



Angry listening and a listening God: Liturgical-theological reflections

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Abstract

The potential value of the bodily expression of anger and lament has been explored in literature, also the value and need for rituals and liturgies of anger and lament. One aspect of angry liturgy that has not yet received much attention is the spiritual practice of listening to anger and lament. This article explores listening to anger in the liturgy as a faith practice. It is argued that embodied liturgical expressions of anger should more readily be accompanied by angry listening. The theological premise of the argument is the God of the Christian liturgy is not only the God who speaks but, also and importantly, the God who listens, and that this listening (to anger) extends to both God and those encountering God in liturgy in a theonomic reciprocal way.

Keywords

liturgy; anger; lament; listening; Practical Theology

1. Introduction

South Africans are angry, again. We have been an angry nation before, and it is quite possible that we will remain angry for some time to come. Scholarly reflection – and also theological reflection – on this anger is important. When it comes to talking and doing justice and effecting reconciliation at grassroots level in some congregations, the experience is one of an impasse (cf. Van der Merwe 2019). Part of this impasse, to our minds, has to do with the fact that some people are only prepared to express their anger and unhappiness about present-day South Africa and many South Africans, but they refuse to listen to the anger and the reasons

behind the anger of many of their fellow citizen, especially also the anger that might be directed at them.¹

Nicolas Wolterstorff (2015:75) writes: “Just as it often happens that one person is not on speaking terms with another, so too it sometimes happens that one person is not on listening terms with another.” Many South Africans are on speaking and even on screaming terms with their fellow citizens, but not necessarily on listening terms and thus the cycle of feelings and expressions of anger is seldom consciously interrupted with angry listening.

In the light of this situation we reflect in this article on the potential value of anger and liturgy, and anger in liturgy. Several publications have dealt with anger and liturgy (Blumenthal 2002; Campbell 1986; Lester 2003; Pembroke 2010; Wepener 2015a; Wepener 2015b), as well as liturgy and lament (Arbuckle 2001; Burger 1995; Katongole 2017; Mahokoto 2019) and anger and preaching (Wepener & Pieterse 2018; Wessels 2020). However, in very few of these publications has the emphasis fallen on listening to anger. Mostly the need for the meaningful expression of anger – in other words the ritual speaking and doing of anger – is mentioned. This is often also the case regarding studies of lament and liturgy, namely the expression of lament is highlighted, but not the hearing or registering the sound of lament. The lament is directed almost exclusively at God as the receiver or hearer of the lament, and not also at the fellow worshippers or other human beings whose actions precipitate the anger or grief. It is thus expected, or implied, that the liturgical act of listening to anger and lament is something only God does, not the worshippers.

The focus of the article – in the light of this lacuna regarding the nature of angry listening in the liturgy (also listening to lament) – is on angry listening as a liturgical praxis. The aim is to make a practical-theological contribution towards understanding listening to anger, thus augmenting the important practice of expressing anger with angry listening. Wolterstorff

1 A worse scenario is when people have moved beyond anger to apathy, but that is not the focus of this contribution. We focus on people and groups who are angry. Lester (2003:191) makes the point that apathy is a point beyond anger and that the expression of anger is a sign of hope as it is a sign that those who are angry believe that the current situation can still be addressed.

(2015:76), in his discussion on listening and hearing, also uses angry people as one example and writes: “if he nonetheless listens to her, then too his alienation is less than complete.”

This article first briefly unpacks the practical theological liturgical theological methodology. After that the South African Reconciliation Barometer (SARB) of the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR) and other sources are consulted to ascertain the state of the South African nation pertaining to reconciliation and justice, with a special emphasis on the prevalence of anger, in the year 2020. This is followed by a section on the importance of faith practices serving for the expression of anger, such as lament, and an argument stressing the importance of faith practices which aim at cultivating angry listening. This section is augmented with the insights of theologians such as Nicolas Wolterstorff (2015; 2011) on liturgy and a listening God in the liturgy, as well as the views of scholars reflecting on postcolonial realities as they pertain to this topic. In conclusion, the importance of a liturgical theology that can incorporate listening to anger is discussed.

