The new East Window of St Martin-in-the-Fields Church, London:

a window of opportunity for developing ordinary theology through a visual image

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Ву

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HP (Homeless person)	
JW (Journal writers)	
PB (passers-by)	
R (Regulars)	
RD (Research diary)	
SM (Staff member)	
ST (Street/shop trader)	

V (Visitors)

VA (Visiting artist)

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Fig 1 New east window in St Martin-in-the-Fields Church, London

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CD Professional Doctorate Portfolio

The new East Window of St Martin-in-the-Fields Church, London: a window of opportunity for developing ordinary theology through a visual image

Edmund John Betts

Abstract

Ordinary theology is a developing concept focusing on people's explicit religious beliefs, and relying on anecdotal evidence and other academic writers to bridge the gap with academy theology. It has influenced empirical studies of ordinary people's experience with the Bible, doctrine and cathedral visiting. A feminist qualitative ethnographic study and action research provide other voices as alternatives to this empiricism. Theologians-in-the-arts have appropriated art to illustrate their academic theology. This thesis takes further the use of a visual image, with a recently commissioned non-figurative designed window, by a female Iranian-born artist, in an well-known London church. It enquires how far a non-specific doctrinal and non-narrative window encourages wider public participation in meaning making and metaphor generation, challenging the current static concept of ordinary theology.

An interpretative paradigm with perspectives from constructivism, phenomenology, and hermeneutics shapes an inductive and qualitative approach to give attention to regular worshippers and visitors. A visual ethnographic method elicits data through semi-structured questionnaires, interviews, and journal writing. Adopting a 'lay' outsider participant role during the fieldwork, unstructured situational interviews with passers-by, street traders and church staff were also undertaken. Interpretive lenses of framing, the pastoral cycle, ethnomethodology, and nitty-gritty hermeneutics assisted in analysing the data.

The window attracted a high degree of participation, engaging people in reflection. Over 85% of participants were professional/university and technically educated and competent in academic disciplines other than theology. The respondents initially made non-religious statements challenging ordinary theology, which focussed on explicit religion. When respondents viewed it a second time, they used religious concepts. The analysis led to the construction of ordinary portraits constructed of previously not heard voices and challenged the earlier faces of academic partners. The window is a dialogically framed 'lived experience' breaking the 'is' of metaphor and the gestalt law of closure. This research explores the 'is not' of metaphor. It explores the relationship of image, metaphor and concept by focussing on window parts; the images of centre, line and web.

The window becomes both a working metaphor and a model of working metaphors extensively used by these participants. Ordinary theology discovers through feminist metaphorical theology that concepts are metaphorical, focusing on both dissimilarities and similarities. The window as a visual image provides an opportunity to extend the concept and metaphor of ordinary theology. It invites academic professionals to an intensive fieldwork experience using a visual image to rediscover a general process of reflection and to reveal people's indirect and implicit metaphorical ordinary theology.

Summary of portfolio

In my professional doctorate, I wanted to make sense of my ordained ministry with a portfolio of work considering the dynamic relationship between art and theology, through art associated with various ministerial contexts. Being dyslexic, art has provided me with a visual alternative to written texts and a more inclusive way of doing theology.

In my literature review I began to reconsider theory as contemplation. The abstract art of Alex Calinescu provided a pathway, abstracting content and democratising art. I found myself moving from conceptual work as abstract reasoning to focussing on practice and contemplation in the artist's studio. The studio, not the academy or church, was the place to attend to the wounds caused by professional academic dominance and isolationism without recourse to explicit traditional theology. Contemplating abstract art had the potential for enriching a more art-filled and artful practical theology by exploring multidisciplinary encounters and bridging the gap between professional academics and art practitioners.

In my publishable article, I moved from the studio to the church after my first viewing of the new semi-abstract east window of St Martin-in-the-Fields. I constructed an imaginary meeting and dialogue between the theologian Paul Tillich and the window's artist Shirazeh Houshiary, structuring it according to Gadamer's moments of the hermeneutical circle. I saw the emergence of hermeneutics of the in-between, leading to fusion and creating new understanding. I suggested a whole range of professionals outside the academy who are involved in the church's building renewal to be regarded as practical theologians.

In my reflections on practice, I focussed, as a dyslexic person, on being academically lost in translating the visual into written texts with constraining theoretical frames and grids. After reflecting on different learning styles and dyslexia, I wanted to research people viewing the irregular grid window to reveal their whole or fragmentary art and implicit ordinary theologies.

In my research proposal, I constructed a research design to elicit responses from a wider group of participants to include regular worshippers and visitors as well as professionals. In my fieldwork, I decided to adopt an inductive approach and to develop the window as an ethnographic visual method to stimulate participants' responses. My hypothesis and research question developed the concept of ordinary theology, going beyond explicit religion, and exploring its relationship with image, metaphor and model. I selected interpretative lenses for my data analysis leading to the constructing of people portraits. Feminist metaphorical theology assisted in seeing the window as a working metaphor and a model of metaphors. The window offered the academy and me an opportunity to explore further ordinary theology.

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I wish to express my appreciation to Professor Elaine Graham and the Reverend Dr Richard Kidd who have been my supervisors. They encouraged me to read and think widely, as well challenging my thoughts and my writing. I am also indebted to my 'peers' who have accompanied me in last six years on the professional doctorate.

I am very grateful to the Reverend Nicholas Holtam, the then Vicar of St Martin-in-the Fields, for his encouragement and support as the research took shape. I also wish to record my thanks to the regular worshippers, visitors, clergy and staff of this remarkable church for their welcome and willingness to participate in this research. Figures 3, 6 and 22 are by courtesy of St Martin-in-the-Fields and figure 5 of Marc Gascoigne.

I wish to thank my family and friends for their forbearance while I have been working for the doctorate, their interest whilst talking about the window, and for proof reading.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the significant contribution of Jeff Astley's original work on ordinary theology, and Shirazeh Houshiary's artistic design, which stimulated this research on peoples' meaning-making with the window.

Introduction



Fig 1 New east window in St Martin-in-the-Fields Church, London

The east window

The window is the instrument through which an image asserts itself ... a place ...[of] contemplative concentration, transported by light thus configured, the quotidian traffic of St Martin's Lane and Trafalgar Square, the pictures of the gallery opposite ... what goes on in the world, is forgot (Gooding, 2008, p. 10).

The east window by Shirazeh Houshiary, an Iranian born artist influenced by Sufi Islamic tradition, was installed in 2008 in St Martin-in-the-Fields Church, London, as part of a £36 million redevelopment project. The window as image works in creative, non-assertive partnership providing an opportunity

for people to explore, to make meaning and to make connections with their daily living. I see the window and the viewer in a subject-to-subject mutual relationship. Neither the window nor the viewer is dominant or inferior. Gooding is writing a new exhibition catalogue for Houshiary's work under the artist's supervision. Houshiary sees this catalogue as providing an experience, that "reveals the creative process of making art" (Gooding, 2008, p. 55).

My research is concerned with experiencing a visual image as part of a creative process of theological reflection. I seek in my research to develop Jeff Astley's (2002) concept of ordinary theology, which was based on his anecdotal research from his experience as an "adult Christian educator and Christian minister" (p. 57). He also gathered support, whilst characterising it, from academic partners from different disciplines using related categories.

Working hypothesis

My working hypothesis is that perceptions of the window are a legitimate form of ordinary theology. However, these perceptions are only legitimate if there is a corresponding incorporation of new understandings: an alternative set of 'people portraits' of ordinary theologians (visitors and regular worshippers), and the generation of metaphors. The window is a focus of contemplation and an opportunity for ordinary people to reflect on their lives right on the edge of a famous London public square.

Research question

My research question seeks to explore to what extent the new east window of St Martin-in-the-Fields, as a visual image, encourages wider public participation and generates metaphors to extend Jeff Astley's (2002) concept of ordinary theology. The question has emerged from my working hypothesis. I wanted to explore the gap between ordinary theology and academic theology using a visual image and people's responses to it. There is also another gap between the practice of the artist making art and its appropriation by academic theologians. My research seeks to reduce directly these gaps by bringing together, through active looking, listening and learning, of not just the expert artistic practitioners, art critics and critical academic theologians, but also the many other voices previously unheard from this corner of a public square. Reducing the gaps means decreasing domination by a few and increasing participation by the many and fostering mutual appreciation of all voices. Portraits of ordinary theology emerge from the research process, and the image generates working metaphors for presentation to the academy. I explore my research question through a 'veiled' window and a thesis gradually emerges.

In 2008, Houshiary informed Rowan Williams, then Archbishop of Canterbury, on a visit prior to the window's installation that she was influenced by Francisco Zurbarán's painting of the *Veil of St Veronica* in which the imprint of Jesus' face is left on the veil. She sees the window is being the "warp and weft of the veil ... [that is] reality and it becomes a

threshold between the interiority and the exteriority. It is never fixed and we are constantly moved by this light" (Williams, 2008, p. 2). My research objectives encourage an interweaving of a visual image and ordinary theology.

Research objectives

My objectives emerge out of preliminary visits, discussions and correspondence prior to the field work research. They are

- To explore the context and commissioning of the window in St Martin's on the edge of a public square as part of renewal project.
- 2. To identify Astley's (2002, 2013a, 2013b) concept of ordinary theology, and suggesting its development by my research.
- 3. To develop a methodology appropriate for designing methods and collecting data from viewing a visual image and encouraging more participation, so as to gather a wide range of reflections from visitors and regular church attendees.
- 4. To analyse data through framing and constructing whole people portraits of ordinary theology.
- 5. To appreciate different parts of the window generating working metaphors and a working model for expanding ordinary theology.
- To suggest ways to explore further ordinary theology in the light of my findings.

Further, I acknowledge my own location as a researcher influenced by my professional work, commitments and interests.

Locating myself as a researcher

I am a full-time ordained clergy person who has served 26 years in parish ministry and 7 years in specialized ministry in England. I have worked in hospital chaplaincy, including 'long stay' hospitals for people with learning disabilities and I have used sign language to develop a sensitive and concrete liturgy. My Master's degree thesis was concerned with developing an appropriate religious education for people with such disabilities. For 5 years, I was involved in designing and delivering learning for lay adults and the continuing professional development of clergy in Wales. I am committed to increasing public participation and reflection in the arts and in theology. In addition to my professional training, I am a graduate in sociology and have a long-standing interest in human perception.

Since my teenage years I have been attracted to abstract art, as it was easier to 'do' than figurative painting. It is more open to differing interpretations. In the 1960s, my local church took part in a town arts festival allowing modernist artists to exhibit inside and outside the church building. My eyes were further opened in 2000, by the *Seeing Salvation* exhibition at the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square. I am not a practising artist, yet I am drawn to visual images, particularly windows in churches.

In 2012, I was officially tested and diagnosed as having specific learning difficulties of a dyslexic nature. There is a discussion in my reflective piece (TH8004 portfolio, 11 July 2011) about people with dyslexia being

predominantly visual or auditory learners. My dyslexia was perceived in my primary education as requiring extra help with reading whilst in secondary education I wrote with grammatical errors and struggled to compose essays. I have learnt strategies to compensate, and accept the need to allocate more time to reading and writing.

In this research process, I wish to bring together my professional life, my interest in art, and my experience of dyslexia. I am committed to those who do and do not read academic theology and those who do or do not like art. I believe all people should have an opportunity to participate in viewing art and to 'do' theology with a visual image. I have had to exercise self-restraint to hear other primary 'lay' voices of visitors and regulars not usually heard by key academic conversation partners.

Locating my research with key conversation partners

My key conversation partner is Jeff Astley (2002) who provides a written primer in portraying, studying and debating ordinary theology. He relies on a definition of ordinary theology that focusses on explicit religion, seeking support from other academic partners and providing anecdotal research so that academic theology takes it more seriously. An edited volume by Jeff Astley and Leslie Francis (2013) outlines further exploration into ordinary theology. Astley (2013a) now seeks to turn to metaphor finding it both in ordinary and academic theology and in hoping it will provide a bridge between them. However, there is no significant exploration in any of his

recent writings of the mediating work of metaphor or the use of a visual image to do so.

Astley (2002) is aware of the critical feminist writers, Nicola Slee (1999) and Sallie McFague (1982) but he does not significantly incorporate them into his work. Yet in my research, they also become key conversation partners, with their insights on the creative use of metaphor and metaphorical theology. There are similarities between my research data and their work to help develop Astley's original concept of ordinary theology.

My research also builds on previous research into ordinary voices and ordinary theology. In contrast to Lynda Barley (2010, 2014) whose action research focussed on the priest-as-researcher, I have become a 'lay' researcher. Various empirical studies have made use of psychological type theory to analyse the experience of cathedral tourists (Leslie Francis, Emyr Williams, Jennie Annis and Mandy Robbins, 2008; Leslie Francis, Simon Mansfield, Emyr Williams and Andrew Village, 2010), people reading the Bible (Village, 2007) or understanding classical doctrines (Ann Christie, 2007, 2012; Christie and Astley, 2009). Williams, Francis, Robbins and Annis (2007) attempt to move their research, without these psychological, biblical or doctrinal grids, to look at the differences between visitor and regular attenders' implicit and explicit theologies, and overcoming the veil between the secular and religious worldviews. Ellen Clark-King (2004) in an ethnographic study highlights the difference, a painful gap between north-

eastern English women and her academic feminist liberation theology. Helen Cameron, Deborah Bhatti, Catherine Duce, James Sweeney and Clare Watkins (2010) find there are at least four theological voices in their research, which help to bridge the gap between the academic and the practical, generating new insights into theology and transforming practice. My research further explores the plurality of voices without a direct concern to increase theological fluency, letting people speak for themselves.

My research stands alongside those engaging in using images in the ordinary theology found on gravestones (Lewis Burton, 2011) and prayer cards (Tania ap Siôn, 2009; Burton, 2010). Pete Ward and Sarah Dunlop (2011) encourage the use of narrated photography to indicate how traditional catholic theology continues to be present in newly arrived Polish immigants. Patricia Killen and John de Beer in *The art of theological reflection* (1994) reveal how images emerge in the general reflective process and contribute to the art of theological reflection with the Christian heritage. I am suggesting a rediscovery of a general process of reflection in which an image expands meaning rather than conceptually contracting it.

My research does not sit easily within the conventional specialised genre of theology-in-the-arts. John Dillenberger (1986), Graham Howes (1997), and John de Gruchy (2005) review the work of theologians, including Paul Tillich, Karl Barth, Hans Urs von Balshasar and Karl Rahner. They work with the arts and artists responding to themes of meaning, representation and belief. In

my publishable article (TH8003 portfolio, 12 July 2010) I indicated how it was contestable whether Tillich received art silently influencing his theological/philosphical writing, or whether he apprioriated art to illustrate his theology, or ignored it. The theologians David Brown (2004), Rowan Williams (2005) and David Jasper (2012) have pursued a theological aesthetic, focussing on questions about God through human experience, beauty and the arts. They view the human experience of the artist, that of the theologian as working alone or as part of a community looking at art. A theology of aesthetics has been generated by the theologians Alejandro García-Rivera (2003) and Cecilia González-Andrieu (2012) from their Latin/Hispanic backgrounds, using their wounded stories to bridge gaps and nurture a sense of wonder.

Works of art are rarely included within theological treaties because of the high production costs, and artwork appears only on front covers of academic books. Charities give grants permitting authors to include paintings. Richard Harries (2013) provides 82 illustrations of how artists have used traditional themes with integrity and generated modern images of Christ. He briefly mentions the example of the St Martin-in-the-Fields east window (pp. 125-126).

In this literature there is a partnership between theology and art with theology being the dominant partner and user, even if now more attention is given to the artist-at-work. George Pattison (1998) theologically sees art differently from liberation theologies with it referring people to 'structural grace' found in

creation (p. 189) and encouraging a more open theology. Later, he returns to a more Christian focus, with art, providing a "working-out of the process - still ongoing - in which words and images - and silences - might help to renew, sustain and encourage us in the faith that the crucifixions we know may bring us to the resurrections for which we hope" (2009, p. 8). On the other hand, Stephen Pattison (2007) seeks to encourage people to see and develop relationships with a wide range of everyday visual artefacts.

There have been other attempts to explore the working relationships between contemporary art and religion. From the perspective of the art critic and artist, James Elkins (2004), sees that art and religion "do not mix ... whenever the two meet, one wrecks the other ... [as] modern spirituality and contemporary art are rum companions" (p. 115). Elkins and David Morgan (2009) seek about a re-chantment of art and religion. Gorringe (2011), as a theologian, sees great works of art working as 'secular' parables. He outlines how they point to God to see things in a different way and creating a new aesthetic future. Rina Ayra (2013) explores in a miscellany of multidisciplinary essays how spirituality, in a very broad sense, can be found in modern art. While Jonathan Koestlé-Cate (2012), evaluates how far art in cathedrals and churches meets ecclesiastical prescription whilst encouraging artistic freedom. He suggests a way forward in proposing a modern secular empty cultural hole, originally suggested by Rudolf Bultmann, who associates it with the decline of religion, into seeing it as a God-shaped hole to revigorate or restrict the relationship between art and religion. He gathers support from Rowan Williams (1993), who sees art "most seriously religious, even theological, when it isn't peceived as trying to illustrate Christian truths" (p. 27). Koestlé-Cate (2012) develops this with the insights of the philosopher, Alain Badiou, to see art making a "subtractive gesture ... making holes in sense, interrupting the circulation of meaning ... [with] this void remain[ing] out of sight" (p. 12) and waiting for an 'event' to reveal it. He questions whether art can be seen as the event filling the hole or that God is name of the void and it is where God is sited. Although seeing art and religion fractiously embracing each other, Koestlé-Cate (2011), has surveyed extensively works of art in cathedrals and churches in rethinking conceptually the relationship of patron and artist. He only refers to the east window in a footnote (p. 425).

The east window in this internationally known parish church is offering an opportunity, a puncturing of meaning and an event for visitors and regulars. The general public in my research are able to view it openly and to develop a viewing relationship, to express their meanings, and to share their interpretations. These hermeneutical constructions are seen in their own right without being dismissed as secular. Theologians and artists are not sole interpreters or writers for others about the window. The key concepts I bring to this research increases an appreciation of the scope of people's perspectives and interpretations and that they are a legitmate form of ordinary theology.

Key concepts embedded in this research

Ordinary theology

Defining ordinary theology is a slippery task that I will discuss further in Chapter 2. Astley (2002) provides several definitions of ordinary theology, belief, theology and 'God talk' and negatively defining it with academic theology. Barley (2010, p. 227) selects only one definition of ordinary theology as the "theology and theologizing of Christians who have received little or no theological education of a scholarly, academic or systematic kind" (Astley, 2002, p. 56). I wish to turn this definition around to seeing ordinary theology as the spoken and written language used by the majority of people (some firmly committed Christians or other faiths, others less so) about lived experience, without recoursing to the academy to provide expert explicit religious language writers. The ordinariness of the theologizing needs to be emphasised, as embracing both explicit religious language and the implicit metaphors used by ordinary people when attempting to speak or write about an experience with a visual image in a church context. A consideration of metaphor, image, concept and model; nitty-gritty hermenutics, gestalts and fragments will help to indicate this and expand a people's ordinary theology.

Metaphor, image, concept and model

In my research I seek to create a dynamic working together of concept and metaphor. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (2003) see "[o]ur ordinary conceptual system, in terms of what we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature" (p. 3). McFague (1982) sees metaphor as

"indigenous to all human learning from the simplest to the most complex" (p. 32). Her main thesis states that if "all thought is indirect, then all concepts and theories are constructions; they are indirect attempts to interpret reality, which can never be dealt with directly" (McFague, 1982, p. 26). She is pulling back the veil covering the conformist meanings of concepts by creating new meaning that reveals the hidden origins of concepts in metaphor. She further explores the language of image and concept and sees there is an interdependent relationship between image and concept as "[i]mages 'feed' concepts'; concepts 'discipline' images. Images without concepts are blind; concepts without images are sterile" (ibid.). She also believes that models are made up of dominant metaphors with "[c]onceptual thought attempt[ing] to find similarities among the models while models insist on dissimilarities among themselves" (ibid.). She brings together concept, metaphor, image and model in a dynamic relationship.

McFague (1982) feels an affinity with Ricoeur's writing on metaphor when she states "whatever 'is' is not accepted, for what religious language as metaphor does is to insist on the 'is not' as well as on the 'is'" (p. 64). She is willing to look at the 'is' and 'is not', and holding them together in tension rather keeping them apart and at a distance.

Ordinary theology may thus be seen as a meeting of the similar and dissimilar. The theology of the ordinary can be seen as the 'is not' by academic theology which in turn produces a new 'is' to be perceived by

ordinary people as an "is" or an 'is not'. Ordinary theology is a meeting of two separate words and worlds, of ordinary and theology. It is a meeting of two different languages, primary ordinary and secondary critical. The window and the image is a focus of metaphoric tension between similarity and dissimilarity. The word window is itself a metaphor, a meeting of eye and wind (Window, n.d.), a 'rough' experience.

Nitty-gritty hermeneutics

Anthony Pinn (1999) seeks to resolve the paradox between traditional Christian concepts and the suffering of black people. Seeing suffering conceptually as redemptive is a "theodical game' ... [creating a] 'theological pothole'" (p. 10), increasing the gap between ordinary and academic theology Theodicy "safeguard[s] against assaults upon the substance of religious belief and structures ... [by] guard[ing] theological houses from the housecleaning horrific human experiences periodically demands" (p. 114). Pinn encourages Black theologians to seek a "fuller spectrum of Black responses to the problem of evil (p. 18) He proposes the methodological/interpretative tool of nitty-gritty hermeneutics, with "no allegiance to Christian doctrine or theological sensibilities" (p. 19) and does not veil or hide oppression. It is has a "hard and concrete orientation ... [confined] to certain parameters of roughness (p. 116) and is heuristically rebellious.

Pinn illustrates his nitty-gritty hermeneutics contrasting 'spirituals', music telling the collective story of black life, with the 'blues' which are more secular

songs, telling it how it is, raw and unpolished, for individuals living in a difficult world. Blues are free from inhibiting, flawed traditional religious interpretations (p. 119). Although I am not a black theologian dealing with evil and theodicy, I see the east window as a visual equivalent to the 'blues', breaking out of the genre of sacred windows and neat theological categories, encouraging people to tell it how it is, rough and with and without theistic conceptions. Nitty-gritty hermeneutics assists in data analysis to develop and expand ordinary theology. It attempts to prevent a smoothing and early closure in analysis.

Gestalt and fragments

The window also works as a gestalt, focussing on similarities, creating a whole picture through conceptual closure. Max Wertheimer (1938a) sees gestalts as givens, structured, having "wholes ... not determined by ... individual elements, but where the part-processes are themselves determined by the intrinsic nature of the whole" (p. 2). Further, Wertheimer's (1938b) principle of closure suggests the viewers of the window will see incomplete circles being made complete, giving unity and coherence, equilibrium, and symmetry" (p. 83).

The window also works as a model in revealing metaphors that are operating as partial and particular, dissimiliar parts and fragments. Duncan Forrester (2005) suggests a constructive working with (theological) fragments as "our knowledge is fragmentary, enigmatic, often confusing, like dim images in a

distorting mirror" (p. 7). He sees that coherent theological systems are not possible to construct in post-modernity, only fragments for individuals and community.

In the east window, then, we see a meeting of metaphor, image and concept; and the similar and dissimiliar, nitty- gritty hermeneutics, whole gestalts and part fragments generating an indirect and implicit metaphorical theology.

Metaphorical theology

A similarity emerges between McFague (1982) writing on parables and the ordinariness of the window. McFague believes that

metaphorical theology is indigenous to Christianity not just ...permitted but is called for ... [and] [t]he heart of the Gospel ...[is the] 'kingdom of God'; what the kingdom is or means is never expressed but indirectly suggested by the parables of the kingdom ...[which is a] dominant genre of Jesus' teaching ... [giving] clues (p. 14).

Most public buildings have windows. In churches windows indigenously provide openings and closure, with or without religious narrative, available for use by believers and non-beleivers to tell official stories and generate personal narratives. McFague sees parables as a "secular form of language, telling stories of ordinary people ... assum[ing] a nonbelieving or secular

attitude on the part of their audience ... focuss[ing] on the dissimilarity, incongruity, and tension between the assumptions and expectations of their characters" (p. 15) and those of the kingdom. She designates this as "Protestant sensibility" (ibid.). She sees metaphors providing a "thread of similarity between two dissimilar objects, events or whatever, one of which is better known than the other, and using the better-known one as a way of speaking about the lesser known" (ibid.) and yet the power of metaphors comes from having "continuity with the way we think ordinarily" (p.16). Threading a similarity whilst viewing the window is more demanding when there is no clear narrative or figurative outline. Ordinary stories emerge with a mixture of languages of similarity and dissimilarity. The window has the potential to facilitate a whole range of different responses. It bridges the secular and religious and holds them together.

McFague (1982) believes further that "good metaphors shock, they bring unlikes together, they upset conventions, they involve tension, and they are implicitly revolutionary" (p. 17). She is refering to Jesus' parables and Jesus, in his life, death and resurrection, which is also a metaphor "seeing through ... a grid or screen ... at one level an ordinary, secular story of a human being, but also a story shot with surprise, unconventionality, and incongruities" (p.18). The east window is a grid, a screen and a metaphor, capable of shocking and surprising, with people struggling with a new ordinary experience and seeking to understand its dissimilarity and similarity. The window thus appeals to religious and secular visitors.

McFague (1982) outlines the characteristics for developing a metaphorical theology guided by the parabolic theology as being "open-ended, tentative, indirect, tensive, iconoclastic, transformative ... [i]t not only says 'is not' but 'is', not only no but yes" (p. 19) She sees both a negative and positive theology "giving license for speech about God as well as indicating the limits of such speech" (ibid.). She is attempting to overcome literalism and iconoclasm, and emphasising the personal, relational categories in language about God as people develop a relationship with the window (p. 21).

I wish in my research to develop from McFague the idea of the window as a dominant metaphor and a model. Models act as "mediators between metaphors and concepts, they partake of the characteristics of each" (p. 28). A problem that arises is that McFague sees the task of metaphorical theology as being to "envision ways of talking about the relationship between the divine and the human which are non-idolaterous but relevant ... true without being literal; ways which are meaningful to all peoples, tradition excluded as well as included" (p.25). Models are also limiting as they are made dominant from within a tradition, which is not so indirect or implicit as she originally implies about metaphor. McFague Te Selle (1975) traces her theological pilgrimage, first of all as a feminist, as an 'outsider' in the theological academy. She has a different perspective from her male colleagues because she was "disenchanted with theological gamesmanship of the doctoral variety" (McFague Te Selle, 1975, p. 625) and wishes theological reflection to

be more than an academic workout. She suggests it is the metaphorical, using the imagination and image which is primary, not the concept (p. 627). McFague Te Selle (1975) is advocating an "intermediary theology", a style of theological reflection which stays close to the parables but also, as a discursive mode, is coherent, consistent and precise - the characteristics of systematic theology" (p. 628). McFague's models are controlling, and turn metaphor by convention and tradition into a concept. She ventures within a 'insider' systematic "thought experiment' with the model of God as friend" (1982, p. xi).

The window is a therefore, a 'thought experiment' for ordinary theology. The window as a dominant model is more imprecise and open to interpretation by all people because of its lack of detail and the difficulty of setting it within a tradition. It is an intermediary window existing between the concept of ordinary theology and individual stories of metaphor. It can be systematic as 'is' and unsystematic, unconventional as 'is not'. The divine-human is open to being more indirect, implicit and less traditional. McFague (1982) sees metaphysical theology having a final task of reforming and transforming classical doctrines by "new religious images and models being suggested by women" (p. 29). This moderates the dominating patriarchal traditional models. The east window is a new image by a woman challenging traditional images, concepts and metaphors. Pauline Bache (2008) sees Houshiary's work as being "open-minded ... transcend[ing] binary identities ... [of] nationality, race or religion ... [with a] common humanity informing her work"

(p. 28). The window encourages dialogical viewing by a common humanity, yet it is more plural in its reception and interpretation.

The key concepts so far discussed shape my research design and also interweave with the data that form the argument of my thesis.

Thesis summary

My thesis is that the east window of St Martin-in-the-Fields Church London, as a visual image, increases public participation in theological reflection. The window leads to the construction of whole ordinary portraits of people doing ordinary theology. This image also becomes a working metaphor and a working model challenging academic conceptual ordinary theology through the mediating work of feminist metaphorical theology. A people's indirect and implicit ordinary metaphorical theology emerges through this window of opportunity.

I will now indicate how I test this research hypothesis, explore the research question, and meet my research objectives.

In Chapter 1, I outline the context of St Martin-in-the-Fields Church, which sits on the north side of Trafalgar Square. I locate my research within the architectural context of the building and its creative tensive relationships with

institutional neighbours. Further I look at the theological context with foundational stories, mission statement, and the Ten Point Charter of the church. Finally, I will consider how the artistic context provides a supportive environment for artists and commissioning new art as part of a renewal of the building architecturally and theologically.

In Chapter 2, I trace my own conceptual journey towards Astley's (2002) concept of ordinary theology before proposing an imaginative/'thought experiment' with him to view the window for developing ordinary theology. I critically evaluate his definitions of ordinary theology, its pragmatic and theological importance, and the learning of the origins of ordinary theology. I indicate the range of empirical studies on ordinary theology with the Bible, doctrine and cathedral visitors with or without psychological grids and other studies focussing on gravestones and prayer cards; reviewing a feminist ethnographic study and the developing theological fluency through listening to many voices. I suggest that ordinary theology needs to learn to look and listen again, moving out of grids and bringing back the image.

