

Welcome to
your Parish Church
in the Diocese of Birmingham



ALL SAINTS
KINGS HEATH

Poverty Sunday

*Kept in solidarity with Church Action on Poverty,
today aghast at the poverty of integrity and wisdom revealed in
the invasion of Ukraine, ordered by the loneliest man in the
world: Vladimir Putin.*

Holy Communion on the Sunday next before Lent
Sunday 27th February 2022

We gather

*As we gather in Church, **we invite you to wear masks when entering and moving around Church.** Feel free to remove them when in your place, rather as we do when going for a different kind of feast in a café or restaurant. We continue to respect each other's physical distance and encourage conversation outside Church rather than mingling inside.*

We do not, at present, pass the collection plate around to receive offerings for the work of All Saints. If you wish to contribute a gift, please put it in the plate at the back of Church when you leave.

If you are worshipping at home, have ready in an honoured place a portion of food and something to drink. It may be bread and wine or something else. Set your Bible alongside. You might light a candle to mark the beginning of worship.

Music as we gather: Enemy of apathy

1. She sits like a bird, brooding on the waters,
hovering on the chaos of the world's first day;
she sighs and she sings, mothering creation,
waiting to give birth to all the Word will say.

2. She wings over earth, resting where she wishes,
lighting close at hand or soaring through the skies;
she nests in the womb, welcoming each wonder,
nourishing potential hidden to our eyes.

3. She dances in fire, startling her spectators,
waking tongues of ecstasy where dumbness reigned;
she weans and inspires all whose hearts are open,
nor can she be captured, silenced or restrained.

4. For she is the Spirit, one with God in essence,
gifted by the Saviour in eternal love;
she is the key opening the scriptures,
enemy of apathy and heavenly dove.

(words: John L Bell & Graham Maule; music: John L Bell)

"In Aramaic and Hebrew, the Holy Spirit is referred to by female pronouns. When we look at some of the key Biblical texts referring to the Spirit, there is an abundance of conceiving, birthing and nurturing imagery which male-orientated Western minds sometimes fail to recognise." (Note from "Common Ground")

When invited to stand, we keep silence and then sing:

1. Let us build a house where love can dwell
and all can safely live,
a place where saints and children tell
how hearts learn to forgive.
Built of hopes and dreams and visions,
rock of faith and vault of grace;
here the love of Christ shall end divisions:

*All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.*

2. Let us build a house where prophets speak,
and words are strong and true,
where all God's children dare to seek
to dream God's reign anew.
Here the cross shall stand as witness
and as symbol of God's grace;
here as one we claim the faith of Jesus:

3. Let us build a house where love is found
in water, wine and wheat:
a banquet hall on holy ground
where peace and justice meet.
Here the love of God, through Jesus,
is revealed in time and space;
as we share in Christ the feast that frees us:

4. Let us build a house where hands will reach
beyond the wood and stone
to heal and strengthen, serve and teach,
and live the Word they've known.
Here the outcast and the stranger
bear the image of God's face;
let us bring an end to fear and danger:

5. Let us build a house where all are named,
their songs and visions heard
and loved and treasured, taught and claimed
as words within the Word.

Built of tears and cries and laughter,
prayers of faith and songs of grace,
let this house proclaim from floor to rafter:

(words & music: Marty Haugen)

Priest: In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**
Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ
be with *us* all. **Amen.**

In Church we respond:
and also with you.

WELCOME and NOTICES

We pray: **Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known
and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of
our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may
perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

We seek forgiveness

CONFESSION

Deacon: We hold before God in silence the detail of our own sin that disrupts
our relationships, and the immeasurable weight of human sin that
attempts to justify war.

Silence

Where there is poverty of relationship, affection, dignity and warmth:
Lord, have mercy.

Where there is poverty of choice, food, water and safety:
Christ, have mercy.

Where there is poverty of integrity, honesty, wisdom and trust:
Lord, have mercy.