2. Practical Theology and Liturgical Theology

This article is based on the understanding that practical theology is deeply contextual. Emmanuel Lartey (2020:150–151) advocates for practical theologians to “return to the rich heritage of multi-cultural and multi-religious thought and life out of which a vibrant practical theology emerges. Such practical theology holds in creative tension faith and life, theory and practise, and the private and public dimensions of communal life.” This recurrence calls for a fresh epistemological paradigm, according to Meylahn (2017:1–2). Firstly, a sensitivity to the pluralistic contexts of South Africa, especially contexts that are ever-changing, is critical. Secondly, it calls for the practice of a radical hermeneutics to create spaces where *other* narratives and interpretation possibilities can be heard. Lastly, a sensitivity to the way language itself can create different realities must be kept in mind. Moltmann (1981:xii–xiii) expressed such an epistemological vision as follows:

Truth is to be found in unhindered dialogue. Fellowship and freedom are the human components for knowledge of the truth,

the truth of God. And the fellowship I mean here is the fellowship of mutual participation and unifying sympathy ... This free community of men and women, without privilege and without discrimination, may be termed the earthly body of truth ... (I)t is only in free dialogue that truth can be accepted for the only right and proper reason – namely, that it illuminates and convinces as truth. Truth brings assent, it brings about change without exerting compulsion. In dialogue the truth frees men and women from their own conceptions and their own ideas ... Christian theology would wither and die if it did not continually stand in a dialogue like this, and if it were not bound up with fellowship that seeks this dialogue, needs it and continually pursues it.

These epistemological ideals are also part of the liturgical theological methodology we employ in this article. Liturgical theology, also as a subdiscipline of practical theology as it is used here, is the continuing process of reflection on the significance and value of religion within a culture, a process which is guided by a focused method (Kelleher 2007:204). It has nothing to do with an abstract form of religion but everything to do with “a concrete religion as it has been lived, as it is being lived, and as it is to be lived” (Kelleher 2007:204). A congregation participating in worship through ritual praxis mediates a symbolic public horizon, the margin of the congregation’s imagination. According to Kelleher (2007:206–207), a public spirituality is passed down from generation to generation. The task of liturgical theology is to explore these public horizons, as these horizons have been passed on with blind spots, negligence, faults, and prejudices.

This article aims to explore the ritual praxis of angry listening in the liturgy, with a specific focus and emphasis on the impact thereof on reconciliation and justice in South Africa. An important source for reflection on this topic is the on-going South African Reconciliation Barometer survey conveyed by the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, which we will utilise in the following section to sketch an angry South Africa.

3. An angry South Africa

The SARB aims to identify progress in the reconciliation process in the South African context, as well as possible problematic areas that hinder

reconciliation. This longitudinal survey has been determining the degree of reconciliation in South Africa through public opinion surveys since 2003. The findings of the SARB inspire South Africans to confront the ferocious history of our past and the subsequent unavoidable legacies of apartheid, particularly the enduring structural oppression evident in the lived experiences of many South Africans (Van der Merwe 2019:124).

The key findings of the latest SARB present a mixed picture, according to Potgieter (2019:17). The 2019 SARB reveals that the vast majority of South Africans agree there is a need for reconciliation. Only half of the respondents indicated that they experienced reconciliation personally. Most South Africans agree that reconciliation is impossible as long as corruption continues in our country, political parties sow division, those who were affected by apartheid continue to be poor, gender-based violence continues in our country, the country continues to use racial categories to measure transformation, and racism remains unaddressed in our society (Potgieter 2019:17). Many of these contextual challenges also elicit anger from the population.

In a variety of South African daily and weekly newspapers anger is described and expressed.

William Gumede (2019) wrote “destructive, volcanic and mean-spirited anger has become legitimised.” Workplaces are angry places. In many neighbourhoods’ violent gangsters threaten the safety of law-abiding individuals, families, and communities. Elected representatives and public officials freely loot public resources leading to the collapse of hospitals, schools, and the closure of companies, which in turn leads to job losses, loss of opportunities and broken families (cf. e.g. Malala 2015).