I indicate how new visual research is conceptually developing ordinary theology. The image can also have a transitory, limited life in a general reflection which is superceded by the art/wisdom of theological reflection. I am arguing for a rediscovery of a general process of reflection in which an image expands meaning rather than allowing concepts to contract it. I wish to contend that an image is not to be discarded in preference to exploring the

wisdom of the Christian theological heritage or to complete a process. The image has the general capacity of working like a metaphor to extend conceptually a static grid-locked empirical ordinary theology. I envisage ordinary theology also developing more in the city through public art, particularly with a new image in a church setting. When academy theologians join other visitors and regular worshippers viewing the window new learning, wholisitic and fragmentary, develops the concept of ordinary theology.

In Chapter 3, I review Astley and Francis' (2013) recent explorations in ordinary theology, published after I had completed my fieldwork, particularly Astley's (2013a) turning to metaphor to deal with the conceptual gap between ordinary and academic theology. In this he suggests that his metaphors of mediation and bridge are trying to hold together the ordinary theology "voiced in metaphor and story ... [and] academic theology ... undergirded by very similar linguistic forms" (p. 52). He provides no working examples. I will suggest that Astley considers McFague's (1982) contribution of metaphorical theology to develop ordinary theology, conceptually and metaphorically and consider the inter-related work of image, metaphor and concept. Further, by choosing the window rather than the bridge metaphor, this will augment Astley's original concept with these additional perspectives and the generation of metaphor.

In Chapter 4, I outline the construction of an appropriate and sensitive methodology and methods for researching, so that the new east window of St

Martin-in-the-Fields encourages participation and elicits the meaning-making by people. I decide on an interpretative paradigm with perspectives from constructivism, phenomenology, and hermeneutics. My approach is inductive and qualitative and will test my working hypothesis - namely that perceptions of the window are a legitimate form of ordinary theology. I work as a 'lay' researcher- not wearing clerical attire or taking services, rather as an member of the congregation. I am interested in developing an evocative ethnographic visual method for visitors to the church and regular worshippers. I develop semi-structured interviews and questionnaires, journaling by participants and myself, and unstructured situational interviews with passers-by, street traders and church staff. The data collected are tested against official documents and sermons. I report on my research journey indicating critical incidents and new areas to emerge.

I proceed to analyse the data with lenses from frame analysis, ethnomethodology, nitty-gritty hermeneutics, and the pastoral cycle. I begin with framing, including the demographic frames of research participants, exploring the primary frame of analysis at the first viewing of the window and then the framing at the second viewing. The responses to the questionnaires are reframed into a sequence of frames providing a cycle or spiral of theological reflection with different degrees of completion. A grid of three different framings of the window emerges from categories given by participants. This has a capacity to generate closure, creating a gestalt. There is an outlining of portraits of people usually overlooked and not heard

by academic ordinary theology. Although the portraits show word movement, they are static portraits of ordinary theology.

In Chapter 5, I focus on three parts of the window and on data provided from participants' journals, streets traders, and passers-by and employed church staff. Each part is a working image, which generates a series of working metaphors. Firstly, I look at the centre with it being seen as a dewdrop, a void, broken, opaque, an egg and a vagina. Secondly, the lines generate metaphors of a mesh, between, between Good Friday and Easter Day, prison and ripples in the water. Thirdly, seen as a web, and metaphors of spider and friend. There is a exploration of the limited awareness and web spinning by those outside the church. I give a reflection on the interaction of image and metaphor, comparing the contribution of literary resources with a visual image. This leads to developing an indirect and implicit metaphorical ordinary theology.

In Chapter 6, I review my research as being a lived experience in a looking-glass church house, with a window available for viewing, and listening to people's perceptions and developing a new sensibility in doing ordinary theology. The research process has focussed on testing the hypothesis that perceptions of ordinary people are a legitimate form of ordinary theology. I show how I have fulfilled my objectives. This is followed by a summary of my findings. I present demographic 'factual' findings which are the rough, nitty-gritty local trends identified in my research. My conceptual and metaphoric

findings living and working with an image. The visitors and regulars are educated to professional and university level, and were willing to spend time with a visual image. They brought to the research their personal and professional experience, critical openness and appreciation from disciplines other than theology. Yet there is an ordinariness and a freshness in their reflections. The window through them elicits wider public participation.

I show how my research contributes to the academy a way of liberating ordinary theology from a constricting conceptual grid by using a visual image. It encourages academy members to join an intensive fieldwork experience for developing a new sensibility in doing theology, restoring hermeneutics back into the hands of ordinary people, and with academics again listening, looking and learning with others rather than critiquing them. Feminist theologians are also invited to join the visit. The research has contributed to my personal development of acknowledging my dyslexia and reawakening my interest in art. I recognize that professionally I have appropriated art for my theologizing rather than listening to others doing theology and serving those voices and being their advocate to the academy. My research is a contribution to returning ordinary theology from the control of the academy back to the people, the local church and the city by engaging people in public art. This intermediary window is bringing people together to do theology. I hope to disseminate my research to other people beyond St Martin's by publishing in academic theological and art journals and in 'popular' religious newspapers or art/religious newsletters.

My conclusions also reflect further my own role within the creation of this doctoral thesis, and the strengths and limitations of my research strategy. I will indicate that I saw myself as an outsider-researcher, similar to an ethnographic tourist, for a fixed period of time, which limited my research. I make suggestions for further exploration by looking at the new altar that complements the window, extending my study to include people attending public concerts, sitting in the new outside public café in the courtyard, and also to working with children and young people. I place my research within the genre of those researching with other visual theologies with the deaf and socially excluded. I consider whether the visual image of my research fills an internal figurative gap between theology and art, encouraging an average viewer, or whether it stretches non-figuratively, both art and theology for wider participation in theological reflection in a public context.

Readers of this thesis are presented with a modest window of opportunity to be part of a 'thought experiment' with a visual image to develop Astley's concept of ordinary theology. It is hoped this will encourage greater participation in doing theology as part of a general process of indirect and implicit meaning-making through metaphorical theology. The window viewing becomes a lived experience for academy members as well as the general public.

Chapter 1 The research context: St Martin-in-the-Fields Church



Fig 2 Trafalgar Square looking towards St Martin-in-the-Fields

Introduction

St Martin-in-the-Field's Church is located on the north side of Trafalgar Square, a public space created in nineteenth century and redesigned by Sir Norman Foster as part of the *World's Square for All* initiative. It is a

pedestrianised open area intended for the meeting of ordinary people, visitors and regular walkers, with various public institutions around the edges. In my publishable article (TH8003 portfolio, 12 July 2010) I mentioned the church's architectural location, its theological approach and how the church, by commissioning art, was encouraging artists to engage with the church's context. I made reference to the detail of the church's arts strategy prepared by Modus Operandi Art Consultants (2005a), to Holtam (2008) reflecting on the physical redevelopment and ministerial renewal of St Martin's, and the commission brief for a new east window also by Modus Operandi (2005b). The following is a summary of this work, locating my research within the architectural, theological and artistic context of St Martin's.

Architectural context

The church is in the north-east corner of this world-famous London public square. Its origins date to the twelfth century, but it was rebuilt and restored many times. It survived the Great Fire of 1666 only to be rebuilt by James Gibbs between 1721 and 1726. Trafalgar Square and other public buildings are later constructions.

Holtam (2008) believes that St Martin's, as a church, holds together in paradoxical tension its public work with its neighbours - royalty and the homeless, with government departments focussing on war and where the British pacifist movement was formed (p. xvi).

Theological context

A number of foundational stories have shaped St Martin's theological context and its mission. The church draws on the story of St Martin, a fourth century Roman soldier who gave half of his cloak to a beggar. At the rededication of the church in 1726 its vicar preached on the story of Jacob's ladder (Genesis 28.16-18) with St Martin's being the "house of God, and this is the gate of heaven" (Modus Operandi Art Consultants, 2005b, p. 4). This story appears embedded in a later poem by Francis Thompson *In no strange land* and is cited in the brief given to artists submitting designs for the east window (Modus Operandi Art Consultants, 2005b, pp. 4-5). Holtam (2008) recalls how a former vicar, Dick Sheppard, in 1914 saw St Martin's as the "church of the ever open door" (p. 2).

Holtam (2008) further sees St Martin's offering an alternative to other churches. It does not provide highly structured basic courses of Christian instruction. Instead it encourages people to reflect theologically on their experiences in the family, locally or globally, thus developing a "theological conversation" (p. 14) through worship, learning events, and the spoken and the written word.

The church makes a number of official theological affirmations. Its mission statement declares "St Martin-in-the-Fields exists to honour God and to enable questioning, open-minded people to discover for themselves the significance of Jesus Christ" (Modus Operandi Art Consultants, 2005b, p. 2).

St Martin's initially appears to be more open and inclusive by not explicitly defining faith. But it then gives a traditional declaration of belief stressing the church's mission is based on the Bible, and is more open specifically by proclaiming the Good News which is "for people regardless of their sex, race or sexual orientation" (St Martin-in-the-Fields, 2012) and seeking justice for the world's inhabitants.

Since I completed my research, St Martin's has issued a new statement defining itself as "a place where the diversity of the Christian belief can flourish so that we can witness with authority and integrity to the love of Jesus Christ in the world" (St Martin-in-the-Fields, 2014). It now explicitly speaks of current ethical orientations of diversity and flourishing. The Ten Point Charter, the terms of reference for the life of St Martin's, remains the same charter acknowledging first that, "[w]e believe and proclaim both the mystery of God whom we partly know and partly do not know, and the human need to worship" (St Martin-in-the-Fields, 2014). The church has the capacity to hold both positive and negative responses to the window within a kataphatic and apophatic theology and yet postulates a universal unproven need for human beings to worship. The charter prefaces the majority of its points with declarations like "we believe" or "we trust", or "we are committed". The openness of "taking all people seriously wherever they might be at their particular point of understanding" (St Martin-in-the-Fields, 2014) is then controlled normatively by "while at the same time sharing with them whatever insights may have been gained by our relationship with God". The charter is

more open in point 7 when "drawing inspiration from our patronal saint" inspiring the church in sharing the resources of the creation.

The artistic context

St Martin's has the National Galley, the National Portrait Gallery and the former Central St Martin's College of Art as artistic neighbours. There has been in recent times a number of temporary public exhibitions of art on the Fourth Plinth site in the north-west corner of the square. St Martin's has also commissioned public pieces of art, including the Christmas crib and the millennium sculpture of the Christ-child (Modus Operandi Art Consultants, 2005a, p. 9) and wanted to continue to provide a "supportive context" (Modus Operandi Art Consultants, 2005a, p. 5) for art and artists. The church developed an art commissions programme to "celebrate the importance of the major refurbishment with high quality art commissioned as an integral part of the project" (ibid.). The new architectural context provided many windows of opportunity. The strategy sought to create a programme in which

artworks are integrated conceptually and physically, and are of the highest quality and appropriateness. The outcome should be the creation of visual continuity and synergy between artworks, architecture and public space (p. 14)

The commissioning of the new east window was one of these projects and it was to replace the 'blue window', which had been in place after the Second World War (see Fig 3).

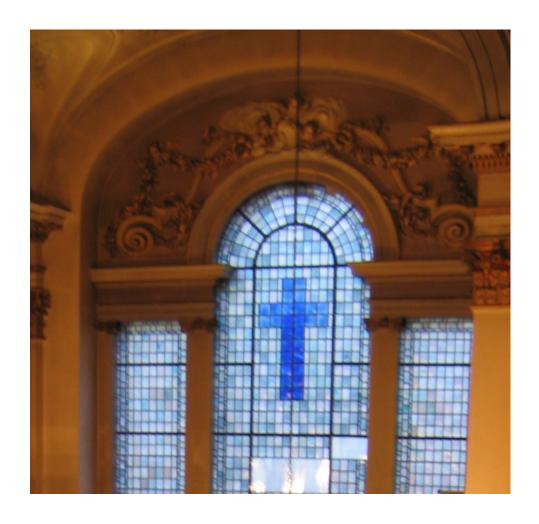


Fig 3 Former 'blue' east window

The new window had to work with the existing architectural constraints and renovations to the building and within the church's "theological and cultural aspirations" (Modus Operandi Art Consultants, 2005b, p. 5). The artists' brief had broad objectives, including inspiring questioning, and suggested themes, one of which could be light, for commissioning a clear glass window, whereas the installation press release was more emphatic that the "window should embody light ... [and] challenge preconceptions and stimulate debate" (Colman Getty Consultancy, 2008, p. 1) as well as encouraging reflective thinking and contemplation.

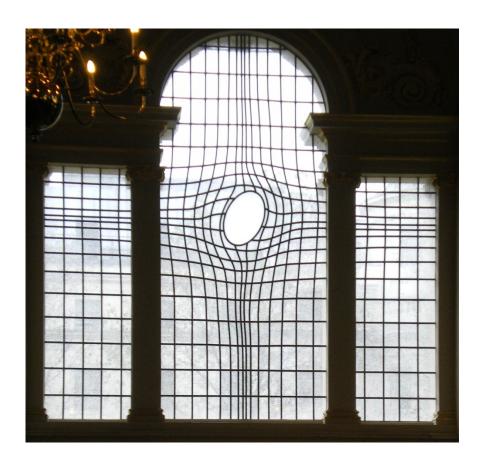


Fig 4 New east window (detail)

The new east window (Fig 4) is a triptych of glass, arched in the centre and with flanking rectangles. The "main central section of 12.5 sq m (5.6m high by 2.4m wide), and two adjoining sections each 4.5 sq m (3.7m high by 1.2m wide) ...[makes for a t]otal area 22 sq. metres" (Modus Operandi Art Consultants, 2005b, p. 7). A stainless steel black frame holds the glass in place. The glass panels are "etched on both sides with a subtle, feathery pattern ... [and t]he panels graduate from a periphery of more transparent glass to a deeper, white centre ... lightly etched" (Colman Getty Consultancy, 2008, p. 2). The window is lit at night.

The framework "evokes[s] the agony of the Cross whilst the central ellipse creates an icon of contemplation [and also] the light at the centre of existence, the glory of God and the light with which He illuminates our lives; or can be seen as universal, transcending cultures" (ibid.).

The artist, Shirazeh Houshiary, sees the window as "a veil ... which is reality and it becomes a threshold between the interiority and the exteriority ... [i]t is never fixed and we are constantly moved by the light" (Houshiary, 2008). In contrast, the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, sees the whole window "rather like a cross reflected in water ... very peaceful and yet a very challenging symbol all at once" (Williams, 2008).

Journalists writing about the architectural, theological and artistic context of St Martin's and the east window present an exchange of views. Rebecca Geldard (2008) sees the window as a "delicate fusion of contemporary art and classical architecture is sublime ...[as well as] a gynaecological reworking of the ultimate symbols of Christianity and modernism - the cross and the grid." (p. 1). There is more tension in the theological contextual workings. Bishop Tim Stevens (2008) preaching in St Martins three weeks after the window's installation said

some of us smiled when we read Simon Jenkins' piece in the Guardian applauding the work of St Martins while regretting its roots in the Christian Faith. For Simon Jenkins the East Window was no more

than a satisfying abstraction. For most of us surely, it depicts the crucified Christ (p. 2).

As a declared atheist, the journalist, Simon Jenkins (2008) saw the window not as "some insipid stained-glass to fallen gentry ... [but as] an exhilarating abstract swirl of advancing and receding shapes" (p. 2). He praised the project raising money to "beautify the city as well as to assist the homeless. We may choose to leave the faith out of it, but we can yet marvel at the mission" (p. 3).

In contrast, Thomas Sutcliffe (2008) notes, "the devout will be able to see through its muted abstraction to a figurative presence behind [and the window] carefully ... [it] balances the doctrinal divisions of art as well as faith" (p. 1). The window uses the universal theme of light whilst not being specific about belief. He sees it as a "non-denominational window" (ibid.) having sufficient "handholds for a spiritual reverie without requiring you to sign up to a particular doctrine" (p. 2) and light passing through it "unmediated by specific beliefs or scriptural understandings (ibid.). He sees the window as "almost completely transparent and yet usefully veils the details that might cause problems" (ibid.).

The artist creates a contemporary window without having a particular religious belief. She is Iranian by birth and influenced by the Islamic Sufi

tradition. She does not believe in any religion and yet she appreciates architecture (Jury, 2008). Further, Houshiary (2010) sees there is

no distinction between consecrated space and other spaces, as I feel the world is a sacred space. We need to create an experiment which would transcend the distinctions between sacred and profane, and also be sensitive to the architectural quality of the building and the original vision of the architect (p. 21).

The east window at St Martin's provides a visual experiment.

Conclusion

The refurbishment and the installation of the new east window at St Martin's has the potential to contribute to increasing public participation from the square through a fusing of existing and new architecture and art. It could encourage people to engage in a wide range of dialogical theological discourses - explicitly or implicitly talking about or not talking about God. My research is located within these contexts and debates and aims at understanding conceptually how ordinary people interact with the window.

Chapter 2 Developing ordinary theology through the east window

Introduction

In this chapter, I trace my conceptual journey with ordinary theology and its shaping of my hypothesis that ordinary people's perceptions of the window are a legitimate form of ordinary theology. I will outline the staging posts of my research journey leading to my studying and critiquing of Astley's (2002) ordinary theology and his focus on explicit religion, which leaves metaphor undeveloped (p. 72). Astley is invited to participate in an imaginary 'thought experiment' to view the window at St Martin-in-the-Fields.

I will interrogate Astley's various attempts in defining ordinary theology and his justification of the importance of ordinary theology both pragmatically and theologically. I will challenge his identification of the genesis of personal beliefs arising from the religious learning context. As he continues to defend his concept of ordinary theology, aided by existing empirical academic partners, he is also being encouraged to interact with new research partners outside empirical theology. In my research I will suggest further developments to Astley and ordinary theology by encouraging a conceptual move from academic grids to images by exploring the window as a piece of public art in a city church setting. Preparation for this new learning involves reviewing research into museum visiting and understanding the fragmentary nature of meaning-making. My aspiration is for this research and for Astley to develop his concept of ordinary theology whilst viewing the window with other people, who are not academy members, and that fresh theologizing occurs.

Conceptual journey to ordinary theology

I detect four significant staging posts on my conceptual journeying with ordinary theology. These provide opportunities for conversations with others on the relationship between art and theology, and appreciating the contributions of professional artists, art consultants, theologians, and the ordinary public.

The first staging post is my previous work for the DProf Literature Review (TH8002 Portfolio 30 June 2009) which considered why Stephen Pattison (2007) desired to develop his relations with everyday objects and a more subtle theory about those relationships. He begins by admitting his 'disability' of being a "logocentric academic" (p. 16), and having difficulty in relating to artefacts, preferring written texts. He turns to the artist and art theorist, James Elkins, to teach him how to look at paintings (p. 227). He becomes preoccupied with the artist physically working the materials of painting. He would have benefitted from concentrating on a few works of art and practising his own advice to others to develop a more inductive and contemplative approach.

I practised a similar process of looking and relating to art for myself in the studio of Alex Calinescu with her abstract paintings. This led to a different appreciation on my part of theory; moving away from an understanding of conceptual work as abstract reasoning to a focus on practice and contemplation. I suggested that inviting academic theologians and art

historians to a studio to listen to the artist and to learn the art of contemplating art could encourage different theorising and a more artful practical theology. However, I subsequently realised that I needed to move from an artist's studio to a place large enough for wider public participation, in order to encourage both brief and longer encounters, of contemplation and reflection.

The second staging post was my initial encounter with the east window whilst starting to explore Jeff Astley's (2002) Ordinary Theology. In my publishable article (TH8003 portfolio, 12 July 2010) I turned away from Astley to construct an imaginary meeting in front of the east window between the theologian Paul Tillich and the artist Shirazeh Houshiary. I analysed this meeting using Gadamer's (2004) five moments of the hermeneutical circle of preunderstanding, the experience of being brought up short, dialogical interplay, fusion of horizons and application (pp. 268-382). He offered a way of creating a conversation between two different people and encouraging more participation. He develops an art of the hermeneutics of the in-between, leading to a fusion and new understanding. I began to see that, in addition to artists and theologians, professional architects, builders, art consultants, commissioners and selectors, and viewers were all practical theologians in constructing and making meaning. Subsequently, I became aware of the critique of Gadamer for being conservative, overemphasising the fusion and being anti-feminist (Code, 2003). I needed to develop a more dialogical understanding of the in-between, holding parts and the whole, fragments and fusions in tension.

The third staging post is my reflective piece (TH8004, portfolio 11 July 2011) in which I indicated that being dyslexic I kept getting lost in the languages of translation, frames and grids. I critiqued Paul Ricoeur's (1991) *From text to action* who sees speech fixed in a written text, creating a distance, a decontextualisation, making it alien, opening up a new fictitious reality and unfolding a new subjectivity. I saw the window as a visual text and an irregular grid involving people, always in the middle of things and co-creators with different, fragmentary theologies in a particular context.

I began to move from being lost to finding myself in lengthy viewings of the window and in which I saw fragments of art and theology. Like me, Laurie Green (1999) was classified as "profoundly dyslexic" (p. 328) and he found that oral story-telling was more interactive for people than books which "distanc[ed] engagement with life" (p. 333). It is therefore surprising that Green (2009) later sees people as "carriers of an implicit theology ... [needing to be] utilized and properly transformed ... as [they] progress through the various stages of the theology cycle" (p. 45). In my research, people are given opportunities to articulate their implicit theologies about God, who may be present or absent in their world. Green (2009) is enthusiastic about the way the culture of doing theology continues to be transformed. The problem now for Green (2009) is to enable the Church rather than the academy to do theology (p. 173). Ordinary church members potentially offer the church, and the academy, significant reflexive, implicit and, to some extent, explicit, theological fragments. These are waiting to be analysed and disseminated.

The fourth staging post is my turning again to Astley and his concept of ordinary theology, and seeing how far it might assist my understanding of the public's encounter with the window, and how my work extends his work. I have previously indicated in my research proposal (TH8005, portfolio 11 July 2011) Astley's characterisation of ordinary theology. I will summarise this to allow for further development. Astley (2002) sees himself taking seriously the beliefs of ordinary people who have received little attention from academic academy theologians (p. viii). He seems to be unaware of a considerable body of work on "lived experience" in practical theology reviewed and developed by Ganzevoort (2009). Further, Bonnie Miller-McLemore's (2012) in her four-fold definition of practical theology indicates it is an "activity of believers seeking to sustain a life of reflective faith in the everyday day ... [also] as a method ... [then] a curricular area in theological education ... [and as] an academic discipline" (p. 5). She subverts a traditionally academic disciplined practical theology by focussing on lived experience, the constitutive activities of daily life, (p. 6).

Astley (2002) continues to advocate that the study of ordinary theology needs "the best sort of empirical research ... [it] also need[s] conceptual work" (p. 103). He sees adult ordinary theology being subjected to the same critical philosophical and theological analysis that is given to professional theologians in the academy so that "we discover what ordinary people really believe and why, and begin to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the content and form of their believing" (p. 104). He makes a major contribution in portraying, studying and debating ordinary theology for the academy.

Astley is situated in a university and an institute of Christian education. He is writing a 'systematic' theology to be taken seriously by an academic audience. His empirical research draws on personal anecdotal evidence (2002, p. 57). He also reflects on how the arts can contribute to researching into ordinary theology. Information received from Astley (personal communication 12 March 2013) suggests he "would expect that reflections on works of art would be a very good way into tapping people's ordinary theology". He admits he has "written more on theology and music, from a learning perspective" (ibid.). Astley (2002) refers to the "highly successful exercises in theological education ... (usually by a group of learners) ...[using] stories, as well as images and metaphors that illuminate and express the learners' own experience" (p. 132), and notes that the "expression of our beliefs and believing is not limited to prose (theology), but can take place through other media – art, dance, [and] music" (p. 144). Astley (2002) uses images extensively and this will be considered later in the chapter.

In *Christ of the everyday*, Astley (2007) extends the metaphor of the everyday road to be the "ordinary way ... [to] encounter the Christ of everyday, and learn to forge an ordinary spirituality for our own lives" (p. x). Astley (2007) sees this Christian learning as "not particularly academic or scholarly, but spiritual" (ibid.) and whilst surveying ordinary theology acknowledges that it provides depth "which is something in principle open to all and addresses the debates that all thinking Christians are already engaged in within themselves, at least at some level" (p. xii). He is overriding

experience by emphasising the spiritual, learning, and providing a depth that by superimposing Christ's image on it (p. 115).

In my conceptual journeying, I begin to wonder how ordinary theology might be demonstrated or exemplified in practice, and how people might interact with something visual, without making value judgements about the depth of responses.

Astley (2003) also sees architecture as an entry point into ordinary theology.

Commenting on the rebuilding and reordering of Blackburn Cathedral and the new glass entrance he sees

an impressive gold inscription over it ... [and he] was greatly moved by the quotation from the story of Jacob's dream at Bethel ... 'This is the House of God', it proclaims. 'This is the Gate of Heaven.' And underneath, at eye level on a printed card, 'Please Enter by the Side Door' (p.71).

He believes "[r]eal buildings should enable real people to go in through the main entrance" (p. 72). However, he will be invited to enter the main entrance of St Martin's which has been shaped by the same dream and foundation story.

An imaginative 'thought experiment' with Astley

I am proposing an imaginative 'thought experiment' to help Astley develop his concept of ordinary theology. He is invited to enter the main entrance of St Martin-in-the-Fields to view the window. He is apprehensive because he remembers a terrifyingly vivid dream of being on a hillside and seeing amongst the stars "an enormous, brilliantly lit, stained-glass window, its apex towering above me" (Astley, 2007, p.5). He traces this back to a visit to the London Planetarium as a child.

We imagine Astley enters the main church doors as a member of the public to encounter the window. He comes with his own concept of ordinary theology and a number of associated images, which he defends, claiming support from academic friends and partners. However, they and others also challenge him with new research ideas. He has the option of holding onto his original clarity or of experiencing a blurring/fracturing when looking and listening at a window in a public church setting. He is offered a learning opportunity and another way to tap into ordinary theology. I will now outline his definitions of ordinary theology, why ordinary theology is important, and its origins.

What is ordinary theology?

Astley (2002) defended his original conceptual work on ordinary theology as a "venture or speculation, intended to provoke a discussion" (p. viii). He sees

himself as a mapmaker imposing clarity by marking boundaries with sharp definitions. Although wanting to be a systematic practical theologian, Astley (2002) sees his conceptual developments in ordinary theology, becoming blurred with "only rough approximations of the real terrain" (p. 95) giving messy accounts in defining ordinary theology. I will indicate his several attempts to define ordinary theology in 2002.

Initially Astley (2002) describes ordinary theology as the "beliefs of 'non-theologically educated' churchgoers and other Christian believers, and of those outside the churches" (p. vii). He then wishes to "recover theology ... [as] an inherent part of *every* Christian's vocation" (ibid.). He extends ordinary theology to "theological beliefs and processes of believing that find expression in the God-talk of those believers who have received no scholarly theological education" (p. 1). He shifts from 'churchgoers', extending it to 'other Christians' and outside the church, and then returning to 'believers'. He refers directly to 'God-talk' and for ordinary theology to count as theology it has to explicitly mention God. The conversation is a 'talk' rather than a scholarly discourse of the theologically educated.

Astley (2002) then changes the language of God-talk into a "theology and theologizing of Christians who have received little or no theological education of a scholarly, academic or systematic kind" (p. 56). He continues to define ordinary theology negatively. He is concerned with "elbowing aside those academic theologians ... [and with Farley to establish] a generic concept of

reflective God-talk ... [found also] in the lairs of academic theologians" (pp. 56-57). He is attempting to be more inclusive. He also raises the question of whether a person reading an academic theological book or participating on a Christian faith course is doing academic theology or being non-theological. He also acknowledges that his critics may see him as "equally vague about other characteristics that mark out ordinary theology" (ibid.). Astley would have benefitted from reading Cameron et al (2010) who interpret theology as having four voices — operant, espoused, normative and formal - and providing a working tool to understand the complexity and dynamic interrelatedness of these voices (pp. 53-56). Astley continues with his binary opposing of ordinary and academic theology to counteract the higher status given to the latter and to represent the former as a substantive force by developing a new metaphor.

Astley (2002) further ventures into seeing academic and ordinary theology as two ideal types in the Weberian sense of being "mental constructs derived from the observable reality but not conforming to it in detail ... [and] incorporat[ing] some deliberate simplification and exaggeration" (pp. 57-58). He seems to be stuck conceptually in this binary definition. He tries to escape this confinement by declaring, "we can all think of individuals who match the portraits that I paint" (p. 58) of ordinary and academic theologians. He also sees a continuum existing between the two extremes. In his attempt to characterise ordinary theology into various categories he sees these as "continuous variables ... plotted on a spectrum of differences in degree" (p. 58). He builds up a composite picture or a series of portraits characterising

ordinary theology as being learned and learning, tentative, lay, significant, meaningful, subterranean, religious, kneeling, celebratory, irregular, mothertongue, and 'onlook' theology (pp. 58-86). He wishes to exhibit them in the academy but he undermines this/these picture(s)' uniqueness by stating they are "only *characteristic* of ordinary theology, they are no means *unique* to it. They are not, therefore invariably absent from academic theology" (p.58).

Astley (2002) attempts to construct an ordinary theology from a number of theological relations and partners. Returning to the spectrum he sees it now as a "rather static visual analogy" (p. 86) for depicting the relationship between the ordinary and the academic, and he offers instead a more dynamic image of a pond with a stone thrown into the middle. There is a smoothing and quietening as the waves have a modest rippling effect on the academic theology nearer to the edges. He notes that between the centre and the edge there are a number of midpoints. It is difficult to decide "whether to call this theological ripple 'ordinary' or 'academic'" (p. 87). Compared with Astley's ideal types of spectrums, ponds or wells, I suggest the window is a more dynamic image.

