

Holy Spirit and Mission

Reflections on *Mission-Shaped Church*

Scott Cowdell

The Church of England is increasingly disconnected from the life of the nation in which it claims a privileged, spiritual location. *Mission-Shaped Church*—otherwise known as the Cray Report (named after the chair of the commission that produced it: the Evangelical leader Graham Cray, now the Bishop of Maidstone)—goes some way to addressing this challenge.ⁱ It offers a valuable analysis of life and culture in post-modern Britain, a variety of good-news stories about Church plants and other fresh expressions understood to represent tomorrow's Church emerging in the midst of yesterday's, and also a reflection on the praxis of this emerging Church, for the benefit of practitioners seeking to 'get on board'.

In what follows,ⁱⁱ the focus is on three issues that I take to be important in our reception of *Mission-Shaped Church*. First, I affirm the Holy Spirit's constant impetus toward creative ecclesial reformation, which is at the heart of the report. The Spirit is not captive to the Church's institutional past, as both Church history and any suitably dynamic pneumatology teach us. However, as my second point, I note the emerging Church's diversity as the report envisages it, going on to identify challenges that mission in today's cultural context pose not only for the institutionally conservative, but for the theologically-conservative-though-ecclesially-innovative constituency that has most eagerly embraced *Mission-Shaped Church*. My third and final point has to do with authority according to the report, in particular the key role it acknowledges for bishops enabling the mission. Might Episcopacy be understood as more than a pragmatic addendum to our thinking about fresh expressions, however, but rather more pneumatologically, integrally and holistically?

1. Beyond Institutional Captivity

The report is a sustained invitation for us to think ‘outside the square’ of the Church’s accustomed institutional life. One key impetus is Church planting, understood as a fresh expression of Church incarnated in a particular context. That context may be geographic, but it may also relate demographically to one of the various de-churched constituencies the report helpfully identifies in contemporary Britain. It is important to note that such initiatives are not understood formulaically nor are they thought to be definable in advance of actual engagement between Gospel and context. All of which is acknowledged as an advance from earlier thinking on the subject in England, shaped as it was by the much more doctrinaire Church Growth Movement, from America.ⁱⁱⁱ

Apart from ‘traditional’ geographic Church plants, examples given of fresh ecclesial expressions include alternative worship communities, base ecclesial communities, café Church, Churches arising out of community activities or networks (such as schools), youth and seeker Churches, as well as old forms of Church striking new growth (such as a revival of the monastic ideal among the young, though not necessarily in traditional forms). Some common features in these various new expressions are the significance accorded to small groups as the locus for Christian formation, the likelihood that a Church will not meet on Sunday morning, the connection to a particular network of people (including a resourcing body), and the post-denominational feel of the whole undertaking.^{iv} It is taken as read that such mission-shaped Churches, of whichever expression, will be dynamic, relational and transformational communities of faith—apart from that, what would be the point or from whence would come the impetus? Significantly, the ecclesial vision celebrated in the report is explicitly, deeply theological and Trinitarian, rather than merely pragmatic or faddish.^v

All of this is alarming for many in the Church. For some of the more ‘Catholic’ among us, this represents a bottom-up process of change which is contrary to belief in the apostolic mediation of God’s grace from the top-down, through the Church’s hierarchy or else its official Councils—also contrary to belief that the Holy Spirit is preserver and protector as well as innovator and dismantler, reflecting a higher view of tradition than is found in other parts of our Church. For those of the more ‘broad’

Church, where the focus is on community and tradition rather than ideology, be it Catholic or Evangelical, this is a departure from the parochial model which has been the reliable symbol of God's incarnate presence in English life for a millennium and a half. For the clergy too, of course, all this brings challenges at several levels. They have not, by and large, been trained for this sort of ministry. It is not readily assimilable in terms of their accustomed expectations of remuneration, clergy housing, superannuation, parson's freehold etc, let alone in terms of typical clergy career paths. And it is highly mission-oriented, which is a profile that many clergy, let alone many congregations, decidedly do not share (as the report obliquely but unmistakably acknowledges).