Elsabé Brits (2019) wrote an article in *Vrye Weekblad* about a protest against violence and sexual abuse directed at women. Thousands of South Africans, clothed in black, participated in the protest, targeting not only the government’s empty promises and the courts’ disdain of constitutional protections, but against “goeie mans wat niks doen nie”² (Brits 2019). Adrian Kriesch (2019) wrote an article with the title *Refugee anger boiling*

2 English translation: “good men who do nothing.”

over in South Africa telling the story of refugees in Cape Town protesting about increased xenophobia.³

The African American activist Martin Luther King Jr. said, “it is not enough for people to be angry”, the challenge is to make “anger a transforming force” (as quoted by Van Troost, Van Stekelenburg & Klandermans 2013). South African artist, Mary Sibande aptly named her latest series of photographed performances *In the Midst of Chaos There is Also Opportunity*. In this work she plays the role of therapist through her art, looking at emotions, the country’s legacy, especially the legacy of apartheid in South Africa, and writes: “What’s apartheid left in our mouths? People are bursting in anger. Anger was compressed in a bottle and is now being released drop by drop” (Jaggi 2019). Sibande’s art highlights the notion of anger’s potential to be harnessed as a creative force, as she rightly admits: “if South Africans didn’t get angry, nothing would get done” (Jaggi 2019).

Currently the reasons for the anger felt by Susan Lombaard (2020), Maroela Media’s CEO, are mostly related to the Covid-19 pandemic in South Africa and the changes it brought to the reality of living with this virus.

These narratives indicate an intense need among many South Africans to express their anger. However, what we do not hear in these sources and from the different voices is an acknowledgement that anger should also find an audience, or rather that expressions of anger should be listened to and heard (cf. Wepener 2020).⁴

3 The anger of adults is inflicted on to our children. Horrific incidents of violence amongst children happening at schools are reported. Therefore, Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga, admitted that “the reality is that we live in a violent society. This is so because learners are a mirror of the behaviour they see within their communities, and homes. As a nation, we have simply not dealt with our violent past and the impact of societal violence on our children” (Grobler 2019).

4 One exception in this regard is the so-called *Luister* (Listen) video compiled by students from the Open Stellenbosch Movement. Here they express their grievances and issue a call for people to listen to what they have to say. See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sF3rTBQTQk4>. These students however do not include the option that they themselves are also prepared to listen.

4. On expressing anger and listening to anger

Many scholars and writers have written about the importance and potential value of the expression of anger, as we have seen happening in South Africa for some years now (cf. Maluleke 2011; Masango 2004; Wepener 2015b). Hill (2013:151) for example states: “If prophetic rage is nothing else, it is the merging of thought and action as continual process, and refusal to cease hoping, resisting, fighting, praying, and striving.” Marais (2019) also points out that what lies behind people’s anger is often disappointment, and the anger is an indication that the people who get angry are hopeful. According to Hill (2013:151), this action in which anger is expressed has the potential to provoke thinking and this thinking can lead to progressive action. Campbell (1986:14) argues that anger can be “a positive source for change” and is “a demand for repentance and renewal”. Lester (2003) conducted one of the most comprehensive studies on anger from a practical theological and specifically pastoral care perspective and shows how, after anger was given the status of a deadly sin in the Christian tradition, it has become very difficult to hear the Bible on anger. According to him, anger is not the opposite of love in God’s nature and thus also not in humans (Campbell 2003:153). Lester’s theological insights are in line with those of other scholars, namely that anger is often an expression of care and love. Most of the authors also point to the potentially destructive course that unbridled anger can take (Campbell 1986:49; Wepener 2015a).

It is not only theologians who have pointed towards the significance of anger, but other writers have done so as well. What these writers put on the table – and that is seldom encountered in theological discussions of anger – is the practice of listening to and hearing anger. In the theological literature on anger and lament there is often the important emphasis on God who listens to the anger of the one expressing anger or lamenting, but very seldom is there also an emphasis on people listening to one another’s expressions of anger.

McKaiser (2015:40), for example, writes: “The first test of one’s commitment to be in dialogue with someone else is an ability and willingness to hear them, truly, as opposed to simply waiting to speak and tell them they are wrong.” McKaiser (2015:58) is also of the opinion that white liberals should not get upset when black academics voice their anger and writes:

“No, really. This has to be about the victim, and not about you, the assistant.” He makes an important argument that if victims who are in spaces of dialogue are forced to “mind their anger”, it is the perpetrators who benefit once again. On the one hand, there is the critical need for the expression of anger by victims (in McKaiser’s book, victims of racism specifically) as well as for perpetrators to listen and experience the anger of their victims. McKaiser (2015:162) puts it in plain language: “You can’t trample on someone’s dignity, and then you think you can make up for it by paternalistically telling him or her how to behave in the world now that you are done trampling on them.” In his book, McKaiser’s emphasis is mainly on creating spaces for the expression of anger and is thus similar to the argument in the book *Boiling point* (Wepener 2015a) and also the work of several writers who have over recent years reflected on issues such as whiteness in South Africa. Dawjee (2018:75, 78) who wrote in a chapter entitled “A resignation letter to performative whites” that “You will not colonise our pain. You have no right to it. It is not yours, nor is this fight” and later also “Instead of virtue signalling, start getting real” is an example in this regard. In Trantraal’s (2018) book *Wit issie ‘n colour nie* anger is part of the fabric of the text.⁵ In these and similar texts the anger that the authors express is fuelled by issues such as coloniality, pervasive inequality, corruption, whiteness, racism, and patriarchy.

In these texts there is a plea that the expression of anger should also have an audience – in other words, there is clearly a need for angry listening. Lester (2003:221–222) makes valuable suggestions regarding anger and liturgy, but little related to the practice of listening to the anger of other people in liturgy in general, and also not about listening to anger that might be directed at the listeners themselves.

In a grounded theory study on how preachers in South Africa preach about anger, the authors of this article developed a preliminary theory which included the notion of angry listening (cf. Wepener & Pieterse 2018). Their argument pertains mainly to the hearers of the sermons and the claim is that there is a need that preachers who embody and preach angry sermons

5 The assertion in the title of his book *Wit issie ‘n colour nie* (White is not a colour) is completed in the text, namely that whiteness is not a colour in South Africa, but rather a religion.

should be allowed the opportunity to do so, and this in turn asks of the hearers to exercise the spiritual practice of listening to angry sermons. In her book *Sing the rage. Listening to anger after mass violence* Chakravarti (2014) emphasises the importance of angry listening. According to her, “listening is the praxis that connects anger with justice: without it, anger can only be catharsis or monologue, not constitutive of the process of justice” (Chakravarti 2014:4). For her it is important that both victim and listener become agents in restorative justice and for that to happen, listening is critical. Chakravarti (2014:153) writes: “Anger is not death; it is the opposite of death and has an impact on those who listen to it that is not dependent on being able to respond but rather comes from its expression of the visceral human desire to survive and be heard.”

It is the intention of this contribution to bring the need for angry listening in South Africa into conversation with angry listening in liturgy. With this in mind, we now turn our focus to a brief liturgical theological exploration of listening.

5. A God who listens and a people who listen

In our definition of liturgy in this article we build on previous work (Wepener 2009:21; Van der Merwe 2019). We see liturgy as an encounter between God and humankind; an encounter in which God’s action has primacy, so that in a theonomic reciprocal⁶ fashion a dialogical⁷ communication in and through rituals and symbols is established in which humans participate in an embodied fashion. In the Reformed tradition, reference is often made to the dialogical nature of liturgy in which God speaks and worshippers answer. This theological vision of liturgy is in line with a biblical theology of a calling and speaking God and responding listeners. In the past we have also argued that this encounter is much more than just one of speaking and

6 A.A. van Ruler (1973:9-40) uses this term in his explanation on the Pneumatology, with a specific focus on the redemptive work of the Holy Spirit. In this redemptive work a theonomic reciprocal relationships exist between God and humans, indicating divine governance.

7 Dialogical here stands in relation to theonomic reciprocity and the idea that God speaks, and humans respond to God’s speaking in liturgy. We deem the speaking to encompass more than just the auditory, but the whole human being with all her senses as involved in this dialogical communication.

responding, with an exclusive emphasis on the auditory sense, but that the whole human being with all their senses are involved in this encounter (cf. Wepener 2006).⁸ We want to build on this vision and augment it with the term ‘listening’, namely that this divine-human encounter is a full body-sensory encounter, an encounter in which God speaks and responds, but also and importantly an encounter in which God listens and in which the worshippers listen.

Wolterstorff (2015:14, 17) sets out to identify the theological understandings both explicit and implicit in liturgy and especially what liturgy implicitly says about God. In various chapters he discusses characteristics of God such as “worthy of worship” and “vulnerable”, but of particular interest to us are the four chapters devoted to a God who listens and hears. According to Wolterstorff (2015:60), worshippers address God, aiming their address at God who listens and expecting a favourable response. “If God does in fact listen, then there is a reciprocity of orientation: we are orientated toward God in addressing God and God is orientated toward us in listening. This reciprocity of orientation brings into existence an I-thou relationship between God and us. God is a thou for us” (Wolterstorff 2015:61).