Astley defines ordinary theology by using a number of images, although without generating more conceptual clarity. He portrays ordinary theology as emerging from people "innocent of theological training... [who] are more likely to show the 'theological workings' of their current theologizing than to display the 'completed calculations" (p.60). He wishes to see ordinary theology as a

contextual theology; he wants to see more than just origins of that learning but the process of learning (ibid.). He then reverts to seeing ordinary theologians restricted to churchgoers who form the "great majority - who remain innocent of academic theological education" (p. 93). He does allow, in passing, people doing theology outside the church" (ibid.). For Astley the academy takes away that innocence and purity of doing theology and yet he mainly focusses on churchgoers. Astley neglects the part played by the wider public; Tracy's (1981) third public of the theologian, is society (p. 5) (the others being the academy and the church). He restricts his focus on society to the techno-economic realm, polity and culture. He sees a "religious reality in culture" (p. 11) in everyday life or in "explicit religious traditions" (ibid.). Tracy (1984) argues for a "religious dimension of ordinary experience and language ... [but it is not] an explicit religion ... [yet] there is a religion; as a limit-dimension, disclosed most graphically in the limit-experiences proper to every human existence" (p. 233). The theologian holds in tension the classical whole-limit narratives and part-limit risk taken narratives of particular realms.

Astley (2002) limits his concept of ordinary theology to focusing on something "more explicitly and more recognizably theological that is, the reflective Godtalk which expresses and articulates beliefs about God, Jesus, sin, salvation and so on" (p. 72). He reinforces this by stating that he does not "use the word 'theology' in an analogical or metaphorical sense, nor as synonymous with the (wider) term 'religion' ... *My* focus is on explicitly religious beliefs and believing" (ibid.).

Despite Astley's attempts at defining ordinary theology conceptually, arguably he needs to focus more on lived experience rather than on the innocence of not knowing academy generated theology. This moves the discussion from the content of theological understanding to places where theology is practised or put to use, moving from orthodoxy to orthopraxis (Graham, 2002). I suggest there is a possibility of finding freshness in experience rather than dull, lifeless, restricting or abstract categories. Further theology needs to have 'ordinary' preceding it to give due emphasis to lived experience. Astley (2002) attempts to return to an earlier dictionary definition of ordinariness associated with "normal and regular both of what ordinarily happens and of what ought to happen" (p. 48). He is aware that ordinary people prefer "the unusual, the extraordinary and the 'special" (ibid.) to ordinariness. In his preamble to characterising ordinary theology, he refers to a poem about God, who is the ordinary one, and who does not intervene, noting that ordinary people share with some academic theologians' a belief in a non-intervening God (pp. 45-47).

In this 'thought experiment' of window-gazing Astley is given a fresh opportunity to incorporate ordinary experience again into theology. He is invited to hear the metaphors of others viewing the window and to reveal publically his own metaphoric language as he views and reflects. I am suggesting ordinary theology is to be seen as a working metaphor of two different agencies.

The 'ordinary' is the 'is' of lived experience of meaning-making, without it being made into the 'is not' by 'theology' which processes experience into abstract categories/concepts and is judged by the academy. Astley pursues a series of definitions of the 'ordinary' as the 'is not' of 'theology' but also proceeds to justify the ordinary theology in the 'is' language of the academy. Astley at times separately negates the academy for the ordinary and viceversa. He sees himself working the conjunction of ordinary and theology when he justifies its pragmatic and theological appropriation as a concept by the church and academy.

Why is ordinary theology important?

Astley (2002) sees the church as pragmatically needing to "study ordinary theology so that it may properly exercise its ministry of pastoral care, worship, Christian education, apologetics, preaching and evangelism, and indeed every other form of Christian conversation, leadership, concern and relationship" (p. 146). Barley (2010) also appropriates ordinary theology for researching weddings and ecumenical partnerships, using Astley's definition as a "helpful tool" (p. 228) to get people to embrace urgent pastoral change. She sees society losing its foundational religious standards and that "engaging with ordinary theology of ordinary people enables churches to hold meaningful conversations and to better understand modern-day mission in the market place" (ibid.).

Astley (2002), reflecting on his inadequate academic ministerial training, still perceives clergy as needing urgently a "large dose of careful, reflective experience of *people* ... to *meet* people in their own context and to *listen* to them" (p. 146). He observes that ordinary theology is spoken "very softly ... [though sometimes] explicitly articulated ... [but often] more implicit and inarticulate" (p. 147). He longs for people to be effective in ministry creating a "dialogue between the minister and the one being ministered to" (ibid.). Barley (2010) extends this conversation to "bring religious professionals and lay congregations together in a constructive dialogue ... looking at people's lives and how they live, listening to what they say, evaluating and learning threads of commonality" (p. 228). Ordinary theology is committed to listening and is offered an opportunity for fresh engagement with people through the east window.

Astley and Barley both want to empathise with ordinary people who have received silently other people's imposed theology. They are using ordinary theology for implementing, if not imposing, pastoral change. Astley (2002) advocates "listen[ing] to people for their sake ... [and] for our sake as well" (p. 148). He recognizes ordinary theology is helping academic theology to understand itself better for -

[i]nside every extraordinary theologian is an ordinary one that he is usually trying to keep hidden in there, or that she hasn't yet noticed ... [we need to] attend to our own ordinary theological background and

origins with more sympathy, more respect and more selfunderstanding (ibid.).

Astley is listening to other people and to himself. There is also a conceptual temptation not only to listen, but also to reprocess what has been heard in ordinary theology. Mark Cartledge (2010) uses Astley's outlines of ordinary theology as the basis for listening to people in a Pentecostal charismatic church. He agrees with Astley that the ordinary theology he has found can be reflective, having a "good understanding of theological concepts ... exceptional experiences of religion ... [and building] a common-sense expertise in relation to how these experiences should be handled these" (p. 16).

Cartledge (2010) sees these ordinary testimonies as "windows', however imperfect, into the beliefs and practices off the congregation as a whole" (p. 19). He carries out the 'rescripting' of these testimonies by bringing in more privileged different voices, the different discourses of the 'official' denomination, the academic discourse of Pentecostalism, non-theological religious and social science discourse (pp. 19-20). He believes his "empirically orientated theology, paying attention to both the ordinary and operational content can potentially rejuvenate both the ordinary and academic through a focussed study in a rigorous methodological manner" (p. 21). He sees his 'rescripting' providing a fresh approach. He also defaces

ordinary theology and removes it/paints over it, for the sake of the higher levels of academic discourse.

While Astley (2002) is justifying ordinary theology theologically to get academic theologians to take it more seriously, he is similarly 'rescripting' it into theological themes for the academy. He believes this is a mutual process also involving the testing of academic theological perspectives to see if they fit empirically with experience (p. 149). He uses the metaphor of 'shoe-fitting' (p. 149-150) but provides no empirical examples of academic theology changing in the light of fitting it with human experiences. For Astley (2002) both ordinary theologians and academic theologians re-read holy/Christian texts, make translations and add their own interpretations. He justifies and systematizes ordinary theology by stressing the importance of experience, revisiting revelation, developing awareness of pre-judgements, correcting the grammar of faith, and enlarging ecclesiology and normativity (pp. 148-157). He sees this enlarging as being radical, increasing a "wider understanding of doctrinal norms, by providing a wider concept of what the church believes as a norm for doctrine" (p. 154). He believes devolving the authority and power of the academy encourages sharing with others outside the academy and reverses "the delimiting thrust of traditional accounts of orthodoxy" (p. 157) and rationality. Astley has radical aspirations for taking ordinary theology seriously, justifying it pragmatically and theologically, without providing supporting empirical evidence.

I intend to challenge Astley's (2002) pragmatic use of ordinary theology to be on the "front line" (p. 162) as Barley (2010) did in order to get more of the market share of weddings by changing clergy attitudes towards couples. Further, Astley (2002) theologically justifies ordinary theology for the testing of academy theology by "'touching down' on human experience" (p. 149). This is 'applied' theology. I postulate that there is a third way, different from framing data for action or the testing of deductive theory. I see the need for the concept of ordinary theology to be more inductive, encouraging people to develop their own metaphors to express what they see. This gives more attention and importance to hearing people's ordinary theology in the 'field' rather than applying 'ready-made' theory or allowing the academy to rescript ordinary theology into an academic discourse. Ordinary theology needs to be situated in the 'field', not within the confines of the academy, and to be working with the metaphors people are using to make meaning. Astley instead creates his own mythological world of learning.

The learning of the origins of ordinary theology

Astley (2002) is committed to giving an account of the genesis of a learned faith whilst acknowledging that it is going to be "messy and in places fairly obscure" (p.13). He sees it as natural to want "to sluice it down and spruce it up; removing these marks of origination" (ibid.), that is, systematise it to make sense of it and have a validity. He is also dedicated to ascertaining incomplete truth about the "nature of the central structures, concepts and dynamics of our own, or other people's, concrete and distinctive lives of faith"

(ibid.). He attempts to depict the learning context of a person's Christian theology as looking for the "soil in which it was nurtured" (ibid.). Astley (2002) sees tracing these origins of learning as a demanding assignment as "[r]eligious faith has deep roots; it is deeply rooted in the tangled morass of mangrove swamps that constitute our lives. And down below those murky waters, our faith is anchored in an even murkier mud" (p. 14). He is creating a mythological underworld for the learning context that requires chronological and depth exploration.

Astley (2002) thinks ordinary theology reveals itself "most clearly and unselfconsciously ... in a more homely place ... [where religious learning is an] everyday and commonplace set of processes" (p. 45). In exploring the acquisition of language through the work of Le Guin, he believes that theology received from the mother is most likely to be ordinary theology whilst that from the father is academic theology (pp. 77-79). Astley (2007) believes he learned his personal and ordinary theology from his mother "who had no status ... She was not 'someone'. She was 'just ordinary'... [that was how] I learned Christ" (p. 126). He sees this as a more personal theology as contrasted with academic theologians who are unwilling to go back in time to trace origins and to remove their personal learning contexts. They prefer to concentrate on "prized blooms and away from its more humble (seedy?) origins and the rank, dark, moist environment" (p. 59). Astley (2002) indicates that the

academic theologian always began life as an ordinary theologian ... [and] his academic theology may be seen as a *modification* of a more basic, earlier model, many parts are still operating ...[for] inside the academic the ordinary theologian slumbers. One cannot, therefore easily separate the two (p. 58).

Astley (2002) is searching for "[s]ome framework of religious beliefs [to] be in place so that religious experiences can be fitted into it, before a person can know what it is that he sees" (p. 85). He tones down his embedded "learned conceptual scheme of religion ... [into] an *interpretative* schemata or background concepts ... [with] ordinary concepts ... not technical ones ... [so] they can be used" (p. 86). He reminds academic theologians that they do not "create this scheme, he only contributes to it or amends it" (ibid.). These ordinary concepts are rooted in the schemata, restricting the exploration of experience. It is debateable whether this religious schemata exists now or even if it did in the past. Accounting for it takes attention away from experience standing in its own right and trying to understand without determining origins.

Astley and those viewing the window are offered an opportunity to do theology with a minimalist image having hints of form and empty blanks in its structure. The window has the capacity to incorporate and to expand with a variety of perceptions from church going, non-churchgoing, and people searching for a meaningful and authentic spirituality. The research seeks to

facilitate a re-engagement of ordinary theology by the general public by liberating it conceptually from the scholar's hands and placing it into the hands of the "whole people of God, including the unschooled and even the unchurched" (Green, 1990, p. 146). The concept of ordinary theology needs to be sensitive in hearing the contributions of people viewing the window. The window releases Astley as an author to hear himself and other released voices, to contribute to a conceptual journey of ordinary theology. He and ordinary theology are challenged to listen again and to learn again in a different context with a visual image.

Ordinary theology: learning to look and listen again

Astley (2002) traces the connection of seeing and learning in biblical narratives but still believes that we have to "learn how to recognize ... things" (p. 82). He refers to 'onlook theology', as one of his portraits of ordinary theology, looking on 'x' experience as 'y' (p. 83). This involves making an interpretation retrospectively by locating such a look in the schemata of ordinary concepts, or by applying lenses or imposing theological doctrines on how objects ought to be seen. His spiritual vision is for "[s]piritual people ... [who] are nothing particularly special, except that they are able to recognize ... this, that and the other as God's this, that and the other" (2007, p. 4). Spiritual viewing undervalues ordinary viewing. For as Astley (2007) states that a "revision of everyday experience ... [is] seeing the same things differently ...[and] as holy, as sacred, as God's seeing more clearly and in

more depth ... through the eyes of faith" (pp. 5-6). Astley needs to see and hear what others are saying without his eyes of faith or an eye for correction.

Astley (2007), writing about discipleship learning, develops the metaphor of sight being "essentially ophthalmic ... the correction of vision ... a restructuring of sight (p. 11). He acknowledges that the metaphor of looking down a well or into a pool helps as:

we shall often see a virtual image of our own faces overlaying a real – though distorted, muddied and shifting - glimpse of what lies below the water ... a confluence of images ... we must think of one of those images as belonging to Jesus ... [with] our own face somehow superimposed, even blended. Reflection and refraction go together (p.115).

Astley (2002) is also critical of a naive approach to description in looking and listening. He sees a dialogue of interpretation taking place between the researcher and those researched. He acknowledges, "My perspective influences what comes to my attention as I listen to you talk about, and see you practise, your faith; indeed it influences what it is that I am capable of seeing and hearing" (Astley, 2002, p. 109). Pre-understandings and superimposition of his images affects Astley's looking and listening. Seeing and hearing in ordinary theology can be encouraged through the more imaginative use of visual evocative images. I am suggesting moving from applied theoretical grids back to images.

Ordinary theology: moving from grids and bringing back the image

Astley continues to collaborate with others in various empirical research projects. I will later describe how researchers use conceptual grids to tap into the ordinary theology of people. Some use visual images of physical objects, such as headstones and prayer cards. Feminist research unlocks the grids to hear the voices of women. There is a movement to consider the multi-voices in research and to encourage theological fluency. They attempt to develop visual research for looking into people's lived tradition. I will suggest how images are seen also to have a limited life in the general process of reflection before they are replaced in the formal art of theological reflection. Instead of reducing the gap, it increases it by discarding the image.

Empirical studies on Bible and cathedral visitors: psychological grids

In my research proposal (TH8005 portfolio 11 July 2011), I outlined a number of empirical studies. I will now critique their conceptions of ordinary theology and expand them. I previously drew attention to Christie (2007). In a later work Christie (2012) identifies a gap between academic Christologies and those of ordinary regular Anglican churchgoers. Christie and Astley (2009) also surveyed another classical doctrine, that of Soteriology, concluding that "much traditional atonement theology and language is a stumbling block for many ... [and] some find it offensive; most are simply puzzled by it" (p. 193). These classic doctrines empirically researched become academic obstacles to exploring ordinary theology. I indicated how Village (2007) studied the Bible with ordinary churchgoers, recognizing a gap between the modern

academic biblical reading and the way ordinary people read the Bible and develop their ordinary hermeneutics. He gives the participants an anonymous Bible passage and offers them several interpretations, which become grids to analyse how different personality types read scripture. They are working with 'pre-given' personality types, which are correlated onto another set of pregiven ways of reading which is another implicitly idealistic understanding. Both Christie and Village's writings are published as part of a series, another grid, jointly edited by Astley and Francis exploring in practical, pastoral and empirical theology.

I also indicated how Francis et al (2008) and Francis et al (2010) saw cathedral visitors through the lens/grid of Jungian psychological type theory. Williams et al (2007) explore the visitors' religious experience measured against church attendance, categorizing traditional pilgrims as regular attenders and, inappropriately, in my opinion, seeing secular tourists as people with little belief or attendance. I showed how Williams et al (2007) see cathedrals as having an exclusive mission opportunity to "draw back the veil between the secular worldview and the worldview of transcendence ... build[ing] bridges between contemporary spiritualties, implicit religious quests, and explicit religious traditions" (p. 122). They see the need for further research and to listen to the views of 'secular tourists' visiting cathedrals so that those responsible for them can more appropriately respond to visitors and their needs. Instead of evaluating the whole cathedral experience these visitor studies would benefit from taking a particular

cathedral visual aspect/artefact, without classifying people into pre-existing 'types' and rather allowing categories to emerge out of data.

Empirical studies: exploring ordinary visual forms

A number of empirical studies that explore ordinary visual forms have been published in *Rural Theology*, a journal whose senior editor is Francis, with Astley as a member of the editorial board. Lewis Burton (2010) looks at the visual inscriptions found on tombstones in a village churchyard and reflects on the ordinary beliefs of those commissioning these memorials. Tania ap Siôn (2009) and Burton (2010) consider the visual and written prayers of ordinary people visiting rural churches. The gravestone and the prayer card provide a visual framing for ordinary words. They are examples of an applied ordinary theology that involves local people and visitors.

A feminist perspective

A feminist perspective through the work of Clark-King (2004) encourages an appreciation of women's implicit ordinary theology. She listens to the marginal voices of regular churchgoing working class women in Newcastle-upon-Tyne speaking about God and their everyday lives, and that of the feminist perspective generated by middle class women. She wishes the previously unheard north-eastern women to be heard in the academy and church. To bridge the gap Clark-King (2004) constructs "a new theological viewpoint for the Church" (p. 187) using a choral metaphor. This, she argues,

permits people to have different images of God in a community and yet is a way of holding them together (p. 190). She sees this imported metaphor as providing an alternative to a "jumble of unrelated fragments ... in which each distinct voice adds to the harmony of the whole" (ibid.). Her feminist voice is challenged by the ordinary theology of these women of the northeast.

Theological fluency and listening to many voices

Cameron et al (2010) contributes to the discussion by considering theological fluency and listening to many voices. They see theology as having an "image problem" (p. 9) in contemporary culture and people being suspicious of it, believers put off by its analytical terms, and theology being unable to envision practices of faith. They see a need for "enculturating the gospel into contemporary cultural modes" (p. 10). A solution to bridging these gaps is offered in re-establishing the strong links of a "deep connectedness of the Christian theological tradition and human experience" (p. 13) by being in "active mode, grappling with the contemporary culture ... [and concerned with] the 'performative speech acts' of faith practice" (ibid.) in a particular context. They wish to develop "the faith community's theological capacity ... [by] expanding its theological 'vocabulary' and developing faithful mission" (p.14). Cameron et al (2010) are similar to Astley and Barley in emphasising a missiological imperative. They suggest organisations need to ensure their laity/employees have the "theological fluency, the ability to function effectively within the world view of faith, and crucially - the capacity to speak as well as to think theologically ... [and also] [s]ome competence in theory and a knowledge of doctrine" (ibid.). They suggest "[t]heological fluency is an art" (ibid.). They are developing, as an outsider team, the capacity of insider teams to develop more faithful practice, and to speak and think 'proper' theology for their charitable and church organisations. They leave behind the ordinary theology of individuals seeing reality through the lens of doctrine or the tradition (p.10). Astley (2002), in contrast, refers to the way in which ordinary theologians speak in a "whisper" (p. 148), hesitancy with stammering speech, compared with confidence and fluency.

Cameron et al (2010) are also concerned to bridge the gap between the academic and the practical transforming practice through generating "new insights, new *theological* theology" (p. 17) and putting faith back into the discourse. They indicate the four voices of theology, operant, espoused, normative and formal, which are "distinct, but interrelated and overlapping" (p.53). Although the four parts are reminiscent of a four-part choir, there is no mention of that metaphor. They do refer to the voices being a "dynamic quartet" (p.55). They recommend, "No one voice should drown out the others even though the search is for a renewed espoused theology that makes the best use of normative and formal sources" (p. 75). They also acknowledge that some voices blend with others whilst others are more powerful and challenging, creating asymmetry (p. 59). Astley (2007) believes that the Church can and

must create a profound and expressive harmony of praise from the variety of visions and [in] this variety of voices ... we individually find

our own voice to express our own vision ... [singing] the anthem of the one Church we each have a part to sing. And no one can sing it for us (pp. 116-117).

Both are stressing a blending, an oneness, and this seeking for unity needs balancing with an exploration of difference.

I am suggesting that ordinary theology stands alone in its own right, without placing it in a grid or expecting ordinary theologians to be fluent, or to experience transformation. The choir metaphor is imported, together with visiting outsider theologians, as a way of mediating between conceptual differences and standpoints. However, as an alternative, pursuing the visual has the potential of extending ordinary theology conceptually and enabling it to be exported to the academy. There have been some attempts in exploring the visual, which I will now consider.

New visual research conceptually developing ordinary theology

Pete Ward and Sarah Dunlop (2011) turned to visual research for a new way of conceptualising ordinary theology. They believe the "distinction between academic and ordinary is blurred" (p. 297). They define it instead through the help of the writings of Raymond Williams as a "whole way of life and a structure of feeling expand[ing] the scope of theology and encourag[ing] us to look for the lived in relation to flows of expression in communities" (p. 298). Williams is entering the territory of popular culture and the Marxist-inspired

movement of studying oral history and mass culture. Ward and Dunlop are developing a more, popular cultured infused ordinary theology.

Their research focusses on young recently arrived Polish immigrants, who take photographs of what is sacred to them and then construct accompanying commentaries. They admit the commentaries are "very brief and often seem marginal to the accounts that the participants give of the experience, nevertheless they represent a formal theological element, which is located within the accounts of the ordinary" (pp. 307-308). Further, they suggest that shortened, fragmentary references to the Catholic tradition "should not be read as the absence of an educated and developed tradition, or structure" (p. 308). They believe the presence of a Catholic tradition in the constructed representations is a "corrective to Astley's definitions of ordinary theology ... [and is] constructed in relation to, and out of, an interaction with communally held tradition ... always embedded in personal narratives" (ibid.). They see, if ordinary theology is to be taken seriously, that there is need to indicate how tradition influences meaning-making (p. 309). When photographs are used to express what is sacred to them, there is "always a mediation of belief rather than belief itself" (ibid.) stopping an over-privileging of ordinary theology and never assuming it is "authentic or natural or real ... [just an] expression" (p. 311). The visual and speech become research partners in reshaping the written words of the personal and the tradition in ordinary theology. Ward and Dunlop are turning to the lived tradition and find parts explicitly and implicitly embedded in narrations. Conceptually, ordinary

theology is being extended by tradition. The photographic collection is eclectic and fragmentary.

Ward and Dunlop (2011) see people doing ordinary theology when they take what is "at hand" (p.312) for taking photographs with ordinary. Doing ordinary theology is being involved in *bricolage* - constructing from what is near and available at the time. The outcome is more fragmentary or surrealist than a finished or coherent product. They suggest that ordinary theology should first explore the textures before generating ordinary knowledge. They warn that while writing about ordinary theology "it is possible to turn it into something that is no longer ordinary" (p. 313). They believe reflexivity can prevent this and yet, they are unspecific about it and what is required. Narrative responses to the chosen visual image[s] are challenging ordinary theology to look again at the visual. The window is a composite whole shape, or a series of parts, suggesting both traditional and non-traditional elements, ordinary yet perceived as different.

Transitory image

For some theologians the image is transitory. I have already indicated at beginning of this chapter that Astley is aware of *The art of theological reflection* by Killen and de Beer (1994). These researchers observe people as having a "natural and almost unconscious way that ...[they] muse, reflect and come to insight and new learnings in their lives" (p. xi). They see this general reflective process as "the *movement toward insight* ... [bringing

people to] important occasions of wisdom in ... [their] ordinary lives" (ibid.). Astley wishes to rediscover a wisdom held in learning contexts and processes. Killen and Beer (1994) see this general process moving through "enter[ing] experience ... encounter[ing] feelings ... images arise ... spark[ing] insight ... [and] lead[ing] to action" (p. 21). For them, images provide a slight distancing between experience and feelings, generating recognizable and unforeseen aspects of meaning by "transport[ing] our situation and us to a new space, a new standpoint ... to new insight, to new learning, to being changed" (p. 41). They see images working differently from conceptual language because they are "less definite and precise ... encour[aging] multiple aspects of meaning in an experience to come forth" (p. 37) and "captur[ing] experience and acting like a metaphor ... revealing the familiar and unexpected" (p. 38). This is explored further in Chapters 4, 5 and 6.

Killen and de Beer (1994) see this movement from symbolizing experience in an image to insight being available to all, and providing "an entry into a more formal theological conversation" (p. 45). They make this the basis/framework for the next stage, the art of theological reflection. The natural reflective process "becomes theological when we use questions arising from themes in our Christian heritage to explore an image that emerges from our experience" (p. 42). The Christian theological heritage for Killen and de Beer (1994) presents a rich wisdom for the community "to test, refine, and expand our insights as we carry them back into our daily lives" (p. 46). They believe the wisdom is no longer to be found in the ordinary but in the tradition through which "we break out, or are jolted out, of our habitual tendency" (p. 16)

regarding it as "a gift, a trust that God is with us and for us, even when we cannot see how" (p. 51). The general reflection captures the experience, whereas for them theological reflection is when adult Christians "connect reflection on their lives to their Christian heritage in a disciplined manner" (p. 73). They indicate in a chart the "complementarity between the movement toward insight and the framework of theological reflection" (p. 74). Images are to be found within the general movement and at the heart of the matter in the framework for theological reflection. They are drawn from secular disciplines and Christian tradition respectively (p. 74). In their worked examples, images are not always used and at the heart of the matter may lead to generating images (pp. 90-107). They see the art of theological reflection controlling the flow of the river of experience by imposing dams. They also act as sources that feed action, tradition, culture and positions (pp. 58-59). Using images can "expand a step in the process of theological reflection ... deepen[ing] the quality of our reflection ... [and we also] must remember to bring the pause to closure and move on to complete the process" (p. 82). The image is transitory, pragmatically used to develop, the art of theological reflection, emphasising the practice rather than the art content of the process.

It is my argument that conceptually ordinary theology needs to break out of the restricting theoretical grids of empiricism embedded in some areas of practical theology. I have indicated how much this academic research so far is waiting to hear a feminist emancipatory voice whilst acknowledging also that this is outside the experience of many ordinary women. Other researchers suggest using a choral metaphor to bridge this gap. The development of theological fluency and the hearing of a multi-voiced community are attempts to develop a conceptually ordinary theology. We have seen how communities living with tradition see the distinction between ordinary theology and academic theology differently. I am suggesting a rediscovery of a general process of reflection in which the image expands meaning rather than concepts contracting it. I will argue later in this chapter that an image is not to be discarded by giving preference to exploring the wisdom of the Christian theological heritage or to complete a process. The image has the general capacity to work like a metaphor to extend conceptually a static grid locked empirical ordinary theology. This will facilitate more participation by the public in reflection, bridging also the gap between the public and the academy.

Exploring ordinary theology in the city through public art in a church setting

Astley (2012) turns to the countryside for developing a closer connection between ordinary theology and rural theology, and shaping rural ministry. He argues that theology in the country is different from that in the city or suburb, believing that the rural clergy connect better with "the everyday life of both worshippers and non-worshipping parishioners ... [and] ordinary theology will often be heard more clearly and may be more closely examined in a rural context" (2012, p. 49). Further, Astley (2012) sees the rural ministry as an "ideal testing ground for ... ordinary theology ... [requiring] empirical studies ...

to paint its portrait (or, rather its variety of portraits) in sufficient detail" (ibid.). He does not engage with the city. His portrait or portraits are a retrospective series of landscapes with people set in a more nurturing monochromatic soil. In my research, the city offers Astley and ordinary theology an opportunity to engage or re-engage with multi-nuanced public art and with a more mixed populace, not pursing and maintaining the coherence of a village.

Astley's academic partners have aided his defence plea for ordinary theology and he is now introduced to other research partners who are not restricted by empirical grids. They include a feminist theologian, some researchers appreciating respondent multi-voices, and those using a visual image. St Martin's Church, originally in the fields, now occupies a public space in the city. I am offering Astley an opportunity to share in a common experience of a work of art with people with faith or none, in order to make connections (or not) with everyday life.

lan Borden (2003) sees cities not as places of highbrow civilized culture with an "occasional nod to everyday life ... [focussing only on] public squares, gentle wanderings, spoken conversations and square-side cafes" (p. 114). Trafalgar Square is one of those piazzas for promenading and passing through to other places, yet it is a place for nurturing. St Martin's becomes one of Borden's (2003)

hidden spaces and brutally exposed spaces, rough and smooth spaces, loud and silent spaces, exciting spaces and calm spaces

[where] people remember, think, experience, contest, struggle ... encounter otherness and sameness ... [and are] at once confirmed and challenged (ibid.).

Through my 'thought experiment' with Astley, the concept of ordinary theology is invited to inhabit St Martin's, a hidden nurturing place, off the square, yet part of everyday city life.

For Patricia Phillips (2003) public art occupies "inchoate spaces between public and private, architecture, object and environment, process and production, performance and installation ... In both reality and rhetoric, it operates within the seams and margins" (p. 122). Astley (2002) admits that ordinary theology grounds itself in language that is "a less articulate and more inchoate complex of human and religious attitudes, values, commitments, experiences and practices" (p. 56). Spaces and language share inchoateness. Phillips (2003) also acknowledges that public art "inhabits contemporary civic life unpredictably ... [and] public art is owned by everyone and no one" (p. 122). Public art can generate public insight and public values. The boundaries between public and private are as changeable and messy as ordinary theology.

Astley will begin to see the east window with a public outdoor face and a private indoor gallery face as seen by regulars and visitors. Phillips (2003) believes a public space is a threshold where "people constantly move in, out, and through it, but it is rarely inhabited" (p. 129). Inside the gallery, "public art

is witnessed as an unintended consequence of transit through a city" (p. 130) as people go about everyday living. For Astley (2002) ordinary theology is in transit "open to change because it is particularly open to outside influence" (p. 160) and he is ready for a new experience. He believes that the people occupying the threshold are pushing for "a more open ecclesiology" (ibid.). Phillips (2003) sees this threshold art occupying "critical junctures, psychological sites, places of unrest ... bounded and boundariless empty and inhabited" (p. 133). Astley finds himself standing on a threshold with a piece of public art, his personal ordinary theology and other people in a church setting. It is my contention that the window brings many people together for a thoughtful experience and renews a mutual working relationship with the everyday.

