

# Contents

Contributors	vii
Abbreviations	ix
Acknowledgements	x
<b>1</b> Daily Prayer <i>Paul Bradshaw and Simon Jones</i>	1
A. History	1
B. Commentary	11
<b>2</b> The Weekday Lectionary <i>Anne Dawtry</i>	33
A. History	33
B. Commentary	40
C. Related Calendrical Issues	44
<b>3</b> Times and Seasons <i>Benjamin Gordon-Taylor</i>	50
A. Advent	51
B. Christmas	58
C. Epiphany	70
D. Lent	79
E. Passiontide and Holy Week	83
F. The Easter Liturgy	90
G. Easter	96
H. Trinity to All Saints	102
I. All Saints to Advent	104
<b>4</b> New Patterns for Worship <i>Trevor Lloyd</i>	108
A. History	108
B. Commentary	115
<b>5</b> The Additional Collects <i>Paul Roberts</i>	121

**vi** Contents

<b>6</b>	Rites on the Way <i>Dana Delap</i>	128
	A. History	128
	B. Commentary	133
<b>7</b>	Wholeness and Healing <i>Carolyn Headley and Bridget Nichols</i>	142
	A. History	142
	B. Commentary	157
<b>8</b>	Reconciliation and Restoration <i>Carolyn Headley and Bridget Nichols</i>	168
	A. History	168
	B. Commentary	176
<b>9</b>	Marriage <i>Henry Everett</i>	180
	A. History	180
	B. Commentary	184
<b>10</b>	Funeral <i>Gordon Giles</i>	194
	A. History	194
	B. Ministry at the Time of Death	201
	C. Before the Funeral	205
	D. The Funeral Service	207
	E. The Funeral Service within a Celebration of Holy Communion	212
	F. Supplementary Texts	213
	G. The Funeral of a Child	213
	H. Services after the Funeral	215
	I. Resources	217
<b>11</b>	Ordination Services <i>Paul Bradshaw</i>	219
	A. History	219
	B. Commentary	228
<b>12</b>	Public Worship with Communion by Extension <i>Phillip Tovey</i>	242
	A. History	242
	B. Commentary	246
	Index	251

## Chapter 1

# Daily Prayer

### A. HISTORY

#### ***Jewish and Early Christian Practice***

Most modern Jewish scholars are convinced that no general obligation to observe regular times of prayer every day existed in Judaism until after the destruction of the Temple and the transformation of the faith that resulted from that catastrophe. Prior to that event daily prayer would probably have been the custom only of certain pious groups. It appears that some people recited the *Shema* (Deuteronomy 6.4–9; 11.13–21; Numbers 15.37–41) twice a day, morning and evening; although strictly speaking a creed rather than a prayer, it was in later times accompanied by brief prayers before and after, and something like this may well have been the case in the first century. Others apparently followed a tradition of prayer three times a day, first mentioned in Daniel 6.10. In later centuries these two patterns were combined to form the expected norm for all Jews. While these daily devotions might on occasion have been performed corporately, more often than not the practice would have been an individual one.

Although earlier generations of scholars supposed that the oldest Christian practice was prayer twice a day, morning and evening, and that this would usually have been done in corporate gatherings rather than as an individual action, those assumptions have been challenged by more recent research. It now appears that prayer three times a day may have been the more common practice. This pattern is first mentioned in the *Didache*, a church order probably dating from the late first or early second century, and recurs in other Christian texts from the second and third centuries, which also include prayer in the middle of the night as part of the regular daily cycle. While in rural communities the timing of the thrice-daily prayer would have been regulated by the movement of the sun (sunrise, noon and sunset), in urban settings it seems to have been co-ordinated with the major divisions of the Roman day, which would have been publicly announced: the third hour (about 9 a.m.), the sixth hour (about noon) and the ninth hour (about 3 p.m.). By the middle of the third century there is evidence from Cyprian in North Africa that it was the custom there to combine the two cycles into a composite pattern of prayer five times a day (morning, third, sixth and ninth hours, and evening) and once again in the middle of the night.

While there are signs that married couples, whole families and groups of Christian friends may have prayed together at these times, yet for many Christians, as for many Jews, this must in general have been an individual activity. It is important not to assume from this, however, that what was done was thought of as private prayer. Christians understood themselves to be members of the body of Christ, and their prayers to be united with one another, whether they happened to be praying alone or with others.

We have no detailed knowledge of the content of these times of daily prayer, but from the clues that do exist we may reasonably assume that they were largely extemporized and composed chiefly of praise and intercession. The singing of psalms and hymns seems originally to have been associated with Christian community meals, but Tertullian, writing in North Africa at the beginning of the third century, tells us that the ‘more pious’ there were accustomed to include in their daily prayers psalms that have an ‘Alleluia’ in the biblical text, so that those present may use it as a response. Presumably others were not yet doing so.

#### **Fourth-Century Developments**

After the cessation of persecution in the fourth century allowed church buildings to become more common, the public celebration of the daily hours of prayer became an established practice. Because assembling together was only a practical possibility for ordinary folk at the beginning and end of their working day, and not during the day or in the middle of the night, morning and evening prayer were usually the sole hours that were prayed in many churches. However, in major cities other times might also have formed part of the publicly celebrated cycle. The pre-eminence of morning and evening over the other traditional hours of daily prayer was given a theological rationale by the claim that they constituted the true fulfilment of the morning and evening sacrifices of the Old Testament (earlier generations of Christians had seen those sacrifices as finding their fulfilment in the ceaseless praise and prayer offered by believers in every place).