Another key issue, which the report does not consider, is tension between the Established nature of the Church of England and the missionary imperative. *Mission-Shaped Church* makes a virtue out of the necessity of Establishment, viewing it positively as a mandate for missionary engagement with the whole nation. To some extent at least, the old wineskins remain suitable for new wine. But are Establishment and radical newness compatible? Will the 'fresh expressions' always remain the sideshow and not the main attraction? Will they be tolerated on the fringes but never be allowed to transform the whole structure while the innately conservative, even reactionary pressure of Establishment remains? Even in Australia, where Anglicanism was never Established, the mindset perseveres—at least in our middle-to-high traditions, we are an ethnic, British Empire Church, determined largely by a social rather than a spiritual agenda. Caroline Miley has written devastatingly about this, with proof of her accurate aim provided by a number of unfavourable reviews in the Anglican Church press.^{vi}

Since the Industrial Revolution it was the ill-fitting extremists of the Church of England, the Evangelicals and the Anglo-Catholics, who carried the missionary banner, rather than the Establishment centre. *Mission-Shaped Church* recognises that today's mission endeavour, too, will issue not from the centre but from the innovative edges. Perhaps the best reading of the report here is that Establishment is a given, with potential benefits in terms of social location, resources and good-will upon which mission can draw, but it is not itself the source or the driver of mission. The new wine really does require new wineskins, 'fresh expressions', which I take to be

the import of Jesus' teaching in Mark 2:18 - 3:6. This was certainly true in the missionary history of the religious orders, for instance, from the Desert Fathers to St Benedict, thence to the Cluniac Reform, then the Mendicant explosion under Francis and Dominic, evolving into modern form with the Jesuit movement and its contemplation in action—from the desert to the Minster, transforming Europe, then into and increasingly transforming the world. Such structural evolution is envisaged in the report—not at the expense of the entire tradition, including the traditional orders of ministry and diocesan structures, but certainly transformative of it.

Yet in the face of all such concerns, the report is nevertheless resolute in its belief that ours is a *Kairos* moment, and that God's Holy Spirit is summoning today's Church to this new future. It is the Spirit who releases this work, according to the report, also inspiring repentance from those who are resistant to it (p. 14). The Spirit is the source of this new thinking, for instance in the conscientious choice of non-Sunday worship as the norm for many new faith communities (p. 61)—flying in the face of much scriptural, symbolic and traditional warrant for worship on 'the Lord's Day'. The Spirit is the enculturating force in the Church's mission, bringing the Gospel alive in the various contexts of life (p. 86). Thus the Spirit of Pentecost is perennial translator of the Gospel message (p. 90). No doubt influenced by the theology of hope, the report understands the Spirit's work in bringing a foretaste of the last things (p. 89), hence allowing a 'baptism of imagination' in today's Church favouring anticipation of the future not preservation of the past (p. 90).

This reading is borne out by reflection on our Christian past. The Acts of the Apostles provides the most generally accepted early example of the Spirit driving both mission and emerging ecclesial structures in tandem. The conversion of the Gentiles and their incorporation within the structures of the early, Jerusalem-led Church is a classic instance of a Christian generation led into a new ecclesial paradigm, although we know the result in terms of misunderstanding, resistance and conflict. The Council of Jerusalem, recalled in Acts 15—belatedly legislating to cope with the new 'baptism of imagination' released by the Spirit in the Gentile mission—is of a piece with the Church of England process leading up to the report. And eventually, as we know, the earliest, Jewish version of Christianity disappeared entirely before the new, mission-shaped Church of the Pauline paradigm.

This represents the first of six paradigm changes that Hans Küng enumerates in his sweeping study of Christian identity from a historical perspective.^{vii} As the ‘Jewish Apocalyptic Paradigm of Earliest Christianity’ gave way (from Paul onwards) to the ‘Ecumenical Hellenistic Paradigm of Christian Antiquity’, as I have indicated, so in turn its more centralising development into the ‘Roman Catholic Paradigm of the Middle Ages’ was challenged by the ‘Protestant Evangelical Paradigm of the Reformation’. Subsequently, gripped by the revolutionary scientific, political, economic and philosophical currents of modernity, the ‘Paradigm of Modernity’ arose in the Enlightenment, oriented to a new world of equality, reason and progress.