Malcolm Miles (1997) instead believes that creating public sculptured monuments, like the ones in Trafalgar Square, reflect the dominant hierarchical power and national identity. Public art can be responsible for constructing and subverting monuments, by democratizing and celebrating the lives of "ordinary' people" (p. 58). Public art can creatively subvert by offering an imaginative space for developing conceptually alternative ideologies and theologies and wider participation. It is my contention that making art available to a wider audience in the public arena will lead to greater participation by people previously considered amateurs by the formally educated professionals. Public art also opens up ordinary theology to fuller participation and creates imaginative interpretations about a window in a church building on the edge of a square. The east window is offering a

fresh image and an imaginative opportunity to conceptually and metaphorically develop ordinary theology.

Ordinary theology: new learning with others through a new image

Astley needs a positive attitude as he enters the church and a determination to be appreciative when looking and listening with ordinary people viewing the window. He can learn from visitors to churches and museums, where people with a wide range of experiences through active participation, engage in constructivist learning. Hein (1998) suggests that participants come to conclusions about an exhibit when "they 'make sense' within ... [their learned] constructed reality" (p. 34), not necessarily "match[ing] those intended by the curatorial staff" (p.35). Viewers will have the opportunity to ponder the window without the clergy or the artist influencing them. For Hein (1998) a constructivist exhibition has "many entry points, no specific path and no beginning and end" (ibid.). I suggest that St Martin-in-the-Fields Church is a place that people enter for a variety of reasons, and they will look at different things in the order they decide. Similarly, Astley's ambiguous and binary concept of ordinary theology can be subject to a wide range of experiences and unpredicted learning.

Astley also needs to prepare himself for people who are not necessarily fully focussed or systematic in their viewing. Visitors "create a prism through which exhibitions and programs are experienced ... [and engage in a] subtle process of building personal meaning" (Faulk, 2006, p. 161). Rounds (2006),

sees this viewing as a "modest investment of attention to exhibit contents ... [building up a] cognitive hedge fund" (p. 148). Astley's predetermined systematic ordinary theology can experience an easing if he is curious about the window. He has the opportunity to make new investments for future research.

Astley (2002), declares the influence of Karl Barth as an academic partner, who momentarily sees the church needing to open its doors and windows, not lock in on itself and to look at only piously narrated filled windows (p. 161). He asserts that Barth wishes to see the church having openness to ordinary life, ordinary theology and the street. This lived experience of seeing an image from inside the church and outside in the street conceptually challenges Astley's ordinary theology.

Astley (2002) is also conceptually moving to begin to appreciate difference as he sees a similarity between organized religion and political parties, both being "living movements ... rather than abstract systems of beliefs and values ... composed of people with commitment who engage in a range of activities [and] carry along with them a rag-bag ideology" (p. 159). He needs to be ready to receive people's interpretations, not just the holistic ones, but also their breaching, rupturing and breaking into new interpretations. Ordinary theology will need to work with many fragmentary unsystematic interpretations.

Duncan Forrester (2005) developing 1 Corinthians 13 suggests a constructive working with fragments as "our knowledge is fragmentary, enigmatic, often confusing, like dim images in a distorting mirror" (p. 7). For Forrester (2005), coherent systems on Earth are not possible - only a "series of illuminating [or dim] fragments which sustain and nurture the life of the community" (p. 8). The fragments for Forrester are also "sharp and disturbing but often also constructive, helpful and healing" (ibid.). Forrester could suggest a way forward for Astley and ordinary theology to receive "'fragments' of insight" (p. 16) as reality is "too messy and too confused" (p. 18). They are to be seen as the food for a "pilgrim people ... [a]nd not just the faithful" (ibid.). Astley would agree with the messiness of ordinary theology. Forrester sees the possibility of fragments working in different ways in theology as "irritants, as illumination, as road metal, as lenses, as fossils, reminders of the past and ... as building blocks" (p. 19). Astley conceptually sees Barth's irregular dogmatics relying more on proclamation, "aphorisms than explicit argument... [and giving only] a fragmentary account of faith leaving the goal of a systematic enquiry to its academic cousin" (p.77). Irregular dogmatics and ordinary theology, for Astley their origins are in systematic academic theology. Fragments from the school of theology can be worked on to make whole constructions or they remain as a series of individual fragments.

Conclusion

Astley is being given a lived experience that could conceptually develop his definition of ordinary theology into a working metaphor. Encouraging a fuller imaginative engagement and participation in public art in the 'field' of a city church can overcome pragmatic missiological and theological appropriation of ordinary theology. Bringing an image into research of ordinary theology and holding on to it facilitates more participation and the hearing of many voices. This could encourage personal metaphoric constructions leading to a new set of people portraits. Ordinary theology has the potential to become more of a people's theology challenging the conceptually authoritative discourses professional theologians based in the theological academy, to look, listen and learn from others and their theologizing with images, spoken and written words.

Chapter 3 Astley attempting to bridge his own conceptual gaps in ordinary theology

Introduction

In 2013, Astley and Francis decided to look at the conceptual gap that exists between ordinary and academic theology by turning to metaphor, in particular, those of mediation and bridge. This significant turn occurred after I had completed my fieldwork and data analysis. I will evaluate their introductory comments about exploring further developments in ordinary theology, though space does not permit a detailed critique of the commissioned theoretical perspectives or empirical studies. I will suggest that Astley considers McFague's (1982) contribution of metaphorical theology to develop his ordinary theology, conceptually and metaphorically.

Astley and Francis (2013) reflect on how *Ordinary Theology* (2002) saw its application to the beliefs of lay churchgoers and others, attracting the attention of academics, researchers, ministers and those involved in adult Christian theological education. They also acknowledge that their work received criticism, which they do not specify. They now feel the time is "ripe to commission a collection of new essays to develop the idea of ordinary theology further, and to explore ... [this] important phenomena ... both through empirical research and in its application to a range of contexts" (p. xiii). Instead of bringing the academy and ordinary theology together the authors have artificially separate sections for reflecting on ordinary theology with analytical and theological perspectives, and then another for researching

and situating ordinary theology with empirical and contextual perspectives.

Only one of the commissioned writers has work in both sections, bridging the gap between the theoretical and a practical context.

As Astley and Francis (2013) explore the terrain of ordinary theology, they expect to find diversity. They welcome "a mix of voice, whether ... complementary or dissenting" (ibid.). Their work focusses on the everyday and the ordinary, still distinctly Christian and within the church. They desire to explore the different terrains with a variety of perspectives and some of the essayists have already appeared in the empirical studies I reviewed in Chapter 2. New writers are developing ordinary ethics, worship, discipleship and learning. There is no suggestion of exploring further ordinary and academic theology using a visual image or any engagement with the creative arts.

Astley (2013b) reaffirms his previous definitions, description and the significance he ascribes to ordinary theology. He continues to systematise ordinary theology, imposing his 'colonial outsider' conceptualization of ordinary theology as God-talk. He acknowledges that not "every part of the unsystematic bricolage that makes up most Christians' ordinary theology works in this way...[but it] must be salvific for people if they are to continue to hold it" (p. 2). Yet people hold on to a variety of beliefs, not all necessarily explicitly concerned with salvation. Astley still focuses on people's beliefs, orthodoxy rather than orthopraxis by "portraying the theology in what people

say (or write) rather than implicit in what they do" (p. 5). He reiterates his overall word and theological approach arguing, "we must always strive to unveil the theology in the linguistic data, rather than impose our own theological categories onto to that data" (p. 6). He continues to go beyond description having "listened to what ordinary theologians say ... [and] probed the theological influences and connections" (ibid.). He persists in providing a theology of ordinary theology that has "theologically trained observers ... [to] reflect theologically on this ordinary theology, presenting their own theology of ordinary theology" (ibid.). Astley (2013b) recognizes that academic theologians would be interested in this but advises that practitioners of ordinary theology should be allowed to "critique their own academic theology" (p. 7).

Metaphors of mediator and bridge

Astley (2013a) limits the mutuality of ordinary and academic theologians even after declaring that the learner is to be the focus. He sees

the Christian or theological educator ... need[ing] to occupy the mediatory role of a translator, fluent in both languages, whose primary task is to convey the sense of academic theology (or of the broader Christian tradition and its several 'languages') in a tongue that is 'understanded of the people' (p. 48).

His pragmatism undermines his 'middle' position, in-between the ordinary and academic theology. The educator becomes a one directional translator

working for the academy to produce vernacular writing. The mediator metaphor dies.

Nevertheless, Astley continues to suggest that metaphor is necessary for the imaginative seeing of connections. Initially, he is "picturing life through theological or spiritual eyes" (pp. 48-49). This can restrict or encourage the spotting of

imaginative resemblance allow[ing] us to 'carry over' a word or phrase between one application and another ... [and] helping us to see a new depth through a form of stereoscopic vision, in which not only two words but 'two worlds' are seen together and we are jolted into spotting similarities that we had not previously noticed, so that we 'see one thing in terms of another'. In doing so, both elements may be changed or 'reframed' (p. 50).

Astley (2013a) makes a brief reference to his earlier work in *Exploring God-Talk* (2004) where metaphor is seen as one form amongst many forms of religious language. He refers to the books of McFague, which he describes as stimulating and making "some big claims about the importance of metaphor in our everyday lives" (2004, p. 36). He highlights her work as occupying an "intermediate point" (p. 41), exploring the symbiotic relationship of images and concepts (pp. 42-43) and suggesting that "we must embrace a plurality of models ... [forming] a network of models" (p. 44). Astley is

carrying out a comprehensive mapping exercise indicating the availability of various types of religious language.

Astley (2013a) does advocate nurturing and educating vision and imagination by bringing together the learner and the Christian tradition through particular learning experiences. He is concerned to promote theological reflection throughout. He believes "most Christians are already reflecting theologically on their practice and experience ... [and i]t is this ordinary theological reflection that Christian educators should mainly seek to build on, linking it with the wider resources of the Christian tradition" (p. 52). This permits him to be more optimistic for the "hermeneutical conversation between ordinary theology and academic or ecclesiastical theology, a metaphorical bridge to facilitate this link is already in place" (ibid.). He indicates how the stories and metaphors in ordinary theology are "very rich in figurative language and autobiographical stories; and the concepts of academic theology are themselves founded and funded by metaphors, models, analogies and narratives ... and work best when they keep touch with their origins" (ibid.). It appears that metaphor or story has become part of a primordial world and academic theologians need to go back to their personal roots. Astley cites the work of McFague (1983) as influencing him in this (ibid). I show later how he partially adopts her work on metaphor but not the complex relationship between concept and image, which are linked powerfully by metaphorical theology.

Astley moves conceptually to develop the 'is' rather than the 'is not' of metaphor by suggesting there is similarity between the two sides as

experience gives rise to an ordinary theology voiced in metaphor and story; and academic theology is undergirded by very similar linguistic forms. The hermeneutical conversation envisaged here, therefore, primarily begins and develops on the bridge between the metaphors and stories of the conversation partners on both sides of the gap. Like speaks to like (ibid.).

The bridge metaphor is an imaginary construction, a 'thought experiment' by Astley. Although he alludes to the bridge as a place of conversations about meaning, the design form is unspecified, the materials are hidden and unknown, and the purpose of the bridge is unclear. He indicates that the pillars of common wisdom and academic scholarship share the same materials, yet the gap remains. Astley is solely responsible for this initiative, not yet openly supported by the academy, or by local ordinary communities. The bridge constructs similarity in his mind and removes difference and a gap.

He is also aware that to bridge this gap is aspirational. He observes that:

[m]uch Christian and academic theological teaching ... seeks wholly to raze people's pre-existing theological fabrications to the ground, trampling their personal narratives and imaginative images, before attempting (often unsuccessfully) to build something entirely new and unrelated on the bulldozed site (ibid.).

Christian educators and academic theological teachers may have the more powerful voices, but Astley (2013a) seeks to elevate ordinary theology by honouring narratives and images, and making them acceptable to a critical and suspicious academy. He sees bridging of the gap between these partners as an urgent priority - "[we] need to try harder, beginning where and with what - people already are" (ibid.). Christie (2013) as a theological educator, supports this view after reflecting on her previous research mentioned in chapter 2, as people do not wholly express themselves within doctrinal norms. She sees the need to ensure an "ongoing mutual critical dialogue with ordinary theology" (p. 48). She admits to being "quite theological" (p.39) and attempts to escape from her own constricting doctrinal grids. She does not specify how this is to be done. On the other hand, Pratt (2009) as an educator, an archdeacon and diocesan communications lead seeks to extend the work of Astley from a liberative perspective. He suggests drawing up a list of topics of "worthy areas of theological investigation" (p. 118), and another list of Church teachings contested by people. He believes that uniting the lists will make theology more "local and contextual, yet universal as well" (ibid.). It will help the church in its "apologetic task of theology, and will broaden horizons" (ibid.). Pratt sees that this process allows ordinary theology to be effectively communicated through the local media. These extensions are also aspirational without empirical examples. Astley and Francis (2013), however, extend their work by presenting their

collection of essays as another speculative effort to incite discussion, without detailed consideration of the bridge working of metaphor and story.

In the east window, there are many processes of construction at work, which use metaphors and models for meaning-making. Astley needs to develop his concepts further by looking for the first time (or again) at McFague's metaphorical theology to consider the inter-related work of image, metaphor and concept. I also suggest that Astley could conceptually develop ordinary theology and its relationship with academic theology by choosing the window metaphor instead of the bridge. He would appreciate other people's perceptions and the way they generate metaphors.

Further insights from McFague on metaphor

Astley indicates the similarity between the bridge pillars of ordinary and academic theology. McFague (1982) is able to see further. In my introduction, I referred to her main thesis: that if "all thought is indirect, then all concepts and theories are metaphorical in the sense that they too are constructions; they are indirect attempts to interpret reality, which never can be dealt with directly" (p. 26). She makes the insightful observation that "[c]oncepts and theories ... are at the far end of the continuum and rarely expose their metaphorical roots" (ibid.). Astley (2002) explores how professional academics overcome the way they forget or hide their ordinary theological roots, by suggesting an attention "to our own ordinary theological background and origins with more sympathy, more respect and more self-

understanding" (p. 148). Astley also sees a continuum existing between the two ends of academic and ordinary theology but McFague sees metaphor linking the two. McFague (1982) sees metaphor generating new meaning whereas:

[c]oncepts ... [are] unlike metaphors ... [they] do not create new meaning, but rely on conventional, accepted meanings. Theories, unlike models, do not systematize one area in terms of another, but organize concepts into a whole (p. 26).

Further concepts and theories attempt to organize metaphor into a whole, allencompassing structure. McFague (1982) sees the language of concepts
making whole word pictures "tend[ing] toward univocity, toward clear and
concise meanings for ambiguous, multileveled, imagistic language ...
richness and multivalency are sacrificed for precision and consistency" (ibid.).
In a key statement McFague (1982) suggests, "[c]onceptual thought attempts
to find similarities among the models while models insist on dissimilarities"
(ibid.). For McFague (1982) models are dominant metaphors with "staying
power" (p. 23), and they have "systematic, comprehensive, interpretive
power" (p. 117). They provide a "further step along the route from
metaphorical to conceptual language" (p. 23). She sees theological language
as a "mix of metaphorical and conceptual language" (p. 117). Astley and
McFague are trying to make both ordinary theology and metaphor, by using
working models to stretch concepts. In ordinary theology and dissimilarity. Astley
is tension between the 'is' and the 'is not', similarity and dissimilarity. Astley

and McFague agree there is need for mediation. Astley suggests a bridge whilst for McFague it is the model. McFague (1982) sees models as "mediators between metaphors and concepts, they partake of the characteristics of each and are an especially fruitful type of expression to investigate for a metaphorical theology" (p. 28).

Astley constructs an ordinary theology acceptable to the academy. McFague's (1982) aim is to construct a metaphorical theology for a wider audience by envisioning and articulating the relationship between "the divine and the human which are nonidolatrous but relevant ... [non-literal] ways which are meaningful to all peoples, the traditionally excluded as well as the included" (ibid.). She believes this overcomes the loss of religious metaphors and substituting them with translations of a "more generalized and abstract vocabulary" (p. 118). She acknowledges that dominant metaphors come to their dominant position as "classics" as they have usurped others and they can also be in turn usurped (p. 28). McFague has to come to her view on the centrality of metaphor and models after extensive consideration of the work of Gadamer and Ricoeur. She believes she shares with Ricoeur "a modified hermeneutics of restoration ... [and also sees] religious language as redescription of or reorientation to reality" (p. 64). In Chapter 2 I cited the way Cartledge (2010) redescribed the ordinary theology of his respondents by others discourses provided by the denomination, of the Pentecostal tradition, social sciences and scholarly studies of Charismatic/Pentecostal theologies. McFague (1982) sees Ricoeur having a

metaphorical quality ... [insisting] on the "is not" as well as on the "is" ... [and introducing] a distinctively negative note, a note of disorientation, of nonidentity, of distanciation, of the future as different from and alienated from the present (ibid.).

Redescription and distancing is another step to moving away from the metaphorical to conceptual development.

Conclusion

The window as a metaphor and model is preferable to a narrow bridge theoretically used to bridge the gap with concepts. McFague (1982) suggests the "central role of models in theology is to provide grids or screens for interpreting this relationship between the divine and the human" (p.125). There is difficulty in having the concept of God at one end of the continuum and the world of metaphor at the other. There is a problem in giving priority to either or seeing them co-existing opaquely in a complex interacting model of concepts and metaphors. McFague registers the danger of being idolatrous in the use of language, and suggests the need for languages other than abstract and distant languages. There is a risk of losing the different ways people talk, in making meaning of what they see and believe.

Initially Astley (2002) rejects the metaphorical in favour of explicit religion, but he is becoming more positive about it as he briefly cites McFague (1982) who sees metaphor not as "esoteric or ornamental rhetorical device

superimposed on ordinary language... [but] metaphor is 'ordinary language'. It is the way we think ... we always think by indirection" (p. 16). The model, as a grid of similarity, has the potential also to stretch and create irregular working metaphors using ordinary language and theology of "is' and 'is not'. Astley has missed an opportunity. McFague (1982) is offering an alternative 'unsubstitutable' approach to metaphor as "'truth' is never reached; rather approximations are achieved to which persons commit themselves, but the process continues" (p. 33). She sees a "metaphorical pattern for rational human understanding is essentially a dramatic pattern for human knowing and becoming, a pattern which focuses on mobility, open-endedness, and tentativeness" (pp. 33-34). Metaphor is not limited to geniuses but is "indigenous to all human learning from the simplest to the most complex" (p. 32).

In the next chapter, I construct a research methodology with methods that are sensitive to eliciting the language people use and will assist in exploring the metaphors people generate when viewing the window and in developing Astley's ordinary theology both metaphorically and conceptually.

Chapter 4 An ordinary methodology for researching a window

Introduction

This chapter considers the construction of an appropriate and sensitive methodology for researching the ways in which the new east window of St Martin-in-the-Fields, London, as a visual image, embodies the concept and practice of ordinary theology. There will be a reviewing of Astley's (2002) preliminary, orienting methodological approach, including his reflexivity and Barley's (2010, 2014) development of ordinary research using the local priest as the ordinary researcher. My critique of their work and my research question, which focusses on a visual image to encourage wider public participation and to generate metaphors to develop the concept of ordinary theology, influenced my decision on paradigm selection, research approach and methods. I sought out appropriate instruments to focus on a visual image, encourage participation and elicit peoples' meaning-making. I needed an approach that would assist me in testing my working hypothesis that perceptions of the window are a legitimate form of ordinary theology. I have selected an interpretative paradigm with perspectives from constructivism, phenomenology, and hermeneutics. My approach is inductive and qualitative.

I selected a visual ethnographic method along with semi-structured interviews and questionnaires, journaling by participants and myself, and unstructured situational interviews with passers-by, street traders and church staff. The data collected were tested against official documents and sermons. I will also indicate how I gained ethical approval for the research.

A number of critical incidents describe the research experience. I make introductory comments about the data collection and analysis and quantify the number of respondents. This leads to a consideration of frame analysis, ethnomethodology, nitty-gritty hermeneutics, and the pastoral cycle as interpretive lenses of data analysis. The analysis commences with framing including the demographic frames of research participants, exploring the primary frame of analysis at first viewing of the window and then the framing at the second viewing. The responses to the questionnaires are reframed into a sequence of frames providing a cycle or spiral of theological reflection. A grid of three different framings for the window emerges. This has a capacity to generate closure, creating a gestalt. There is an outlining of portraits of people usually overlooked and not heard. Further imaginative participation and data analysis leads to an exploration of themes of reawakening, being inbetween and the web. These working metaphors and ordinary people portraits arise from stretching, breaching and rupturing of academic grids. The window becomes a working example that includes a person's ordinary theology previously unspoken and unheard. This releases the concept of ordinary theology from a confining academic grid into a more open hermeneutical web and template by placing in it the hands of ordinary people.

The orientating methodological approaches of Astley and Barley

Astley (2002) believes that ordinary theology necessitates both the "best sort of empirical research ... [and] conceptual work" (p. 103) and they need to

orientate and revise each other. He distinguishes between studying and doing ordinary theology (p. 97). For Astley, researching ordinary theology involves drawing from many academic "disciplines and fields in order to furnish it with the requisite theoretical insights and procedures, and empirical methods of data along with the appropriate sensitivity concerning ... pastoral and educational - considerations" (ibid.). He gives reassurance that his approach does not mean empirical and conceptual "never meet or interact" (p. 105) as research design uses methodologies and methods that frame the collection of data and its analysis. He sees such research as "tak[ing] us beyond a research methodology that depends on the impressionistic and the anecdotal ... [for s]erious 'looking and listening' are needed to test the intuitions that we all have about what and how people believe and feel" (p. 103). He recognizes that empirical studies will "need the conceptual reflections of the theologian and the philosopher from the outset" (p. 105). He also suggests practical theology needs to have theory "to frame empirically testable hypotheses and to revise them in the light of empirical findings" (p. 106). This gives priority to academic theology framing the hypothesis in its own language. He suggests a depth of reflexivity in his approach that takes seriously what people say and yet acknowledges the impossibility of removing the researcher's beliefs (p. 113). He sees the need for presuppositions and standpoints of theology to be declared and used (p. 114). Astley's 'coherent' methodology seems to distance him from people's everyday ordinary theology. Researching ordinary theology needs to have direct contact with ordinary theologians and their lived experience by research methods, which facilitate this.

Barley (2010; 2014) building on Astley's thinking locates her "ordinary research" (2010, p. 229) within a methodological frame of action research and develops the work of Ellen Clark-King (2004). She also believes that "handling and interpreting ordinary theology of ordinary people ... [is best] carried out by ordinary clergy in a manner that informs their pastoral practice" (p. 230). The local clergy become "local researchers ... [needing to] gather ... the stuff ... [of] 'ordinary research" (ibid.). They need to be trained to "listen to everyday theologians and to interpret, connect and reconcile the emerging choral theology" (ibid.). The clergy become, by default, local market researchers, with ordinary voices re-cast into potential consumer or customer voices. The research outcome is to increase the church business rather than understanding beliefs. Nevertheless, she suggests a range of empirical methods of action research as the tools for "everyday researchers conducting 'ordinary research' where they are" (p. 231). These tools are predominantly methods used in qualitative research. I will later outline in this chapter my selection from these methods.

In my choice of paradigm, perspective, methodology and methods, I wanted to be more open and flexible in design, and to include more ordinary voices than Astley has done. I sought an alternative to Barley's consumer research approach and to question whether the priest is the best person to lead research into ordinary theology. In order to do this, I will look again at some of the ideas of Clark-King. In Chapter 3, we saw how she develops her metaphor of choral theology to hold voices to be heard. She further suggests that this image or metaphor "is intended to provoke thought and discussion"

(2004, p. 212) and asks the question as to who should conduct the choir. She sees the priest as the conductor who "naturally inhabit[s] a position between the academy and the pews ... [living] amongst the people they serve, sharing the same environment" (ibid.). She also suggests if the local priest sings only "their own theological lyric" (p. 214) there is a need for a "peripatetic theologian to do the necessary crossing the boundaries" (ibid.) from the academy to the working class communities to elicit the ordinary theology of congregations. She proposes the possibility of "multiple conductors" (p. 215) in the contemporary church as all people are called to be involved and there is no need for a sole conductor. She believes it is important to listen to the 'other' people, to 'classic', traditional resources, and what lies hidden in the heart.

I am a parish priest by vocation and profession but in the terms of my research, I dressed as a 'lay person', a researcher from the University of Chester. I am a peripatetic outsider researcher at St Martin's, interested to hear and receive from people. I see myself more as a temporary visiting participant in the life of a particular community than a distant observer of theological tourism. St Martin's is a 'visual space' with its unique new east window, offering meaning-making opportunities for a variety of people, generating many different interpretations. I am concerned to develop a research design and strategy with a paradigm able to appreciate diverse interpretations and deploying methods that seek out different hermeneutics.

Research design and research strategy

I decided on an interpretative paradigm with perspectives from constructivism, phenomenology and hermeneutics. I adopted a qualitative and inductive research approach. I chose methods predominantly associated with qualitative research to facilitate eliciting the data of the phenomena of viewing and the hermeneutical constructions that participants give and make with the window.

I have found helpful Guba's (1990) definition of paradigm, which is in the "most common or generic sense: a basic set of beliefs that guide action, whether of the everyday garden variety or action taken in connection with a disciplined inquiry" (p. 17). He sees paradigms as paying attention to beliefs and action. A word such as 'common' is near to ordinary and 'basic' can be 'generic'. The great strength of this definition lies in its acceptance of ordinary viewing by ordinary people.

In constructivism, I find relativist ontology, which accepts various constructions by other people and appreciates how epistemological knowledge emerges from a subject-to-subject relationship of knowing. Guba (1990) sees relativism as the "key to openness and the continuing search for evermore informed and sophisticated constructions. Realities are multiple and they exist in people's minds" (p. 26). As a lay peripatetic researcher, I was set free from defending an official ontology. Epistemologically, as a researcher, I wished to work with respondents from whom I was no longer

separated, and was involved in a dynamic interactive process of "active participant[s] and co-creators[s] of the interpretative experience" (Swinton and Mowat, 2006, p. 235). As a researcher, I actively encouraged respondents to be involved in a process of co-creating with the artist's design in the 'officially' approved window. My standpoint was to seek out a variety of perceptions of the window. I was an advocate for ordinary people, encouraging them to speak out and to write their theology that would be read and heard by the academy.

Guba (1990) sees constructivism neither as predicting, controlling or transforming, but as reconstructing a window on the world that exists in the "minds of the constructors" (p. 27). From a physical window containing an image, I constructed a window to be interpreted by others. Kaufman (1995) attempts an "imaginative construction' of a comprehensive and coherent picture of humanity in the world under God" (p. ix). He sees the theologian as an artist, not focussing on "a segment or fragment of experience ... but rather address[ing] ... the whole within which all experience falls" (p. 39). He suggests the theologian needs to appreciate a variety of experiences artistically "for the 'whole' is nothing, an empty abstraction, apart from the parts that make it up" (p. 40). There is a need for a wide variety of conversations. He underestimates the work of the artist, who is also imaginatively working with a commission brief. Further, he assumes that a work of art exists externally to the artist, viewed by the public, whilst the theologian's work of art has to be "lived in" (p. 41). I adopted a constructionist perspective that appreciates the window both as an external object for viewing by the public and an invitation to live with it internally. Further, in addition to the artist and theologian, the people viewing the window are working artistically as well. Theologians need to venture out of their studies to appreciate publicly how others view and live with a piece of art.

I decided to adopt an interpretative paradigm using a dialogical phenomenological-hermeneutical perspective. Swinton and Mowat (2006) observe that there is a creative conflict between phenomenology wanting to explain the world in a detached, objective manner, free from bias, and the hermeneutical, which focuses on interpretation by human beings who display their own acceptable biased hermeneutics (p. 108). They note the similarities between the two perspectives with people involved in dynamic constructions, focussing on word texts and developing understanding (pp. 108-109). Astley (2002) believes the difference between these perspectives is only a matter of degree and researchers into ordinary theology need to "hear and describe another's beliefs ... [and] not be engaged at the same time in evaluating those beliefs against the whole range of the researcher's own theological presuppositions, either overtly or covertly" (p. 114). An interpretative paradigm with perspectives from constructivism and phenomenology and hermeneutics creates a methodology for researching the phenomenon of ordinary theology and ordinary theologians taking seriously the various interpretations created by people viewing the window.

Research approach and methodology

In choosing an interpretative paradigm for my research, I was able to test the hypothesis that people's perceptions of the window are a legitimate form of ordinary theology. It is an inductive rather than deductive approach, more suited for gathering and analysing the various interpretations made by people viewing the window. It is a qualitative inquiry reflecting Mason's (2002) belief that qualitative research can "explore a wide array of dimensions of the social world, including the texture and weave of everyday life, the understandings, experiences and imaginings of our research participants" (p. 1). The window is a textured glass offering images with which people can weave and explore everyday lives. I found Mason's commitment to qualitative methodologies enhanced my research allowing me to "celebrate richness," depth, nuance, context, multi-dimensionality and complexity ... [and showing] how things work in a particular context' (ibid.). She is aware that qualitative research is criticised for being "merely anecdotal or at best illustrative ... casual and unsystematic" (ibid.) and Astley (2002) receives similar criticisms with ordinary theology (pp. 123-140).

Mason considers the differences between qualitative and quantitative methodologies. She sees her qualitative research having a methodology that is systematically and rigorously conducted, accountable, strategically conducted, flexible and contextual; with active reflexivity, explanations or arguments, and which is generalizable (pp. 7-8). Astley and Mason are both arguing for the academy to take seriously ordinary theology and qualitative

research respectively. My research seeks to be qualitative rather than quantitative, and my methodology and methods are shaped by my interest in eliciting the systematic whole and partial interpretative constructions during the hermeneutical process.

