

Ministers-at-Work

The Journal for Christians in
secular ministry

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To help ourselves and others to celebrate the presence of God and the holiness of life in our work, and to see and tell the Christian story there.

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Copy deadline for the January edition: 5 April.

All views expressed in articles are those of the writer unless otherwise stated. If you would like to reproduce any items in another publication, please contact the Editor.

It isn't too late to join the ...
CHRISM Reflective Weekend 2005

The Pearl of Great Price

Reflections on Matthew 13, vv44-46

***18 – 20 February, Morley Retreat and Conference Centre,
Derby, www.morleyretreat.co.uk.***

What is the Pearl of Great Price that we have discovered by virtue of our ministry as an MSE – the thing for which we have paid the highest price ?

What are the rocks that cause us to stumble over on our way ?

Are we open to discover new pearls, new treasures which speak to us of the realities of the Kingdom of God in our Work ?

These and many other themes will be the field of our exploration over the reflective weekend.

We shall be joined by Sister Pat of the Little Sisters of Jesus – who will encourage us in our reflections.

And of course there will be the usual opportunities for quiet reflection and to relax and share experiences with fellow MSEs.

If you would like to come along, or would like more details – please contact Phil Aspinall (details on back cover).

Cost: £95 (£105 to non-members).

Full details and bookings to:

Phil Aspinall, 139 Wiltshire Court, Nod Rise, Coventry CV5 7JP.

0247 646 7509; PhilAspinall@vectragroup.co.uk

Editorial

For all those who received Book Tokens among your Christmas presents, this edition is definitely for you! The second half of 2004 saw a number of works of interest to MSEs published, and a catch-up on reading some older additions to the canon. A rather good crop they are too. And as it is a new year, time for resolutions: how about each reader resolving to write a piece for "Ministers-at-Work" during 2005? My thanks to all who have contributed to this edition, especially Adrian Holdstock, David Damon (and through him Frank Carson Knebel), Graham Cornish and Peter Draper, for thought-provoking and informative articles.

Before I go any further: an apology. Jim Cummins has pointed out that I misreported him in the last edition, regarding the worship at the Goldsmith's College MSE Conference. It was not Jim who organised the worship, but the formidable triumvirate of Elizabeth Bonham, Valerie Barford and Deirdre Palk, so it surprises me that one or other has not yet kicked me in the shins! Bishop Stephen Verney described the event as "a two-day agape with a Conference embedded in it." So, my humble apologies to all four.

It doesn't seem long since I sent out yet another copy of the October edition, which proved to be very popular, especially among our US cousins. Over 330 copies have now gone out, so I'm seriously considering recommending we increase the print run from the current 350. Even without a repeat of the 'extras' this time around I expect over 300 on the mailing. In common with many localities at the moment, our community is petitioning the Post Office not to axe our local branch, sitting as it does in the middle of a very mixed residential area of some 6,000 people. It is long walk down hill to the next nearest branch, and more to the point a hard climb back again, so many hundreds of elderly folk rely on 'our' Post Office. I must also pay tribute to Jenny, the Post Mistress, who takes the bags of Journals from me each quarter, with a list of destination types, totals up the postage charges, then puts the stamps on for me (us!). She is a real gem and deserves the esteem in which she is held in the local community. Ministry in action.

A week before writing this I suspect I was one off a very tiny proportion of the population who knew where the Andaman and Nicobar Islands are. This mainly because among my father's collection of photographs taken in the RAF during World War 2 are a couple of prints from a reconnaissance mission he flew over the islands in 1945; I well remember one of a metal water tower among palm trees near Port Blair. If it was still standing it won't be now. When the first maps of the unfolding tragedy went up on 26 December I realised right away that these low-lying islands were hard hit. Because they are so inaccessible few reporters have got there, the TV crews concentrating on other scenes of devastation. The day-to-day cares we face were firmly put into perspective by the enormity – which we may not appreciate for some time yet – of what happened. Human efforts suddenly seem very small.

And where is God in all this? In the mess, as usual. A story of human tragedy is also turning out to be one of human hope, as faith groups and individuals of faith are in the forefront of relief and rebuilding operations, from the churches, mosques and temples that have thrown open their doors to the living and the dead, to the fund-raisers and aid-bringers. There will be many MSE stories in there somewhere; have you one to share with us?

Rob

Caption competition

Last edition we invited captions for this photograph, taken at the AGM, with Ruth Brothwell seated at the right of the picture, Jean Skinner and Phil Aspinall at the table.



So what suggestions are fit to print?

'You can't beat the old whoopee cushion!'

'Nominations to the Committee – Ruth!'

'She won't be smiling when she knows what she's volunteered for.'

'... and all those wearing sandals are duly elected.'

Resourcing Mission

Some CHRISM Members will be aware of the current initiative in the Church of England, "Resourcing Mission", which seeks to identify the most effective ways to use the Church's pool of people and funds. The Resourcing Mission Group is chaired by The Right Reverend Peter Price, and the letter reproduced below has been sent in response to his invitation (in 'The Church Times') to submit contributions to the work of the Group. Felicity Smith, as Presiding Moderator, has signed the letter on behalf of CHRISM and it is proper that members know what has been said on our behalf. Thanks on behalf of all the Committee are due to Adrian Holdstock, who drafted the response so well.

Dear Bishop Peter,

"CHRISM" (Christians in secular Ministry) is the body that represents "MSEs" across the denominations in the UK. "MSEs" are Ministers in Secular Employment and may be lay or ordained. CHRISM's management team observed your letter in the Church Times and we wish to contribute to your reflections on resourcing mission. We believe that CHRISM and the MSE concept we represent have an important contribution to make to your two specific aims: to achieve equitable distribution of financial and [especially] other resources across the Church; and to facilitate local mission objectives and plans.