Three aspects of Küng’s account resonate with what *Mission-Shaped Church* has to say about fresh expressions of Church today. First, each new paradigm brings a set of fresh Christian expressions, as the Gospel engages a new cultural context—from Hellenistic culture to medieval feudalism to the rise of a new commercial class in early modernity to the era of revolution, both political and industrial. Second, each paradigm shift involves a period of destabilization, upset and conflict—just as in scientific paradigm change, before what Thomas Kuhn called ‘normal science’ can resume.^{viii} Third, each new stage builds on (and occasionally blends together) aspects of the ones before it, not requiring an entirely fresh palate to paint its new vision. Sometimes recovery of the past is decisive in the present, as when Paul’s vision was recovered at the Reformation (and again in the twentieth century, by Barth and the Ecumenical Movement), and when the Reformation influenced today’s newly emerging Christian paradigm at Vatican II.

I daresay Küng would recognise many aspects of *Mission-Shaped Church* as expressions of the currently emerging new Christian paradigm, which he tentatively calls ‘the Contemporary Ecumenical (or Postmodern) Paradigm’. It is plainly continuous with the great movements of God’s Spirit in twentieth-century Christianity—the Ecumenical Movement (which challenged a divided, institutional understanding of the Church with the holistic, biblical imagery of Christ’s body), the Liturgical Movement (which recovered a biblical emphasis on participation by all

God's people, along with ancient appreciation of the formative role of liturgy, representing also a great impetus toward the enculturation of Church and Gospel), the Charismatic Movement (a renewal movement of the Holy Spirit 'from below', at its best enriching and democratising both worship and Christian life throughout the mainline Churches) and, perhaps more controversially for some, the various Liberation Movements (again, movements 'from below' renewing the Church's faith, worship and witness among marginalised groups such as the Latin American and Asian poor, Western women, and American Blacks—indeed, *Mission-Shaped Church* includes so-called 'base ecclesial communities', which have their origin in Latin American Liberation Theology, as a viable fresh expression of Church for today's West). Emphases from each and all of these movements are evident in the post-denominational, highly relational, experiential and culturally-engaged 'fresh expressions' celebrated in *Mission-Shaped Church*.^{ix}

Paul and the writer of Luke-Acts are clear that the agent of the first major paradigm change in Church history was the Holy Spirit, and Paul's corpus can be understood as a sustained apologia for this new, global understanding of an inclusive Church. By extension, I argue that the Spirit who is leading us into all truth (John 16:13) consistently forms the mind of Christ in new cultural contexts—and is doing so again, as *Mission-Shaped Church* claims.

Yet in the Church of England, in Australian Anglicanism and throughout mainline Church life in the West, moroseness, nervousness, defensiveness and structural resistance confront such changes, as we have seen (and as our paradigm discussion leads us to expect). Here I am helped by the Greek Orthodox theologian Bishop John Zizioulas. He challenges the Western Church over its captivity to an institutional past from the perspective of the Greek Fathers and later Orthodox ecclesiology, adding to a proper emphasis on Christ and Christian origins an insistence on the Holy Spirit as the ground of present ecclesial life and the presence of God's in-breaking future. 'Christ *in-stitutes* and the Spirit *con-stitutes*',^x as Zizioulas memorably puts it, and hence we need not fear change in the Church if we are confident that its life in Christ *institutionally* is always and everywhere secured by the Holy Spirit *constitutionally*.

Such a vision allows us to retain assurance, poise and engagement, and to welcome the ‘fresh expressions’, confident that God is leading the Church toward God’s dream for it—dynamic and on-the-move, not static and paralysed.

No doubt Zizioulas is also challenging the ossified traditionalism and Establishment erastianism of much Orthodox life, and not only various expressions of Western Christian captivity to past structures (the Scriptures or else Popes and Councils for conservatives; the Historical Jesus for liberals). We can certainly point to a preference for Platonic stasis over Spiritual dynamism in Eastern Churches, despite their best theological instincts—though the Orthodox Church under Stalin was the greatest Church of martyrs in the twentieth century, which amply demonstrates the presence of Spiritual dynamism and eschatological joy at the very heart of its life despite any innate conservatism. Indeed, Orthodox experience during the Cold War shows how tradition can become the rallying point for protest against the demonic modern, apart from any reactionary motive. This demonstrates how tradition and Spirit can go together, as *Mission-Shaped Church* also clearly believes.