Research methods for generating data sources

I decided that I needed to collect the hermeneutical constructions from different groups. I chose to approach members of the regular congregation meeting for worship and who had viewed the window over time. I also selected visitors who had brief encounters with the window. In Chapter 2, I indicated how Astley in defining ordinary theology focussed on Christian believers, those who were less definite or had no belief. Strangely, much empirical research had only considered visitors, not regular worshippers. A further group identified was the "makers" of the window and those involved in its selection process. After deciding on the methodology and the groups, to be targeted I selected appropriate methods for data collection.

An ethnographic method

Brewer (2000) notes that ethnography studies "people in naturally occurring settings or in the 'field' by methods of data collection which capture their social meanings and ordinary activities" (p. 6). This method encourages the researcher to be sensitive in observing and participating in the field. Astley (2002) suggests that ethnography developed from anthropology is appropriate in studying ordinary theology as it "presents religions as they are

perceived and lived by their adherents, rather than as abstract systems of beliefs" (p. 113). He is cautious about accepting the categories of ordinary people and identifies the need to translate the words of others and put "things in language of our own ... like a critic illuminating a poem" (ibid.). Ward (2012), on the other hand, sees the blurring of boundaries between ethnography and qualitative inquiry due to its use by many academic disciplines (p. 6) and he suggests that ethnography should be a "cluster of values that shape how research is conducted, rather than a specific, closely defined methodology" (p. 8). Ethnography has become synonymous with qualitative research. Creswell (2009) and Silverman (2011) have identified common characteristics of qualitative research (Table 1).

Creswell	Silverman
Natural setting	Begin with single case. Study
	phenomena from contexts through
	observation
Researcher key instrument	
Multiple sources of data	
Inductive data analysis	Hypotheses generated from analysis
Participants meanings	
Emergent design	No one agreed way to analyse
Theoretical lens	
Interpretive	
Holistic account	Simple tabulations,

Table 1 Common characteristics of qualitative/ethnographic research

I was a participant, getting inside the worshipping and social life culture of St Martin's, rather than being a detached visiting observer. I carried out my "field" research over two long weekends in the late autumn/early winter of 2011. This was a limited, timed immersion into a community and required intensive participation. I was able to elicit webs of meaning spun by participants as they interpreted the window (Geertz, 1973, p. 5). Geertz believes that ethnography requires intellectual effort and emotional empathy if it is to provide "thick descriptions" (p. 6). In my research, I established rapport with people by explaining my research and inviting them to look, make meaning of the window, to complete questionnaires and to keep journals. I submitted my research design for ethical approval; granted on 21 June 2011.

Several theoretical lenses were used in analysis and these will be described in more detail later. The responses through framing allowed simple tabulation of trends. The research remained qualitative without statistical testing. I attempted to hold both holistic and partial interpretations together. The methods I selected were appropriate for the context of my research and the eliciting of data to test my hypothesis and answering my research question.

Whilst reviewing research methods, Astley (2002) suggests that "participant observation and unstructured or semi-structured interviewing that are so central to ethnographic research (broadly conceived) may best provide us with the necessary full description and depth of understanding for the study

of ordinary theology" (p. 98). In my research, I adapted these methods and characteristics of qualitative ethnographic research to develop an ethnographic visual method. Semi-structured methods were appropriate for a window, which was semi-abstract or non-figurative, and evocative of different interpretations. The stretching and expanding lines in the window are reflected in respondents viewings over time. As a researcher, I am seeking out others' voices. My personal reflexivity is focussed on how I assist or inhibit that hearing by the academy and myself.

Developing an ethnographic visual method

There have been attempts to link the work of visual artists and theologians, correlating and integrating the arts into theology as seen in the work of Paul Tillich which I referred to in my publishable article (TH8003 portfolio, 12 July 2010) and later by Dillenberger (1986). Robin Jensen and Kimberly Vrudny (2009) contend that the visual arts have been "overlooked as a subject for study and reflection" (p. ix). They encourage a looking at an artist's work "in light of a theological issue or focus" (p. x). Annette Esser, Christine Gasser-Schuchter, Sylvia Grevel, Alison Jasper and Ursula Rapp (2011) have attempted to bring together artists interested in feminism and religion, and academic theologians. Other efforts have been made to embrace religion and modern art by Daniel Siedell (2008) and Richard Harries (2013). William Dyrness (2001) looks at the visual arts and theology in terms of enriching the worship context.

There has also been a move to rediscover the theology of aesthetics. García-Rivera (2003) developed a theological method to help express a living Latin American theology. For García-Rivera (2003) "formality and rationality give substance to textbook theology ... [whereas] art and aesthetics animate a living theology" (p. viii) found in art, symbols and creative writing. He sees "bringing the beautiful into theological reflection recovers an ancient way of doing theology" (ibid.). González-Andrieu (2012) continues this exploration with her theological aesthetics method, looking at beauty and the interweaving of art and theology (pp. 132-133). Both theologians are concerned with the beauty of God and with beauty itself being the "best sign we have we are on the right path" to God (González-Andrieu, 2012, p. 166). I found I needed a research method that was able and willing to listen to people reflecting on a visual image without having necessarily read or accepted a theology of beauty.

Other academic disciplines outside religion and theology are also researching the visual. Jon Prosser and Andrew Loxley (2008) introduce visual research methods, whilst Gillian Rose (2012) focusses on a visual culture of the everyday ordinary seeing in public and domestic settings. Sarah Dunlop (n.d.) has reviewed the use of visual methods in studying religion. In Chapter 2, I indicated how Ward and Dunlop (2011) developed narrated photography as an ethnographic visual method. This method allows more participation, with respondents selecting what they see as sacred and holds in tension contemporary experience with traditional Catholic cultural

experience. The method creatively seeks out data that are dialogical and fragmentary but does not control them.

In contrast, Panofsky-Soergel (1979) reveals how Abbot Suger justifies publishing a guide about the lavish refurbishment of his abbey church, as all the decoration was "not easily understood by mute perception of sight without a description ... [and] intelligible only to the literate" (p.63). The viewer is told what to view to fully appreciate the new architecture and ornamentation. Kidd and Sparkes (2003) suggest that acquiring the skills of imagination and attention are needed to gain significant insight and to bring art and theology together (pp. xi-xiv). Ordinary people can interpret without instruction or skills.

St Martin's Church produced only a small leaflet about the window and reference to it on the church's tourist audio tape is brief. The image can speak directly to viewers without a guide. Further, Brock and Parker (2008), in their tourist "fieldwork" whilst visiting the early historical churches in Ravenna and Rome, observed that they saw no crucifixions, only images of the Risen Christ set in the paradise of this established world. They began to see the world from the perspective of people who were "visually literate" (p. xvi). Peter Brown (1999) cites Pope Gregory the Great writing to Bishop Serenus of Marseilles and advising him that a picture offers a visual form of teaching "the ignorant ... who do not know letters ... [for] a picture stands in the place of reading" (p. 18). The window becomes an evocative visual ethnographic method open to all, and no visual or written literacy is specified.

Semi-structured interviews and questionnaires

Astley (2002) appreciated that "unstructured or semi-structured interviewing" (p. 98) is, together with participant observation, vital to ethnographic researching. Slee (2004) goes further by suggesting that feminists have adopted qualitative methods and particularly ethnographic and interview methods as they are contextual, have sensitivity to hear the lived experience of people (p. 44). She further suggests that interviewer and interviewees are involved in a mutual respecting process and wish to generate explanations rather than have them deductively imposed. Although Slee (2004) rejects them as stereotypical feminist methods, she sets out the principles influencing her research design and these appear as a rephrasing of earlier feminist methods - taking the experience of women seriously, seeking out difference, setting women free with non-domineering methods and encouraging reflexivity (pp. 46-51). She believes she is committed like other feminist researchers to creating an open and relaxed setting where women can "tell their own stories in their own words in their own way" (p. 55).

I agree with Slee's principles, particularly those that encourage fuller participation in the process. My interviews and questionnaires had to be semi-structured because in seeking ethical approval for my research I was required to submit templates of interview questions and questionnaires. I was also carrying out research in a public setting by permission of the local church, and I needed to assure them about my research credibility. Furthermore, although I had not limited myself to researching a relatively

small sample of people, yet I was under considerable time pressure. As a lone researcher, I decided to collect a larger number of shorter semi-structured interviews than a few in-depth unstructured interviews.

I decided to interview the artist, the architect, the art consultant, and the panel responsible for selecting a design for the east window. I approached the artist first by email and then by letter. Before approaching visitors with a questionnaire, I decided to approach those who were looking at the window. They had a choice of responding with written answers, or drawing a picture, or making an audio recording of their replies.

The construction of the questionnaires was influenced by a large-scale qualitative research project on visitor meaning-making and their interpretive strategies at Nottingham Castle Museum and Art Gallery by Eilean Hooper-Greenhill and Theano Moussouri (2001). The project invited visitors to "think aloud' as they walked around ... and to report what they saw, thought and felt about the artworks and the exhibition as a whole" (p. 3) These were audio recorded. Semi-structured questionnaires were administered with the first question asking visitors their reasons for visiting. Secondly, it sought demographic information and asked about their interest in art.

I devised separate questionnaires for visitors and regular worshippers (Appendix 1 and 2). The layout was portrait style on A4 sized paper, with two

columns. In the left hand column were open-ended questions and on the right multiple choice answers to elicit demographic information, how long they viewed the window and how they would describe themselves. A deliberate choice was made to produce a balance between informational and reflective replies, and not to tire respondents, particularly any who were dyslexic. The questionnaires provide a semi-structured template with a bounded visual image in a church. Every person received a shorten information sheet (so as not to overload potential respondents), with a more detailed version available on request. I also decided to follow up suggestions made by the clergy and laity to have conversations with passers-by and street traders. These were more spontaneous 'field-work' interviews and the questions were more openended. I encouraged the street traders to talk about the window first, then I asked them to repeat what they said so that I could audio-record them. I made written notes of passers-by whilst they were talking.

Journaling

In the questionnaire for regular worshippers, there was an invitation to respond by keeping a journal of their thoughts about the window for a period of 28 days. Each type of questionnaire attempts to elicit what first caught people's attention about the window and how this changed on subsequent viewings. They were still relatively brief hermeneutical encounters. The journal gave a further opportunity over a longer period to see if there were further viewings. Journal writing provided opportunities for a sustained period of reflection, creating a personal authentic narrative of thought and feelings

arranged sequentially as a diary or through experimenting with another genre, like poetry. The method is suitable for those who are willing and able to express themselves in writing. Journal writers were also encouraged to draw their reflections.

During the fieldwork, I also kept a research diary/journal, recording my own reflections, insights and frustrations. This was simple journaling recording significant events and insights. I developed files for key words, and chapter plans. Being dyslexic, I felt overloaded and blinded by words. I struggled with personal reflexivity, as I had already named the external sources shaping my research and my interest in art and religion. Then I became absorbed with the naturalism of the fieldwork, believing the researcher was responsible for constructing a research process that let the respondents and their data speak. As the researcher, I listened, looked and learned.

Official documents, foundational stories and sermons

In preparation for my reflective piece on dyslexia and the submission of my research proposal (TH8005, portfolio 11 July 2011), I made use of documents published by St. Martin's Church. Nicholas Holtam's (2008) *A room with a view* is a personal review of this church's refurbishment and an articulated vision for the renewal of its ministry (p.xviii). Reworking the foundation stories of his predecessors, he provides a new revised espoused theology, using one of the theological voices outlined by Cameron et al (2010) for a renewed operant working theology for those who worship and

work at the church. These stories were informing voices for constructing a research process that let the respondents and their data speak, becoming significant documents together, with other official policy documents and sermons. They shaped my research.

Lindsey Prior (2008), attempts to show that documents are not just "containers for words, images, information, instructions but how they can influence episodes of social interaction, and schemes of social organization" (p. 822). This research project was concerned to see how far these written documents of and about St Martin's had influenced the ordinary hermeneutics of viewers and participants in the research. Table 2 indicates my chosen methodology, data collection methods used and number of respondents or documents contributing to the research.

Methodology- Qualitative and inductive within an interpretative paradigm with perspectives from constructivism, phenomenology and hermeneutics

Primary data source collection

Ethnography, particularly visual ethnography

Semi-structured interviews with artist, architect, builders (0) and **questionnaires** 58 visitors (V) and 40 regulars (R)

Journal writers 9 people (JW) and my research diary (RD)

Unstructured situational interviews with 11 passers-by (PB), 6 street traders (ST), 2 staff members (SM), 1 visiting artist (VA) and 1 homeless person (HP)

Researcher as participant rather than observer

Secondary data collection

'Official' policy documents (3), foundational stories (2) and sermons (25).

Table 2 Chosen methodology, data collection methods used and number of respondents or documents.

Ethics

I negotiated the research with the then vicar of the parish, the Reverend Nicholas Holtam, and he saw all the questionnaires, information sheets, consent forms, journal template, and interview questions for the artist and the selection panel. A full application was made to the University of Chester's Faculty of Humanities Research Ethics Committee. A risk assessment for all aspects of the research was undertaken and appropriate strategies taken. Assurances were given that the personal information and data collected would be confidentially stored with only the researcher having access. Further, personal contributions would appear anonymously in the report with other identifying material removed. The committee permitted the distribution

of a briefer information sheet to possible participants if mention was made that there was a fuller information sheet available on request. It was important not to lose the opportunities to make brief contact with people. If I spent more than five minutes with the participants, it was agreed they would receive the full participant's information sheet and complete the consent form. The committee gave their approval. A fuller statement is in my research proposal (TH8005 portfolio, 11 July 2011).

The actual research experience

A number of critical incidents affected the course of my research. These included the vicar of the parish moving and the challenge of inviting people to participate in the project. There was difficulty in contacting the artist. I closed down a potential avenue of research on dyslexia and the visual as I had only one response. St Martin's regulars suggested further potential sources of data, which included exploring sermons, presentations of other images on the window as a screen, and conversations with employed staff, passers-by and street traders.

The vicar moving to be a bishop

In autumn 2009, after I had seen the window for the first time in June 2009, I began to explore with the vicar the possibility of conducting research on how people viewed the window. My publishable article (TH8003 portfolio, 30 June 2009), my reflective piece (TH8004 portfolio, 11 July 2011), and my research

proposal (TH8005 portfolio, 11 July 2011) were part of my preparation for the research and established rapport and credibility with St Martin's. I planned to carry out the research in the spring/summer of 2012 when I was to take sabbatical leave but, in July 2011 Nicholas Holtam was consecrated Bishop of Salisbury and the church was plunged into an interregnum.

Holtam and I decided to bring forward my fieldwork to autumn 2011 before the appointment of a new vicar. I lodged the paperwork with the church's administration. I had to 'brief' the administrator, the clergy and churchwardens nearer the time of the research. The administrator gave information about the research in the weekly newsletter. The clergy introduced me to the congregation on my first Sunday morning. The Communications Department made an entry on the church's *Facebook* page. I gained limited access to the more evangelical Cantonese and Mandarin speaking congregations who worshipped on Sunday afternoons. The head verger at the time was helpful in briefing me on the history of the church, finding old photographs, facilitating introductions and being hospitable on long research days.

Inviting people to be participants

With a regular large congregation of 150-200 people, I had to decide where to position myself physically to invite people to be participants in the research. On my first Sunday, when the service ended, I followed people to the coffee area in another part of the church complex where, at a number of

coffee tables, I was able to invite people to complete the regulars' questionnaire. The next Sunday when I stood by the main doors, I failed to recruit any volunteers and so went to the coffee area again. This room did not lend itself to audio recording because of the background noise. The other main English speaking services did not have any social/fellowship activity after the service.

Secondly, I approached visitors looking at the window. This gave me an opportunity to inquire what they saw in the window and whether they would be willing to participate in my research. The church also attracts many visitors to their lunchtime and evening concerts.

The 'death' of the artist and others

In my reflective piece (TH8004 portfolio, 11 July 2011) I expressed my interest in exploring how the artist, the architect, the art consultant, and the selection panel view the window over the passage of time from the submission of the design to its installation. I decided to approach the artist first. I sent an initial email about the research, suggesting that I would be willing to send her the interview questions. No reply was received, nor to a follow-up letter. Then I met the artist at the dedication of the new altar she had also designed. She agreed I could write to her and I did. Again, there was no reply. I decided for the purposes of the research, to adapt Roland Barthes (1995) words, that there was the 'death' of the author/artist and the

professionals involved in the selection process, giving rise to the birth of the reader/viewer.

Dyslexia

In my questionnaires, I asked if people were dyslexic or not. In my research proposal (TH8005 portfolio, 11 July 2011) I suggested I was interested to see if people with dyslexia were particularly attracted to the visual window and to see if their reflections were different. I did not pursue this as only one person said they were dyslexic.

Emerging areas of research

Some new avenues of research emerged to compensate for the cul-de-sacs. I looked at the sermons on the church's website from the time of the installation of the window in 2008 to 2011 to see how different clergy publically reflected on it. Eight sermons made direct reference to the east window and the preachers offered their personal reflections. Five other sermons were about learning the art of browsing and reflections on recent exhibitions in the National Gallery and the church.

A former choir member informed me the window was used as a screen for a multi-media presentation of the Bible with 'The Word became flesh and lived amongst us' projected in colour on to the front of the window (see Fig 5). A

modern crucifixion titled 'Victim no resurrection?' by Terry Duffy was also held in front of the window, depicting the conflict and suffering in contemporary violent world (see Fig 6). I was also able to have conversations with an artist exhibiting in the crypt and then with various employed staff.



Fig 5 'The Word became flesh' on a screen



Fig 6 'Victim no resurrection?'

I also decided to talk to various street traders and staff in shops around the east side of the church. After negotiation with the clergy, I placed some

notices on the railings at the east end of the courtyard asking people passing by to tell me what they saw in the window from the outside. I made notes of respondents' key words. This was an attempt to engage with the wider public on the outside of the church, and to see whether they noticed and engaged with the window.

Data collection and analysis through interpretative lenses

I chose methods and interpretive lenses sensitive both for eliciting the familiar and new frames people constructed whilst viewing the window. The analytical lenses are framing (Goffman, 1986); the pastoral cycle of reflection (Wertheimer (Green, 1990): making gestalts 1974a; 1974b): ethnomethodology - people's methodology (Garfinkel, 1967), and nitty-gritty hermeneutics (Pinn, 1999). It is my contention that participative viewers and the researcher are holding together their ordinary experiences in a frame and making a gestalt, a whole and coherent picture. These frames and gestalts become a series of continuous frames facilitated by cyclical movement of reflection or there can be a breaching, a breaking through by rough hermeneutics creating new frames and portraits of ordinary theology. I commenced with a demographic framing before moving to primary and further framings.

Demographic framing of people

Visitors and regulars gave their gender (see Table 3).

	Female	Male	Blank
Visitors (58)	52%	46%	2%
Regulars (40)	46%	42.5%	11.5%

Table 3 Gender of visitors and regulars

Gender was more evenly balanced than Village's (2007) sample for the Bible and lay-people project where 63% were female and 37% men, which closely resembled national research (p. 16).

The majority of visitors and regulars came from the 40-79 age range (see Table 4). In this and subsequent tables some respondents did not complete the questions put to them. Hence, some tables do not add up to 100%.

	Under 20	20-39	40-79	80 and over
Visitors	3%	27%	60%	8.5%
Regulars	Nil	27%	60%	12.5%

Table 4 Age profile of visitors and regulars

The research focusses on people 16 years and over- seeing them as adults.

St Martin-in-the Fields attracts an estimated 700,000 visitors per annum (Modus Operandi Art Consultants, 2005a). Table 5 explores where the visitors were staying.

Staying	At hotel	With friends	At home	At work
Percentage	50%	15%	24%	3%

Table 5 Where visitors were staying

My research reveals 65% were away from home staying in a hotel or with friends on holiday, whilst 24% came from home and only 3% were visiting as their work brought them to be near to visit St Martin's.

The visitors gave more than one reason for visiting the church (see Table 6).

F	Reasons	Visiting	Passing	Pray	Links	Curious	Window
			through				again
		18	3	6	5	3	3

Table 6 Visitors' reasons for visiting St Martin's

Three people were passing through, one the way to a meeting, another going to lunch, and the last visiting another tourist attraction. Some visitors had links with St Martin's through its work with the homeless or through the music of the Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields. Three visitors were curious about the church and three wanted to see the east window again.

Visitors were well disposed for viewing the window if happiness is taken as an indicator (see Table 7).

Нарру	Tired	Wanted to	Questioning	Surprised	Curious
		pray	Mood		
58%	15%	9%	3%	3%	5%

Table 7 Visitors' feelings on arrival at St Martin's

It was found that 11% stated there were in an inquiring frame of mind, initially expressing surprise or being curious about their visit.

Regulars were asked what attracted them to St Martin's. Respondents gave more than one reason (see Table 8).

Inclusive	Social	Relatives	Clergy	Preach-	Music	Worship
Open	Service	Recommend-		ing		
		ations				
12	7	7	5	5	5	5

Table 8 Regulars' reasons for attending St Martin's

St Martin's commitment to inclusivity and openness in their thinking is important for regular worshippers. Further, St Martin's work with the homeless attracted the same number of responses as people having family connections with St Martin's or those who had been given a recommendation to worship there. The formal attractions of a parish church through the

ministry of clergy, preaching, music and worship as a cluster were also important in attracting regular worshippers. Yet on their own their impact was limited.

The research focused on regulars at the 10.00am Sunday service and over 45% of these were working. The visitors indicated that 33% were working and 14% on holiday, assuming they would not be normally at work. This composite figure of 47% visitors equates with the regulars. This is also the case for those who are retired - visitors 30% and regulars 33%. The regulars have more not working 10% compared with 2% of visitors. More than 57% of regulars came to church alone and 17% with another person, compared with 26% and 55% of visitors respectively. St Martin's is attracting significant numbers of people attending the church on their own.

Both visitors and regulars indicate high levels of education with over 85% of visitors and regulars being university, professional and technically educated. This compares with Village's (2007) sample, of which only 56% had degree, diploma and postgraduate education (p. 17). It only became apparent after completion of the questionnaires that four of my respondents had studied academic theology. They were on holiday or retired. I decided not to exclude them. The clergy at St Martin's received information about the research and did not complete questionnaires or keep a journal. Jeff Astley focusses on ordinary people who are non-theologically educated. Even though he was theologically educated he was being invited in this 'thought experiment' to

view the window as and with other ordinary people. It was important to see what people were gaining from reflecting with a visual image. Whilst the questionnaires did not ask where people lived, anecdotally, about 20% of the visitor respondents were from outside the United Kingdom and for many English was their second language.

The respondents were emotionally well disposed on their visit, or positively attracted to regularly attending the church. The majority are educated in higher education and the professions. They bring openness and critical appreciation from non-theological disciplines and professions other than academic theology. Their ordinary theology is not reducible as being inarticulate or inchoate. I believe viewing a visual image increases participation and contributes to ordinary theology.

Over 64% of visitors said they admired old buildings compared with 47% of regulars. Both visitors and regulars were the same in how they enjoy art (55%) indicating that they were people able to respond to a visual image and reflect with it. The regular worshippers viewed the window on a weekly basis.

Compared with the regulars the visitors had just this single opportunity for looking and viewing (see Table 9).

Time viewing	0-2 minutes	3-5 minutes	Over 5 minutes
Visitors	7%	53%	18%

Table 9 Time spent by visitors viewing the window

The image caught the attention of visitors who then spent time in viewing it.

I asked regulars and visitors what had first caught their attention when looking at the window. This demographic framing provided primary frames of numerical information. Next, I examined the primary frames of interpretation respondents first gave to the window. I was interested to see if the frames contained religious or 'secular' ideas.

Respondents' primary frame of analysis

The religious frame is not initially strong as only 15% of visitors and regulars see the image in the window as 'a' or 'the' cross or with God in the centre. Hence, a religious central learning structure was not active. This challenges a closed theodicy interpretation. Instead, the respondents, visitors and regulars, are using their own ethnomethodological categories to interpret the window, focusing on its non-religious aspects. The overall design is a major attraction – 19% of visitors and 20% of regulars, but 25% visitors stressed the irregularity of the window compared with 5% of regulars. The theme of light is significant to 55% of regulars but only 12% of visitors. The oval draws the attention of 25% of visitors and only 2% of regulars. The visitors seem to

have a strong impressionistic viewing of the window focussing on its sturdy features. The 'roughness' of the window is mentioned by 5% of visitors, with comments of it being plain or having no colour. There was a more negative response of 8.4% by regulars, who living with the window, continue to see it as dirty, clearly not liking it, having no meaning or colour, and longing for the blue cross that was formerly there. These respondents were eager to make their views known. A nitty-gritty hermeneutics is emerging.

There is a movement from a primary frame from the 'is' to the 'is not' of metaphor. The regulars refer to other frames or grids. A regular (R2) said it reminded him of the painting titled *The Scream*, by Edvard Munch, and another (R10) saw it as resembling the *Salvador Mundi*. A respondent (R17), recently diagnosed with degenerative eye disease, noted the window resembled the diagnostic markings/patterning for a patient's visuality on the Amsler grid. The regulars were beginning to see the image in other competing non-religious frames or seeing it as out of frame, with R8 seeing it as a monster spider and R29 saying it "looked vulnerable". The frame was beginning to break when R19 saw "a person in prison, opportunity ... [for] small outlet of escape".

In the exploration of the feelings of regulars there was grief, mourning when viewing the window, as 22% expressed the negativity they experienced by using words such as "disappointed" or seeing something "horrific" in the patterning. People's viewing also indicated their vulnerability. Goffman (1986)

sees a vulnerability appearing in a frame resulting in a disattending (p. 202) and denying a new frame. On the other hand, the window moves 25% of the regulars. They expressed emotions of being uplifted, delight, and feelings of hope, peace, and calm in viewing the window. The regulars felt they were startled/surprised, encouraged reflective/curious, being to be engrossed/absorbed, puzzled/questioning (17.5%).and Only one correspondent said they felt they were looking at Jesus.

The framing of the second viewing and movement

The second viewing comes after the visitors have described their feelings, whereas the regulars were asked to remember their first viewing of the window when it was installed (or later on), and then at the time of the research. With the visitors the second viewing showed a significant move from 15% to 44% using a religious frame reference and mentioning the cross, or God or Jesus. The use of theological terms by regulars increased to 25%. Regulars saw the window as having familiarity and warmth, personified as the suffering of a person and of Jesus. Regulars in contrast to visitors were more at ease in using non-religious framing and language. It remained evocative because of or despite their familiarity with the window. Respondents shifted their framing. The religious frame is secondary or an alternative to the primary non-religious framing. The window encouraged dialogical viewing/framing. I moved from focussing on primary and secondary viewing to see a more sustained reflection process using metaphor.

I decided to present all the respondents' frames to the questionnaires, to appreciate their full cycle of reflections whilst viewing of the window. I could also see whether ordinary theology, as part of a general process of reflection, started with a non-religious frame and moved to a religious frame on a second viewing. At the end of this chapter, I summarise this viewing by constructing people portraits of ordinary theology during the different stages of reflection.

Reframing into a sequence of frames for reflection

I needed to explore further movement in specific religious frames and in the general, non-religious frames of the respondents. I turned to the interpretive lens of Laurie Green's (2009) circle or cycle of theological reflection (pp. 17-26). I adapted his work emphasising more the importance of window reminding of previous experience and learning for visitors, and cognitive and practical action (see Table 10), whereas for regulars (Table 11) I focussed on their predisposition to St Martin's, feelings and sustained reflection. Instead of isolating frames, I sequenced them into a 'lived experience'.

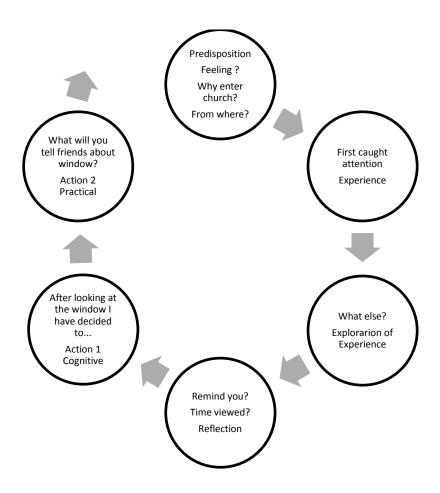


Table 10 Visitor's circle/cycle of theological reflection

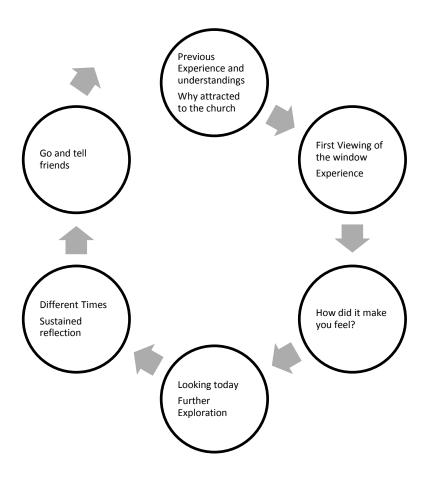


Table11 Regular's circle/cycle of theological reflection

Questions to visitors about what first caught their attention and what else they saw correspond to Green's categories of experience, and exploration of experience. The question about whether the window reminded them of anything is an attempt to see if visitors linked this to an experience of learning or a tradition. The action is now in two parts: a cognitive action response and a practical response indicating what people are taking to a new situation, a part of spiral learning. For the regulars, in addition to the first viewing, there was a question of whether seeing things at different times was a way of exploring personal reminiscences, traditional theological resources and their interweaving during sustained reflection. The frames became a

sequence of frames forming into a circle and a spiral. Reflection, in terms of meaning-making with religious - explicit or more implicit - or non-religious meanings occurs all the way through the process. The number of respondents completing the process will be revealed, as well those stages that were omitted or where reflection stopped at a particular frame.

