

MONDAY
21 SEPTEMBER
Matthew, Apostle
and Evangelist
Proverbs 3:13-18
Psalms 119:65-72
2 Corinthians 4:1-6
Matthew 9:9-13

TUESDAY
22 SEPTEMBER
Proverbs 21:1-6.
10-13
Psalms 119:1-8
Luke 8:19-21

WEDNESDAY
23 SEPTEMBER
Proverbs 30:5-9
Psalms 119:105-112
Luke 9:1-6

THURSDAY
24 SEPTEMBER
Ecclesiastes 1:2-11
Psalms 90:1-6
Luke 9:7-9

FRIDAY
25 SEPTEMBER
Ecclesiastes 3:1-11
Psalms 144:1-4
Luke 9:18-22

SATURDAY
26 SEPTEMBER
Ecclesiastes 11:9
- 12:8
Psalms 90:1-2. 12-
end
Luke 9:43b-45

REFLECTION

Evangelist Matthew, whose Gospel provides the major focus for our Sunday readings this year, is celebrated in his own right on Monday. Thought to have been Jewish, writing from an urban context, his theological intent is to prove to sceptical fellow Jews the scriptural credentials of Jesus as the Messiah, fulfilling Jewish prophecy. Despite this emphasis, it is Matthew whose Gospel ends with Jesus commanding his circle to go and make disciples of all nations. There are echoes of that in Jesus' declaration in Tuesday's reading from Luke, that anyone who obeys God is his relation – God's love is not solely for the chosen people. On Wednesday we see Jesus instructing the disciples not to linger in places where his authority is not accepted and on Friday Peter's declaration of Jesus' messiahship is hushed as too inflammatory to broadcast. While rational proof is required by some, especially the communities Matthew is writing to convince, others are more intuitive, responding, like Peter, to actions. As the writer of Ecclesiastes reminds us through the week, it is easy to overthink our behaviours, become preoccupied with our own desires, when our focus should be firmly sighted on discerning God's will and vision for our lives.



Matthew the Evangelist by Josef Kastner, in Döbling Carmelite Monastery, Vienna. Renata Sedmakova / Shutterstock.com

PRAYER

Holy God,
 as we celebrate the gift of Matthew's Gospel,
 and every volume of scripture,
 may we allow your words to read us,
 opening our hearts and minds to your truth,
 so that, filled with your love, we might be the next chapter
 in your unfolding plan of salvation.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ANGLICAN LITURGY

PART IV – COMMON WORSHIP

Heather Smith concludes her series looking at the history of Anglican liturgy.

The millennium saw a revision to the Church of England liturgy that would replace the 1980 *Alternative Service Book*. At the time, some felt it was following too quickly on its heels. Liturgy, they thought, needed time to bed in so that people could consider its merits.

Common Worship was introduced in 2000. It contains an array of choice, with the result that in many churches a whole raft of different service booklets exists to cover the different times and seasons. The liturgy for a Eucharist in Ordinary Time in one church may seem quite different from that of the church a few miles away. Although they follow the same framework, the choices made can result in huge differences in the words actually spoken.

Some complain that the “Common” part of the name represents an unwanted commonness of language, that it has lost the mystery and dignity they valued. Its choices, though, allow for traditional language although many churches choose not to use it. In fact the “Common” refers, just like the *Book of Common Prayer* (BCP), to the fact that churches are using a common liturgy although, as we have seen, the array of choices means the same words are not being spoken in every Anglican church in the country.

Common Worship does not contain readings, but follows the cycle of a lectionary based on the *Revised Common Lectionary*, used by many denominations. The *Common Worship* Lectionary, differs from it at some times of the year, but it follows the same three-year cycle, with Gospel readings based on Matthew, Mark and Luke depending on the year.

The experience of worship is certainly different from that which early twentieth-century congregations would have had. BCP is, of course, still the only permanently authorised service book, so in terms of the newer liturgy, the future may bring further developments, as liturgical scholars continue to study the liturgy of the early Church and consider the needs of an ever-changing society.

LIVE the WORD

SUSTAINING YOU THROUGH THE WEEK

Edited by Caroline Hodgson and Heather Smith



Fifteenth week after Trinity

Monday 21 September
 Saturday 26 September
 2020

WEEK