The Church is not a pre-existing mould into which the Spirit is poured, then. It is more like an evolving entity or a growing, changing body, with God’s Holy Spirit as the inner principle of its ongoing life, maintaining continuity in change. I will have more to say about this matter of Spirit and structure later in the essay.

2. Beyond Theological Captivity

The report has been seized-upon with understandable enthusiasm by Evangelical Anglicans. Its post-denominational, non-traditional, culturally-attuned message encourages Evangelicals whose urgent commitment to mission is too-often resisted by a hidebound institution. The Church of England did, after all, fail to realise the treasure God had planted in its field with the Methodist movement. At last, however, the innovative new ministries and Church plants characteristic of energetic contemporary Evangelicalism have a chance to gain wide recognition and support within the Church of England. By and large, then, it is not the Evangelicals who blanch at the fresh expressions celebrated in *Mission-Shaped Church*.

However, there are significant challenges for Evangelical Anglicans in the report. While they are rightly encouraged when the report puts on notice much that is moribund in the Church's institutional and worshipping life, I suspect that challenges to favourite theological positions entailed by the report have not been registered. It is not just institutional conservatism but theological conservatism as well that *Mission-Shaped Church* confronts.

The main work of God's Spirit, according to the report, is to bring the Gospel into compelling closeness with people's lives through enculturation. As I have suggested, such enculturation has marked the Spirit's work from the time of Paul's Hellenistic mission to more recent missionary initiatives: the Liturgical Movement, bringing the Gospel alive through indigenous worship; the Charismatic Movement, with its appeal to today's more informal, feeling-oriented culture; and the various Liberation Movements, with their emphasis on mutual dependence and authority arising 'from below'. Aspects of all these movements are evident in the fresh expressions of *Mission-Shaped Church*.

Among Evangelicals, much enculturation has to do with praise and alternative worship styles, the abandonment of liturgy and formality as alien and unhelpful, and the adapting of Church to various concrete forms of life—often to niche or subculture markets: university students, young families, surfers, the motorbike scene, the alternative music scene, etc.

Dave Tomlinson initiated a Church plant in an English pub, called 'Holy Joes'. However, this priest and leader in the so-called Post-Evangelical movement found that with engaging the youthful pub culture came a resistance to pat answers and too-neat closure in matters of faith and life. So while this new fellowship was bible-based, it was not Evangelical in the sense of clear and familiar doctrinal boundaries.^{xi} Nor are patterns of evangelism, faith acquisition and conversion guaranteed to follow a traditional Protestant path from *notitia* (knowing) to *assensus* (assent) to *fiducia* (trust). Among young people today, Evangelicals are discovering the role of belonging in the foreground of believing, with some advocating a more Catholic, catechumenal style of faith formation that blurs traditional emphases on conversion

and declaration of faith in Jesus as personal saviour.^{xii} And traditional, liturgical worship is not off the youth agenda by any means. There is evidence that authenticity in the context of worship matters more than style or content among Generation X and Y Christians, so that praise or alternative worship styles are not necessarily perceived as more relevant to the real needs of these young people, even though they may be more culturally attuned.^{xiii} It is clear that *Mission-Shaped Church* appreciates diversity and does not advocate a one-size-fits-all approach to mission. Evangelicals welcoming its message should appreciate that this engagement will stretch favourite Evangelical customs and theologies, just as stretches many middle-to-high Anglicans over the institutional matters closer to their hearts.

Two more examples—one is reasonably obvious and receives brief mention, while the other is more subtle and I will dwell on it a little longer.