Completion and non-completion of the cycle of theological reflection

More regulars (55%) completed the framed process compared with 48% of visitors. This could be accounted for by regulars having an increased familiarity over time with the window and visitors tiring more easily, having come to visit a church and not expecting to be involved in reflective research. Of the regulars, 32.5% omitted the different times/sustained reflection and 13.7% visitors left out the reminding/reflecting frame. Green (2009) indicates there is a gap between the action part (response and experience), and the reflective part (to explore and reflect) which produces a "fractured cycle" (p. 36). My research sees the omission confined to the sustained reflection frame, more so for regulars than visitors. Hence, theological reflection is a brief encounter rather than a sustained activity. I abandoned my attempt to evaluate the quality of the reflection with simple, yet too loose, criteria of very good, good, average and poor.

I found the pastoral circle/cycle of reflection organized the frames into a sequence and these frames are analysed by a combination of nitty-gritty hermeneutics, and ethnomethodology (the words and categories the people

used whilst viewing the window). I created a sequence of framing structures generating whole gestalts. Wertheimer (1938b) illustrates the laws of organisation by giving the example of "stand[ing] at the window and see[ing] a house, trees and sky" (p. 71) rather than making manifold distinctions of brightness and colour. As a researcher I analysed the data operating Wertheimer's (1974b) principle of closure: seeing incomplete circles being made complete, giving unity and coherence, equilibrium, and symmetry" (p. 83). I also began to look at how this closure could become more of a dynamic process with dialogical viewing - seeing wholes, parts and combining wholes and parts as hybrids.

As part of this dialogical/interactive viewing, first, visitors viewed the window as a whole, noting the "simplicity of the design" (V32) or the "light in it" (V6). Regulars saw it as "magnificent" (R21) and "the way light streams through it" (R15).

Secondly, visitors viewed the parts of the window through its "asymmetry" (V15), "twisted structured" (V38) displaying its "bomb damage" (V48). The regulars stated that it "looked vulnerable" (R29), and the "glass dirty [struggling] to find Christian symbols" (R11). A visitor saw "broken lines and patterns" (V35). The vicar supported this when recalling in a sermon a group of elderly people who asked, "What's with that broken window? "It's not broken, it's new" came the reply. After a pause, "But why is it broken? the

man asked, "It's like something has been thrown through the cross and smashed a hole in it." (Holtam, 2009, p. 11).

Goffman (1986) acknowledges, "a break can occur in the applicability of the frame, a break in its governance (p. 347). Pinn (1999) goes further by suggesting that telling 'how it is' is a risk and "heuristic rebellion ... [causing a hermeneutical] rupture" (pp. 116-117). He seeks overtly to deride interpretations that constrain or confine the liberation of the black people. My research suggests that conceptually ordinary theology needs to pay attention to parts of the whole picture and to their brokenness.

Thirdly, respondents saw there was a "joke, [an] ambiguity" (R4) in the window and that it is an "enigma" (R25). A dialogue is seen to be taking "place between the in and out" (R12), an "incongruity between the design of the window and the surrounding architecture" (V31), and there is a tension between the "unusual design but very ordinary" (V7). The regulars saw specific changes in the window during the day, noting, "the play of internal and external light" (R6) and during the day it is an "oval egg full of potential ... [whilst] at night invites reflection, draws me in, suggests peace, eternity" (R3).

These three categories were constructed into a three-part grid (see Table 12), indicating the starting and finishing points of the cycle and whether

respondents focussed on the whole window experience, or a part, or a hybrid of whole and part. In this figure visitors (39%) and regulars (47%) initially focus on a part of the window, with 30% of visitors and 40% of regulars seeing whole, with 25% of visitors and 10% of regulars seeing a hybrid of whole and parts. Some respondents did not complete all the questions/process.

Start	Whole	V	R	Part	V	R	Hybrid	V	R
		30%	40%		39%	47%		25%	10%
Finish									
		29%	17%		15%	10%		45%	62%

Table 12 Starting and finishing in the circle/cycle of reflection

After completing, the questionnaire there seemed to be significantly more regulars (62%) as compared with visitors (45%) who have made a fusion. Hence, fewer are seeing the parts. In addition, the number of visitors seeing the whole changed little from 30% to 29%. There is also a residual element shown in Table 13 maintaining a consistent whole or part or hybrid viewing throughout the research.

Start	Whole	V	R	Part	V	R	Hybrid	V	R
Finish		8%	5%		1%	5%		8%	5%

Table 13 Consistent viewing frame throughout the circle/cycle of reflection

I have been able to show evidence of movement in framing by the new sequencing of responses according to the pastoral cycle of reflection. Further, I have indicated how people interacted dialogically with the window, this dialectical viewing of the whole being the thesis, the parts being the antithesis, and synthesis found in the hybrid producing another new gestalt. I have constructed the framing of the process and can now construct the portraits of individual viewers exhibiting the phenomenon and hermeneutics of those viewing the window. They are voices that are not usually heard by the likes of Astley.

Creating portraits of people doing ordinary theology

In his work, Astley sought out academic partners to define the similarity and difference of ordinary theology from academy-based renditions. Instead, I have decided to paint a number of ordinary people-portraits of people participating in the research. This idea occurred to me as I was trying to 'load' the responses of visitors and regulars to the questions onto the windows/grids of Microsoft Excel sheets. As someone with dyslexia, I became overwhelmed with the number of words and categories. This triggered word fatigue and blindness. I had also sought the help of an Nvivo software programme and on-line training. I began inputting the responses into the programme for creating files, nodes and testing relationships. This became complex and my limited memory processing was not able handle the processing of these data. I instead devised a simple alternative of small data summary cards with of all of the responses in the cycle of reflection with

abbreviated personal data and made them into word portraits of respondents. I began to 'deal' them into different 'piles'. I decided to select respondents who had not been heard or had not had a place in a theological academy. Visitors are only visiting, passing thorough. Regulars would have listened to clergy or would have given a token nod to St Martin's being an inclusive church. In my research, regulars and visitors are included whose explicit and implicit faith/theology is moving/stretching out of the confines of the church, as well as those who are static or even negative.

Astley (2002), when attempting to define ordinary theology from academic theology used the Weberian concept of ideal types (pp. 57-58). An ideal type can be a composite or an exaggeration of individuals. This research does not seek to contain data to construct ideal, pure types, but rather it seeks to release data dialogically to construct a series of ordinary types. People are creating their own ordinary paintings of what they see when viewing/reading the window and completing the semi-structured questionnaires. Their responses are reframed into a cycle of reflection, which in turn frames into a series of portraits. This framing provides a bordering to highlight the nitty-gritty hermeneutics made by respondents. I also give epistemological preference to people's voices not usually heard as explicit religion by the academy - those who have no religion, two humanists, and a person who enjoys art. I also present a person who is a regular believer and negative towards the installed window, and two regulars who reflect positively with the window developing an implicit theology.

I have framed these portraits to present them to the academy and for public viewing. It creates gestalts, whole pictures by enclosure. The ordinary portraits are gestalts, created by closure, omitting earlier demographic information. They create a smoothing of rough nitty-gritty hermeneutics. I have designed the word portrait to include an anonymous face indicating gender. Each portrait frame has four mini-portraits, four internal frames. There could have been should have had a visual portrait, a photograph, of the respondent alongside their words of ordinary theology but I promised to keep the respondents' anonymity, hence, a silhouette, a figurative hint, more than the actual window design. Astley referred to putting faces to his partners of academic theology supporting ordinary theology. I have tried to give human faces to ordinary theology within the ethical constraints of the research. There are further frames summarizing demographic information, the stages of the reflection cycle and the response given.

In this chapter, the portraits are presented sequentially, so they can viewed imaginatively as though exhibited in a gallery on a long white wall, as a group of four, then a solitary one and then two portraits (see Figure 7).

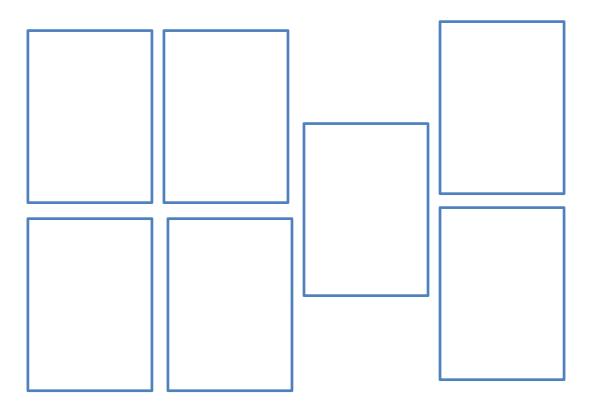


Figure 7 Ordinary portraits arranged for gallery viewing

Initially, they are for silent viewing and reviewing. Afterwards the commentary I have constructed on their groupings is available for reading and consideration. I indicate the significance of the portraits to my research project as data so far analysed. I am not seeking to create a typological grid, constricting their contribution. Instead, like the east window, the lines are pushing out and so are these hermeneutical constructions to create new

meaning. I will indicate how the portraits can become static gestalts, capable of closing down further necessary work on image and metaphor, concept and model

Ordinary people, non-explicitly religious, working positively with the window

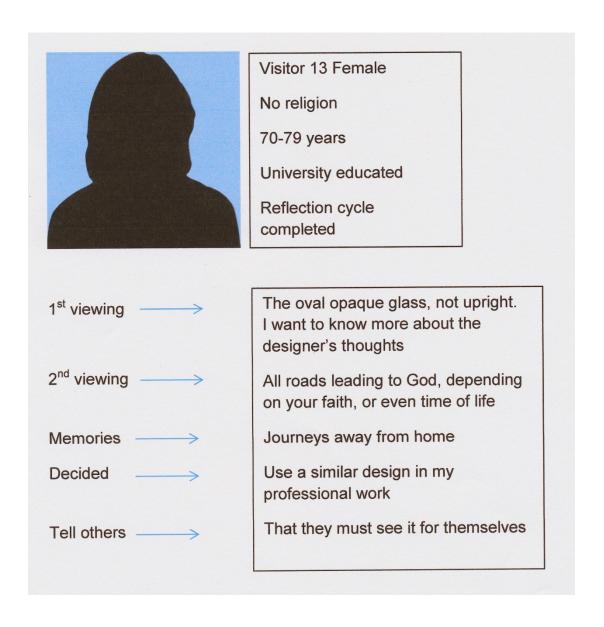


Fig 8 Ordinary portrait- unheard voice of no religion

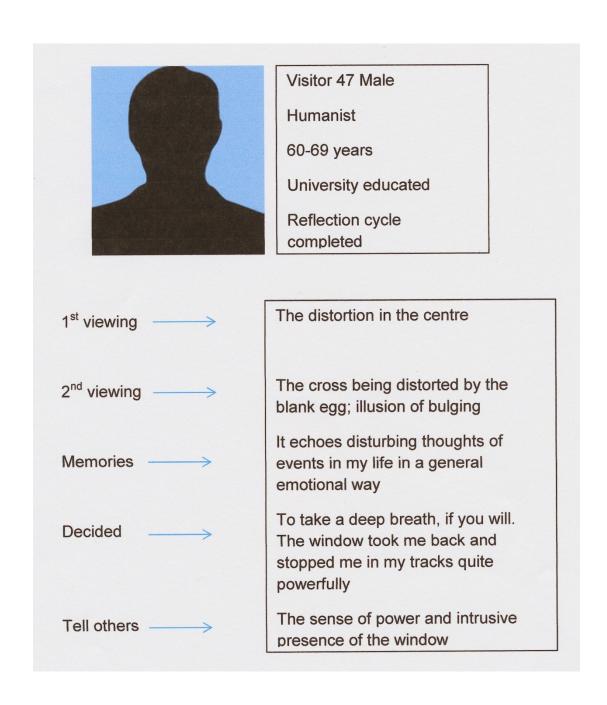


Fig 9 Ordinary portrait- unheard voice of male humanist

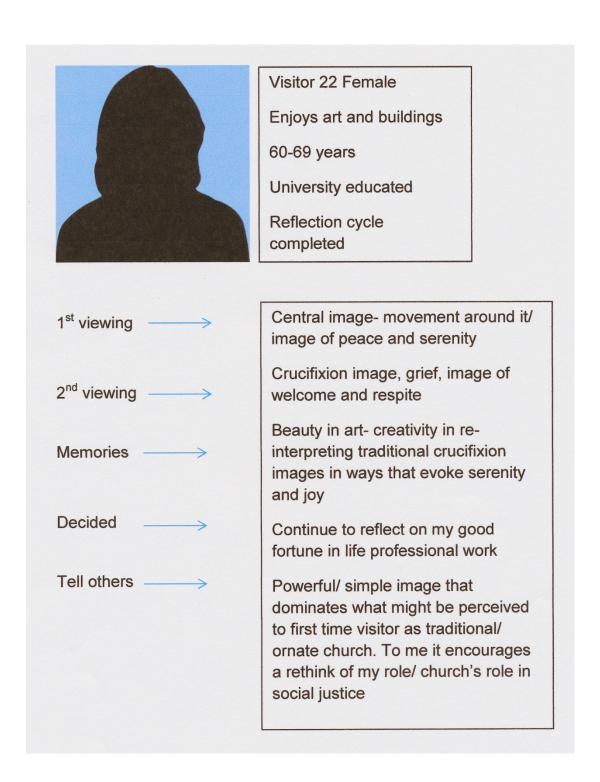


Fig 10 Ordinary portrait- unheard voice that enjoys art and buildings

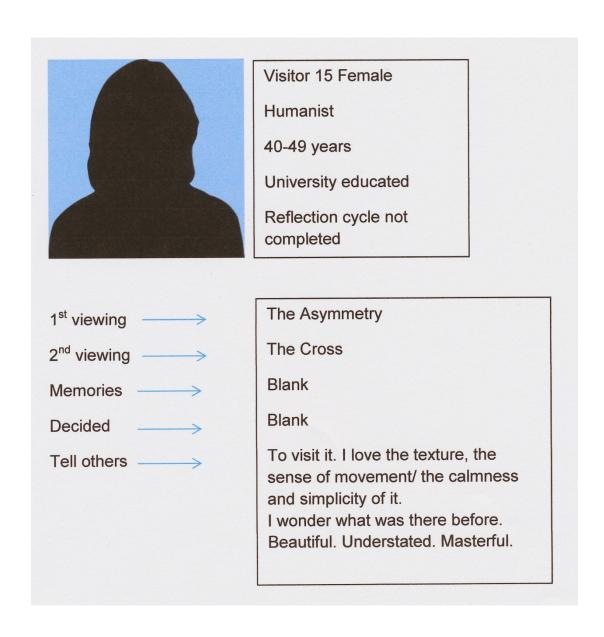


Fig 11 Ordinary portrait- unheard voice of female humanist

Commentary on the set of four portraits of visitors

The Figures 8 to 11 indicate how in primary framing religious concepts are not present in the respondent's first viewing. There is a focussing on parts of the window – oval and the central image, and generalizing the whole effect of distortion and asymmetry. In the next chapter, there will be further exploration of the parts, images within the window and the generation of metaphor. In their second viewing, visitors are more explicitly religious in their framing, mentioning religious concepts of God, cross (twice), and crucifixion. Although using religious concepts V13 makes a metaphoric statement "all roads leading to God". Religious concepts are stretched by metaphor as the- "cross ... [is] being distorted by the blank egg" (V46). The crucifixion concept is moderated by grief. It is also an image of "welcome and respite" (V22).

Two of the four respondents had memories reactivated from "journeys away from home" (V13) to "disturbing thoughts of events" (V46). One respondent (V22) declined to comment whereas another generalises, by providing an oblique commentary, of "beauty in art ... [and] creativity in reinterpreting traditional crucifixion images in ways that serenity and joy" (V22). One respondent decided to vary the design for their "professional work" (V13) whilst another wanted to continue reflecting on their professional "good fortune" (V22). A respondent was overwhelmed in viewing the window that they decided "to take a deep breath ... [t]he window took me back and stopped me in my track quite powerfully" (V46). This respondent noted the window had power and is an "intrusive presence (ibid.), whilst another viewed

it as a "[p]owerful/ simple image which dominates ... traditional/ ornate church" (V22). These two respondents give advice to others viewing that they might be shocked as they will be involved in re-interpreting and rethinking their assumptions and involvement in personal/ church life and issues. The remaining two respondents decide to tell others to visit the church and see the window for themselves but can't help in elaborating "I love the texture, the sense of movement/ the calmness and the simplicity" (V15).

The four visitor respondents are grouped together, creating a symmetrical form, to indicate the significant engagement of people who would not declare themselves at first as explicitly religious with a visual image. The window image is evocative. There initial framing gives way to using religious concepts. Their responses also indicate their emotional engagement. They all, except one complete the theological reflection cycle. There is a creative dialogue of concept and metaphor with an image. They speak positively about the window. A solitary portrait represents a group of regulars who are negative about the window (See Fig 12).

Regular 35 Female

Believer

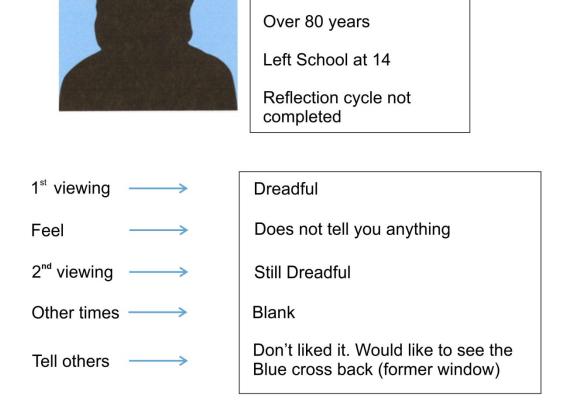


Fig 12 Ordinary portrait- a believer negative about the window

Commentary on a regular worshipper's negative response

A number of regular worshippers made negative responses about the window. They had opposed its installation; preferring the old 'blue' window. They were included in the research as they are significant minority voices. The above portrait by a regular made repeated short closed, if not angry, responses. She was unable to view the window at different times. She left a blank. Bereavement and blindness constricted her viewing. She did not complete the cycle of reflection. In the next chapter, several of metaphors reveal an impasse and I propose linking them with the feminist writing of Slee on awakening.

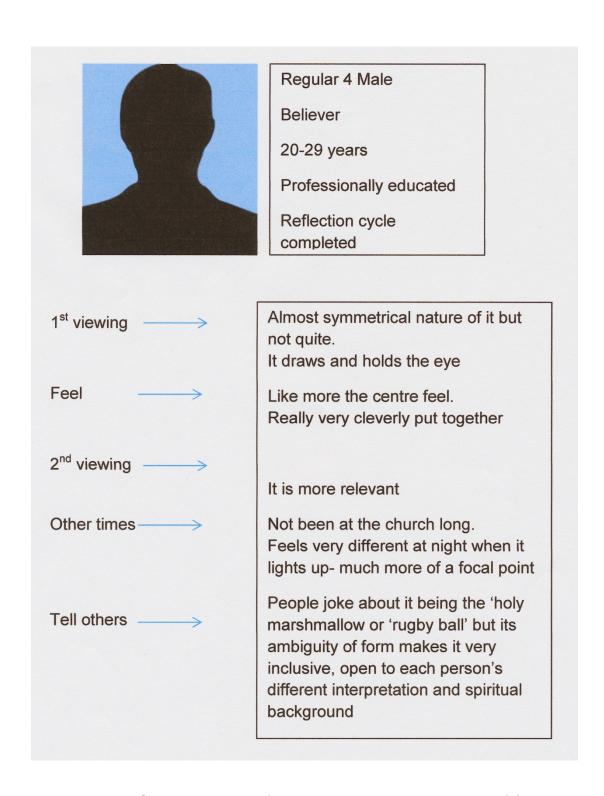
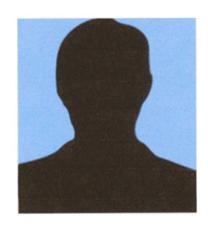


Fig 12 Ordinary portrait of person making implicit theology (1)



Regular 6 Male

Believer

50-59 years

University educated

Reflection cycle completed

Fig 14 Ordinary portrait of person making implicit theology (2)

Commentary on regulars engaging with the window

The visitors in the first four portraits (Fig 8 to 11) move from primary viewing generating non-religious words/metaphors to explicit use of religious concepts in their second framing. In contrast, these final two portraits (Fig 13) and 14) are those of regulars who engage with the window, and use indirect and implicit language in their primary and secondary framing. There is an understanding of the almost symmetrical pattern, which is encouraging the eye to create a gestalt (R4). The other regular focus on the oval and sees it as a web (R8). They are different in the way they use language as R4 give more elaborated prose whereas R6 has less words yet similar to poetry with condensed and evocative meaning. The first regular explores the window's ambiguous form, whilst the other concerns himself with the play of light. Both are encouraging people to look at an inclusive window and to hear what they make of it. These portraits of regulars help to expand Astley's restrictive focus of ordinary theology on explicit religion and concepts. They are examples of ordinary people living and working with an image. They replace Astley's faces or names of academic partners and their theological approaches.

Conclusion

In writing about these portraits, I have shown they are so gestalts, whole pictures, generated by frame analysis and the pastoral circle/cycle. The frames provide a border to the data. They contain the nitty-gritty words of how respondents see it. My qualitative interpretive approach with

participatory methods of data collection and analysis focuses on lived experience with an image rather than concepts. In Chapter 5, I will show how Slee (2004) sees women making more use of images and metaphors than men (p. 66). The portraits show word movement, they are static portraits of ordinary theology. The research paradigm, approach, and methods chosen, together with the data collection and analysis, through framing and reframing, are also building gestalts, closing and completing them into a portfolio of whole pictures. I have constructed a selection of complete ordinary portraits of ordinary theologians. These have replaced Astley's faces of academic partners for ordinary theology. The window encourages this and challenges these gestalts. I contend that a frame produces similarity, coherence and unity- it freeze-frames the nitty-gritty responses. Yet there is also focussing within the frames on dissimilarity, disruption. This encourages the stretching of frames and the breaking of conceptual frames. I have been working and living with an image. I have seen how respondents have used explicit religious concepts. There has been a significant use of metaphor. In the next chapter, I will consider how an image is also a working metaphor and a model of metaphors for expanding ordinary theology. I will focus on three parts, images found within the window that provide opportunities for generating ordinary working metaphors and models of working metaphors.

Chapter 5 The Window becomes a working metaphor and working model for expanding ordinary theology

The audio tour really helped me – being an arts person, knowing the design concepts behind it ... the window has added light in many places (JW6 - male).

It has been a revelation to spend time contemplating the window. I have found much more to see in it than ever I imagined. Thank you for providing this opportunity (JW1- female).

Introduction

In this chapter, I will summarize my research journey so far with the concept of ordinary theology, the need to turn to metaphor, and developing an appropriate, sensitive methodology and methods. I will move from the creation of ordinary portraits of theology by framed gestalt closure to explore the use of metaphor in my research. I wish to continue McFague's (1982, 1987) exploration of the working relationship between image, metaphor and concept. The image in my research generates along a spectrum, metaphors than concepts. The visual provides a distinctive kind of metaphorical resource. McFague's conversational approach encourages a different exploration of the data. I will focus with the working 'is' and 'is not' and this inbetween relationship, working the "hyphen" (Fine, 1998). I will select three images in the window- centre, lines and web that emerge from the data

revealing a working model. This will lead further reflections on the interaction between image and metaphor. I will indicate how my research with a visual image develops ordinary theology more effectively than working with written literature, opening up doing theology with a wider range of people. This chapter will indicate the contributions made by McFague with feminist metaphorical theology and Astley insisting on ordinary theology being salvific. I then develop an indirect and implicit metaphorical ordinary theology for eliciting and taking seriously everyday language from people viewing the window. My aim is to suggest a way for developing ordinary theology with a visual image

The research journey so far

In chapter 2, I began a conceptual journey with ordinary theology shaping my initial hypothesis, that perceptions of the east window are a legitimate form of ordinary theology. I reviewed Astley's understanding of ordinary theology. I indicated his restrictive focus on explicit religion, rejecting metaphor as being secular. He has limited empirical engagement, relying on aligning his concept of ordinary theology with a number of academic partners/disciplines. I suggested a conceptual development of ordinary theology from its reliance on academic partners and centralised learning structures to painting ordinary people-portraits of this theology. This involved a proposal to take Astley on an imaginary visit to St Martin's in order to defend his concept of ordinary theology. His imaginary exposure, together with the perceptions of visitors and regulars, encourages a fuller participation in public art in the city. The

proposed visit never physically occurred but I carried on with my 'thought experiment' with Astley and his concept of ordinary theology.

In chapter 3, Astley (2013a) turns/returns to metaphor. He saw ordinary theology as unsystematic bricolage, insisting this theology has to be salvific held by ordinary people for the academy to accept it as theology. He seeks to reveal theology from the linguistic data, searching for influences of theology. Astley suggested a metaphoric bridge to link metaphoric languages in ordinary and academic theologies. He does not develop this metaphor for his conceptualisation of ordinary theology. Astley acknowledged McFague's research as a middle position in exploring the relationship between image, metaphor and concept but he does not pursue this by developing an ordinary metaphorical theology. An intermediate window offers an opportunity, yet his work on metaphor is only aspirational with no developed methodology and methods for further research.

In chapter 4, I constructed an appropriate and sensitive methodology to guide the choosing of particular research methods to explore how far the window as a visual image developed the concept and practice of ordinary theology. In the early stages of data analysis, nitty-gritty hermeneutical fragments emerged from the questionnaire responses leading to their re-arrangement and recycling into frames, like panes for the window. A new set of people-portraits emerged. They became whole portraits bordered by a frame, containing nitty-gritty words. A more participative people's theology

materialised that challenged the minority, yet powerful, theological academy, to look, listen and learn again at people outside academia who theologise with images, spoken and written words, concepts and metaphors.

Although, these portraits showed word movement, they were still static portraits of ordinary theology. The research paradigm, approach, and the methods chosen, together with the data collection and analysis through framing and reframing, were building gestalts, closing and completing them into a portfolio of whole pictures and panes. The window encouraged this and yet challenged these gestalts.

In this chapter, I explore metaphors already revealed from the research data in these portraits by returning to the questionnaires and interviews. In addition, I will analyse the 28-day journals kept by eight regulars (1 male, 7 females) and my research diary as other sources of primary data. The journals provide new insights about the ways people reflected on the window. The journal writers cited at the beginning of this chapter indicate a range of concerns, from fixed conceptual design to further revelations. McFague (1982) offers a perspective, a conversational approach, as part of her 'thought experiment' in metaphorical theology (p. viii) for further data analysis. Her approach is sensitive to differing perspectives and interpretations found in theological reflection. She locates herself within a Protestant sensibility focussing on "dissimilarity, distinction, tension ... [being] sceptical and secular, stressing the transcendence of God and the finitude of

creation" (p. 13). This contrasts with a Catholic sensibility seeing "similarity, connection, harmony ... [being] believing and religious, stressing the continuity between God and creation" (ibid.). Briefly, she is "more aware of the discontinuities of God and the world than of the continuities" (p. viii). I lived with this tension between conceptual similarity and metaphorical difference in my earlier stages of analysis. I wish to pursue this further by looking at the window as a working metaphor and a working model. The window acts as a visual image, providing a grid, a screen, an etched, lightly feathered veiled surface. I will focus on three framings/constructions by respondents with their nitty-gritty hermeneutics. The three parts/images of the window are the centre, lines and web. The metaphors generated by the images have threads of similarity and of difference - it 'is' and it 'is not'. I will reflect on this analysis comparing it with Astley (2002) and Fiddes (2009) on literature and metaphor. I will evaluate the contribution and limitations of McFague's perspective of feminist metaphorical theology for expanding ordinary theology and Astley's requirement for theology to be salvific to develop. My research with a visual image increases participation and elicits everyday language for developing an indirect and implicit metaphorical ordinary theology.

Three working images and working metaphors

These three images of centre, line and web reveal the metaphors generated to make meaning of an ambiguous abstract window in a church context. Viewers are creating links of similarity with other objects/experiences by

metaphor. Each image generates a series of different metaphors held together by an image. The window becomes a working model of metaphors struggling to find similarity whilst trying to elude closure into gestalts and ensuring difference.

Centre

The centre refers to the white centre in the central panel of the window. Respondents name this centre plainly as the centre or more distinctly as a geometrical shape - an ellipse, a circle or an oval. Various metaphors of similarity and implied dissimilarity emerge from the data.

It is a dewdrop

In my research diary, I recorded that a homeless person woke from sleep. I asked what he saw - and he said, "it was a dewdrop" (RD 14 October 2011). The homeless sleep in the church by day if they remain sitting upright. He took his working metaphor from nature: droplets of condensation appearing on objects in the morning or evening and seeing a similarity with the window. He could also be describing his experience of the window as an awakening in the morning or any time during the day, or another re-awakening from a previous one and then a re-sleeping. The respondent quickly returns to sleep and the metaphor returns to sleep mode. In contrast, several metaphors focus on the initial deficiency of the window- with gradual improvement from an empty void, to being broken or opaque.

It is a void

For one viewer the centre of the window is a plain hole (V30), whilst for others it is a potential for more elaboration metaphorically: "[white] space-irregular, broken, asymmetric, space as a canvas" (V35) and the "[c]entre is not a fixed place ... it is in motion ... it's an open space" (V52). Another respondent, when first viewing the window, saw the "central void" catching his attention, the feeling that the central void metaphorically is "drawing power ... [and] poses an enigma of what to say about it" (R25). In the introduction to my thesis, I indicated that Koestlé-Cate (2012) was concerned whether the hole was a God-shaped hole waiting for an event to reveal its breached meaning. The metaphor of void suggests a hole waiting for potential activation.

A journal writer in exploring the window conceptually referred to the void as a quantum vacuum, whereby [there is an] ... excitation of latent energy produc[ing] an 'event' ... the panes are of a regular size, represent[ing] the latent energy of the quantum vacuum, the irregular sized panels represent an 'excitation' ... the central disc is the being that results from this excitation (JW1).

This journal writer whilst viewing the window is experiencing a reawakening of scientific theory and concepts through an initial metaphorical link. The window is a metaphor and working model where theories and concepts meet model and metaphor. The void or hole has potential.

It is broken

In chapter 4, I referred to a story in a sermon told by the vicar of a man seeing the window was broken. After the vicar informed him, it was not and it was part of the design, again he asked why it was broken. A passer-by saw it as a "ball hitting" (PB1) the window.

