



WINCHESTER AND
PORTSMOUTH DIOCESAN
GUILD OF CHURCH BELL
RINGERS



A Resource Book for Worship

at Ringers' Services and for
Belfry Prayer

1996

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Introduction and Foreword

This booklet contains resource material and suggestions designed to assist those who lead us in our worship, whether it be the customary service that accompanies most of our Guild and District meetings, or in conducting belfry prayers before ringing.

In these pages you will find a 'Call to Worship', a selection of suitable psalms, readings and hymns, a Guild 'Collect', and a selection of appropriate prayers which can be used.

The choice as to whether to use a traditional or contemporary office or rite is left to the person who will be responsible for conducting the worship.

The need for some revision of the previous Guild office has been apparent for some time; last revised in the late 1960's, it was beginning to look rather dated, especially where it deviated from the familiar and timeless idiom of the Book of Common Prayer.

The intervening years have seen considerable liturgical revision and renewal in the Western Churches; in the Anglican Church we now have the ASB 1980, and more recently the publication of the Office Book 'Celebrating Common Prayer', and doubtless there will be further revisions in the years to come. I am confident that the resource material this publication provides will remain helpful no matter what office, or indeed eucharistic rite, may be used in our worship in the future.

I am most grateful to the small *ad hoc* committee who have worked together with me in writing and compiling this material over the past couple of years. We hope that all who use it will find it a helpful aid in our corporate worship and devotion, and accordingly it is with great pleasure that I commend it to you.

Reverend Barry J Fry
Guild Master
Spring 1996

A ‘Call To Worship’

We have come together to worship in the faith which we proclaim
through our ringing of the Church Bells.

In our service today we shall

Sing to the Lord in Praise,

Listen to his holy word in Scripture,

and turn to him in Prayer;

in all of this giving thanks for the fellowship which we enjoy.

In Our Lord,

In the Church,

In our art,

and in this Guild.

A Selection of Suitable Psalms, Readings and Hymns

Psalms

If the set psalm for the day is not to be used, one of the following is suggested; (alternatively an appropriate hymn may be used e.g. ‘Crimond’ and ‘The King of Love my Shepherd is’ are alternative versions of Ps 23)

Ps 23, 29, 33, 34, 47, 67, 81, 84, 96, 98, 100, 108, 13, 121, 122, 138, 142, 146, 148, 149, 150.

Similarly a hymn such as ‘Tell out my Soul’ could be used as an alternative to the Magnificat.

Readings

The Old Testament lesson may be read, but in any event the New Testament lesson shall be read. If the lectionary readings set for the day are not to be used, the following are appropriate.

Old Testament: Numbers 10 vs 1–10; 1 Chronicles 29 vs 9–15; 2
Chronicles 5 vs 11–14; Isaiah 6 vs 1–8

New Testament: Matthew 5 vs 1–15; Matthew 7 vs 1–12; John 15 vs 1–
12; Romans 12 vs 1–10; Ephesians 4 vs 1–13; Philippians 2
vs 5–16; Peter 3 vs 8–13; Revelation 1 vs 4–18

Hymns

	AMR	HHT	EH	NEH	AMNS
Angel voices, ever singing	246	—	—	336	163
Be thou my vision	—	10	—	339	343
Come workers for the Lord	—	17	—	—	350
For all the saints	527	—	641	197	305
Guide me, O thou great Redeemer	296	—	397	368	214
Let all the earth in every corner sing	375	—	427	394	202
Let bells peal forth the universal fame	—	—	—	395	—
Lord Jesus Christ	—	58	—	297	391
O worship the King	167	—	466	433	101
Teach me my God and King	337	—	485	456	240
Tell out my soul (Tune: Woodlands)	—	89	—	186	422
There's a spirit in the air	—	—	—	—	515
Thine be the glory	—	95	—	120	428
Unchanging God, who livest (The Ringers' Hymn – words and music on page 13)	496	—	—	—	—
When morning gilds the skies	223	—	512	473	146
Ye holy angels bright	371	—	517	475	198

Any other appropriate general or seasonal hymn may be used.

The Guild Collect

Send, O Lord, your Grace into our hearts,
as we ring the bells of your house of prayer.
May we never forget its sacredness;
and may we ever ring to your praise and glory,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Intercessions and Prayers

Almighty God, you have promised through your Son Jesus Christ to hear us when we pray in faith.

We pray for Christ's Church throughout the world, for its mission and witness; for our Diocese of Winchester and Portsmouth, and for N and N our Bishops; we pray for our own parishes, their clergy and people, and for this (these) parish (parishes) in which we meet today.