ABSOLUTION At home we pray for forgiveness. In church, the priest declares forgiveness for all, wherever we worship:

*May the God of love and power forgive us and free us from our sins, heal and strengthen us by his Spirit, and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.***

We celebrate God's forgiveness singing THE GLORIA

1. Glory be to God in heaven,
peace to those who love him well;
on the earth let all his people
speak his grace, his wonders tell:
Lord, we praise you for your glory,
mighty Father, heavenly King;
hear our joyful adoration
and accept the thanks we bring.

2. Only Son of God the Father,
Lamb who takes our sin away,
now with him in triumph seated,
for your mercy, Lord we pray:
Jesus Christ, most high and holy;
Saviour, you are God alone
in the glory of the Father
with the Spirit: Three in One!

We pray THE COLLECT from Remembrance Sunday

Almighty Father, whose will is to restore all things in your beloved Son, the King of all: govern the hearts and minds of those in authority, and bring the families of the nations, divided and torn apart by the ravages of sin, to be subject to his just and gentle rule; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING [Exodus 34:29-end](#)

NEW TESTAMENT READING [2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2](#)

HYMN [Jesus Christ is waiting](#)

1. Jesus Christ is waiting, waiting in the streets:
no one is his neighbour, all alone he eats.
Listen, Lord Jesus, I am lonely too;
make me, friend or stranger, fit to wait on you.

2. Jesus Christ is raging, raging in the streets
where injustice spirals and all hope retreats.
Listen, Lord Jesus, I am angry too;
in the kingdom's causes let me rage with you.

3. Jesus Christ is healing, healing in the streets;
curing those who suffer, touching those he greets.
Listen, Lord Jesus, I have pity too;
let my care be active, healing just like you.

4. Jesus Christ is dancing, dancing in the streets,
where each sign of hatred his strong love defeats.
Listen, Lord Jesus, I feel triumph too;
on suspicion's graveyard, let me dance with you.

5. Jesus Christ is calling, calling in the streets,
"Come and walk faith's tightrope, I will guide your feet."
Listen, Lord Jesus, let my fears be few,
walk one step before me, I will follow you.

(words: John L Bell & Graham Maule; music: Traditional French melody, arr Christopher Tambling)

GOSPEL READING [Luke 9:28-36](#)

In church we stand and, when it is announced, we say:

Glory to you, O Lord.

At the end: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON *from Margaret Healey Pollett*

Part A

Conversation with Elaine Hyde of New Life Baptist Church foodbank. We will be looking at the following questions:

1. What year did the NLBC set up the foodbank?
2. How do people access the foodbank?
3. Who can refer? Do service-users have to be referred?
4. What are the main reasons why people have to come to your Foodbank?
5. Have you seen numbers needing food, growing over the time you have existed?
6. What do the food parcels contain?
7. Where do the food donations come from?
8. How and what can we donate to the foodbank

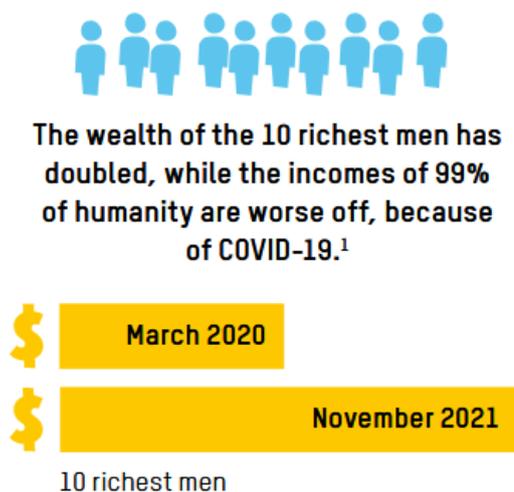
Part B

'When I give food to the poor, they call me a saint. When I ask why the poor have no food, they call me a communist'.