It is opaque

The central disc for other viewers is opaque (V13) with incomplete infilling. The "opaqueness of the glass [which has] the morning light shining through it" (V34), "sunlight streaming through" (R14) (see Fig 15).



Fig 15 Early morning light

A regular sees the effect of morning and evening light on the central image as

sometimes the structure seems to blur into the outside ... [i]f it is sunny the light almost blinds the eyes and the inner structure disappears ... [whilst o]n duller days the detail of the etching on the

glass is more evident ... [whereas in] the evening the moment when the elliptical shape in the window is gradually illuminated ... as a moon and creates a focus drawing the eye to the centre of the window (R2).

Figure 16 indicates the evening light and how around the central disc a series of lit and veiled windows emerges in the dark landscape. Further metaphors emerged by seeing the window as an egg and as giving birth.



Fig 16 Evening light

It is an egg

Some regulars and visitors, female and male, see the oval shape in the centre of the window as an egg (V4, V17, V27, V34). Five passers-by also said it was an egg. Visitors began to explore this metaphor of an egg as

"something is born" (V.26) and being "full of potential (R3). For some the egg becomes a working metaphoric reminder of previous home life back in the United States and the West Indies, eating a hard-boiled egg or gathering eggs from a hen (R7 and V51; see Fig.17).



Fig 17 Egg

People are reaching back into their past to make meaning. This metaphor is challenging a traditional concept of Jesus by seeing "Jesus as an egg, not as a man but an egg, beginning of life" (V26). Metaphor and concept are meeting and are also producing difference and confusion - "disorientated by egg" (V47) and the "blank causing distortion, cross being distorted by an egg, an illusion of bulging egg" (V46). The concept of the cross is being challenged by the egg metaphor. The female journal writers went on to develop metaphors of the oval, drawing similarities between the window and female sexual body parts and giving birth.

It is a vagina

The oval, a word derived from *ovum*, the Latin for egg, is "like a vagina opening to give birth – some anxiety; will be it able to push the rigid lines sufficiently out of alignment to make room for new birth? Or is the oval the baby being born" (JW4). The same writer extended her reflection on the egg and window by suggesting

our need for eternal life – our awareness of the divinity within the whole gamut of daily experience (that is, in some language the incarnation of God in Jesus) – to push hard to get itself 'born', recognized, included in our daily living (JW4).

The egg in the window is metaphorically creating a link through birthing with the divine in everyday ordinary life. Metaphors are stretching and earthing our concepts. Another journal writer started by seeing the oval shape as a 'hole' "shaped like a womb ... a sign of the birth of new life in the power of God's love" (JW8). A male security person, whilst viewing the "round circle ... [said it was] like a womb ... reminding him of the birth of Jesus" (SM2).

Prior to my research at St Martin's there had been a projection of artwork with a visual showcasing of St John's Bible onto the window, making it a "modern version of a stained glass window ... [with various] treatments throughout the evening, it became almost 'pregnant' with meaning – a sculptural canvas waiting to be transformed again" (JW9).

The central part of the window generates working metaphors from the natural environment (drewdrop), from sciences and engineering (void, broken, opaque), and from animal/human biology (egg, vagina/womb). The image generates metaphors, which interacts with theological/scientific concepts. Respondents saw beyond the centre and focussed on the lines as an image in itself, having metaphoric possibilities as mesh, a between position, as a prison and as ripples on water.

Lines

Visitors saw the lines as lines "which move[d]" (V4), then as "straight lines and wobbles" (V17). It was seen as a "window of simple beauty with a deeper meaning for me ... more than a few squiggley lines" (V32). A visitor observed an "interesting movement of lines which had a free flowing effect" (V39). There was an appreciation that the lines were distorted (V58, V51). Some visitors extended this into an "asymmetry of lines" (V39). A regular admitted they "notice[d] the lines more than the light" (R15) and they were "asymmetrical, yet vertical lines hold it together and were symmetrical" (R23). There were a "cross of lines" (V27) without seeing them as a "stave of harmonic lines" (JW2). Another visitor saw them as "lines vortexing" (V41) preferring a more active image as proposed in the original design and some respondents saw the "curved lines which form a cross" (V.49). The image of lines criss-crossing also generated metaphors of the dynamic working of lines (See Fig 18).



Fig 18 Between the lines and criss-crossing

It is a mesh

One journal writer refers to the window as a fishermen's net with the "mesh that seems to pulsate, vibrate inwards and outwards, and backwards and forwards" (JW2). A mesh appears to generate a space for meeting, a holding and viewing place. This journal writer sees "four pillars support[ing] and uphold[ing] this organic mesh" (ibid.). She also holds onto seeing a crucifixion with Jesus' head and the "mesh of lines as of a cross" (ibid.). In a haiku verse, she observes, "inside meets outside/through a mess of rhythmic line/his body lingers" (ibid.). Image and metaphor is generating the concept of the cross with a mention of Jesus' head and body lingering. There is a sense the window is between, not complete.

It is between

A journal writer is "struck by the contrast between the lights inside the church and the darkness outside" (JW1). Another writer finds herself denying the negativity of the image-

I don't want it to be a crucifixion, as I don't want to see every time I come to St Martin's as this for me, Jesus is a positive image ... man of compassion, not judgemental, great prophet, my inner guide, great healer and lover of all not just the man who was crucified on the cross (JW2).

There is a holding in tension of the negativity of the concept of the crucifixion and a positive image of Jesus.

This theme of between is explored when a writer states, "[w]e are not perfect. We are human beings, not human doings and we are being the best we can be with whatever resources we have" (JW3). She finds herself facing a misnomer on Remembrance Sunday when we "remember the glorious dead ... [t]here is nothing glorious about war" (ibid). The window is between those views as it "speaks of words that can't be spoken" (ibid). She previously notes that November is the month when the dead are remembered and the window "knows this and that for now all I can see is 'through a glass darkly" (ibid.). She acknowledges that the "whole of life, death and life after death thing is a mystery and that is how it is supposed to be. I can live with that" (ibid.). For her the "windows axises feel as if they are supporting me as I journey through life"(ibid.) She sees herself as part of a multitude of people

who are gone before her and we are "interdependent ... [and] interconnected" (ibid.) with each other through the criss-crossing of lines. This between position is taken further in an exploration on the position of Holy Saturday between Good Friday and Easter Day.

It is between Good Friday and Easter Day

A journal writer is gripped by the "cross and all the complex forms of it, which are intermingled and interrelated with the world ... [t]hey are strong and hold them firmly together and yet light passes through everywhere and a hole has burst through the centre" (JW8). She sees this hole as a womb where new life is born in the "power of God's love" (ibid.).

This journal writer conceptually limits the power of this image and metaphor generation. Slee (2011) cites to Alan Lewis (2001) which has influenced her in seeing Holy Saturday as offering an opportunity for "individuals and communities ... [to be] in that in-between, liminal space between death and life, after the breakdown or loss of what is most precious to us and before anything new emerges out of death" (pp. 94-95). She sees this liminal space offering to feminists a "psychological space, a gap, a fissure in time, a place of unknowing, waiting, ... the in-between space of transition ... [of] silence and apophatic spirituality in which language and thought-forms are absent" (p. 95). Compared with Slee this journal writer does not allow time for silence and for an apophatic emptying spirituality to emerge in the between of Good Friday and Easter Day. The familiarity and strangeness are not in tension.

Gadamer (2004) sees "[t]he true locus of hermeneutics is this in-between" (p. 295). The journal writer reveals a fusion rather than a working gap and an exploration of the between.

It is a prison

A regular notices the "prison bars. I sit where I can't see them" (R8). Whilst in chapter 4 I indicated how a regular saw the window as containing a person in prison and with an opportunity to make through a "small outlet to escape ...being set free from imprisonment" (R19). This is a brief commentary on the window whereas a journal writer earlier in this chapter offered an extended refection on the void from a scientific metaphor/concept of quantum vacuum of waiting for an event and an excitation of energy. This could be connecting, unknown to the viewer, to an embryonic iconographic Orthodox dogma of the harrowing of hell, Jesus breaking the prison locks and opening the door of Hades, allowing him to lead the escape and rise from the dead with the liberated prisoners. The metaphor and dogma of the Risen Christ, breaks a conceptual frame of the crucified Christ.

It is ripples in water

A journal writer sees "ripples on all the glass panes" (JW1) whilst a visitor develops this with "ripples in water" (V32). Another visitor says the window "evokes memories of dropping a stone in water" (V31). Astley (2002) developed the image of the pond and the metaphor of ripples to look at the

differences between ordinary and academic theology. The former making more significant ripples in a pond, when a stone was thrown into the middle of it, with the ripples smoothed out into a more academic stilling as the waves move from where the stone was thrown in towards the shore (pp. 86-88). He identified the point where the stone splashes and the edge of the pond as opposite ends of a spectrum and the "points in-between one may not be sure whether to call this theological ripple 'ordinary' or 'academic'. Astley believes a pond "can be restructured, enlarged and landscaped by an academic theological education" (p.87).

My research explored the generative opportunities offered by the between, an intermediary window rather than a pond. Astley's solution to this ambiguity is increasing the input of academic theological education, which conceptually smooths and diminishes the dynamic life of the image and metaphor generation. I have shown that respondents live between their created metaphors and traditional theological concepts. Further, the exploration of human experience creates the web as a metaphor through spinning and interweaving. There is an exploration of these experiences through metaphors of a frightening spider, and being a friend. The limitation of human spinning by street-traders and people passing-by the outside of the church is indicated. The window is not effective in getting their attention. An artist also suggested the window lacks narrative hindering the making of connections through metaphor. The metaphoric spinning about the windows in sermons is not apparent in the respondents spinning.

Web

It is a web

Emerging from focussing on the oval in the centre a respondent sees the "web pattern" (R6). A journal writer engaged with the window and saw the oval shape as having two possible meanings - "I used to think the oval in the middle was meant to be the head of Christ. Is it? Or is it the clear path that we all need in the web we spin around us in the way we live our lives" (JW7). The oval now becomes a web of stories.

The web image generates negative as well as positive comments. A visiting artist saw the window as a

work of art, very powerful but because it has an absence of colour and narrative there's not enough to engage me. It's a very spiritual thing but it's not a very religious thing as far as I'm concerned so it doesn't exist in the material world ... [not] enough richness and pleasure ... [of] the world that I live in. It seems to be a bit more remote and outside of real life" (VA)

The artist expressed disappointment about the lack of colour and stories of ordinary everyday life. His own painting of St Martin's Church, in contrast, is set in the busy Trafalgar Square filled with traffic, buildings, and advertisements for beer. It also has the patron saint soldier, wearing a long flowing red cloak and riding a mythological horse across the sky, connecting

him with the church steeple. The regular, journal writer and artist have spun stories, creating webs of meaning (see Fig 19).

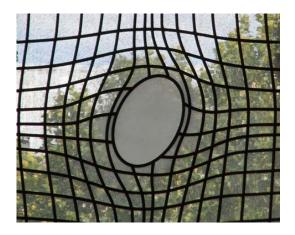


Fig 19 Web structure

It is a monstrous spider

The window also encouraged the spinning of 'horror'. A regular viewer saw the window as a "monstrous spider web ... seeing it as Shelob's web in *Lord of the Rings* ... [and choosing] to sit in church where I can't see it" (R8). A darker side emotionally, not just a physical darkness of the daily or seasonal rhythm emerged. Pain, grief and loss were expressed (JW4) and those with 'happy endings'.

It is a friend

Another regular saw the window as being humanised, having "a deep smile, an old friend" (R7). McFague (1982) experiments with the model of 'friend' as a way of interpreting/remythologizing a relationship between God and the

world, and moving towards the "metaphorical pole ... [rather than] the conceptual pole" (p. 127), stressing connections with postmodernism and human stewardship of the world. Viewers gave a human face/quality to the window, suggesting familiarity and power to change. A grandparent brought her granddaughter into church and noticed how she changed from being "cross and cranky- [after] look[ing] up at window ... [giving it] a huge smile" (R5).

The window created personal webs of meaning connecting with the outside cultural and worldwide web. The window generated narratives from within – "a mix, all blending of all stories in the light" (R7). A regular, whilst looking at the lines, asked this question - "Why has the world spun out of true?" (JW5). The window as a visual image, a whole, as parts, or as a working metaphor and model of metaphors, did not always engage other people to spin metaphors. It became an 'is not' without tracing the 'is' of similarity.

The web of street traders

Compared with the regulars and even the visitors the street traders were on the margins of the church and the outside world. A long established street trader provided a different perspective/story from the professionally/university educated regular and visiting viewers. His language style was more direct and emotive. When asked what he thought of the window he replied with rough nitty-gritty grammar in unfinished sentences. He declared that it should

the cross, but to me basically it looks like somebody's thrown a stone through the window. And I get that from a lot of people ... [who] are disappointed ... When it was first unveiled and they come past. Basically 'cause it was a, you know, a beneficiary put the money up for it But quite honestly, the window to me I would love maybe there but just plain glass not that bit in the middle ... You know, I go to the Mediterranean ... and you see the churches out there, they're fantastic, you know what I mean? I dunno. Perhaps I'm wrong in what I'm saying but it's just my personal opinion (ST1).

The trader initially believed there was a need for a more traditional cross within the window; he compromised with the idea of plain glass. There was a freshness and directness in the reply, with minimal elaboration in the incomplete sentences. For Astley this narrative would represent the usual and expected ordinary theology of people without formal theological education and implicitly without any university/professional education. Astley (2002) appreciated the irregular fragmentary accounts by ordinary theologians and how an open ecclesiology involved being open to the street (p. 170). The window connected more with the middle-class regulars and visitors coming to look inside the church. A seller of the 'Big Issue' interrupted his selling to say one word – "Cross" (ST5). Another person, whilst emptying bottles from a bar into the recycling bin, said, "It's a cross." After placing a few more bottles in the bin he said, "The artist is trying to be artistic," and then finally, "energy coming from the centre" (ST6).

Limited outside awareness of the image and metaphoric web spinning

The window provides a partial bounded context with light pouring through and a limited connection to the wider web of the world. It largely went unnoticed by other people trading on the street and in the shops/cafés. During the evening 'rush hour', I estimated that over a thousand people per hour passed the window (see Fig 20), as the rear of the church is a public thoroughfare to Charing Cross Station. I observed commuters rushing past, I did not see one of them even glance at the window. The people who responded to the window from the outside were coming into the area to spend an evening of leisure in the West End of London.



Fig 20 Window in the evening rush hour

There is a need to evaluate the effectiveness of art installation in churches to provide feedback to the commissioning churches. This research has provided some limited evaluation. The Archbishops' Council Cathedrals and Church Buildings Division (2011) published detailed guidance on the process of commissioning new art and its installation with minimum concern for post-commissioning except for insurance and maintenance. People came to St

Martin's with their own 'living documents', spinning webs of meaning from their own lives and these met the constraining/stretching web spun in the window. The window in its own right encourages more people to participate in reflection compared with listening to sermons about the window.

We saw in chapter 4 that sermons (preaching) are not highly influential, as a single factor, in attracting people to the church (see p. 118). There was no repeating or re-phrasing of sermons about the window on the website in the responses and stories told by regular respondents. Further, another visual image, the red torn cloak of St Martin, used by the church for its logo for internal and external communications, is not mentioned in the personal narratives. There is a disconnection between the cultural/corporate promotion and marketing webs spun, and the personal, except for the limited incorporation of other foundation stories. The window got the attention of regulars and visitors viewing the inside of the church, and it generated metaphors and spun webs of meaning. On the other hand, street traders and the public passing the window from the outside had minimal metaphorical contact- a dead cobweb not gaining attention or support. The art of the image did not attract or was not sufficiently provocative. The window, from outside goes unnoticed unless it is illuminated. According to a verger, the outside view, if recognized figuratively, has Jesus leaning to the left on the cross, the traditional iconographic position.

I will now reflect on this data analysis with the image of the window and the images within it, and the generation of different metaphors, not necessarily traditional. The window holds them together, working as a model of metaphors. I will compare this with the work of Astley (2002) and Fiddes (2009) on literature and metaphor.

Reflecting on interactions between the image and metaphor for developing ordinary theology

At the beginning of this chapter, I opened up a conversation between my research data and McFague's metaphorical theological perspective. My research indicates how the window as an image and three images within it encouraged a dialogue with viewers and the metaphors and concepts they generated. A series of metaphors were created to express the 'is' and the 'is not', the known and unknown, in what is seen in the window. Respondents indicated how their conceptual thought attempted to find similarities whilst metaphor and model saw differences. The window, as a whole, became a metaphor and a working model of metaphor. This visual image as a method and with its outcomes was different from the attempt by Astley (2002) to find an alternative approach through poetry to encourage ordinary theology. Fiddes (2009) sought through different types of literature to link with everyday language of the people. He sustained an academic conversation between metaphors found in literature and the concepts of systematic theology.

Literary resources for generating metaphors

Astley (2002) reveals an alternative non-traditional theology of God that emerged from a survey of North London people asked if they believed in the God who had the power to change life on earth. They replied they believed in God who was "just the ordinary one" (p.45). According to Astley, some academic sociologists of religion treated the response as a joke. In 1988, Donald Davey elaborates this answer in a poem entitled *Ordinary God*, which contains an implicit belief in a God who does not intervene and is silent. This kind of person rarely declared their belief. Astley sought to value ordinary theology from a poetic base.

Fiddes (2009) focusses on the arts in general and literature in particular, believing that "images and stories outside scripture ... [can] contribute to the actual *making* of systematic theology, not just illustrating of it" (p. 5). He wishes systematic theology to remain "close to 'everyday theology', resisting any *reduction* of metaphor and narrative to metaphysical concept, whilst at the same time bringing metaphor into genuine interaction with concepts that make ontological statements" (p.11). He justifies his 'inclusive' theology, as "concept, image and story can all be understood as human response to a self-revelation of God" (p. 13). Creative writing, for Fiddes, concentrates on human experiences, which as a "movement towards self-transcendence is bound to overlap with the theological understanding of the human spirit as being grasped by transcendent reality" (ibid.). He seeks to place "any writer's use of metaphor, symbol and story side by side with those from the Christian

tradition, together with Christian concepts ... used to organise and limit them" (ibid.). Initially Fiddes includes any writer if not all writers. He then creates a typology of three art forms indicating their different interactions between Christian images and new images, commitments to tradition and the use of Christian concepts. The systematic theologian selects the literature, controls the interactions and makes it significant with their ontological concerns. Fiddes locates himself within an "open metaphysics" (p.11). He appropriates literature for his purposes and the literature selected becomes distant and constricts his appreciation of everyday language.

Fiddes is working with written literature, in the tradition of Paul Ricoeur. He sees "novels and plays enabl[ing] theologians to enter other worlds than their own, to extend their range of human experience as they vicariously live other lives in a narrative which has reconfigured the time and sequence of their everyday lives" (p. 17). This literature takes theologians out of their everyday reality and transcends it. This fictional constructed reality is not easily accessible for all, it requires considerable time and honed professional skill to read, decode and correlate. It creates a distance between the primary and secondary language experiences. The window is veiled; yet it is near for brief viewing generating nitty-gritty hermeneutics. My research is similar and yet different from Fiddes with literature. I record a wide range of people's experiences from viewing a more accessible visual image. The reader of the window is privileged, not the author or the professional theologian.

McFague (1982) acknowledges her appreciation of Ricoeur and Gadamer, stressing the need for incorporation within a tradition. She also sees the language tradition has the potential of creating "false consciousness or oppressive cultural structures it may mask as absolutes" (p.63). An alternative conversation needs developing between McFague's explicit metaphorical theology and data from people viewing a visual image than a written text. This involves a critical evaluation of her metaphorical theology and Astley's salvific explicit theology. This gives value to ordinary voices viewing the window and develops an indirect and implicit metaphorical theology to be theological, expanding ordinary theology.

The contribution of McFague's perspective of a feminist metaphorical theology to expanding ordinary theology

McFague (1982) sought theologically to envision ways of talking about the relationship between the divine and the human that were not idolatrous, nor literal, nor traditional and that all people would find meaningful (p. 28). The divine-human is then open to being more indirect, implicit and less traditional. The window, as a new image, encouraged wider public participation with people finding meaning in it. This supports McFague's task for metaphorical theology to reform and transform classical doctrines by finding "new religious images and models being suggested by women" (p.29). She insists that "many metaphors and models are necessary, that a piling up of images is essential, both to avoid idolatry and attempt to express the richness and variety of divine-human relationships" (p.20).

McFague (1987) sees this openness in doing theology as existing within religion and the constraints of the "Christian pole or constant ... [found in the] patchwork, potpourri character of the Hebraic and Christian scripture with their rich flood of images, stories, and themes - some interweaving and mutually supportive, and others disparate, presenting alternative possibilities" (p. 44). According to McFague, this "gives Christian theologians 'authority' to experiment, to find grids and screens with which to interpret God's transforming love within the givens of our own times" (ibid.). The window is also an experiment, within constraints. It is a grid and a screen inside and outside the Christian tradition.

The window originates from another grid and screen. In the introduction to this thesis I indicated the artist, Shirazeh Houshiary, told the then Archbishop of Canterbury, that the painting of the *Veil of St Veronica* by Francisco Zurbarán influenced the design of the window. She wanted to explore the imprint of Jesus in the veil, and the veiling of reality. Houshiary effaced Zurbarán's painting and silenced the narrative. The window originated from a framed painting of an insider with an explicit traditional theological narrative. Inspired from another religious tradition, Sufi Muslim ascetic spirituality, Houshiary erased figures and narratives with geometrical forms and patterning. She stretched and broke out of her own tradition, creating an indirect and implicit metaphorical theological visual construction. Her theology is hidden within the window. She was concerned about abolishing polarities and promoting a common humanity. The window stands in and out of a religious tradition, and inside and outside a Christian/religious building. It

has a tense relationship with the institution, traditions and viewers. Respondents, with their multifarious interpretations, emerge from sharing a window open to all humanity. The window gives an opportunity for people to voice and put into words their viewings. McFague whilst reviewing parables saw them as a "metaphorical theology [which] is 'positive' as well as 'negative,' giving licence for speech about God as well as indicating the limits of such speech" (p. 19). The window encourages speech and writing; it also reveals their limitations.

My research reveals a few voices using direct speech and concepts about God, Jesus, the cross and eternal life, and science. In chapter 4, we saw how in the first viewing of the window there was little primary religious conceptual framing. In the second viewing visitors used more religious concepts than regulars in their meaning making. In this chapter, respondents generated metaphors challenging religious concepts. For example, Jesus, was seen as "an egg, not as a man, rather as the beginning of life" (V26). Another respondent saw the cross distorted by an egg (V46). A journal writer, reflecting on the egg, saw the need to push harder, to stretch concepts by metaphors in order to give birth to satisfy the "need for eternal life" (JW4). The writer is developing the concept of the incarnation of God in Jesus. She is using metaphor and everyday language to connect with daily living whilst not silent about Jesus, the cross, eternal life, the incarnation or God. Concept and metaphor meet in the window with metaphor stretching religious concepts.

There was also a 'disciplining', a contracting of metaphor by concept and theological discourse. A journal writer initially focussed on the hole as a shaped like a womb where new life was born in the "power of God's love" (JW8). The writer produces a theodicy argument that "suffering seems necessary for God's love to triumph and be experienced by all ... [with the] gathering of all suffering and death in this world into God's love ... incorporate[ing it] in the dying and rising of Christ" (JW8). Astley develops and holds onto a personal 'theology of salvation' within ordinary theology.

The contribution of Astley on seeing ordinary theology being salvific

Astley (2002) sees ordinary theology needing to be a "theology to live by, and to die for ... [as i]t is self-involving, personal, even pragmatic" (p. 40). He admits even if he wanted to "speak of an objective salvation ... it must be subjectively appropriated and will therefore depend on what is salvific for us" (ibid.). He elaborates salvific as "what saves us, what heals us, what works for us ... what we need to be saved from and for" (ibid.). He declares he would "not dare to apply the adjective 'salvific' to theology itself, we must at least affirm that the religion, spirituality or faith that it expresses is salvific, and recognise the form of all these will be individual, personal and experiential" (ibid.). Then Astley (2013) admits, "that even when ordinary theology is anecdotal, figurative, inconsistent or even logically confused, it may serve us as a personal expression of a self-involving religious response or relationship that works" (p. 2). This salvific meaning- meaning leads to a "psychological/spiritual change in a person, which (theological realists insist)

depends on transcendent facts about God's structuring of the human heart through nature and grace, so that it is restless until it rests in him "(pp. 2-3). The objective theory of salvation according to Astley is internalised by 'transcendent facts' which originate in nature and are regulated by God's grace.

Viewing the window challenges and stretches these 'facts' into differing interpretations through metaphors of centre, lines and web; other metaphors appear for respondents further viewing and what they would to tell others about the window. Respondents have changes of perspective without calling them explicitly salvific. Nitty-gritty hermeneutics emerge rather than a systematic theological conceptual smoothing of similarity. This visual image increases participation and elicits everyday language for developing an indirect and implicit metaphorical ordinary theology.

Developing an indirect and implicit metaphorical ordinary theology from eliciting everyday language of the viewers

My research reveals the capacity of the window to move people to make positive affirmations when interacting with the window design that brought pleasure and insight, declaring it to be - "surprising" (V5), "amazing" (V9 and V21), and "how lovely it is" (V28). There are also simple expressions made with exclamations of "Wow" (V52) and "[t]he more I think about it the more gobsmacked I am" (R17). Respondents encountering the window for the first time predominantly expressed responses of amazement and delight without

an explicit theological aesthetic. In chapter 4, I mentioned people who commented on the window's simplicity of design as well as its complexity - "striking complex simplicity" (V48), and "unexpected simplicity in complex setting" (V56). The simplicity is seen as "powerful" (V2), an "articulated simplicity" (R16) and "the most complex theology through sublime simplicity" (R17). The design was seen as "audacious" (V47) breaking conventions, and it was regarded as an "unusual design but very ordinary" (V7). These positive affirmations are the language of lived experience by human beings. They are indirect and implicit theological statements of wonder rather than belief.

In chapter 2, I was concerned with Astley's explicit religious belief/language and his rejection of metaphor in developing the concept of ordinary theology. McFague (1982) comments that "feminist theologians are saying that religious language is not only religious but also human, not only about God but also about us" (p. 10). Then McFague (1982) attempts to explore the relationship between believing and human living by seeing them existing on a "continuum" (p. 65). Human beings "interpret ... to think of 'this' as 'that,' to make judgments concerning similarity and difference, to think metaphorically" (ibid.). McFague indicates as human believers and human beings "we never overcome the distance between ourselves and our world" (ibid). The difference is the "degree of tension between ourselves and reality" (ibid). McFague assumes that religious people are more aware of this tension and "how things ought to be; they are conscious of the metaphorical 'is' and 'is not'" (ibid.). From my research, for visitors and regulars this religious and secular divide is blurred, they are aware of metaphoric tension in attempting

to describe the human experience of viewing the window in a church building. The respondents and church of St Martin's find themselves being both 'in' and 'not of' the city world, living metaphorically. As all thought is indirect and there is a gap between ourselves in this world, yet alone with another world, metaphor more than concept assisted in an exploration of humans living in an ordinary world.

Slee (2004) ventured further into human believing indicating how image and metaphor emerged as a "dominant means of faithing for women ... [with her interviews] reveal[ing] an extraordinary metaphoric potency" (p. 66). She had recruited women who saw themselves as Christian or previously so. Slee (2011) worked with a definite visual image of a Risen Christa rather than a non-figurative image. Then in *The faith lives of women and girls* (2013) she suggested her practice of research was "within the theological framework of a faith perspective" (p. 15). Her framework included a variety of faithing strategies. The people in my research had a wider range of belief or no belief. They shared a common experience of viewing the window and making their own interpretations.

McFague (1987) as a systematic theologian constructs an intermediary theology "essential to ... our time" (p.40). It is contextual and driven by academic theology. In chapter 2, I indicated how Astley saw the original learning structures as the place for generating concepts. McFague believed her metaphorical theology worked at the "foundational level of the

imagination, where images that form our concept are grounded" (ibid). She admits her concepts are not comprehensive or closed; rather they are "open to other attempts, other methods, other routes" (ibid.). She saw her project in metaphorical theology as an "imaginative construal of the God-world relationship ... [to] remythologize Christian faith through metaphors and models appropriate for an ecological, nuclear age" (ibid). My research reveals the imaginative construal of the mystery of God-world relation through a veiled and abstract window viewed by human beings. They are trying to make sense of the window and themselves, through meanings generated by a window located in a building designated as a house of God.

In my research, I have found the image(s) generated more metaphors than concepts. Metaphor expands Astley's conceptual understanding of ordinary theology. It re-establishes a working link. McFague develops an explicit metaphorical theology, whereas I am concerned to advance an indirect and implicit metaphorical theology as part of a general process of theological reflection available to all people. McFague's reminds that metaphorical theology must be cautious and "tolerant ... [and] pluralistic, aware ... [that] metaphors and models ...are relative ... heuristic ... and that this kind of theology as a whole, is a tentative affair and can advance few solid claims" (ibid). This is also applicable to indirect and implicit metaphorical theology. Metaphor has potency and inbuilt weakness. McFague returns to believing in the "tradition of the via *negativa*: finding little to say of God with certainty, it boldly makes its case hypothetically and let it rest" (ibid.). The window is a veiled for viewers indicating the mystery of presence and absence in the

divine and the human person. Nitty-gritty hermeneutics emerge in response to this window. Astley believes expanding ordinary theology is possible as it is "open to change because it is particularly open to outside influence" (p. 160). The window provides that outside change and influence. McFague (1987) is challenging our protected understanding when she states that

[b]y seeking security through our constructions, we refuse to step outside the houses of language we have erected to protect us from the emptiness and terror we cannot control. Our safe havens, called dogmas and orthodoxy, become absolutes, giving the illusion of being certain, being "on the inside," having the truth (p. 25).