In the basic structure of liturgy there is thus also this element of not only speaking, but also *listening* which is often overlooked. Wolterstorff (2015:62–63) calls this “the understanding of God that is most passive and fundamental in the traditional liturgies is that of God who as one who can and does listen to us and is capable of responding favourably to what we say.” However, God remains free to listen and hear or not (Wolterstorff 2015:63).

A part of the reciprocity between God and people in liturgy and the listening and hearing God is the listening and hearing people. Through the actions of the liturgy (reading of Scripture etc.) the people listen to a speaking God. Wolterstorff (2015:77) writes that God created “beings who are also capable of such listening.” The listening of the worshippers we want to suggest is a listening to God through the act of liturgy of which the anger of people should be a part. Thus listening, and listening to God,

8 “The Reformation saying *Praedicatio verbi Dei est verbum Dei* is still mainly and exclusively interpreted as preaching being an auditory medium, and something like See/ Smell/ Feel/ Taste *verbi Dei est (also) verbum Dei*, is largely downplayed.”

should include listening to the lament and expressions of anger of other worshippers. In an earlier text Wolterstorff (2011:25) writes that “The celebration of the liturgy ... is our response to our apprehension of *this* world as gift and glorious work of God.”

Listening in the liturgy is sometimes associated with moments of silence, even silence filled with music or words in anticipation of the speaking God and aimed at discernment. That is good and we are also of the opinion that liturgical listening involves discernment. However, it does not necessarily involve silence or even a pleasing sound. When it comes to angry listening in liturgy, it will most probably be noisy, involve exposure to very unpleasant emotions that challenges the worshippers’ ability to listen. Campbell (1986:81) helps us in this regard when he writes that “we must use the power of our anger to insist upon a true meeting, ... like the covenant God who will not relinquish His beloved” and also “this is the anger that seeks love, not destruction.” The point is that the sound of anger and lament is usually very unpleasant, which will mean that listening to expressions of that anger and lament will be extremely challenging for worshippers. Wolterstorff (2013:90) writes with regard to the incorporation of lament in liturgy that “lament does not market well”; this is true, but it is even more so the case with listening to and hearing lament and anger in liturgy – they do not market well at all.

In his liturgical theological explorations Wolterstorff also asks what is meant by a God who hears us in the liturgy? His answer is connected to the people’s longing for God’s kingdom and of “God as actively engaged in bringing about the full manifestation of God’s kingdom” and in his view references to the coming of the kingdom in the future must not overwhelm references to the coming of the kingdom in this age (Wolterstorff 2015:111, 112).⁹ Enactments of liturgy and living are for him an alignment with “God’s bringing about of God’s kingdom”, and in the liturgy “we give voice to our longing” in the hope that God will hear and act on it (Wolterstorff 2015:125).

9 Wolterstorff makes use of the insights of N.T. Wright to expand on what he means by the Kingdom of God.

This voicing in the liturgy can also be in the form of anger and lament; however, that anger is an anger which is a longing for the coming of the kingdom in the future, but also now. The sounds of this liturgical anger as longing are heard by God, but also by fellow worshippers. In the liturgy, God listens and God hears, or put differently, in the liturgy God may listen to and may hear the (angry) longing of the worshippers. In and through the liturgy the worshippers can also hear an angry God, but in addition to hearing God, via the angry liturgical act of fellow worshippers, worshippers can also hear the angry longing of God's people. In this way God listens and hears anger and in a theonomic reciprocal fashion, the worshippers also listen to and hear anger.

In the expression of anger and the listening to anger in the liturgy, as an expression of what worshippers' experience in life, they encounter God in a unique way. According to Wolterstorff (2011:27), "the suffering of the world is also an epiphany of God – sometimes of the anger of God, sometimes of the gift of God, but always, I suggest, of the suffering of God." In the liturgical act of listening to anger, we thus listen to fellow worshippers, but also to the suffering of God.