This was famously said by the Brazilian Catholic Archbishop Dom Helder Camara, one of the South American Liberation Theologians. In the context of the time of a U.S. backed military dictatorship, 'they' were using the term 'communist' as a slight. It is the argument that the Church should not be involved in politics. It's Christian to help out *where* there is need, but not to ask *why* there is need. This view is still found today, especially among those who don't want to have their power challenged.

But how can we not ask the question why? Why is Elaine's foodbank seeing rising numbers of people in need of food parcels? Why is there a need for the foodbank at all? What changed at the time the foodbank had to be set up? As the Church informs ourselves about poverty and asks these questions, we are being faithful to our biblical prophetic heritage, and walking with Jesus Christ, the man for others, who is to be found 'in the face of human deprivation and poverty'ⁱ

Not being an economist, I have to turn to the analysis of trusted organisations. In January, Oxfam brought out a report called 'Inequality Kills'.ⁱⁱ It presents some truly staggering facts:



"If these ten men were to lose 99.999 percent of their wealth tomorrow, they would still be richer than 99 percent of all the people on this planet," said Oxfam International's Executive Director Gabriela Bucher. "They now have six times more wealth than the poorest 3.1 billion people."

Another source of information is 'The Decade the Rich Won' recently shown on BBC 2, made in collaboration with the Open University.ⁱⁱⁱ This programme examines how the policy of quantitative easing, following the banking crisis of 2008, has had the effect of making the wealthy much wealthier by increasing the value of *assets*. Assets are possessions, such as land, property, and investments that the owners make money from, through rents and dividends, and which do not depreciate in value. As the wealthy became wealthier, the Government's budget deficit had grown due to the bailout of the banks, and the new Coalition government went heavy on public spending cuts, or 'austerity' as it was called. Foodbanks started to emerge in 2011-12. All this led to the greatest concentration of wealth in history. Instead of money being in circulation for the purpose of the welfare of all, and the common good, it became concentrated in the hands of ever-wealthier billionaires, who engage in their own private space race, and other such activities, emitting masses more tonnes of carbon than over half the world put together.

Companies, as well as individuals, can be enormously wealthy, with the richest being worth trillions of dollars. With our current worries about Ukraine, we might pause to consider the consequences of wealth created by war. BAE Systems have been profiting from Saudi Arabia and its allies' war on the Houthi people of Yemen over the last 8 years. The war has caused mass starvation in Yemen.^{iv}

Informing ourselves about how the structures work is the first stage, asking what we might do is the next one.

Firstly, we are taken back to the work of the foodbanks. As we donate goods to them, and volunteer our help, we are responding to local need, as we must. We cannot turn our backs on the individuals in trouble, who we encounter, as we see in the Parable of the Sheep and Goats at the end of Matthew 25.

Secondly, we can support the work of Oxfam, and Church Action on Poverty. I recommend further reading of the Oxfam report, which advocates that governments properly tax the rich, and invest in public services. It is Church Action on Poverty^v who have designated this day as Poverty Sunday. You may be interested to know, and some of us will remember, that one of their staff members, Liam Purcell, used to be part of this congregation. We have been given their prayer cards, so we can pray with them, and on the back, there are the details of how to donate to the organisation.

Thirdly, here at All Saints we have our Justice, Peace and Green Group, which examines and considers All Saints' response to this and other pressing issues; and our Traidcraft stall. Traidcraft describes itself, in the catalogue as 'a Christian response to poverty'^{vi} They want to see trade 'conducted fairly for the benefit of all who participate in the supply chain'. Supporting Traidcraft is easy for us, thanks to the sterling work of Gill from the back of the church. If you would like to know more about any of this, please chat to one of us after the service.