Priest: Lord in your mercy.

People: Hear our prayer.

We pray for our Guild, our District(s), and our towers. Especially we pray for all who hold office amongst us, that you, Heavenly Father, may bless them, and that we who elect them may support them in the various offices in which they are called to serve

Priest: Lord in your mercy.

People: Hear our prayer.

We pray too for ourselves; may we so give ourselves to you, to our art, and to one another, that our ringing may give worthy praise to you, Heavenly Father, and be a fitting reminder of your love to those who hear it.

Priest: Lord in your mercy.

People: Hear our prayer.

We pray, dear Lord, for all who are sick, for all who are anxious, and for all who are sad at this time, especially Members of this Guild, and others known to us whom we call to mind before you in our hearts.

Priest: Lord in your mercy.

People: Hear our prayer.

Heavenly Father, we remember with gratitude all who have departed this life, and who, in their lifetime have enriched our ringing, our lives, and our faith. [Especially at this time we commend to you the soul(s) of N. Rest eternal grant unto them O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them.] At the last may we share with them the joy of your eternal kingdom.

Priest: Lord in your mercy.

People: Hear our prayer.

All may here say together the following prayer.

Almighty God, we thank you for the gift of your holy word. May it be a lantern to our feet, a light to our paths, and a strength to our lives. Take us and use us, that we may love and serve you and all people in the power of the Holy Spirit, and in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

A Selection of Other Prayers

For the Guild

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, we ask your blessing upon our Guild, its officers, and all who serve in our Districts and towers, help them in all their work undertaken for the furtherance and advancement of our art, and in the service of your holy church, we ask this in Christ's name.

Amen.

O God our Father, we give you thanks for our fellowship within our Guild, and for the rich inheritance in which we are privileged to share. We ask your blessing upon all who hold positions of leadership and responsibility in our Guild, in our Districts, and in our Parishes and towers. May your peace and blessing be with us this day; give us your light to guide us, and your love to unite us, we ask this in Christ's dear name.

Amen.

For the Guild meeting today

Heavenly Father, grant that in our meeting today we may be guided by your Holy Spirit, that we may have a right judgement in all things, and may ever work for the coming of your Kingdom, through Jesus Christ, Our Lord.

Amen.

For the Church and its Mission

Heavenly Father, we pray for all who are called by the sound of the bells to worship in Christ's Church; may all who respond praise you with joy, and show forth your love and goodness in their lives, in Jesus name.

Amen.

Almighty God, we pray for the mission and witness of the Church throughout the world, and especially in our own Diocese of Winchester and Portsmouth. We pray for our Bishops (N and N), and for the clergy and people of the parishes we represent. May we be united in your truth, live together in your love, and show forth your glory amongst all we meet in our daily lives, in Christ's dear name we ask this.

Amen.

O God our Father, may the sound of the bells ringing from our towers remind those who hear them of the mission of the Church, and find comfort and assurance from the Gospel of peace they proclaim, may the bells draw us all to praise you for your love and goodness through Jesus Christ, Our Lord.

Amen.

For Ringers

Almighty God, the giver of all good gifts, without whom we can do nothing; prosper, we pray you, the work of our Guild; increase our skill in the performance of our art, and grant us grace to serve you faithfully in word and deed, that in our lives we may witness to your glory, and to your love for us in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whose dear name we ask this.

Amen.

Father, hear our prayer for those who ring the bells of your house of prayer, may we ring out the false and ring in the true, that the gospel of Christ may be faithfully proclaimed, and may all who ring be joined together in fellowship and peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

O God our Father, we give thanks for the comradeship and fellowship of the ringing exercise, and pray for ringers everywhere. We ask your blessing upon our Guild and all its work, and upon us all, that we may be enabled to preserve and progress in our art, using to the full the gifts you have given us; and grant that by our ringing and our lives, we may witness to the gospel of truth, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

Heavenly Father, we pray that we and all who ring the bells of your house may be joined together in fellowship and peace. May we do our utmost to make the art of ringing a fitting instrument for your service, to the praise of Jesus Christ Our Lord.

Amen.

For the Sick

Compassionate Father, we commend to your love and healing touch all who are sick and suffering at this time, (especially N). May the sound of the bells ever remind them of the prayers of the Church, and of the hope to which the Gospels bear witness, through your Son, Jesus Christ, Our Lord.

Amen.