These daily services were composed of two principal elements – praise for God’s creation and redemption, and intercession for the needs of the world. The core of morning prayer everywhere seems to have been Psalms 148–150, repeated every day. In many places, especially in the East, this was followed by the canticle, *Gloria in excelsis*, and preceded by Psalm 63, because its first verse was (mis)translated in Greek as referring to the morning. Psalm 51 often formed a penitential introduction to the service. Only on Sundays and festivals was there any variation in this daily pattern. Evening prayer seems to have been less standardized. There was no equivalent of Psalms 148–150, but in Eastern practice Psalm 141 seems to have been the counterpart to Psalm 63, because of its reference to the offering of the evening sacrifice in verse 2, and the hymn *Phos hilaron*, ‘Hail, gladdening light’, was sung at the beginning as the evening lamp was ceremonially lit, a traditional domestic custom now taken over into

ecclesiastical practice. Intercession was often in the form of a litany, with its petitions varying according to the needs perceived by the local church. Modern scholars have given the name 'cathedral office' to this pattern of prayer. Neither morning nor evening prayer usually included any Bible readings, which belonged instead to distinct services of the word. These were held on Sundays, as part of the eucharistic rite, and on Wednesdays and Fridays, the standard days of fasting each week, generally at the conclusion of the fast at the ninth hour, and often on a daily basis during the season of Lent.

While congregations were still being urged by preachers to observe all the other daily times of prayer wherever they happened to be, few did so, and those hours came to be thought of as the preserve of the especially devout and of the new religious communities that were emerging in towns and cities throughout the Christian world. Some of these groups joined in whatever hours were being celebrated in their local church or cathedral and then completed the rest of the daily cycle in their own communities, while others kept the entire daily round within their community. This pattern of prayer has been described by modern scholars as the 'urban monastic office'.

Long before the fourth century dawned there had been some Christians who had not been content merely with frequent times of prayer each day, but wanted to fulfil the apostolic injunction to 'pray without ceasing' (1 Thessalonians 5.17) rather more literally, keeping up a constant vigil of praise and prayer throughout their waking hours while they toiled at their daily tasks. This vision of ceaseless prayer was taken up by the hermits and ascetics who took to the deserts of Egypt and Syria in the early part of the fourth century. Dissatisfied by what they regarded as the laxity of the lifestyle of the majority of members of the Church in the post-persecution era, they withdrew from society and devoted their lives to engaging in spiritual combat with the devil in the isolation of these regions. Their constant prayer was interrupted only by the minimal breaks for food and sleep. Once they had risen for prayer during the night, they did not return to bed but immediately embarked upon their daily vigil of prayer, continuing until daylight enabled them to start work, which they then did to the accompaniment of their praying.

The content of their prayer was significantly different from that of their contemporaries back in the towns and cities. Instead of praise and intercession, their focus was on perpetual meditation on the word of God. They would recite to themselves passages from Scripture they had learned by heart, alternating this with silent reflection on its meaning, intent on fostering their own spiritual growth towards perfection. We may thus describe their prayer as inward looking, in comparison with the more outward orientation towards the world seen in the prayer of the Church at large. As communities of monks were gradually formed in the deserts, they too adopted a similar spirituality and pattern of praying. The Pachomian communities of Upper Egypt seem to have assembled together twice each day, morning and evening, and to have practised in those gatherings the same sort of praying as they would maintain

individually in the rest of the day: different members of the community in turn would read aloud a passage of Scripture, with a period for silent meditation in between. In Lower Egypt, however, the monks would mostly pray alone in their cells, and here the preferred texts as the basis for their meditation were the canonical psalms. Since they were thought by early Christians to have been written by King David under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and to have been prophetic in character, referring to the Messiah who was to come, they seemed the natural choice for those who wanted to form their own lives after the pattern of Christ. Each psalm was interpreted as either being addressed to Christ or to be about Christ or to be Christ speaking. Unlike the selected psalms of praise in the ‘cathedral office’, these communities used the whole Psalter, learning it by heart and reciting it in its biblical order with silence for meditation after each psalm. This distinctive pattern of praying is termed the ‘desert monastic office’ by modern scholars.

### **Cross-Fertilization: The Traditions Combined**

It is hardly surprising to find that, as time went by, the thoroughgoing asceticism of the desert monks began to influence the spirituality of urban monastic communities, including their patterns of worship. The first signs of this are already evident in the fourth-century sources with the emergence of a nightly vigil in urban monasticism, joining the ancient time of prayer in the middle of the night to morning prayer with a service of alternating psalms and silent prayer, the psalms being sung in their biblical order. This shortening of the period of sleep led in some cases to monks going back to bed once morning prayer was over, and to the consequent emergence in many monastic rules of an additional time of prayer after the morning office at the first hour of the day (and therefore called ‘Prime’ in the West) to put an end to this ‘second sleep’, as it was known. Together with prayer at bedtime (known as ‘Compline’ in the West), the urban monastic round in most places now consisted of a total of seven daily services, in addition to the long night office (given varying names in different traditions, such as Nocturns or Vigils, and later Mattins, because it was the first service of the day): morning prayer (usually called ‘Lauds’ in the West, because its core was the *Laudate* Psalms 148–150); the first hour (‘Prime’), the third, sixth and ninth hours (‘Terce’, ‘Sext’ and ‘None’), evening prayer (often called ‘Vespers’ in the West) and Compline.

As time went by, Western monastic traditions were more profoundly affected by the ideal of the Egyptian desert monks, and the practice of using the whole Psalter began to supplant the older tradition of using only certain psalms selected for their appropriateness as hymns of praise at every service of the day. The Rule of Benedict, for example, aimed to complete all 150 psalms in the services each week, with only a few of them being repeated daily. Intercession disappeared almost entirely from the offices, and even the silences for meditation between the psalms were reduced in length, and eventually eliminated altogether, as the psalms themselves came to be thought of as being the