In this letter we have assembled our views under three questions: What are MSEs? Where do mission and the MSE concept meet? How can MSEs add value to mission?

What are MSEs?

MSEs are Christians who recognise they are living out their Christian lives and values in the world of work. We regard “work” as including both paid and unpaid work, both formal and less formal voluntary work. We value creation and we regard work as created for humans with the potential to dignify humans as well as contribute to society and God’s world. We value work and workplaces as providing opportunities for human relationships, where people may find a sense of identity, dignity and belonging.

A good summary of the MSE concept is given in the enclosed brochure produced by CHRISM. It is worth noting that our membership includes a broad spectrum of MSEs and those considering whether they are MSEs. We include those seeking formal training, perhaps towards ordination, and others who have fulfilled a lifetime of paid work and may now be contributing more to ministry in the work of retirement!

MSEs, then, are both representative of and counter-cultural to local church congregations. We are lights for Christ shining “abroad,” out in the world. We are a “frontier” ministry, distinctive from, but complementary to, the Parish or other Church structure. We encounter God and people where they meet in the busy-ness of worldly life. We experience that busy-ness, its joys, its pains, its frustrations from the inside, resulting in a rich diversity of encounters with God’s world and humankind. As a consequence, CHRISM would not attempt to specify a “position,” a right way to be an MSE – but would seek to encourage MSEs and others to work out their ministry and theology as they go about their daily lives.

Where do mission and the MSE concept meet?

Mission is God’s mission. It helps to think of mission as a process rather than an event. It also helps to think of God’s mission being to communities and their processes rather than just to individuals. In that case, mission needs to happen within and amongst actual communities. Often, however, many communities are not touched by Parish ministry, and this is true even if some individuals from those communities “go to church.” MSEs, on the other hand, are on the inside of

many of these communities: MSEs can reach the parts of community life other activities of the churches cannot – the networks of working people and the places of work.

MSEs are able to perceive how their faith works out in the world. Rather than be bound by traditional forms of church, we experience and accept God's grace and the Holy Spirit's guidance to discover and recognise new ways of being Kingdom and Church in the midst of humanity and creation alongside the traditional church structures.

There is a sense in which wherever MSEs are then mission is underway. Because the individual MSE acknowledges that our own situation can appropriately be described as MSE, then we reflect on our work and relationships with an MSE mind-set. We identify with one or more of Christ's characteristics of prophet, priest and king as well as servant and shepherd. Both in the actual work we do, and the relationships we have with people met through work, we offer a prophetic comment on the work and its processes, its outcomes, and its impacts on society and the environment; we bring especial pastoral care (as should any sensitive line manager or colleague); and we provide the (kingly) leadership so often required in human organisations. Prophet, priest or king in work means mission in and through work. Above all, modelling our working lives on Christ as servant, we approach our work and relationships in work as servants with a missionary role.

Every church member has a share in God's mission to the world. If God starts a mission activity in the world of work, then MSEs will be there to indicate God's activity and support and serve God's purposes. But God has a much greater resource to apply to this mission. Many faithful people in congregations are incipient servants in the world of work: "closet MSEs"! They are an untapped resource of God's army in the world of work. Their every action and encounter could and should be an opportunity to serve God. MSEs have a teaching and preaching and encouraging role so that these people, our congregations, can recognise their advantage for God's mission to the world of work: they are already out there! All they need is equipping and coaxing to give life to mission and ministry where they work.

How can MSEs add value to mission?

MSEs have a wealth of experience of a sector of life where God's mission does function, can function or could function better. Sharing reflections on our experiences will add value, between MSEs, and from MSEs to all Christians, lay and ordained. CHRISM offers a central point for reflection through its quarterly magazine and two annual gatherings: a retreat and a conference week-end. CHRISM also encourages local MSE groups but does not specify specific local or regional structures. More could be done by the Churches to encourage ecumenical and cross-functional liaison and reflection on ministry and mission in the world of work.

Theological and mission-focused training is a broad area where MSEs are significantly under-used. From universities through theological colleges and courses to local Continuing Ministerial Education, the MSE concept needs lights to be shone as beacons for people to consider their calling to serve God and whether that calling is not out of the world into the Church but into the world of work equipped for mission.

We do not perceive that MSEs are looking to be "organised" to deliver mission. We do not seek financial support - our calling is to be self-supporting, "tent-makers" like St Paul. On the other hand, our service of the Gospel should not be considered of less worth because it has not been Church funded. It is a worldly trait that undervalues anything which does not carry a price tag. Nevertheless, should funds be available then MSEs may be able to support more directly the work of the Church in its mission strategy e.g. liaising with DDOs and theological colleges and producing theological material and training courses.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we do feel strongly that the Church's strategy for mission should be inclusive of MSEs, both as a resource and as a source of theological reflection, both in the world and to the Church. We suggest that dioceses should be encouraged to recognise and support MSE as part of their overall strategy for ministry

and mission and facilitate this by appointing a Dean or Warden of MSE (who would themselves be a MSE) to the diocesan team.

We would welcome the opportunity for CHRISM to be considered for further consultation by your Group.

Worker-priests / Priest-workers

Continuing the open dialogue between Graham Cornish and Hugh Valentine from the previous edition, Graham responds further. If you would like to contribute or comment on this topic, please do! Ed.