Heavenly Father, in our prayers we remember before you all who are ill, all who are lonely, all who are unhappy, and all who feel unloved. We pray that by the message of the bells, they may be aware of your saving love and presence, and experience the healing touch of the risen Christ in their lives, in his dear name we ask it.

Amen.

For the Departed

Heavenly Father, your Son is the resurrection and the life for all who believe in his name; we pray for those who have died, especially all past members of and benefactors of our Guild (and for N recently departed); at the last grant that we may share with them in the inheritance of the saints in glory in that eternal kingdom, where with you and the Holy Spirit, he lives and reigns, world without end.

Amen.

Father in Heaven, we pray for all who have departed this life in your faith and fear, both those who have confessed the faith, and those whose faith is known to you alone. (Especially at this time we would pray for the repose of the soul of N). May all who have died know your peace, and be enabled to share with all the saints the blessings of your eternal kingdom, through Jesus Christ Our Lord.

Amen.

For Advent

Grant Lord that as we hear the Advent summons to be prayerful and alert as we await the coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ, so the ringing of these bells may summon your people to gather in holy worship, that we may acknowledge you as Judge and Saviour, now and forever.

Amen.

For Christmas

O Lord, as these bells ring with joy to celebrate the birth of our Saviour Christ, may all who hear them remember with exultation your lowly Incarnation and praise your name with carol and prayer in your holy Church. For his name's sake we ask it.

Amen.

For Easter

Grant, O Lord, that as we celebrate with joy the triumph of Our Lord Jesus Christ over the powers of sin and death, the joyous sound of these bells may enliven the hearts of those who hear them, that they may praise your name in your holy Church, now and forever.

Amen.

For Ascension

O God our heavenly Father, as we celebrate the glorious Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ to your right hand on high, may our bells proclaim the majesty of his kingship and gather your people into your kingdom and Church. For his name's sake we ask it.

Amen.

For Pentecost

O God, who at this time came with a sound as of wind to your waiting apostles, may the sound of these bells draw people to yourself, that they may worship you in spirit and in truth, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

For Harvest

We recall with gratitude, O God, your goodness in creation and the abundance of your earth. As we celebrate the gathering in of the ripe fruit of our labour, may the ringing of these bells gather into your Church a happy and faithful people, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A Belfry Prayer

Grant, O Lord, we pray, that those who are appointed to ring the bells of this house of prayer may do it worthily and to your glory; and that those who shall be called by the ringing of these bells to worship you may enter into your gates with thanksgiving and into your courts with praise; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Two Ringers' Hymns

Tune "Austria".

A. & M. 292, E.H. 393

Lifted high within the steeple,
All our bells are set on high,
To fulfill their holy mission,
Midway 'twixt the earth and sky.
Far and near our hearts shall hear them
In our toil and in our rest,
Telling how in one Communion
Of one Church we all are blest.

When God's day of rest and gladness
Calls us to our Father's home,
To His House, and to His Altar,
They shall bid His children come;
They shall welcome little children,
Born of Water and the Word,
And their wedding chimes shall tell of
Holier union with the Lord.

They shall comfort sick and dying
In their hour of utmost need,
Whispering how, for weak and weary,
Holy Church doth ever plead;
Year by year the bells' sweet music
O'er the graves around shall pour,
Where the dust of saints is garnered
Till the Master comes once more.

Thus in joy, and thus in sadness,
Shall our bells, 'twixt earth and sky,
Lift our hearts from earth to Heaven,
Plead for man with God on high.
Consecrate them, Lord Jehovah,
Holy may they be to Thee,
Whom we laud in adoration
Ever Blessed Trinity. *Amen.*

“Belfry Praise” (Alternative tune “Ellacombe”)

J.H.Matthews



Unchanging God, Who livest
 Enthroned in realms on high!
To men the power Thou givest
 Thy name to magnify.
We raise the Bells for ringing
 With ready mind and will,
And come before Thee, bringing
 Our hearts, our strength, our skill.

We call, from Tower and Steeple
Upon the Day of days,
All faithful Christian people
To worship, prayer, and praise.
We ring with joyous gladness
When man and wife are blessed;
We peal in muffled sadness
For loved ones laid to rest.

By union, free and willing,
The work of God is done;
Our Master's prayer fulfilling
We would in Him be one!
One, as the Church our Mother
Would have her children stand,
Befriending one another,
A strong and steadfast band.

Our lives, like Bells, while changing,
An ordered course pursue,
Through joys and sorrows ranging,
May all those lives ring true!
May we, through Christ forgiven,
Our faults and failures past,
Attain our place in Heaven,
Called home to rest at last. *Amen.*