The first example of challenges that enculturation poses is already evident in the Roman Catholic Church, that embraced enculturation in the Liturgical Movement, and less officially in the Latin American Liberation Movements. The tolerant, democratic elements of contemporary culture, however, and the gender-equalising imperative they bring, are proving harder for Rome to accommodate. Some if not all of this also challenges many Evangelicals. An Evangelical hard line on a number of issues to do with gender and sexuality is one of the reasons why young people reject Evangelicalism,^{xiv} and why a Post-Evangelical movement is now emerging.

The second example has to do with the penal substitutionary theory of atonement, which is absolutely central to Evangelical mission and apologetics. This is a venerable theory retaining great emotional power for those plagued by guilt. But for all its venerability, and centrality for Evangelicals, anecdotal evidence suggests to me that this ‘Latin’ or ‘objective’ view, characteristic of Anselm, actually *functions* in a way closer to the ‘humanistic’ or ‘subjective’ view characteristic of Schleiermacher—that the extent of Christ’s sufferings moves the heart to conversion.^{xv} That is, it is not the truth of the ‘objective’ view that convicts and compels as much as the subjective impact of such imagery working the conversion—I am suggesting that many Evangelicals are actually converted by an experience mediated by the preaching of Christ’s sacrifice rather than convinced by the actual, objective, sacrificial teaching

itself. Here is an instance of central Evangelical theological themes being accessed in a typically post-modern way, in a culture preferring feeling and experience to theoretical sufficiency and closure. In other words, many young people use Evangelical theology as software for accessing a personal reality of conversion and faith that is pre-theological and experiential—Graham Kendrick reassures Jesus in ‘Shine, Jesus, Shine’^{xvi} that ‘by your blood I may enter your brightness’, but the brightness is the thing.^{xvii}

Also, if enculturation of the Gospel is central to *Mission-Shaped Church*, it is important to remember that it was in the cultural context of medieval feudalism that penal substitutionary theory captured the Western imagination. That particular enculturation of the Gospel was perhaps inevitable before the rise of nominalism and the modern, self-determining individual. It was what George Rupp, in a close historical study of atonement theories against their cultural and philosophical contexts, called ‘Realist-Transactional’—referring to an eternal transaction between God and humanity brokered by Christ’s sacrifice, independent of subsequent history. More likely to commend itself in a contemporary context, however, is the opposite position in Rupp’s four-fold typology, which he called ‘Nominalist-Processive’, referring to atonement as a process of Christ’s reconciling work continuing through a community of believers, ‘raising the crucial question of whether...a religious system is viable [today] if it declines to interpret as religiously significant man’s increasing capacity to shape his personal and corporate life within the sphere of phenomenal existence’.^{xviii}

So enculturation of the Gospel in today’s context may require Evangelicals to jettison penal substitutionary atonement as a central plank of mission. It is increasingly criticised for its violent and dysfunctional resonances, after all,^{xix} as well as being far from obvious in a culture that at bottom is now thoroughly individualised and historicized. This is not to deny the atoning grace of God in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, but it is to say that one venerable option for expressing this, much favoured by Evangelicals, may prove incompatible with enculturation of the Gospel as *Mission-Shaped Church* understands it.

3. *Charism and Power*

A big issue for fresh expressions of Church is that of ministry and authority. According to many Evangelicals and Charismatics, one of the moribund institutional hangovers from yesterday's Church is a ministry structure that stifles mission. For some, the whole structure of ministry needs to change, with emphasis on bottom-up entirely replacing the older, Catholic model of top-down. The suggestion is that God's Spirit works uniformly through the body of Christ, and is not mediated institutionally through suitably authorised leaders. Why bother with continuity in patterns of ministry, then? Why not dispense with existing orders and structures in favour of an adaptable, independent congregationalism with a very flattened authority structure? Surely this is a plain instance of how enculturation of the Church in today's culture might look. These are some of the voices that *Mission-Shaped Church* seeks to keep within the Anglican fold.

Behind these concerns is a key issue of enculturation in corporate life today, and that is adapting hierarchical and centralising institutions to a more decentralised environment in which scope for bottom-up influence proves crucial.^{xx} Business today is well aware of the pressure on firms to become more dynamic, flexible 'learning organisations' if they are to survive and thrive in global, post-modern conditions.^{xxi} Hence the proper concern of Church planters and other leaders in 'fresh expressions' to move beyond yesterday's mistakes to ensure success in mission. There are two problems with such a wholesale bottom-up approach to ministry, however.