Dear Hugh

Many thanks for your reply to my note. I think you raise a lot of questions and I will try to give my personal response to each one.

You ask why I say we should not challenge the traditional model of parish ministry. I do recognize only too well the caricature you have painted of the parish priest. Sadly, it is all too common and I would firmly challenge its continuance. But I challenge that as a member of the church, not because I am an MSE. My point was that MSEs are called to exercise ministry in different context and we should not waste our time and energy challenging other people who may (or may not) be called to more traditional models. If their model works, it will survive: otherwise it will eventually fail. I prefer to leave them to sort that out and get on with that I believe God called me to do.

You question my use of the term "calling we hear". What I mean by this is that inner calling we have all heard (I hope) to offer ourselves for Christian ministry. That calling is specific to each of us and then has to be worked out in terms of reality. My own experience is that the Church defaults to stipendiary parish ministry and has to be told firmly that the person offering themselves has received a different call. I always advise anyone offering themselves for anything other than parochial ministry to have ready a vision of how their ministry might work, with the proviso that God may reshape this for them in

the future. It is up to us to show the Church we have alternative visions of ministry, not expect the Church to grasp this by some kind of instinct.

Of course we may feel called but vocation has to be tested and it may be that the Church is not ready for our particular vision or, perhaps, the vision is too early. There is still work to do on the concept of "unfulfilled vocations" which can themselves be a calling which has to be followed. Thus I see vocation as something personal which the Church validates. Failure to validate it does not mean the vocation is invalid – only that it cannot, at this time, be followed within the structures of the Church itself. There may be other ways God is calling people to fulfil their vocation other than being ordained. In that sense vocation to a function within the structure of the church and vocation to carry out a particular form of ministry can be separate and one fulfilled and the other not.

As to fulfilment, I see this as achieving what God has called us to do in what ever way He has chosen. When I consider I have done what God called me to do, then I am fulfilled. When I fail to follow what He calls me to do, then I am unfulfilled. Thus an unfulfilled vocation is one where God has called someone to consider following a particular path, which they do, but this may not be what either God or the Church (they don't always speak with the same voice!!) wants at this particular time, if at all.

I hope this clarifies some of the points you raised. Perhaps the debate will continue.

*Graham P Cornish
Copyright Law Consultant
And MSE within the diocese of Ripon & Leeds*

CHRISM 1 ...

Ministry In Secular Employment - An Introduction ... is now available as a PowerPoint Presentation, particularly useful if you are speaking about MSE to a medium sized group. The last slide is the "What to say to a Bishop in a lift" summary developed by the

"Challenging the Churches" group.

If you would like a copy to be e-mailed to you, please send an e-mail to Rob Fox or Phil Aspinall, details in rear inside cover.

If you have developed any aids for explaining MSE we should be glad to hear from you!

The Nature and Value of MSE

Peter Draper

Starting with a current development in Australia, Peter, MSE and Director, Research and Reach-Out, Faculty of Health and Social Care, The University of Hull, raises a number of issues about the role of MSEs and the ways in which the Churches as organisations 'model' their activities and personnel. It implicitly invites further comment and shared experience. I would be particularly interested to hear from our Antipodean and Permanent Deacon members. Comments from outside the Anglican community would also be interesting. Ed.

The Diocese of Sydney is planning a new permanent diaconate whose members will be selected and trained according to different criteria than those of priests (Church Times 5th November 2004). Whilst there is nothing particularly new or radical in the idea of a permanent diaconate, this particular proposal is underpinned by a theology of priesthood that is quite new. "For us", said assistant bishop Dr Glenn Davis, "priesthood is concerned with incumbency rather than with eucharist". This view of priesthood is clearly at odds with both Catholic and Reformed traditions within Anglicanism. However, I believe it also has implications for the theology and practice of the Minister in Secular Employment (MSE) which may not be immediately apparent but which are, nonetheless, profoundly important.

I take odds with the suggestion that the work of a priest can be reduced to, or expressed simply in terms of, his or her function within the parish, and I argue that the Sydney proposal is likely to under-

mine both the function of the traditional Anglican parish, and the work of priests who act as incumbents within the parish structure. Incumbents can act as incumbents because they are priests. It does not follow at all from this that a priest's identity as a priest is dependent upon his or her function as an incumbent, even though this is the setting in which most of the work of most priests is undertaken. According to the Book of Common Prayer, priests are those who have the authority to absolve sinners, to preach the word of God and to administer the sacraments. More modern versions of the ordinal also emphasise the responsibility of the priest to act as servant and shepherd among the people.

To me, the new Sydney theology of priesthood-as-incumbency looks as if it is moving away from the view of the priest as one with authority and responsibility, and towards an understanding of the priesthood in which his or her primary function is to occupy a role within an organisational structure. I note with interest that members of the new, permanent diaconate will be able to resign their orders for a time. According to the Church Times article, the Diocese of Sydney thinks this might be an attractive option for women deacons who might wish to step down from their role for a while to raise a family.

I ought to explain that my own understanding of Holy Orders was formed within a low church, Evangelical tradition, and I am far from believing that ordination bestows a changed ontological status on its recipient – the so-called “mark on the soul” – but I firmly believe that the privilege of ordination brings with it a life-time of responsibility. I am ordained (as a deacon) all the time – at church, at work and at home. I simply cannot understand how I could simply stop being ordained for a bit, and then perhaps pick it up again later. Ordination is for life – its not a part-time calling. There is a curious paradox in the possibility of a permanent deacon being able to function temporarily in that role.

