

# Beauty and Anglican Worship in Schools

Worship:

- Beautiful
- Contemporary
- Relevant
- Inspiring
- Anglican

???

# Beauty and Anglican Worship in Schools

- Introductions – name and positive experience of Anglican worship – not just in school context
- Apology for being a reactionary Anglo-Catholic
- Share experience and research
- Share group's experiences

# What is Worship?

- Discussion

“Nowadays people campaign for a certain style not because they want to worship God but because they want what they want and like what they like” - *Graham Kendrick*

- Not entertainment or ‘spiritual lollipops’
- Offering of Worship to God

# Beautiful Worship

## Theological Foundations

Incarnation: The Word became flesh and dwelt among us

Ascension: Absorbing humanity into Godhead

Parable of the Sower: Seed flourishes on the good soil of God's grace – sacraments.

# Beautiful Worship

- God's communication: aesthetic more than cognitive, using metaphor, symbol, myth to promote deeper meaning than plain words.
- “The barest alphabet of reverence for so divine a mystery” - *Fr Mackonochie*
- Beauty contrasts with the world's ugliness as Heaven contrasts with Earth
- Awful or Aweful?

# Contemporary Worship

Contemporary: *of the times*

“People are not *outside* of God; they are *grasped* by God on the level in which they *can* be grasped – in their experience of the Divine, in the realms of holiness in which they are living, in which they are educated, in which they have performed acts of faith and adoration and prayer and cult, even though the symbols in which the Holy is expressed may seem extremely primitive and idolatrous.” – *Paul Tillich*

# Contemporary Worship

Modern society

- Androcentric,
- Seeks self-oriented emotional responses

Modern church music

- 73 songs begin with 'I' in one hymn book - focus is us rather than God
- Immediate, emotional responses

# Contemporary Worship

## Society

- Flexible
- Informal
- Relativist
- Self interested
- Competitive
- Profit
- Reward

## Worship?

- Non-liturgical
- Informal
- Congregational
- Individual Salvation

## Christian Worship

- Liturgical
- Formal purpose
- God is truth
- Oriented to God
- Mutuality
- Loss
- Communal glimpse of heaven



# Contemporary Worship

“The church ... contains repertoires of images and aspirations which are in various ways at odds with social requirements.”

“The partitions code the real world in its fallen condition and the signs of the Kingdom of God co-exist with the partitions in creative tension. That tension is of the utmost importance and should be continually exploited, but to pull down the partitions is only to pretend that the gap has been closed. In fact the ‘mystery of God’ is not finished.”

*David Martin, Sociologist*

# Contemporary Worship

- Liturgical Worship not as attractive to newcomers
- We have a captive audience. Not an excuse to be boring, but we don't need to persuade them to come back. Over time the liturgy becomes normative.
- Tradition: transcendence, timelessness and transformative ritual.

# Relevant Worship

- Is real worship ever relevant?
  - Gospel foreign to every culture
- “Listening to the Church, society hears only the sound of its own music.” – *David Bosch*
- Easy option is to make concessions
  - Importance of the sermon/homily/teaching

# Inspiring Worship

Risk of Disenchantment

Good liturgy

“Experience the certitude of a divine meaning surpassing and enfolding ours.” – *Tim Gorringe*

“A signal witnessing to the world that God’s kingdom has come in Christ.” – *Christopher Cocksworth*

# Inspiring Worship



- Glimpsing another world
- timelessness
- being bathed in warmth and light
- loss of sense of self

# Anglican Worship

“We have a family service – it’s called the Mass.”

- Incarnational, world-affirming church
- Catholic – universal and shared mission
- Ordered – routine promotes familiarity
- Do we believe in Anglican worship?
- Room for revision

# Discussion

- Experiences of beauty as part of worship
- Experiences of ministering 'beauty for brokenness'