The liturgical praxis of listening to anger is the kind of listening that does not come naturally to humans. Deep and authentic listening to angry South Africans is incredibly difficult and can only happen if it is preceded and accompanied by a change of heart. Smith (2016:21) indicates that the human heart is calibrated by following role models and participating in rituals over time. Barnard, Cilliers and Wepener (2014:170) emphasize the multi-sensory nature of rituals and the active participation in rituals whereby people become connected to God and other human beings. In conclusion, the liturgy becomes a space of catechesis whereby humans come to learn and understand to Whom they belong, as well as to discover their calling as people of God in this world.

In South Africa, many liturgical spaces are also still colonised spaces where liturgists and preachers do not always realise that they belong to the privileged and powerful, who are often a hinderance when it comes to listening to anger. We want to argue that many worship planners and preachers in South Africa will do well by actively adopting a "spirituality of liminality" (cf. Wepener, 2015c) when planning and leading worship.

This calls for continual reflexivity on the part of the worship leaders and preachers in both preparation for and leading of the liturgy and thus a decentralising of the role of a traditional fairly hegemonic heteronormative preacher and liturgist, and actively opening up space for more voices and perspectives. In writing on postcolonial preaching, Go, Jacobsen and Lee (2014:5)¹⁰ ask for a hybrid approach and warn against keeping traditional binary oppositions in place – one of them being “reasonable vs. emotional”. Three decades ago, the South African missiologist David Bosch (1991:296) warned against what he called “benevolent paternalism” when doing mission work. This extends to liturgy when liturgists employ binary thinking, for example rational vs emotional, that excludes emotions such as anger, especially the anger of the oppressed directed at the powerful, and thus allow little room for anger and angry listening in liturgy. In this regard, and with reference to expressions of power in liturgy, it may be meaningful ever so often to revisit the sacrament of Baptism, which is part of an identity that is in need of continual formation.

Junker (2014:40) emphasizes that the church’s sacraments in general, but baptism par excellence, contributes to the formation of the Christian identity. Although the identity of believers is not limited to the sacramental life of the church, the study of the sacraments as liturgical rituals is of particular importance when reflecting theologically on identity formation. Aiden Kavanagh (1991:145) states that sacramental theology defines both the believer and the church. Baptism offers a new identity, a way of life, a commitment that brings about reciprocal relationships, which is called a community (Anderson 2003:176). It is in this community through which Jesus Christ’s grace, character, faith, hope, and mercy are constituted in this world. The ritual ministry of baptism shapes and transforms the community. The ritual ministry of baptism gives meaning to the church’s existence as the body of Christ, it creates a level playing field where everyone has a place and is truly welcome and at home (Junker 2014:41). For the church as the body of Christ, it is essential to share God’s compassion with those suffering and marginalized because of oppression, iniquity, poverty, sickness, and even deficiencies. This is an expression of conviviality, to live

10 See also the other articles in the same issue of *Homiletic* devoted to the theme of postcolonial Homiletics, for example, those by Know Pui-lan and Sarah Travis.

with people in the circumstances in which they find themselves and thus cultivate a life of fullness and abundance. Living in conviviality empowers people to make real changes, focusing on the kingdom of God (Addy 2017: 20), which includes expressing anger, but also and importantly listening to anger (even anger directed at the person listening to the anger).

6. Conclusion

We propose that what is needed in our own day in liturgies in South Africa is the possibility to express anger, but also the courage to listen to expressions of anger. In this way the suffering of the world and the suffering of God encounter one another, in a similar mysterious theonomic reciprocal fashion as God and humankind meet each other in the liturgy. The purpose of this article is to provide an initial and brief exploration that can serve as the basis for liturgies in which anger can be expressed, but also and simultaneously liturgies that assist people to remain in uncomfortable spaces where they can also listen to and hear an angry God and angry South Africans.

Angry liturgies in which angry listening finds a place can assist in rupturing and enriching the cycles of the expression of anger with angry listening. If God's anger is a sign of God's love, and people's expression of their anger are also signs that they care, then active angry listening and hearing are the almond blossoms of a new season of change that is breaking through. They will be liturgies that are difficult to participate in and uncomfortable to listen to; however, they will be part of the hopeful groaning of creation (Rom. 8:22). The theologian Flip Theron (1996) described this kind of inbreaking of God's kingdom as "Silently comes the summer". We agree with Theron; however, when it comes to angry listening in the liturgy, it will be an African summer that is usually accompanied by many a thunderstorm and as such is quite noisy.

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