Of course, the logic behind temporary permanent deacons makes sense if you believe that ordination is really about fulfilling a function within a bureaucracy, and I suggest that a bureaucratic ecclesiology can be found behind the Sydney plans. A bureaucracy is a

particular type of organisation. It tends to have a pyramidal structure with a clear hierarchy of authority and a chain of command stretching from the top to the bottom. People who work within a bureaucracy have clearly defined roles. Occupancy of the role carries with it a clear set of tasks and expectations. In a bureaucracy, performance is regulated by explicit operating procedures, and sanctions are applied when things go wrong. Bureaucracies are great if you want a uniform product of known quality at a fixed price. That's why McDonald's restaurants are run like that. But the bureaucratic model also has its limitations. It restricts creativity, it won't tolerate dissent, and it can't respond quickly to change. Thus, I suspect that the model of priesthood-as-incumbency will undermine the independence of the parish, bringing it more closely under central control, whilst simultaneously altering the character of ordained ministry by turning those who, as priests, have the authority to preach and administer the sacraments and the responsibility to serve and shepherd, into branch managers.

I am also concerned about the implications of the proposal for the work of non-stipendiary ministers, some of whom are priests and deacons. If we define priesthood as incumbency we assume that the boundary of God's operation in the world coincides with the parish boundary. Experience shows that this is not the case. Christians in the secular workplace regularly encounter people and situations in clear need of Christian presence and witness and, frequently, they find that God is already at work there. I think that this is the experience of many Christians at work. But since my own ordination, I have also begun to discover that there is, in all of this, a contribution to be made by the ordained person. Sometimes this contribution involves the direct provision of pastoral care, such as listening to a colleague who has been bereaved. At other times, it involves supporting lay Christian colleagues in their ministries at work, sometimes just by being there. I believe that, although the primary Christian witness to the secular world is made by lay people, they can be encouraged and facilitated by non-stipendiary deacons and priests working along side them. The boundaries of the Church of God do not coincide with those of the Anglican parish, and I see no reason why the functions of ordained women and men should be defined as though they do.

The Ghosts of Christmas Present

Frank Carson Knebel

The following article appeared in the December 2004 edition of "The Vintage Voice", Newsletter of the Church Pension Fund (U.S. Episcopalian), and was forwarded by David Damon, NASSAM (Episcopalian Self-Supporting Ministers), Florida. Frank Knebel is a retired priest and Humanities instructor living in San Diego. This article is reproduced here with kind permission of the author.

Of all the actors who have taken on the character of Charles Dickens' Ebenezer Scrooge by far the best was the late Alistair Sim, a quintessentially English collage of wispy gray hair, watery eyes, and bad teeth. Throughout his long career, Sim also frequented the role of the stereotypical country vicar, a slightly befuddled anachronism irrelevant to the world around him.

Approaching the twilight of his life, Sim's Scrooge is a tormented, friendless man. His unlikely saviour will be the ghost of his late business partner, Jacob Marley, shackled to the ancient accounts and musty ledgers that now, unseen, bind Scrooge as well.

Of the trinity of spectres that follow, the ghost of Christmas past is the most benevolent, a conjuror of childhood memories adorned with festive Yuletide trappings. The memories are idealized and highly selective – youthful friends, a loving sister, and quaint mentors. Few elicit the loneliness of the boarding school; none linger on the grinding poverty and early death which remained the lot of the poor in Dickens' England.

The Christmas ghosts of *my* youth are also selective, the war that is their stage-set seen through a lens darkly – flickering black and white images of weeks-old events in foreign places with exotic names. When there was wartime privation, my Depression-acclimated parents simply took it in stride – gas rationing, home canning, back yard "victory gardens" apparently intended solely for growing oversize zucchini for patriotic children to drag around the neighbourhood in little red wagons. In the church, the Litany was

used more frequently ... “From battle and murder, and from sudden death, Good Lord deliver us ...”, but most offices and sacraments remained essentially the same, their efficacy unquestioned.

Thus most of my Incarnational apparitions appear framed by the choir stalls of my home parish, my vantage point for midnight services during my stint as a soprano soloist. They are comforting wraiths, redolent of hot candle wax and freshly laundered choir robes, kaleidoscopes of scarlet poinsettias and polished brass and the magnificent cloth-of-gold vestments of the clergy. And beyond the sanctuary, counterpoint to these splendors, a host of unscripted rituals play themselves out against a background of primal sound ... scattered coughing, oaken kneelers being lowered, poorly muted asides, the ordinary and the mundane – the dramas of *the people*.

Of these common-man cameos, several remain indelible. In the soprano section of the choir, Virginia, an oversize teenage girl of apparently delicate constitution, could always be relied upon to faint in the middle of the interminable Prayer (said kneeling) For the Whole State of Christ’s Church. Even before the interminable “clump” of her “passing” had ceased to echo through the nave, two of the basses would rise to their feet, solemnly genuflect in front of the altar, and haul Virginia’s very limp and very large body “off stage”. The following Sunday she would be in her accustomed place, apparently unembarrassed by her fall from grace.

Another side-show staple was Cecile, a slightly out-of-focus waif whose High Church mother had instilled in her the eternal truth that women are to have their hair covered in God’s House. Clearly the work of the Devil, Cecile’s tacky lace “choir doily” always managed to fall off somewhere between vesting room and pew. Desperately seeking to avoid the displeasure of the Almighty, Cecile would gamely improvise, somehow managing to kneel, stand, and juggle hymnal and sheet music while grimly holding one hand firmly on top of her head.

