

Alcuin Club Annual Meeting: Shaping the Assembly

20 May 2024, St Mary the Virgin, Oxford

Call for Papers

In 2023, the Alcuin Club Collection was a volume of essays under the title *Shaping the Assembly*. Through 18 essays from different perspectives, the book explored, as its subtitle puts it “How our buildings form us in worship.” At the Club’s Festival this year, the editor of the volume, Prof. Thomas O’Loughlin, and one of the contributors, Canon Christopher Irvine, will discuss the themes raised in the volume, and explore some of the questions raised by it.

Alongside this discussion, the Club invites proposals for up to three short papers which engage with this theme. Papers may explore any aspect of the liturgical space, its fittingness for and role in shaping the worship that takes place within it, and in forming the members of the assembly who gather there. Possible topics might include (but are not limited to):

- Do beauty and utility conflict in liturgical space?
- Can present demands and historical inheritance of buildings be held together?
- How does liturgical space shape who has a place at the table?
- Does the building always win? How do the form and function of the liturgical space interact?
- Can there be liturgical space in cyberspace?
- Can liturgical space be shared space?
- What sort of liturgical space does the church need here and now?
- How can liturgical space marry together the transcendent and the immanent?
- What theology does a building contain?
- What place is there for liturgical space to tell its own history?

We welcome reflections on the challenges of using inherited liturgical spaces as much as principles for shaping new spaces and welcome proposals from both scholars and practitioners at all stages of their careers. Powerpoint will be available for the presentations.

Selected papers will need to be presented in 20 minutes, and presenters are asked to be present in person at the Club’s Festival at the University Church of St. Mary, Oxford on 20 May 2024. Proposals of up to 300 words should be sent to tom@alcuinclub.org.uk by 22 March 2024. You will be notified if your paper has been selected by 5 April 2024.