One is that such a view is contrary to the Bible. In the New Testament there are clearly various sorts of prophets, teachers and apostles who lead a ministering community, in a genuinely collaborative vision that nevertheless entails diversity in ministerial gifts and roles. As Paul can talk about different gifts of the Spirit for the building-up of Christ's body, including his own gift of apostleship (1 Cor 12: 27-30), so Peter Carnley can talk about 'a different realm of the gifts of the Spirit'^{xxii} manifest in ordained ministry—not at the expense of the body, nor only as a representative expression of the body's omni-giftedness, but as a special thing God's Spirit does alongside a range of other ministries, adding up to the total ministry of that body.

The other problem with a solely bottom-up model concerns the lessons of Church history. Structured order arose for a reason, and rapidly from the first century on. It guarded the Gospel and enabled mission at a time of conflicted internal self-definition and externally-inflicted trauma for the Church in antiquity. Such Church order remains as a sign, agent and guarantee of ecclesial faithfulness to this day. Of course it can go too far, as many believe to be the case with Roman Catholic understandings of the Petrine ministry, or within Anglicanism (which should know better) when the laity are treated as less than the order of ministry they properly constitute.

Nevertheless, despite pushing the envelope of institutional flexibility, *Mission-Shaped Church* remains convinced that the Spirit ensures proper leadership in the Church, and that Anglican order and structure is adequate to the ‘fresh expressions’ it champions.

In particular, the report recognises a crucial role for bishops in mission. Not as missionary bishops of the Celtic, or else nineteenth-century Anglo-Catholic sort (which may in fact constitute an oversight), but certainly in terms of authorising, encouraging and protecting the Church’s fresh expressions.^{xxiii} Experience has taught that without Episcopal leadership, in particular brokering the changes in custom and structure that fresh initiatives regularly demand, Church plants and other mission initiatives struggle to succeed. It appears, then, that the ‘gift of authority’ God gives to bishops through the Holy Spirit, according to our ordinal, is indispensable if tomorrow’s Church is to emerge in the midst of today’s Church without continuity with yesterday’s Church being lost.

Apart from this pragmatic effect, however, and apart from its venerable status as an early and resilient emergence from the range of New Testament ministries, can we offer further warrant for Episcopal order? And can we thus relieve the minds of those who believe that any such top-down ministry cannot be a work of the Spirit in our day? Here I am indebted to my colleague at St Mark’s National Theological Centre in Canberra, Stephen Pickard, for the beginnings of a new theology of ministry that affirms the traditional threefold order in general and the Episcopate in particular as a viable emergent life-form in the Spirit, powerfully linked to how God works in the world for creation and redemption.^{xxiv}

Pickard goes beyond suggestive but not ultimately compelling attempts to base a theology of complementary ministries in the Trinitarian diversity-in-unity of God's own being, seeking a firmer basis for the collaborative ministry that is absolutely essential in the emerging Church. He looks to priest/biologist Arthur Peacocke writing on emergent complexity in nature, and how influence is conveyed not only bottom-up but also top-down in natural systems. Theology of God's action in the world now recognises both the sort of influences that arise from parts of a system to affect the whole, but also whole-part effects. Think of how introducing a single diseased individual can infect a whole population—the contagion moving from 'part' to 'whole' within the system. But think also of how a tiny change in the overall temperature of water can lead to a phase change, from icy crystal to liquid to gas, with the behaviour of every water molecule 'part' influenced by this change to the 'whole'.

