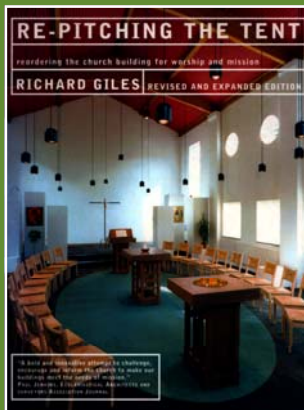


Resources

Re-pitching the Tent is Richard Giles' most well known book and forms the foundation of most of his work with parishes in re-ordering their worship spaces and transforming worship. The book was the Catholic Press Association Award Winner in 2000 and has received critical acclaim internationally.

Copies of the book are available in the parish library for parishioners to borrow.



For more information about Richard Giles and his work you can also visit his website.

www.liturgyworks.org.uk

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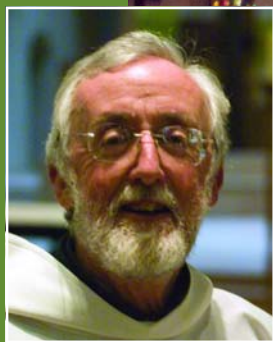


Re-ordering our building,
our worship and ourselves

St David's Church
May to August 2013

RICHARD GILES is one of the foremost international experts in transforming worship in the Anglican tradition.

Richard grew up in Birmingham and gained degrees in town planning and theology at Newcastle University. After training at Cuddesdon, he served as a priest in the Midlands and the North of England before becoming parish development officer and canon theologian for the Diocese of Wakefield, working with parishes to rethink and redesign their buildings as part of mission strategy.



His particular expertise in the design of liturgical space bore fruit in the publication of *Re-Pitching the Tent*, now in its third edition, *Creating Uncommon Worship* (2004) and *Times and Seasons* (2008). Other titles include *Mark my Word*, daily meditations on Mark's Gospel, *How to be an Anglican* (2003), a light-hearted introduction to Anglican belief and practice, *Here I Am* (2006), reflections on the ordained life, and *At Heaven's Gate* (2010), reflections on leading worship, all from Canterbury Press.

From 1999 to 2008 he was Dean of Philadelphia Cathedral in the Diocese of Pennsylvania, USA, where he oversaw the radical renovation of the cathedral to become a place of transformative worship. In 2008 he became a Visiting Fellow of St John's College, Durham. He now lives in Tynemouth, and continues to work as a facilitator of transformative worship and a consultant in liturgical design.

The Process

One of Richard's conditions on coming to Perth to be with us is that we trial our new pattern of worship for at least 2 months following his departure, allowing us to find our rhythm and make changes as we go. Because of school holidays the trial period will be slightly longer than planned and will conclude in mid-August.

The final decision on how our worship should be ordered will be taken by the Church Council at its meeting at the beginning of August, before that time it is essential that the Council receives feedback from the congregation.

There will be at least two feedback sessions after the service on a Sunday morning to allow people to express their thoughts.

If you would prefer to write your thoughts down, this will also be useful. Please either email your reflections to andrew.williams@applecross.perth.anglican.org

or hard copies can be sent care of the Rector at the Parish Office.

As a further measure to gain opinion it is planned to have a short questionnaire during the final weeks of the trial.

Prior to Richard's arrival the parish bought 12 copies of his book, 'Re-Pitching the Tent.' Please take the time to read this as it helps us to grasp the thinking behind the changes that have been made.

Finally, please chat with other members of the community. Some people are enjoying the new experiences, some people are having difficulty with the changes, only by talking with each other as the trial period progresses will we grow and learn.

Shared authority

During the trial period the presiding priest hands the stole of authority to each person who takes on a certain role in the service. Those who read from the bible and those who offer prayers on behalf of the whole church community are given the stole as a sign of authority to act in this way on behalf of us all.

Posture

Richard has reminded us of the ancient posture for prayer. As we stand around the altar we are all invited to hold our arms aloft and make the prayer of thanksgiving our own. The priest says the words, but we all give our assent to this by making our prayers in this way. Wall paintings of some of the earliest Christian communities at prayer illustrate Christians praying in this way.