Lastly, let's think about the Church of England, of which we are all part. It is an asset-rich billionaire charity, with an endowment of £8.7 billion, which yields annual revenue of £1 billion, (according to Wikipedia, and dated as 2019)^{vii}. The church has had investments in fossil fuel companies and arms manufacturers, which have long come under the scrutiny of activists, and there is now an Ethical Investment Advisory Group. Even so, this might cause us to pause for thought about our wealth as a Church, when the instinct of those who had known Jesus, was to sell their possessions and give to everyone in need (Acts 2:45).

While holding the national Church to account in the way it uses its assets, we might also look at our local asset, that is our All Saints' building. I think we have much to be proud of in the way we have made our site more accessible to the community in the square outside, and in the provision for youth work and elderly persons' support, in the organisations we have set up in the Centre. We are now asking what more might we do, and a group has started meeting to review and renew the vision. We would like to make our place of worship accessible, comfortable, and beautiful; we also want to examine how we might reduce our carbon emissions, and open up as a daily place of

welcome. Our sister churches in 'Churches Together in Kings Heath' also offer places of welcome, hospitality and assistance as we have heard from Elaine today, and so could we have a conversation about the different provision offered? There is not much point in All Saints opening another foodbank, for example, but we might think more about how to support the one run by Elaine, who will be available for a chat afterwards. Likewise, to find out more about the renewed visioning for this site, please have a chat to one of us after the service, or look out for more information as it comes through. The group's intention is to hold a consultation with the congregation in the summer. Who else do we need to listen to?

All Saints has been, and still is, blessed, not only with our large material resources, but also with gifted theological thinkers among our congregation. One of these was our dear sister Mary Beasley, who, some of you will remember, used to come here in her wheelchair. Her book 'Mission on the Margins' was published in 1997. In it she looks to the Church, not just to give charity, but to engage in dialogue:

'the Church does not only enter the world of marginal people in order to change their situation; it enters that area in order to be first changed itself'.^{viii}

Mary was always a challenger. Her challenge is also the challenge we hear through Poverty Sunday: that we build a society where everyone belongs, and a Church where the poor and marginal become key.

We affirm our faith

At home, if able, we stand and turn in the direction of Church, where we also stand to affirm our faith:

Deacon: We stand to affirm the Promises of God, in defiance of the fake promises of human powers and authorities:

**All: Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

**Blessed are those who mourn,
for they shall be comforted.**

**Blessed are the meek,
for they shall inherit the earth.**

**Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they shall be satisfied**

**Blessed are the merciful,
for they shall obtain mercy.**

**Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they shall see God.**

**Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they shall be called children of God.**

**Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Amen.**

(Matthew 5:3-10)

INTERCESSIONS *from Tariro*

Our Father in heaven, we bring to you the needs of the world, knowing that you hear our prayers and work out your good purposes through those who believe.

Master, Chosen One, your radiant glory fills your Church with hope and expectation. We pray for your church throughout the world. We pray for our bishops, clergy, lay ministers and all those who serve. Send more people to serve Christ in his church here and overseas both lay and ordained. Transform our action as we listen to and wait upon your presence. Make us a people prepared to declare your love with boldness and trust. Grant us your Holy Spirit that together we may walk the way of Christ.

Lord of glory

Shine upon us

Master, Chosen One, on the mountain the world was revealed to be subject to your rule. We entrust to you the nations of the earth and all who govern. You are our refuge and strength, a present help in times of trouble. We pray especially now for the people of Ukraine, helpless children and civilians who do not want to see blood being shed and lives being lost, fearing for tomorrow. We pray for their political leaders and ask that you guide them with your Holy Spirit during this difficult time where difficult decisions and choices are being made. We thank you for the leaders and organisations whose purpose are to work for justice and peace and ask that their work and efforts especially towards peace for

Ukraine will not be in vain but result in the laying down of weapons and peace for all. Grant wisdom, discernment, and compassion to those who have power over decisions to go to war or peace and reconciliation that they choose that which is good for the people you have put under them. We pray for people and other nations holding on to grudges and grievances. Soften hardened hearts and transforms our structures with your justice and peace.