So if God were to institute change within the natural world, action at the quantum level is one option (i.e. expanding from a point of origin hidden in quantum indeterminacy to produce a large-scale, visible effect), while altering a whole system to produce changes in whichever desired target portion is another possibility. We are now far clearer about the latter option with the advent of chaos theory, exploring how behaviour throughout a whole physical system can suddenly change, with unexpected appearances of order where all was chaos, or vice versa.^{xxv}

By extension, Pickard follows some recent thinking on systems theory and corporate leadership to propose a ministerial correlate. God changes the Church through bottom-up as well as top-down means. The Episcopate enables and creates the conditions for creative growth at 'lower' levels, just as the creativity at other levels contributes to the exercise of *episcopé*. Pickard understands the orders of ministry as 'irreducible, intrinsic and interdependent', commending 'a dynamic ontology of order' in which 'the vitalities of the ministries are embedded *within* the system',^{xxvi} allowing a flexible response to opportunities and threats within the environment—just the sort of thing *Mission-Shaped Church* requires.

This means that such ministries are intrinsically related in a 'mode of togetherness' such that they raise each other to the fullness of the ministry of each. As the ministries are so interrelated they become participants in God's own energetic ordering of the church for the world. To this extent

the ministry and the ministries can be genuine mediations of God's own holy order.^{xxvii}

Thus we have the sort of equality, flexibility and dynamism that advocates of bottom-up models seek, while preserving the potential good effect of top-down structure, held together in an energetic complementarity that is holistic to the point of being organic, while retaining the role of the individual and the structural diversity of office. Here a whole range of contemporary cultural emphases find a home while continuity with both scripture and the wisdom of Church tradition is preserved, all within 'a double focus in a doctrine of creation as well as redemption'.^{xxviii} This constitutes a pragmatically-minded pneumatology of ministry allowing the Church to focus effectively on mission.

As we noted earlier, however, Church history strongly suggests that the Holy Spirit of God is regularly served but never confined by ecclesial structures. Pickard's organic account recognises that new forms arise under the pressure of circumstances, which may in time prove to be vigorous and sustained developments. Or else they may not. Here I think of John Wesley, whose missionary movement was not ultimately able to be preserved within Anglicanism (to our great shame), though he was 'arguably, the greatest saint, the greatest witness to Jesus Christ, produced by the eighteenth-century Church of England—the last place you'd expect to find fools for Christ's sake'.^{xxix} Or of General William Booth, in the nineteenth century, who produced a 'fresh expression' of Church with the Salvation Army—responding to a missionary need the 'proper' Churches were not meeting—and, 'although it has no sacraments, we could not for a moment deny that it receives and transmits divine grace'.^{xxx}

It is certainly true that Methodism and Salvationism influenced other Churches, including the Church of England, to greater missionary endeavours so that by now, perhaps, or in future, their separate identity as Churches will no longer be required, with history remembering them as influential but temporary reform movements. But their emergence and flourishing, if only for a season, is a reminder that the Holy Spirit will not only develop and transform our structures but also go around them should the mission demand it.

I conclude that *Mission-Shaped Church* is a timely invitation for all types of Anglicans to a compelling mission imperative demanding imagination, renewed faith and institutional flexibility—but also greater theological flexibility, as the Holy Spirit once again leads the Church into a painful season of paradigm change, this time through engagement with post-modern culture. Yet this ought to be possible without wholesale abandonment of our past, as the report itself hopes, because a suitably dynamic and collaborative ontology of ministry is conceivable in the Spirit, as I have sought to show in conversation with recent theology of science. It is up to the Church of England now, alongside other mainstream Churches of the West, to demonstrate its trust in the Holy Spirit’s continued constituting of the Church’s life and mission.

ⁱ *Mission-Shaped Church: Church Planting and Fresh Expressions of Church in a Changing Context* (London: Church House Publishing, 2004).

ⁱⁱ I would like to thank Bishop Bruce Wilson for his helpful comments on an earlier draft of this essay.

ⁱⁱⁱ *Mission-Shaped Church*, see Chapter 2, pp. 16-28.

^{iv} *Mission-Shaped Church*, see pp. 43-44, and the examples throughout Chapter 4.

^v *Mission-Shaped Church*, p. 81-82.

^{vi} Caroline Miley *The Suicidal Church: Can the Anglican Church be Saved?* (Sydney: Pluto Press, 2002).

^{vii} Hans Küng, *Christianity: Its Essence and History (The Religious Situation of Our Time)* (1994) (London: SCM Press, 1995).

^{viii} Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962) (3rd edition; Chicago, Ill: The University of Chicago Press, 1996).