Silence

Following the reading of scriptures and singing of the psalm we are all invited to reflect upon what we have heard in a moment's silence. The beginning and the end of the silence is announced with a gong to allow people to rest securely and use the silence without fear that 'something has gone wrong.'

Re-Pitching the Tent

The Very Reverend Richard Giles visited the parish in May 2013 to guide us through a process of renewing our worship and the space we use. This booklet has been produced in order to explain the process and help us all to understand some of the thinking behind this trial

Background

Following extensive discussion and debate in 2009, the parish produced its Mission Action Plan (MAP) in 2010. One of the 'Mission Actions' was to:

“Recreate the worship space to make a more flexible, inspirational and comfortable worship space. Explore changing from pews to chairs.”

In time for the Annual Meeting in 2012 the Mission Committee produced a review of the plan to consider how we were travelling. Much had been achieved in the two years of the Plan's existence, but this important area of our community life remained untouched. In the 2012 MAP review the need for action was restated with these words:

“Develop a Liturgy and Worship Working Group to review the current practice of worship at both churches. This includes music, styles and opportunities for worship. Development of this area is on-going but should be formalized the next 2-3 years.”

Shortly after the 2012 AGM the Mission Committee focused its work on this area and suggested a way forward to the Church Council. After discussion at Church Council the unanimous decision was made to invite Richard to lead us in a time of liturgical change. Richard agreed to travel around the world to be with us on the understanding that we were willing to engage with his ideas and allow for a trial period once he had returned to the UK.

In this trial period we will worship in the manner suggested, at the same time we will adjust the worship as we progress through the trial to better suit our needs and to make the style our own.

Why the change in layout?

To answer this question we firstly have to ask ourselves what is the point of our church building?

On a fundamental level the building simply houses the community of faith, the actual church. It exists as a tool for use by the faith community to help express the beliefs it holds.

Our role as a Christian community of faith is to show the love of God as we understand it through the revelation of his Son Jesus Christ, and as baptised Christians we are called to tell the story of Jesus afresh for each generation.

‘Since the rise of the Liturgical Movement in the 1960’s our expression of our faith has changed considerably.’

Richard Giles suggests that over the centuries our buildings have stopped reflecting the theology of the community that uses them. The very first Christian groups met in large houses to gather for worship and a meal, their worship looked very different from what we see in most church buildings today.

As the Christian faith became ‘legitimate’ in the eyes of the powerful, so it absorbed some of the trappings of power, adopting the style of grand public buildings of the Roman

Empire.

Since the reformation we have filled our church buildings with pews and some would say expressed a theology that God is attended to by privileged people, in an area set apart from the general congregation.

Since the rise of the Liturgical Movement in the 1960’s our expression of our faith has changed considerably. The words of our liturgy express the belief that the people are the body of Christ and that the Spirit of God is present with us when we gather together, wherever this may be. The priest has an important function, but she or he is not the only person who has access to God.

At the same time there is a desire to recapture the sense that Christian faith is a journey of discovery. The liturgical movement seeks to express this sense of journey through the design of our worship space and the type of liturgy we use.

During the trial our Church building is currently ordered so that the worshipping community is clearly identified as an active assembly of Christians meeting together to worship God, rather than an audience attending a performance. The font is now the focal point of our gathering, reminding us all that each of us is commissioned to ministry through our baptism.

Some liturgical differences

Our Mission Action Plan stressed the need to have distinct worship experiences available in our attempt to be an attractive and contemporary community of faith. At St George’s we maintain a traditional worship pattern, enjoyed by the community that regularly worships in that building. At St David’s we wish to retain the dignity of our Anglican inheritance whilst exploring some more contemporary styles.

Rooms for worship

During the trial we are emphasizing the two rooms in which we gather for our worship. Initially we gather to reflect upon the word as we receive it through our scriptures. In the second part of our service we gather around the altar table, to share in the Eucharistic meal of bread and wine.

Music

Music remains an important element in our worship. The choir has a strategic role in leading the congregational singing and assisting the whole congregation to enjoy the music we offer. We have begun exploring some of the richness of new church music available to us as well as retaining some of our old favourites. At the same time we will endeavor to sing hymns and songs which reflect our inclusive theology. We are actively pursuing a pianist to assist us in our worship.