**OWN ARRANGEMENTS – ADVICE AND RESOURCES**

**FOR CHURCH STEWARDS AND WORSHIP GROUPS.**

Standing Order 569 **Services not led by a Presbyter or Local Preacher**.

(1) A service described on the preaching plan by the words ‘Local Arrangements’ or any similar expression shall be arranged by church stewards and led by persons from the local congregation and shall not normally include a preaching element. Local preachers and worship leaders may be invited to take part in such a service but are neither required nor expected to do so and are free to decline any request to participate.

Thus an ‘own arrangement’ (OA) service can only include a ‘preaching element’ if a preacher (ordained or lay) has agreed to take part. Please remember that the main reason for OAs on the Circuit Preaching Plan is that our available preachers are already stretched.

If there is no preacher contributing that element to an act of worship, and you are unsure whether something that happens in a service is preaching or not, then the rule of thumb is that it *probably* *is preaching*.

If there is to be no ‘element of preaching’ in an OA because there is no preacher available and participating, then there is a variety of things that can be introduced as a means of illustrating and unpacking the biblical readings in lieu of a sermon. These include:

Drama

Meditation

Story

Prayer Stations

Discussion/Conversation

Café style worship

Remember: an OA is an opportunity to ‘think outside the box’ when it comes to assumptions as to what constitutes an act of worship.

Churches which frequently are allocated OA on the Preaching Plan have been given a copy of the workbook *Worship: Foundations—an introduction to preparing and leading worship in the Methodist Church*. This free resource has been prepared by the Ministry: Vocation and Worship Team, Methodist Church in Britain, to complement the online course *Worship: Leading and Preaching* currently used to train Local Preachers and Worship Leaders. Further copies of *Worship: Foundations* are available from Michael Chester.

Please be careful in searching for worship resources on the internet. There are some people out there anxious to push their particular attitudes and doctrines which are not in accord with Methodist attitudes and doctrines, e.g. they may hold that infant baptism is not valid, or that homosexual people can be ‘cured’. Neither opinion is acceptable in a Methodist act of worship.

**That does not mean that no website is trustworthy when it comes to preparing OAs.** There are, for instance, suggestions on the York Circuit website:

[www.yorkmethodist.org.uk/publications/service-resources.html](http://www.yorkmethodist.org.uk/publications/service-resources.html)

The Methodist Church website has resources, including a document entitled [***Don't Panic!! The step-by-step guide to local arrangements***](https://www.methodist.org.uk/media/1050/local-arrangements-dont-panic-guide.pdf)***.***

[www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/worship/resourcing-local-arrangements/](http://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/worship/resourcing-local-arrangements/)

Our hymnbook *Singing the Faith* has a website with hymn suggestions for every Sunday, including new hymns, all related to the lectionary readings:

[www.singingthefaithplus.org.uk/](http://www.singingthefaithplus.org.uk/)

Music copies of *Singing the Faith* have a variety of indexes to assist with hymn selection, including an *Index of Biblical texts*, and a *Liturgical Index.*

On **Special Sundays** worship material is made available by the church organisation or charity concerned, e.g. The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Christian Aid Week, Methodist Homes Sunday, Action for Children, Holocaust Memorial Day, etc.

***Roots*** is an ecumenical lectionary based resource available in print and digitally on subscription. It offers two sets of resources, for *Adult and All Age* and for *Children and Young People*. Resources are offered for every Sunday, and for every aspect of worship, including prayers and hymn/song suggestions: [www.rootsontheweb.com](http://www.rootsontheweb.com)

Subscriptions with multi access are available.

The Church of Scotland website and the Wild Goose Worship Group (Iona Community) website are to be trusted, and have free downloadable resources: [www.churchofscotland.org.uk](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk), [www.wildgoose.scot](http://www.wildgoose.scot)

There are many **printed resources** available, offering drama, stories, meditations etc, often with a biblical index. Here are some examples:

**The Wild Goose Worship Group** resources from Iona ([www.ionabooks.com](http://www.ionabooks.com) and [www.wildgoose.scot](http://www.wildgoose.scot)) are invaluable, including the well-known *Er … Jesus … Yes, Peter?* dialogues, now bound in one volume as *Jesus and Peter: off the record conversations.*  John Bell’s book of meditations for public worship, *He Was In The World*, is of a quality you would expect, and is Kathy Galloway’s *Imagining the Gospels* (SPCK) from a co-warden of the Iona Community.

The biblically based meditations and prayers written by the late **Eddie Askew** former Director of the Leprosy Mission International are worthy of attention. They have biblical indices. There are many titles, some of which are still available new. It’s always worth looking on [www.abebooks.co.uk](http://www.abebooks.co.uk) for used copies, often in very good condition and available for little more than the postage.

**Nick Fawcett’s** books are worth investing in, including his meditations for reflective worship on the person of Jesus, *No Ordinary Man*, vols 1 &2 which are available from Kevin Mayhew ([www.kevinmayhew.com](http://www.kevinmayhew.com)) or via Amazon ([www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk)) or the Book Depository ([www.bookdepository.com/author/Nick-Fawcett](http://www.bookdepository.com/author/Nick-Fawcett)) There are 100 meditations per volume, together with service outlines etc. Nick Fawcett has authored more than a hundred books of prayers, for personal and public worship use, many focussed on a particular season of the Christian year.

*The Story Goes . . .* is a series from the late Dutch theologian **Nico ter Linden**. There are three volumes: *The Stories of the Torah*, *The Stories of Judges and Kings* (both Old Testament based), and *Mark’s Story and Matthew’s Story*. Not all are in print, but they are available used.

**Sara Maitland’s** *Angel and Me* contains twenty short stories written with Holy Week in Mind. Indeed, Lent and Holy Week have, not surprisingly, been fertile ground for meditations and other worship resources. **Kathie Heathcoat**, a presbyter who was based in the York Circuit for past of last year, has produced a book of resources for Lent and Holy Week: *A Voice in the Wilderness: Finding God in Confusion.* See

<https://piptil.co.uk/a-voice-in-the-wilderness.html>. This is her third collection of meditations, images and prayers.

**Prayers** created to fit the lectionary themes week by week are published by Epworth in a series: *Companion to the Revised Common Lectionary* in 6 volumes.

Of course, it is already late to be seeking resources for Lent and Holy Week 2019, but this resource sheet is **a work in progress**, and the intention is to continuously update. The most up to date version is found on the circuit website at

www.yorkmethodist.org.uk.

Suggestions for additional resources to Michael Chester ([mchester9@gmail.com](mailto:mchester9@gmail.com)) please*.*

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