Astley states he is open to change. McFague sees the need to step outside our language houses. The window offers an opportunity of a new visual glasshouse to see the outside and the inside with visitors, regulars and passers-by.

My research focusses on many metaphors produced tracing the 'is' and 'is not' of the world in which the image is located. Muted hints and silences are made of and about God and the other world by the 'is' and 'is not' of metaphor. The question is whether academic theology is open to the 'is' and 'is not' of ordinary theology and is willing to look, listen and learn from people living and doing ordinary theology. Alternatively pursuing metaphysical concepts, coherence and normativity can turn academic theology in on itself. The metaphoric origins of concepts in images is hidden, or not heard by the

academy. This ordinary theology is encouraging the academy to move into a more public setting on the edge of the square and as seen from a side street. The window opens to the public an opportunity in doing indirect and implicit ordinary metaphorical theological reflection and challenges a conceptual explicit metaphysical theology hiding its implicit metaphorical roots. It is positive in affirming the language of lived experience; it is religious and human; it can include a wide range of belief or none, and it is tentative and open to further imaginative construal of God and the world. The window enlivens a process of theological reflection open to all.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have further analysed my data by exploring the relation between image, metaphor and concept. The data in this research confirms my hypothesis that perceptions of the east window are a legitimate form of ordinary theology. The window has functioned as a visual image to encourage more participation and to generate working metaphors that challenge Astley's original conceptualisation of ordinary theology. A conversation between respondent's viewings with the mediating insights of McFague's metaphorical theology has seen the window to be an open working metaphor and a model of metaphors. My thesis that the east window of St Martin-in-the-Fields Church, London, as a visual image, increases public participation in theological reflection emerges. The window leads to the construction of whole ordinary portraits of people doing ordinary theology. The image also becomes a working metaphor and a working model

challenging academic conceptual ordinary theology through the mediating work of feminist metaphorical theology. A people's indirect and implicit ordinary metaphorical theology emerges through this window of opportunity.

According to a regular respondent, this window is "so right for the renewal" (R31). A journal writer identified a working tension for the church being "open to everyone, offering to include anyone who wants to be included ... [and being a] Christian community ... [and needing] to express this clearly and publicly (JW4). The church is living with the controlling partner of theology and, in particular, Christianity, whilst recognizing the 'other' of other people's meaning-making which generates an indirect and implicit ordinary metaphorical theology.

Chapter 6 Conclusion: Looking at the window for ordinary theology

Introduction

respondents is metaphorical.

My research has focussed on living, for a limited time, in a constructed house, a looking-glass church house, with a window available for viewing, and listening to people's perceptions and developing a new sensibility for doing ordinary theology. Some of those present in the 'church glass house room' are regulars, whilst others are visitors. The people become living participative portraits of ordinary theology. The language used by the

This research has focussed on testing the hypothesis that perceptions of the window by ordinary people are a legitimate form of ordinary theology. In Chapter 1, I located myself and stated that the purpose of my research was to give voice to others not previously seen or heard in ordinary theology. Further, I did not want the reflection of others to be seen negatively as suggested by St Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 13: "we see in a mirror dimly" (Revised Standard Version). St Paul hopes that a face-to-face situation with God will give clarification. The window is clearer with black and white twisting lines and spaces than the usual coloured and narrative filled stained glass church windows. It is more immediately available for the majority of viewers.

Meeting the research objectives

In Chapter 2, I completed my first objective, which was to explore the context and commissioning of the window as part of a renewal project on the edge of a public square. In Chapters 3 and 4, I identified my second objective, which was to critically evaluate Astley's (2002) concept of ordinary theology and its further development in his recent writing (2013a) to suggest a framework for my research. In Chapter 4, I decided, as part of my third objective, within a constructivist, hermeneutical, phenomenological, interpretative paradigm to develop a qualitative methodology appropriate for designing methods and to collect data from viewing a visual image. The methodology and methods was designed to encourage public participation and I gathered a wide range of reflections from visitors and regular attendees of the church.

In this chapter, I will now present a summary of my findings of respondents' reflections on the window, which are factual; describing wider public participation, with regulars and visitors doing theology, which fulfils my third objective of participation. They are 'indications' and have not been subjected to testing for statistical significance. They are indications of trends in a particular locality. My fourth objective was met by analysing data using framing and constructing gestalt 'whole' people portraits of ordinary theology. I completed my fifth objective by indicating how parts of the window generate working metaphors and models for expanding ordinary theology. These created new understandings of ordinary theology and are a response to my research question, which asked whether the window as a visual image

encourages wider participation and generates metaphors to extend Jeff Astley's concept of ordinary theology. Further, this chapter summarizes and presents my research findings to the academy, for my professional and personal development, to the church and the public square. In this chapter, I summarise my perceived limitations to this research and suggest improvements in design for further researching, and this will complete my sixth objective.

Summary of factual findings

Demographic participation

A cautionary warning precedes the 'factual findings'. They are not the outcome of quantitative statistical analysis to prove their significance, nor are they generalisable to a wider population. Instead, these are rough, nitty-gritty local trends identified in my research.

The gender of respondents to the questionnaires was evenly balanced, compared with only one of the eight journal writers who was male. Keeping a written exploratory journal of reflections over a period of time may be gender specific or perhaps this was a group of people willing to be involved in a 'thought experiment'.

Over 60% of the visitor and regular respondents were in the 40-79 age range. Visitors and regulars were well educated with over 85% having professional/university education. The majority were laity. Four respondents were 'theologically educated' which became apparent in their responses to the question of having studied academic theology. They were not dressed as clergy. Lay people and clergy sharing in a common experience such as the proposed 'thought experiment' of Astley visiting St Martin's with other people helps to break the expert clergy grip on theology, encouraging a willingness to look, listen and learn together. The visitors and regulars were willing to spend time with a visual image. They brought to the research personal and professional critical openness and appreciation from other disciplines than theology. They showed the potential to extend Astley's definition of ordinary theology. Their contributions cannot be talked-down, denigrated as inarticulate or inchoate or the 'is not' by academic theology.

Viewing the visual image of the window opens up ordinary theology. Over 64% of visitors said they admired old buildings compared with 47% of regulars. Both visitors and regulars said they enjoyed art (55%) indicating an ability to respond to a visual image. Over 53% visitors spent 3 to 5 minutes viewing the window, and 18% for longer than 5 minutes. Although regulars had had the opportunity to view the window over a longer period of time both sets of people represent wider public participation and the generation of a more reflective ordinary theology.

Summary of conceptual and metaphoric findings

In my analysis I decided on an interpretative paradigm for looking at the phenomena and hermeneutical meanings people constructed whilst viewing the window. As the research is inductive and qualitative, the conceptual and metaphoric findings revealed themselves as an on-going research narrative. I have separated these findings into two: first the results of living and working with a visual image; and second, finding working metaphors through an image.

Living and working with a visual image

In the primary framing, only 15% of respondents used religious concepts to state what they saw in the window. Astley, focusing on the explicitly religious, would have missed this important data source. He may still dismiss it as being too 'secular'. In the second viewing of the window, the use of theological concepts increased to 44% for visitors but only 25% for regulars. It is possible to argue that my research confirms Killen and de Beer's (1994) general process of reflection, without using religious concepts, and the art of theological reflection becomes incrementally more important with further viewings. Visitors may enter with more of a tourist frame of mind for viewing, looking at architectural/art features and then moving into concepts that are more religious. Regulars, in contrast to the brief viewing of visitors, are more familiar with the window. It continued to be evocative and they talked about it in implicit terms. I will return to this later in consideration of the window as a metaphor and working model and the extensive use made of metaphor.

After reframing the responses into a cycle of reflection, 55% of regulars compared with 48% of visitors completed the cycle. Visitors compared with regulars may have tired more quickly in this unexpected participation in this research project. Yet it showed that regulars omitted sustained reflection and visitors did not relate their experience to the past. Instead of seeing the window negatively as a 'fractured' cycle of general or theological reflection, it was viewed as a valuable brief encounter for the majority of respondents. This confirms the research into strategies used by people visiting museums. It challenges the assumption that theological reflection is a lengthy and continuous reflective process only done by a few committed and disciplined enthusiasts or obligated professionals.

I indicated there was still a pressure to close and complete a sequence of frames for the purposes of creating coherence and unity. I began to appreciate a dialogical viewing process, seeing wholes, parts and making a fusion. Initially more regulars (47%) than visitors (39%) focussed on parts rather than the whole of the window. Evidence suggests that after reflecting on successive/subsequent viewings of the window more regulars (62%) created a hybrid/fusion of viewing than visitors (45%) did. This may be that regulars see a blending or oscillation, whilst visitors, due to limited time, have fragmentary experiences. To show this development I constructed and painted a number of ordinary portraits of ordinary theologians to replace the faces Astley presented to his academic partners. My ordinary portraits are of participants whose voices not previously been heard — a person with no religion, two humanists, and someone who enjoyed art and old buildings. In

addition, a person who is negative about the window is included as well as two regulars who developed their reflections whilst viewing. They humanise Astley's ideal types of ordinary and academic theology. They are lived experiences using an image rather than abstract concepts. These portraits are important for ordinary theology and they need to be listened to and given a respectful place in the academy. These human portraits liberate Astley from appropriating and justifying ordinary theology pragmatically for missiological purposes and academic theological collaboration. Nevertheless, they are paintings; gestalts constructed and completed that became static portraits for research purposes.

Finding working metaphors through an image

Astley rejects non-explicit, metaphorical religious language, yet he creates his own world of central learning structures submerged in a dark swamp. McFague challenges Astley's learning mythological underworld with metaphor, which she sees as central and original to all human learning and all thought and language being indirect.

Using the interpretive lens of framing, sequencing responses as stages in the pastoral cycle, listening to nitty-gritty hermeneutics, gathering ethnomethodological categories and painting portraits, conceptual gestalt whole pictures emerge of the 'is' of reality seen in the window. My research also paid considerable attention to people focussing on metaphors of how they see and write about their viewing.

I will now summarise the ways in which the window becomes a metaphor of indirect thought of holding the 'is' and 'is not' in creative tension. The window becomes a working model of many metaphors, challenging Astley's (2002) sterilising, disciplining imageless concept of ordinary theology and his intended explorations with metaphor (2013), which are not fulfilled.

Reviewing the journals, mainly completed by females, the questionnaires and the informal interviews, three images/parts of the window are developed in the process of meaning-making. The first was the centre generating metaphors of a dewdrop, a void, broken, opaque, an egg and a vagina. The metaphors stretched the explicit religious frame and sought similarities and differences from experience. The second image is of lines generating metaphors of a mesh, between, between Good Friday and Easter Day, prison and ripples in the water. The last image a web, and metaphors of spider and friend. The questionnaires gave regulars and visitors the opportunity to spin further stories. I recorded that one person had constructed twenty-six single line verses and seven Japanese style haiku poems..

Respondents made various decisions, such as to make personal ethical changes in their lives, or a practical response, of going to eat somewhere else, take a photograph; seek further information about the artist or to pray. They had opportunities to say what they would tell others about the window. Some wanted to warn future viewers about being surprised, whilst the

majority were eager to let people make their own meaning (repeating my research style with respondents).

The window made limited engagement and connections with the wider cultural web of street traders outside the church and commuters passing by and they did not generate metaphors or spin stories with it. The window is a working metaphor and a working model generating metaphors for both regulars or visitors.

Contribution of this research in ordinary theology and beyond

I will now explain the contribution my research makes to the academy, to my personal and professional development, to the Church, including St Martin's, and to public art and public engagement. Green (2009) reflects on his earlier attempt to do theology in *Let's do theology* (1990) noting an "impenetrable reluctance on the part of academic theologians to mix it with ordinary Christians ... [making theology] remote, erudite and book bound (pp. vii-viii). He now believes that nineteen years later there have been significant changes in the theological culture. He sees the "conversion of theology is being hampered by the inward-looking stance of the Church itself" (p. 173). I think Green is blaming the Church rather than the academy. St Martin's is an outward-looking community, which has made significant steps in using art to 'do' theology with people. The advances made in the academy are still aspirational. My research challenges the academy and the Church beyond St Martin's and I suggest there are many types of ordinary theology and

ordinary theologians, using explicit and implicit theological language. They include regulars and visitors, people trading in the streets on the edge of the church and those who are passing-by. My research is a contribution of work-in-progress.

To the academy

Astley (2002) sought to get the academy to take ordinary theology seriously. I make a similar plea with actual empirical rather than anecdotal research. My research reveals how people's ordinary theology and academic ordinary theology have an opportunity to meet in a window, mediated by an indirect and implicit metaphorical theology. The image is pregnant with meaning and challenges concepts and theories. It is ready for hermeneutical construction by ordinary people and by visiting academy members. It stretches the reductionist theoretical grids; it challenges the feminist importation of a choral metaphor, and the need for building up theological fluency by listening to four theological voices. It offers further use of a visual image in research in the field of practical theology beyond headstones, prayer cards and narrated photography. The image is 'central' for reflection and not transitory being replaced by the art of theological reflection. It is the heart of the matter. The respondents' voices were given priority and this stopped me only offering my personal anecdotes. The ordinary portraits and metaphors explored provided the evidence. The researcher is only one voice among many and I offered my own pane and a research design for others to speak for themselves. The research writing about ordinary theology is embedded in a particular context and makes an ordinary contribution rather than an extra-ordinary one to the academy.

My research provides empirical hermeneutical conversations of people viewing a visual image and their use of metaphor in everyday experience. Originally, Astley (2002) rejected metaphor whilst still using images such as spectrum, pond and swamp. Recently Astley (2013a) suggests such conversations, containing metaphor and story, were already in place linking to and metaphorically bridging the gap between "ordinary theology and academic or ecclesiastical theology" (p. 52). He then states the conversations are only envisaged and primarily begin and develop on "the bridge between the metaphors and stories of the conversation partners on both sides of the gap" (ibid.). The metaphoric bridge is controversially neither metaphoric nor illusionary, as there is no evidence of significant construction work in the commissioned essays (Astley and Francis, 2013). In Chapter 4, I recorded my general impression that these essays display the same earlier restricting conceptual features critiqued in Chapter 3. There is little engagement between concept and lived ordinary experience in the fieldwork.

Astley and the academy need to go beyond the academic 'thought experiment', as I suggested earlier in Chapter 3, in order to overcome the gap between ordinary and academic theology and to expand academic concepts and grids. Feminist theologians, like McFague and Slee, are challenging Astley and others in their glasshouses of conceptual language by

providing a way to liberate them from constricting conceptual grids. I proposed an intensive experiment for Astley and extended it to other academy professionals to view the church window. My research developed existing academic studies by living and working with a visual image, and experiencing the window as a metaphor and as a model generating further metaphors. This encourages a new sensibility to doing theology, restoring hermeneutics back into the hands of ordinary people, and academics again looking, listening and learning from others rather than critiquing them. Feminist theologians are included in the invitation.

McFague needs to go beyond her model of friendship as a metaphor of the divine/human relationship to look at and hear people's implicit as well as explicit metaphorical theology. Slee will be challenged to delay infilling the apophatic hole with feminist theology and to live further with the creative tension of 'is' and 'is not' of metaphor experienced by people. As a consequence of his 'visit' to St Martin's, had he accepted by invitation, Astley would actually turn to image, metaphor and model and explore their significance for the concept and theory of ordinary theology. It will give an opportunity for participation and collaborative working between ordinary people and professional theologians. This live window has the potential and a research record of achievement in facilitating ordinary hermeneutics as revealed through an ordinary methodology with ordinary people using ordinary language of metaphor. Astley's bridge remains simply a research proposal, a link or a perspective for new partners rooted and disciplined within mainly male dominated empirical theological studies. Feminist writers

considered in this research avoid using the language and concepts of ordinary theology, preferring more 'homely' language, metaphors and stories.

Personal and professional development

My personal interest has helped me to make meaningful my years of professional ordained ministry. I had intended to research artists and their work from the various contexts of my ministry. I achieved this with one artist in my Literature Review (TH8002 Portfolio 30 June 2009). Viewing the window at St Martin's changed this plan as the window spoke to me. It challenged me and started to stretch my frames of interpretation. I have regularly visited art galleries and I have appreciated church architecture. I have appropriated art to illustrate liturgical texts, biblical words, or events in Jesus' life for confirmation candidates. During Holy Week and Easter, I have made extensive use of figurative art of the crucifixion and resurrection linking this with classical, popular and music from the shows. I have now lived with the window and the respondents for three years with its constructed wholeness and its brokenness into parts.

During this professional doctorate journey, I have been professionally tested and certified as dyslexic. Over the years, I have learnt strategies to compensate for this. I feel more comfortable viewing and talking about visual images than reading or writing words. Visually constructed images and word texts are two different windows that open implicitly and explicitly into humanity and God. As a result of my research, I will now be professionally

more cautious in my appropriation of images for theologizing and let others speak before offering my interpretation(s).

This research project has also permitted me to update my professional ministerial education from the 1970s that lacked any major study of feminist and liberation theologies or systematic theology. I am able to appreciate the freshness of ordinary theology and to open the window for a more sensitive and inclusive academic theology.

As a result of this research I have learned, as a minister, to 'let go' of my ministerial leadership role and become a peripatetic 'lay' rather than a local/organisational employed priest-researcher. I have seen the need as a researcher to encourage people to participate and to be ready to 'serve' them as they responded to the window. I have become an advocate for ordinary theologians by presenting this research to challenge the academy to take seriously and to look with other people at this church's etched glass window.

Contribution to the Church and Society through the public square

My research contributes an evaluation of the effectiveness of the installation of the new east window. I have previously recorded that national guidance is available on the process of commissioning works of art. There is little attention given to post-commissioning evaluation except regarding maintenance and insurance. In Chapter 1, I explained how St Martin's set its

objectives for those artists submitting designs for the window. My research reveals how the window catches the attention of visitors who are willing to spend time viewing and to make meaning of it. Although my research did not enquire into the cultural and ethnic backgrounds of respondents, I feel, intuitively, that it the window appealed to a wide range of national and international visitors. The window has become a focal point in the east end of the church. Regulars and visitors engaged in brief reflections as evidenced in the questionnaires and the more sustained reflection shown in the journals. Respondents have commented on the way the window blends with the architecture or not.

I hoped to show that the window contributes to the church being an important space and significant place in the public landscape. Astley sees ordinary theology as being involved more overtly on the front line of mission or testing academy-based constructions against human experience. This research has returned ordinary theology to the city. Public art brings life to the city, Church and to academic ordinary theology. The art of this window operates on a threshold of potential engagement between private and public worlds. The inductive research revealed that the image of the window has not significantly connected with passers-by or with those working in shops and trading in the immediate vicinity of the church. Respondents' reflections about the monochromatic window have challenged the official interpretations found in press releases and sermons. Reflections are more varied and less explicitly religious. Ordinary viewing has been valued without imposing any dominating lenses of spiritual viewing or criticism. The window engages both visitors and

regulars, and increases a participation in meaning-making. I hope to disseminate my research to other people beyond St Martin's by writing for publication in academic, theological and art journals and in 'popular' religious newspapers or art/religious newsletters. Nevertheless, my research has limitations and I will now suggest how I might have done things differently.

Research limitations and suggestions for further research

During and after the fieldwork I had reflections about the limitations of my research design, the fieldwork practice, data analysis and further explorations with this visual image.

Research limitations

The carrying out of 'outsider' research at St Martin's 180 miles distant from my usual place of work and residence is open to criticism of ethnographic tourism. I adopted the approach of a 'lay' participant researcher relying on the initial perspective and information resourced by the vicar who subsequently moved before I conducted my fieldwork. This, together with limited time for fieldwork and being a distant sole researcher constricted my research design. Others suggested further areas of interest during the research process.

Reviewing the process, I should have limited the scope of the research by not inquiring about the artist and those involved in the selection process. As an inductive study, the research both contracted with their exclusion and expanded to include other people and documents. I had not decided on the number of visitors and regulars I wished to interview. Instead I received from all those who responded in the questionnaires over the two fieldwork weekends. If I had initially adopted a quantitative approach, I might have handled the data more efficiently. However, I decided on a more interactive and inductive approach to data gathering. This provided a more sensitive handling of nuances of interpretations and paid attention to the generation of metaphors. Had time permitted, I would have included from the methodology of action research, the use of focus groups to increase the ownership and participation in the research process. I listened with courtesy to those who we were unhappy with the window. I have recorded their comments, as they are a legitimate part of ordinary theology. I decided not to pursue further the 'controversy' and changes in the design and commissioning process.

I had not considered formally gathering basic information regarding visitors' countries of origin, and whether English was their second language. This would have indicated St Martin's importance as an international tourist attraction and the fact that the congregation includes people living and working away from their 'home' countries. Further public engagement could have been achieved by researching those people attending lunchtime and evening concerts. I had not negotiated this and I would have needed others to assist in the larger scale research.

My respondents were all adults and mainly lay people. All made written responses, with a few exemptions, to this visual image. I could have audio-record their responses if a 'quiet' place had been available. I suggested people could paint a response but there were no facilities available for this.

I was a time-limited participant in the fieldwork. I negotiated the research study with the vicar. If I had lived nearer, apart from establishing focus groups, I could have become more of an observing participant. The interpretive lenses for the framing emerged a considerable time after the fieldwork and as a result of many experiments with coding and selecting themes. This contributed to my process of learning how to conduct research.

Further explorations into ordinary theology

The end of the fieldwork, when respondents were writing their journals, saw the installation of a new altar, designed by Shirazeh Houshiary to complement the window above and complete a visual story of Jacob's ladder to heaven and the stone altar marking a holy place (Genesis 28.16-18). Only two of the journal respondents mentioned it and they are divided in their opinion. However, there would be a fruitful area of research seeing how two metaphors, a hierarchical ladder and an altar of hospitality and fellowship appear, if at all, in people's perceptions. The altar may attract less controversy than the window. See Figure 21, which shows the new altar under the window.



Fig 21 Window and altar on the night of installation

Further research could include people attending public concerts. Researching the response of children and young people under 16 viewing the window could be a further extension. Since I completed my fieldwork, a summer outdoor café has opened in the previously unused and locked church's courtyard. This would give an opportunity to ask people from outside the church what they saw in the window. The long summer daylight hours, with the café closing before dusk and a more traditional iconographical outline of a figure as Jesus on the cross, may hinder seeing the window differently unless it is illuminated. The church would need to consider alternative additional artwork to the traditional window if it is to connect with people in the courtyard. Figure 22 shows the east window from outside and figure 23 the courtyard café.



Fig 22 East window from the outside



Fig. 23 Courtyard café

Making research connections with other visual theologies

My research connects with others recently researching into visual theologies. Wayne Morris (2008) sees deaf theology as being "lived ... temporary and not fixed for 'eternity' in written texts ... a reflective experience expressed through BSL (British Sign Language) ... doing theology without the words of texts and speech" (p. xv). He sees the doing of deaf theology is through "spatial and visual media" (ibid.). Tracey Raistrick (2014) gives epistemological privilege to the language of the deaf community through BSL and explores how visual-corporeal languages unsettle word-centric approaches to the Bible and its translations. She sees the visual offering opportunities for fresh understandings of the Word of God, bringing together the human and divine. Both Morris and Raistrick are stressing how theology can be done using a visual text rather than being confined to written texts.

Chris Shannahan (2012) has reported on a different visual project with unemployed young men living on a Birmingham public housing estate, who were socially excluded, and who worked with a Muslim graffiti artist, 'aerosol' Ali to produce a mural cube to record their experiences, moods and spirituality. The cube was temporarily exhibited on the estate before being transported for exhibition at Birmingham University. The window and cube both have Muslim artists making marks on glass or wood, one more figurative than the other. Both provided opportunities for and engaged with people not usually included in expressing their implicit theology or spirituality.

Shannahan and Houshiary are therefore providing an urban-based challenge to those who write about theology-in-the-arts.

Filling the gap or stretching art and theology

In contrast to my research, Paul Fiddes (2000) is seeking a pastoral doctrine of the Trinity to fill the gap between experience and doctrine. For Fiddes (2000) metaphors give "an entrance into engagement in God ... [they are] a movement of pointing as a flag-stream in the wind and show the direction in which the wind is blowing" (p. 40). He sees metaphors providing "pictures of relationships ... but the 'depictive' element subverts itself as soon as its task is done of drawing us into relationship" (ibid.) with God. He explores the metaphor of *perichoresis*, which "expresses the permeation of each person by the other, their coherence without confusion" (p.71). Henri Matisse's (1909) painting of the Dance - first version is on the front cover of his book and Fiddes does not refer to the painting in the written text, but leaves the image to generate its own dialogue with the books inner content. The cover provides a window of reflection about western and eastern Trinitarian doctrinal traditions. Matisse leaves a gap between two dancers, not holding each other's hands, but straining to connect. Fiddes (2000) envisages a reconciliation in doctrine when people venture out of the close communion circle of dancing and enter into a progressive movement with others before returning, "bringing other dancers with them" (p. 75). He is holding in creative tension the self-sufficiency of the closed circle with "a swirling vortex of arbitrary currents" (p. 79) and the dominating Father figure of a progressive dance (p. 76). The initial rejected window design was a vortex and it had been suggested to me that the artist straightened up the vortex to get the window design accepted.

Although, Fiddes (2000) sees his dance metaphor as providing an "interpretative tool" (p. 75) my ethnographic visual research is about people viewing a window rather than dancing with doctrine. The non-figurative window encourages people to dialogue and complete whole, gestalt pictures whilst being stretched by parts and brokenness. Metaphors generated by the window are from lived experience using ordinary language rather than a Greek word *perichoresis*. There is more of a meeting of the wind and the eye with respondents voicing indirect and implicit, direct and explicit, or no language about God rather than definite 'flags' pointing to God. These reflections of the window emerge where visitors cross thresholds and where regular worshippers view in a pastoral church setting. This east window of opportunity links a western church in London's West End to an artist born in the East, and develops the relationship between art and theology.

Since my fieldwork was conducted, Harries', *The image of Christ in modern art* (2013), has focused on images of Christ in modern art and the way artists are challenged to reveal the "transcendent through the mundane" (p. 8). He sees the artist and the theologian going beyond representation. Commenting on the east window, Harries (2013) believes it is "[d]eceptively simple, it is extraordinarily effective ... it is not purely abstract, and there are hints of

Christian themes" (p. 125). He declares the window to have "subtle suggestions of a traditional image [that] not only make it easier for the average viewer to respond; it is congruous with the fundamental Christian conviction that the word has been made flesh" (ibid.). He is patronising to the viewers, appropriating this artful window for his theological purposes. He agrees with Moffatt (2008) that the window is "oddly conservative" (ibid.) compared with the original but rejected vortex design.

This thesis seeks not to overemphasise the extraordinary nature of the window or the help it offers those not educated in critical art appreciation. The viewing cannot be dismissed as being ordinary or taken out of ordinary lived experience. A conservative window can also subvert those critically educated in art and theology. Instead, the window significantly engages people in making meaning and extends participation in doing theology to those within the church and those on the threshold.

This research goes beyond Astley's (2002) original work and his and Francis' (2013) further recent explorations in ordinary theology. My research is located in a church glasshouse where people have a window of opportunity to live with for a while (see Fig 23).

My thesis is that the east window of St Martin-in-the-Fields Church London, as a visual image, increases public participation in theological reflection. The

window leads to the construction of whole ordinary portraits of people doing ordinary theology. There is more than one type or person doing ordinary theology and these are ordinary theologians in a very broad sense. This image also becomes a working metaphor and a working model challenging Astley's academic conceptual ordinary theology through the mediating work of feminist metaphorical theology. A people's indirect and implicit ordinary metaphorical theology emerges through this window of opportunity. Academy members are invited to take the opportunity to view the window and to gracefully look, listen and learn from other people's hermeneutical constructions.



Fig 24 A window of opportunity for ordinary theology

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Appendix 1 Questionnaire for visitors



Looking at the East Window what was it that first caught your attention?

How did you feel just before you entered the church? Please underline most suitable word.

Happy/ surprised/ contented/ worried/ sad/ confused/ tired / questioning/ wanting to pray/ state other

Why did you come into church today?

Then what else did you see?

Did you come from home/ hotel/ staying with friends?

Does the window remind you of anything in your past or present life?

Are you working/ student/ retired/not working at present / on holiday?

Are you visiting alone/ with another/ in a family/ group?

Is this your first visit to St Martin-in-the-Fields? Yes / No

Whilst looking at the window I have decided to....

How long today have you looked at the east window - less than 2 minutes/ 3 to 5 minutes/ longer?

What will you tell friends about this window?

How would you describe yourself as:an admirer of old buildings/ enjoy art/ regularly attend religious services/ seeker/ spiritual person/ humanist/ person of faith believing in God/ other?

How would you describe your education- left school 16/18/ university/professional/ technical/ studied academic theology

Please would you be willing to let us know of any further thoughts you have about the window within the 28 days? Yes / No

Has it ever been suggested to you that you might be dyslexic? Yes/ N

Optional- First Name......Phone No.....Phone No.....Phone No.....

Appendix 2 Questionnaire for regulars



Looking at the East Window for the first time what got your attention?	Please could you tell me what attracted you to this church?
How did the window make you feel?	What services do you regularly attend?
As you look again at the window today what do you now see?	Are you working/ student/ retired/ not working at present / on holiday? Are you here alone/ with another/ part of family / group?
Have you seen anything else at different times of the year?	How would you describe yourself as:- an admirer of old buildings/ enjoy art/ regularly attend religious services/ seeker/ spiritual person/ humanist/ person of faith believing in God/ other?
What would you say to your friends about the window?	How would you describe your education- left school 16/ 18/ university/ professional/ technical/ studied academic theology
	Please would you be willing to keep a diary of your thoughts about the window for 4 Sundays/ 28 days? Yes / No
	Has it ever been suggested to you that you might be dyslexic? Yes/

Optional- First Name......Male/ Female. Year of Birth.....Phone No......