Lord of glory

Shine upon us

Master, Chosen One, Peter rushed to preserve the moment of your transfiguration. Capture our hearts for your Kingdom. Make us agents of transformation in public and private relationships. We pray especially as we think of the many who are living in poverty in our country and many others known to us. Often, we feel helpless in our efforts as they seem small in comparison to the need we see. In the miracle of the feeding of the 5000, you were able to feed many with just five loaves and two fish. We know you Lord are able to multiply the little we might have, the little that we give so that there is plenty for all. Help us in our efforts to help and to preserve life, to trust you and your ability to make them be enough. We pray for families to be loving and stable, our community to be caring and vibrant.

Lord of glory

Shine upon us

Master, Chosen One, on the mountain we got a revelation of your power making what might seem impossible with our earthly understanding possible. Pour out your transforming love on all who cry for release from their sufferings, those suffering ill health, those who are mentally or emotionally distressed. We pray for those known to us: Ralph Healey Pollett, Brian Clucas, Ruth Tetlow, Iain Galloway and Bill Gardner. Bring strength, healing, and encouragement through those who care for them. Set us free to sing your praises.

Lord of glory

Shine upon us

Master, Chosen One, you spoke with the ancient prophets of your impending passion and resurrection. Transform our fear and bring us to trust in you. Bring comfort to all who mourn, feeling the void left by those whom they love who have died. We give you thanks for their lives thinking especially of Mr Thomas Francis Humphries and others known to us. Bring us with all the departed to your eternal city.

Lord of glory

Shine upon us

Master, Chosen One, we think of the many blessings given to us each day. We ask for grace to become more like you.

Merciful father,

Accept these our prayers for the sake of your son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE PEACE

We pause to remember each other: those worshipping at home, and those worshipping in Church:

Deacon: Jesus said "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God." We say longingly to the whole world:

All: The Peace of the Lord be always with you.

HYMN [The Lord will come and not be slow](#)

1. The Lord will come and not be slow,
his footsteps cannot err;
before him righteousness shall go,
his royal harbinger.

2. Truth from the earth, like to a flow'r,
shall bud and blossom free;
and justice, from her heav'nly bow'r,
bless all humanity.

3. The nations all whom thou hast made
shall come, and all shall frame
to bow them low before thee, Lord,
and glorify thy name.

4. For great thou art, and wonders great
by thy strong hand are done:
thou in thy everlasting seat
remainest God alone.

(words: John Milton, based on Psalms 82, 85 & 86 alt; music: William Jones)

The Table is prepared in Church. At home, now is the time to say the Lord's Prayer (below) and consume the food and drink you have prepared, first praying:

God, we long for Communion. With this symbolic meal stir my hope for the fellowship meal we cannot yet see, and help me wait for it with patience. **Amen.**

(cf Romans 8:2)

We celebrate God's faithfulness

In Church we stand, if able, for the Eucharistic Prayer

Priest: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

Creating and liberating God, you called your people into covenant with you and sealed it with Moses on the mountain, you called your people back to that covenant through your prophets and spoke in a still small voice to Elijah on a mountain. Then on a mountain your Son Jesus stood between the Law and the Prophets and revealed the radiance of your gospel. On Calvary's hill your Son redeemed us by the blood of your new covenant, and on the mountain in Galilee he ascended to your right hand on high. And so we gladly thank you, celebrating your glory with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, dazzled by your face and singing the hymn of your unending praise.

All: Holy, holy, holy Lord.

God of power and might,

heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Dazzling God, you set up your tent and make your dwelling among us. Abide with us now through the power of your Holy Spirit, that your people may become a temple of your presence, and that these gifts of bread and wine may be for us the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ. Who, at supper with his disciples, took bread, gave you thanks, broke the bread, and gave it to them, saying, "take, eat: this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

A bell is rung.

After supper he took the cup. Again he gave you thanks and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Drink this, all of you: this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

A bell is rung.

Deacon: Great is the mystery of faith:

**All: Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.**

Transfiguring God, it is good for us to be here. Through this holy sacrament make us your sons and daughters and be close to all children who have no one to share your love and mercy with them. Make us your beloved and visit all who have no one to call them beloved. Give us grace to listen to your voice and bring to your heart any who have no one to listen to them. Surround us with your prophetic company and take us up into the whirlwind of your glory, until the day comes when the waters of the Jordan are parted and the heavens are opened and the chariots bring us home to you, ever one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Deacon: As our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.**

Priest: We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**All: Though we are many, we are one body.
For we all share in one bread.**

Draw near with faith. Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ which he gave for you. Eat in remembrance that he died for you and feed on him in your hearts with thanksgiving.

We sing: **Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us.
Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us.
Jesus, Redeemer of the world, give us your peace. (x2)**

We pause to remember all who pray at home, then share the bread, now for us the body of Christ.

SONGS *during Communion*

1. Blest are you, Lord, God of all creation,
thanks to your goodness this bread we offer;
fruit of the earth, work of our hands,
it will become the bread of life.

*Blessed be God! Blessed be God!
Blessed be God for ever! Amen! (x2)*

2. Blest are you, Lord, God of all creation,
thanks to your goodness this wine we offer;
fruit of the earth, work of our hands,
it will become the cup of life.

*(words: Based on traditional Jewish grace, and the prayers at the preparation of the gifts
[Roman liturgy]; music: Aniceto Nazareth)*

and

Let all who are thirsty come.
Let all who wish receive the water of life freely.
Amen, come Lord Jesus.
Amen, come Lord Jesus.

(words & music: Taizé Community)

A POST COMMUNION PRAYER *may be said.*

**We are sent out
Almighty God, we thank you for feeding us with your Word [*and
with the body of Christ*]. Strengthen us in the power of your
Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen.**

THE BLESSING

The peace of God which passes all understanding keep *our* hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be with *us* and remain with *us* now and always.

Amen.

HYMN [Praise to the Lord, the Almighty](#)

1. Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!
O my soul, praise him, for he is thy health and salvation.
All ye who hear,
now to his temple draw near;
joining in glad adoration.

2. Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things so wondrously reigneth,
shieldeth thee gently from harm, or when fainting sustaineth:
hast thou not seen
how thy heart's wishes have been
granted in what he ordaineth?

3. Praise to the Lord, who doth prosper thy work and defend thee,
surely his goodness and mercy shall daily attend thee:
ponder anew
what the Almighty can do,
if to the end he befriend thee.

4. Praise to the Lord, O let all that is in us adore him!
All that hath life and breath, come now with praises before him.
Let the "Amen"
sound from his people again,
gladly for ay we adore him.

(words: Joachim Neander, trans Catherine Winkworth; music: from 'Praxis Pietatis Melica' [1668])

Deacon: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All: In the name of Christ, Amen.

Our Voluntary today is based on "The great Gate of Kiev" from Pictures at an Exhibition by Modest Mussorgsky (1874)



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ⁱ John M. Hull *Towards the Prophetic Church*, SCM 2014, page 217.

ⁱⁱ <https://www.oxfam.org/en/press-releases/ten-richest-men-double-their-fortunes-pandemic-while-incomes-99-percent-humanity>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://connect.open.ac.uk/money-business-and-law/the-decade-the-rich-won>

^{iv} <https://caat.org.uk/challenges/arms-companies/bae-and-saudi-arabia/>

^v <https://www.church-poverty.org.uk/>

^{vi} <https://www.traidcraftshop.co.uk/about-us>

^{vii} https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Properties_and_finances_of_the_Church_of_England

^{viii} Mary Beasley *Mission on the Margins*, Lutterworth 1997, page 93