

Inclusive Language for a Therapeutic Church: Elizabeth Baxter Executive Director Holy Rood House,  
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Rites themselves ‘cannot produce love’ but ‘where love is, they may express it and help it to grow.’  
Grainger, 1997, p. 21.

‘Look at one another with the creative glance of artists... (for ritual is) ‘artistic re-creation of emotional truth in terms of spiritual significance.’ Grainger, 1994, p.5.

‘(the) rite destroys the barrier we erect, because it is always and essentially a gateway. It is the gateway to a new kind of personhood...’ Grainger 1987 p. 8.

‘Resilient connections with other people and the earth bring joy, pain, and wisdom. These resilient connections are the presence of grace. Grace can move us from resignation, bitterness, and despair to passionate love and determined action.’ Welch, 2000, p. 173.

...our bodyselves become the ground upon which God moves through, with, and among us... The divine presence is incarnate-embodied – in our relational selves ... Heyward, 1989, p. 33.

We must think about the questions of God and of our own existence in that mysterious space of encounter between the body and language, and between our personal stories and the larger cultural and religious narratives that shape our lives. Beattie, 2003, p. 74.

‘The advent of women as agents of liturgy who are learning to speak in their own voice and identify their own experience, offers the possibility to transform ritual and public prayer in a more holistic and authentic direction’. Roll, 2000, p. 303.

‘(Through) self-blessing, you affirm the divine you. Self-blessing is very important for (women), because too many of us have internalised our own oppression... Self-blessing rituals are a way of exorcising the patriarchal policeman, cleansing the deep mind, and filling it with positive images of the strength and beauty of (women)’ Budapest, 1979, pp.269 and 271ff. cited King, 1989.

Examples from Holy Rood House Publications:

The Breaking of Bread

a) We gently break this bread of fragile life...  
*our breaking down becomes our breaking through.*

b) In the breaking of the bread  
*we hold the broken ones*

In the pouring of the wine:  
*we wait with the wounded ones*

Section of Pentecost Eucharist

As we re-member fractured stories  
of your marred image,  
broken bodies  
of inhospitality  
and blood spilt in war and waste,  
do not leave us in a place of loneliness.

*Do not abandon us.*

Come as comforter and counsellor.  
Come as fiery dragon's breath.  
Come lightly  
as dove's wings.

*Come make your home in us.*

In this humble meal  
we receive you,  
in our embodied hospitality  
you take your refuge,  
when your wings are broken,  
and your fire  
quenched.

Come Spirit  
yearn for us  
as we yearn for you.  
Together we shall burst the bars of fear,  
flying freely,  
bringing warmth to the earth  
and winds of justice to those who cry 'Peace'.

Blessing from Saints' Eucharist

We join hands of blessing  
with saints and angels:

*beautiful and plain  
wise and foolish  
weak and strong.*

We receive a blessing  
from each other:

*forgiving and forgiven  
understanding and understood  
healing and healed.*

This is God's blessing  
to us and through us:

*for the earth  
and for all  
longing to be loved.*

Budding, birthing, breathing Blessing

The blessing and budding of  
the forming one

*feel my moving  
into readiness*

The blessing and birthing of  
the labouring one

*push my moving  
through the darkness*

The blessing and breathing of  
the suckling one

*nourish my moving  
into your be-coming*