^{ix} I have written further on the Emerging Church in today’s West: see Scott Cowdell, *God’s Next Big Thing: Discovering the Future Church* (Melbourne: John Garratt Publishing, 2004).

^x John D. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (1985) (St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, Crestwood NY, 1997), p. 140.

^{xi} Dave Tomlinson, *The Post-Evangelical* (London: SPCK, 1995).

^{xii} William Abraham, *The Logic of Evangelism* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1989); Robert E. Webber, *Ancient-Future Faith: Rethinking Evangelicalism for a Postmodern World* (Grand-Rapids, MI: Baker, 1999).

^{xiii} Shane Hübner, “‘X’ Marks the Spot? How Generational Theory can help the Emerging Church” *St Mark’s Review* 193(2003) 3-10; Colleen Carroll, *The New Faithful: Why Young Adults are Embracing Christian Orthodoxy* (Chicago, Ill: Loyola Press, 2002); on the enculturation of traditional liturgical worship in today’s youth scene, see Tex Sample, *The Spectacle of Worship in a Wired World: Electronic Culture and the Gathered People of God* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1998); see also Graham Cray himself, in ‘The Eucharist and the Post-Modern World’, in Pete Ward, editor, *Mass Culture: Eucharist and Mission in a Post-Modern World* (Oxford: The Bible Reading Fellowship, 1999) 74–94; on the impact of Robert Webber and the renewal of liturgical thinking in a contemporary charismatic context, see Dave Roberts, ‘Charisma, Freedom and the Eucharist’, in *Mass Culture*, pp. 131–148.

^{xiv} Bishop Richard Holloway recalls how scandalised many of the young staff were at the 1998 Lambeth Conference, in *Doubts and Loves: What is Left of Christianity?* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2002), pp. ix–xi.

^{xv} These are terms used in the classic study by Gustav Aulén, *Christus Victor: An Historical Study of the Three Main Types of the Idea of the Atonement* (London: SPCK, 1931).

^{xvi} Hymn #675 in *Together in Song: Australian Hymn Book II* (Melbourne: HarperCollinsReligious, 1999).

^{xvii} I am helped here by Bruce Wilson and his distinction between personal ‘knowing’ and institutional ‘believing’—especially his recollection of the gap between youthful Evangelical experience and the subject matter of Evangelical theological education—in *Reasons of the Heart* (Sydney: Albatross, 1998), pp. 48-54.

^{xviii} George Rupp, *Christologies and Cultures: Toward a Typology of Religious Worldviews* (The Hague, Mouton, 1974), p. 249.

^{xix} It is challenged nowhere more sharply than by James Alison: see ‘Unpicking Atonement’s Knots’ in *On Being Liked* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 2003), 17-31.

^{xx} See e.g. Alistair Mant, *Intelligent Leadership* 2nd edition (Sydney, Allen & Unwin, 1999), pp. 34-38.

^{xxi} See e.g. Peter M. Senge, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization* (1990) (Sydney: Random House, 1992).

^{xxii} Peter Carnley, 'Lay and Ordained Ministry' in *Reflections in Glass: Trends and Tensions in the Contemporary Anglican Church* (Sydney: HarperCollinsPublishers, 2004), pp. 156-180, p. 180.

^{xxiii} *Mission-Shaped Church*, pp. 135-143.

^{xxiv} Stephen Pickard, 'Healing the Wound: Collaborative Ministry for Mission' *St Mark's Review* 199 (2005), pp. 3-11.

^{xxv} These options are widely canvassed in recent theological literature. See for instance my own contribution, *A God For This World* (London & New York: Continuum, 2001).

^{xxvi} Pickard, 'Healing the Wound', p. 8.

^{xxvii} *Ibid.*

^{xxviii} Pickard, 'Healing the Wound', p. 9.

^{xxix} Rowan Williams, 'John Wesley' in *Open To Judgement: Sermons and Addresses* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1994), pp. 202-206, p. 203.

^{xxx} John Macquarrie *Principles of Christian Theology* Revised Edition (London: SCM Press, 1977), p. 422.

© Scott Cowdell 2006