If these were diversionary comedies, George was a morality play. For George, the war had come home. An off-again-on-again alcoholic since the death of his son at Pearl Harbor, George would arrive

at 9:00 pm from the final choir rehearsal. Even cold sober, he was a distant presence, a huge craggy-faced man with salt-and-pepper eyebrows and a nose like the prow of a Viking ship. Three sheets to the wind, he would proceed to “trope the text” of the familiar carols, his booming voice assaulting heaven with such new and improved lyrics as, “Hark the herald angels sing, Frinzel’s Pills are just the thing. Peace on earth and mercy mild, Two for man and one for child!”

As a boy chorister, was never privy to the apparently unsavoury process by which George was rendered fit for public display, but by the time the crucifer began to lead the choir down the aisle to the strains of “Joy to the World,” George had usually achieved at least a modicum of sobriety, enough so that his grief was now even more acute. During the Eucharistic prayer, George would bury his head in his arms and sob quietly while the men flanking him would put their hands on his shoulders and mumble words of comfort.

I remember those moments now as integral to the liturgy, not alien to the solemnity of the occasion but embodiments of fragile humanity, affirming the reason for Christmas as surely as the images of abiding shepherds and the sounds of angelic hosts. It was the Redemptive Community of a sort which I would later come to equate with my years in seminary, but rarely experienced thereafter.

As the spirits of present and future materialised in turn before him, Scrooge must face the realisation that the values he has espoused all his adult life no longer serve him. In the afternoon, if not the twilight, of my own life, I find myself haunted by similar shades, doleful entities bowed beneath creeds and concepts whose archaic imagery – “ascended into heaven,” “descended into hell,” death as punishment for sin – was put to test by Galileo and Darwin. It is with great sadness that I find the classic formularies – Incarnation, Atonement, Trinity – no longer serve *me*, nor make sense to me, as they stand, in the face of what I have come to understand about the natural world and the human condition. In this I feel that I am far from alone, but have no way of knowing, save from the closest of friends.

There is a reason for this. As Victorian England kept its unruly masses out of sight, continuing to send them to exile at Botany Bay lest they soil the elegant fabric of society, so the twenty-first century Church seems loath to acknowledge the untidy netherworld of theological doubt inhabited by many of its flock. Yet if the church of the Incarnation, or its concept, is to truly redeem our humanity, it must minister to *all* of it; souls warmed by the traditional assurances of our youth, *and* minds and consciences wrestling with the conflicting but undeniable realities of the present.

Ultimately, through his ghosts, Scrooge finds redemption, a place at his nephew's table. At our Redemptive Table, there must be room for our ghosts as well, a place for doubting Thomas as well as confessional Peter.

God bless us, every one.

In his letter to the Editor accompanying this article, David writes, in his usual perceptive way:

"The article ... focuses on the very real issue of credibility. People are living long enough, have become knowledgeable enough, survived enough faulty / fake leadership so that authority, including religious authority, is suspect. Added to this is a generally expanded awareness of the universe and its structure popularized by print and TV. Consequently, theology / religion is at the point medicine was with medicine's discovery of the germ theory of disease. What was thought to be true turns out not to be. Then what? ... What bothers me is that there seems to be no one addressing this issue. A few 'renegade' bishops but no serious academic pursuit of the 'emperor's clothes' possibility."

Now if that isn't an invitation to respond, I don't know what is! Ed. Past issues of "The Vintage Voice" can be viewed at <http://vintagevoice.cpg.org>

Book Review - 1
“Church that Works”,
David Oliver and James Thwaites.
Authentic Lifestyle, Word Publishing, 2001; pp211; ISBN 1-86024-447-5.

Rob Fox

It is refreshing to find a book where the title says exactly what the contents set out to do. If you would like a pigeonhole, this is essentially a work of ecclesiology, and, like any good gold mine, the nugget at the end is well worth finding. The model of church developed here is pure MSE – it is one of dynamic not of structure – and it is refreshing that such a discovery has been made from the charismatic, house-church constituency from which this book both comes and is addressed to. Those who recall the 1999 CHRISM Conference at Queens College, Birmingham, will find a great deal of resonance between what Mike Williams expounded then and what David and James do here. The core message is that no matter what a church does, unless its members can make the connection between what they do ‘in church’ and their daily lives, the church has failed.

Having said that, as with gold mines there is a great deal of mining to be done. This is not an easy book to read. Unusually for a co-authored book we are helpfully told which wrote each chapter, not that it is difficult to spot. David Oliver is senior partner of Insight Marketing and has many years experience of that industry internationally. James Thwaites has been in ‘pastoral ministry’ for over twenty years and written previously about looking out beyond the congregation.

As with his previous book, “Work – Prison or Place of Destiny”, reviewed two editions ago, David has a didactic, stream of consciousness, style that, while often easy to read, can leave one feeling bludgeoned. He does however work towards critique of the weaknesses on the recent charismatic church movements in a way I think is both proper and overdue. To venture an answer to one, in

part rhetorical, question David poses, in a chapter titled 'Where has the river gone?' (a reference to the 1994 Toronto outpouring), how is it that so much blessing has been poured out but so little resulted? The river is beautiful and contains much of wonder, but why do you still look into the river and not to whom it flows from?

James concentrates on the construction, developing a model of church designed to equip members to live out their faith in daily life, especially in their places of work. I didn't find his style easy, often re-reading sections to make sure I'd understood, and the diagrammatic illustrations of the model didn't work for me. There are also elements that grate, no least attributing most of the historical faults of Christianity to Plato and those influenced by him (most of the ideas given are Plotinus or Aristotle) – anyone with decent knowledge of church history or philosophy will wince. I've also heard the same Corrie ten Boom story (the washing up one) several times – she must have said the same thing to many young men she came across.

Nonetheless, if you want to keep abreast of thinking in this constituency, warm to a model of church that MSEs will recognise and be challenged (though not necessarily by the bits the writers intended), go out and read this one.

Book Review – 2

"Pocket Prayers for Work",

compiled by Mark Greene. Church House Publishing, 2004, £5.99 (£4.79 from Amazon); ISBN 0-7151-4022-1.

Rob Fox

Before you run for cover at the thought of yet another portable book of twee prayers, this is actually quite good. Yes, the cringe-making is represented, but so is the well thought out and challenging, with a many that ring true to life. There is even one for those moments when the concentration we have finally summoned is rudely shattered by the telephone: who - like me - vents their frustration on the unsuspecting caller? Mark's greatest asset is his easy-going style, never taking himself or his subject too seriously. It works.

Book Review - 3

"The Heart Aroused:

Poetry and the Preservation of the Soul in Corporate America", David Whyte

New York: Doubleday, 1996, ISBN: 0385484186

Adrian Holdstock

David Whyte was educated in natural science and raised in the north of England. Yet he is a poet who has a distinctively soft Irish accent with a touch of the US, a place where he has spent much of his working life. I first heard his voice from tapes played at a work-place training course. I was entranced by his approach to reciting poetry: he would say and then repeat a line, speak two more lines and repeat them, then go on, opening up the music of the words, layering them into our minds. What occurs naturally to our ear with music was being presented in poetic form, and it was moving. I met him when he ran a seminar for the Industrial Society in the UK. *The Heart Aroused* reflects his presentation: prose that uses a few poems and ancient stories to create a powerful theology of the human condition in the place of work.

Whyte learned to use poetry and life to speak "to the soul of corporate America." Do not be concerned about references to the USA – his ideas are very transferable around the western world and possibly beyond. He happened to be in the USA when he found that poetry enabled him to give expression to "the hidden and neglected side of corporate life." His focus is on "the difficulty and drama of work," the challenge of the mission set against deep inner desires for meaning and belonging. He has not written a 'how to do it' manual. Rather, he aims "to try to bring to life the experience of change itself." There is a clue in the book's subtitle: "Poetry and the Preservation of the Soul in Corporate America."

The Heart Aroused is presented in the form of a journey. Whyte quotes from a wide variety of sources, literary, scientific and theological. He claims no theological basis for his work though draws comfortably from sources such as St John of the Cross and Zen

Buddhism. He opens by quoting from Dante: "In the middle of the road of my life I awoke in a dark wood where the true way was wholly lost." As the journey begins he tackles the issue of "inviting the soul to work" and at once we are provoked to turn "off the path" and consider "something else they don't teach at Harvard." We learn about the sense of being lost and the stifling of our own creativity by corporate life: "work both emboldens us and strangles our soul life in the very same instant." We are invited to look deep into our own lives.

The journey moves into the next chapter: "Beowulf – Power and Vulnerability in the Workplace" in which we face our desire to avoid "that part of us we keep in the dark". Whyte suggests we realise "how unwelcoming a professional corporate setting can be to the darker soul struggles of human existence!" He uses the struggles of Beowulf to mirror our own as we search for courage to tackle the issues we face at work. The issues themselves are not important; as Beowulf found, "It is not the thing you fear that you must deal with, it is the mother of the thing you fear."

The journey moves onto "Fire in the Earth" where we search for "the distinct possibility of a work life we might actually want for ourselves." If we choose the path of fire we seek to be true to our own creative gifts. And there is a consequence to "a soulful work life" which is that "all of us must confront the question of quiet and contemplation in the workplace." This, Whyte says, "does not necessarily have to be in the form of a special room for silence and meditation; it could equally be in the form of a company culture that encourages people to admit they do not always have an answer."

Subsequent chapters deal with finding out how to speak out, the power of knowledge, the soul at midlife and taking the homeward road. Here, Whyte asks if we know ourselves or have forgotten what we are truly like: "Work becomes, as we sacrifice everything on the corporate altar, the be-all and end-all of our identity." There is much more to challenge and give expression to our inner experience of working life. Whyte gives voice to human feelings about work. He speaks ideas that the corporate world is intrigued to hear – as such his may be one model of communication MSEs may wish to explore.

This idea may seem unconventional: "Managers, being true to their title, have until now unconsciously followed the second law of thermodynamics, the belief that everything in the universe tends towards disorder, unless, of course, it is managed." But it sits comfortably with Stephen Covey's concept of "release management" alongside which Whyte seeks alternatives to the word manager altogether. But my favourite story uses David Wagoner's poem "Lost." The story parallels our experience in workplaces by teaching children in the old native America what to do if lost in the forest:

*Stand still. The trees ahead and the bushes beside you
Are not lost. Wherever you are is called Here,
And you must treat it as a powerful stranger,
Must ask permission to know it and be known.*

When lost in the workplace, stand still. The trees ahead and the bushes beside you are not lost. And as you read on in the poem, and *The Heart Aroused*, you will discover "the heart of a soulful life worth living."

Book Review - 4

"Faith in Governance",

Michael Willis and Michael Fass.

Published by the Industrial Christian Fellowship, 2004;

pp173; ISBN 0-900487-01-1

Rob Fox

Sub-titled "Renewing the role of the Director", this is a welcome excursion into publishing by ICF, aimed at putting "the F-word – the fiduciary duty of the director which lies at the heart of the role – back into governance."

Michael Willis currently works as a tutor for the Institute of Directors (IoD), serves as a non-executive director on a number of company boards, and was until recently the CEO of a medium-sized engineering company. Michael Fass will be familiar as a former Moderator of CHRISM and is currently Chair of the ICF NEC. He

has extensive experience of work in senior management, was a founder member of the Prince's Scottish Youth Business Trust and manages the IoD's training activities in Scotland.

The book is intended as a practical guide to anyone who takes on the role of director, which can be in anything from a small, private, family firm, through trusts, charities and public companies to the largest of multi-nationals. As the authors point out, the scale may range widely but the core responsibilities of the Director remain essentially the same. It is pointed out early too that governance is not the same thing as management; the Director may also be manager (and in most companies this is so), but the two roles are distinct. So what is governance? There are eight references in the excellent index to definitions of governance, the first referring to the Cadbury Code (1992), 'the system by which companies are governed and controlled'. This is of course much developed and no director reading this book could be in any doubt as to their responsibilities. So what makes this different from a training manual?

A good training manual covers the 'what' and the 'how'. This book also covers the 'why' and the 'what do you think?' The why is implicitly based on the Christian world-view that we do what is in the best interests of others not because the rules tell us to but because it is the Godly thing to do. What is lacking however is any theological reflection on the role of governance. In fairness the authors do not set out to do this but given the decision to publish under the ICF banner rather than a business publishing house one wonders whether the book will reach the intended target audience. Certainly the Institute of Directors should be pushing this one hard.

There is however a reminder of the strong element of service in being a Director that is unfashionable but essential if good governance is to characterise how a business is run. I am in an unusual position in that in my work I have seen a very wide range of examples of governance in action; the examples of good and poor governance given by the Michaels two chime well with what I have experienced myself.

For anyone involved in corporate governance in any way, or for any-

one with an interest in it, this is a most informative and readable book. It is well-written and easy to follow, well referenced, and deserves to be widely read. There is even a supporting website, at www.faithingovernance.com, with details of the Contents, Introduction, Chapter 1, a Sample exercise, links to useful websites, and associated articles.

Book Review - 5

***"The Business of Virtue", Clive Wright;
SPCK 2004, pp233, £19.99; ISBN 0-281-05426-6***

Rob Fox

The accompanying information about Clive is modest about his credentials to write about applying Christian virtues to the world of business, but impressive they are: Chairman of MODEM and of The Christian Association of Business Executives, 30 years experience as a senior manager in the oil and chemical industries. He is also clearly someone of considerable reading and intellect, as his easy command of history, philosophy and theology in this work clearly demonstrate. So what have we got?

The central theme of the book is to use virtue ethics, especially that of Alasdair MacIntyre, to map out an ethical framework in which business can be both managed and conducted. Clive points out that the cultural context that has shaped the modern business world is inherently Christian and in turn the way in which Christianity has developed has been influenced by the growth of western free-market capitalism. Over the past century or so there has been a growing divorce between the two, neither understanding the other in the 'old' way, yet there is a clear need for a continuing Christian understanding of and perspective on wealth creation.

The survey of the historical context in the early chapters is masterly, demonstrating the role of Christian ethics in the growth of business theory and practice. After this though the case he builds is not always as thorough or convincing. For example, there is no definition of what is meant by wealth creation, still less a theology. Several times he meets the simple 'rejectionist' opposition to wealth

creation by asserting that it is not a 'zero sum' game (one person gains at another's loss). This is too simplistic; inequalities in *access to* wealth are not adequately addressed. The lack of a definition also leaves untouched the matter of what *kinds* of wealth creation meet the ethical standards he sets out. The question of whether wealth creation is always a 'good thing' is also left unanswered, although right-wing economists also come in for a fair share of criticism.

The book is on much firmer ground when looking at how a business can be run virtuously. Clive discussed how the cardinal and theological virtues can be applied to business management and sets out five criteria for the 'just business':

- 1 Service – of humankind through meeting needs and wants;
- 2 Legitimacy – obeying the laws and obligations of legitimate authority in the jurisdictions in which it operates;
- 3 Proportionality – of the benefits provided to the costs incurred;
- 4 Trustworthiness – establishing trust amongst all the parties with which the business engages (suppliers, customers, the local community, employees and so on);
- 5 Reciprocity – recognition of the reciprocal benefits between all these parties.

From this Clive sets out in the chapter 'The formation of moral corporate behaviour' a blueprint of how a business can conduct itself according to these principles, which could be summed up in the adage 'virtue brings its own reward.'

The final chapter addresses the globalisation debate, arguing that rather than oppose the march of globalisation there is here a real opportunity for Christians to embrace and engage with a phenomenon that promises to benefit humanity. There is no reason why the Christian understanding of love should not lay claim to this territory, and he is right.

This is a well thought out book, very well written and if it fails to satisfy on every point that is largely down to the scope. There is

certainly further work that can be undertaken in some areas, but Clive has set out cogently the main considerations of virtue in business.

Book Review - 6

"After the Market:

***Economics, Moral Agreement and the Churches' Mission",
Malcolm Brown;***

Peter Lang 2004, pp321; £37.00; ISBN 3-03910-154-4.

Rob Fox

Currently Principal of the East Anglian Ministerial Training Course, Malcolm Brown has a background in Industrial Mission and until 2000 was Executive Secretary of the William Temple Foundation, all experience he has put to good use here. This is Volume 23 in the publisher's 'Religions and Discourse' series, previous contributors including James Francis, Andrew Britton and Peter Sedgwick, who will be familiar to the MSE community.

The book is essentially a critique of the Churches' recent (overly negative) engagement with economics and suggests a new theological framework within which the historical dialogue might be resumed. In this it follows a similar pattern to the recent writings of John Atherton, with whom Malcolm worked in the William Temple Foundation. There is more than a trace of indebtedness to Ronald Preston too.

The central argument is set out straight away: it is usually assumed that in modern pluralist society any level of general moral agreement, especially in respect of economic fairness, is impossible, so that the mechanisms of market economics are the only viable distributional means of meeting human needs. Brown points out that in the last few decades Christian and other critiques of market economics have failed to engage with this argument, assuming that the moral shortcomings of the latter are self-evident, rather than to construct a reasoned critique. Brown argues that a Christian critique has to take seriously ethical plurality: "This may sound like a somewhat arcane and limited question, but as long as market apolo-

gists play the plurality card, and Christian critics avoid its significance, theological challenges to economic policies will miss their target.” Good point; so Brown sets out to establish a basis for a Christian critique that both takes seriously the realities of market economics and can itself be taken seriously.

Early on the marginalisation of Christian social thinking, even within the Churches themselves, that began in the Thatcher years and has continued under ‘New Labour’, is surveyed and examined. This is usefully accompanied by defining a number of terms essential to the dialogue: Liberalism, Plurality, Communitarianism, Postmodernism and Postmodernity. There follows a survey, well put together, of the Churches’ engagement with the economy in Britain since World War Two, focussing on Industrial Mission and the Church of England’s Board for Social Responsibility. The BSR in particular was influenced in the 1960s and ‘70s by Ronald Preston and favoured his ‘middle axiom’ approach. *Faith in the City* appeared just as the BSR was beginning to move away from this approach and recognise the increasing plurality in UK society, and marked a methodological shift. Brown maps out well the turmoil that has beset the BSR over the past two decades.

As with many Christian social thinkers in Britain today, Brown takes as his basis for a renewed dialogue between Churches’ and society the virtue ethics of Alasdair MacIntyre, and in his third chapter sets out why he doing so and how. In particular he sees virtue ethics as a viable alternative to Liberalism, drawing in particular on MacIntyre’s work *Whose Justice?*. He concludes that MacIntyre is better described as a Communitarian than a Liberal, but points out that the man himself rejects this label as too much associated with state-centred and centrally imposed versions of social and economic ‘common good.’ Here a key point is acknowledged: linguistic and conceptual baggage often gets in the way of meaningful dialogue; better to re-think old terms and assumptions.

Brown then moves on to look at market models, not shying from the failings of the Liberal market model, which he sets out in a clear and well-balanced way. He has clearly done his reading in this area and cites a range of sources effectively and with real understanding.

Moving along to the persistence of shared moral values, he then demonstrates that plurality is not as all consuming as some suppose, demonstrating how economists themselves frequently grapple with moral questions.

Part II begins with an examination of the Liberal Tradition in Social Theology, drawing on Sedgwick and Preston, before moving on to Nowak and the neo-Conservative Market Theology. This is followed by a good survey of Revisionist Liberalism, drawing on Ronald Thiemann and Max Stackhouse, and Communitarian and Confessional approaches to Social Theology (John Milbank, Stanley Hauerwas, Michael Banner, Ulrich Duchrow). These various theologies are reviewed, with reference back to MacIntyre, before Brown introduces “an emerging Theological model”, Dialogic Traditionalism.

The hallmarks of this new model “must be: openness to ambiguity and contingency; attentiveness to questions of Christian identity; and an ability to give an account of how Christian theology encounters other narratives and traditions.” It strikes me that the ‘plurality’ implied in this is not so much that of different religious traditions (that has taken so much of the Churches’ attention in recent years) but secular ways of thinking. In this respect it is familiar territory to MSEs.

Brown draws on Ian Markham’s approach to a renewed natural theology to develop the dialogic method, and on Andrew Shanks and Peter Selby for criteria in choosing dialogue partners. After describing how the various elements work together he describes Dialogic Traditionalism thus: “It is neither liberal nor communitarian in the accepted sense, but draws from the one its insistence on cross-boundary dialogue and from the other its commitment to the exploration of identity. It is in the exploration of Christian identity that it finds the principle of dialogue, rather than in any tradition-transcendent narrative.”

Having set up the terms of the dialogic method, Brown finishes the Part by saying why he sees it as relevant to economics, as a basis

for the moral evaluation of markets.

Part III returns to the BSR and IM and applies the methodology to their work, using a number of practical examples. Here there is also a section on the implications for ecclesiology, noting that “many structures and systems exist because they reflect and accommodate the diversity of positions within the Church of England rather than because they make any logical structural sense.” Finally, Brown turns again to the economy and how this new approach can be used to reconstruct the dialogue; another excellent section – pity there isn’t more of it.

Few books setting out to encompass such a vast range within a relatively short space succeed in doing so entirely, but this one does it. The reader is left edified, informed, and challenged, if perhaps wishing that a few areas might have been developed further. It deserves to be widely read, and not just in Church circles, as a genuinely innovative and practical contribution to Social Theology.

Diary

‘The Spirited Workplace – Transforming our working lives’ is the title of this year’s Work / Life Seminar hosted by Ely Cathedral, 4 -6 March, and led by Georgeanne Lamont, author of *‘The Spirited Business’*. Cost of the weekend is £195 inclusive and full details can be obtained from Janet Leebetter, 01353 660310, j.leebetter@cathedral.ely.anglican.org.

The Coalition for Ministry in Daily Life holds its annual meeting in New Haven, