

Glastonbury Poemprayer

I have always quite fancied the idea of going to Glastonbury, not the place so much as the festival! I grew up with the Greenbelt Christian music festival and saw some great bands and discovered interesting speakers. But having grown up a bit, I discovered that I am really not a great camping fan, and what I really want from a holiday is a bit of peace and solitude. However I do enjoy watching highlights from Glastonbury each year on the TV and seeing others having lots of fun in the rain and mud. This prayer was written for a service based on Glastonbury – for some reason I remember focusing a lot on feet but can't for the life of me remember the Biblical text we used, though reading the prayer I guess it must have been Moses taking off his shoes at the burning bush "for this is Holy Ground"!

The crowds converge
snaking their way along traffic jammed roads
travelling from all directions
the skies darken with clouds
a city of coloured canvas bubbles
grows up overnight
sound checks are completed on staged areas
stewards and medics are at their stations
the entrepreneurs are ready
with extortionately priced wellington boots
the scene is set for the ultimate of hippie gatherings
as the sun blazes its longest arc across the skies
and the celebration of the summer solstice begins
site of ancient gathering and mysterious stone circles
place of contemporary youth culture
and modern portaloos artistically graffitied
a liminal place where old meets young
and we glimpse the eternal
holy ground, littered with tents and debris
holy ground, pounded by rain and millions of feet
holy ground, mud between your toes
holy ground that demands the removing of shoes
and walking barefoot on the earth

Barefoot God,
forgive us when we cling to the conventional
and are too scared to let our hair down and take our shoes off
remind us that yours in holy ground
ground of our being
that we are made from dust and to dust we will return
startle us with your spontaneity
for you are not to be defined or pinned down
challenge us to walk barefoot
take us by the hand and show us a glimpse of divinity
as we discover who we might be.

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