

Steven Croft and Roger Walton
Learning for Ministry:
Making the most of study and training.
ISBN 9780 7151 4053 6
London, Church House Publishing, 2005, £12.99

Students of Wescott House, Cambridge
Glimpses of God:
Reflections in Words and Music
CD produced by and available from:
Wescott House, Jesus Lane, Cambridge CB5 8BP; £7.99 (+£1 p&p).

'Learning for Ministry' is written by representatives of the Anglican and Methodist churches in Britain, both of whom have been involved in training candidates for the ministry. It is a practical guide to making the most of ministerial training, focussing on themes such as knowing God and yourself better, understanding and serving the Church and God's world, and learning how to learn. The book makes no assumptions, explaining such terms as 'liturgy', 'sacrament', and 'systematic theology'. Included in each section are questions for further thought, and Bible passages to look up and ponder. Some sobering facts are presented, such as the 1990's ecumenical survey that found the average stipendiary minister working 60 hours a week, 22 hours of that in administration and 6 minutes a day in personal prayer. Issues around calling and vocation are included alongside more practical matters of learning and ministry skills, with a view to establishing working practices that can be sustained into full-time or part-time ministry. As a book to read when exploring vocation, or particularly during the summer before beginning a ministerial training course, this would be a valuable starter for reflection.

'Glimpses of God' is altogether more inspirational. Included are a selection of prose reflections and musical pieces written or performed by members of the Wescott House theological training college in Cambridge. The meditations are read by their authors, and speak of moments of awareness of the presence of God in illness and grief, in worship and joy. It is a moving collection of personal experiences of people finding their way to God as they offer themselves for Christian ministry. One is left with an abiding impression of the talent and sensitivity of the contributors, and a sense of hope for the Church with such people as future ministers. Much more than an abstract account, this gives a real flavour of the spirit of theological education and training, and would be an ideal gift to someone considering exploring ministry in the Church.

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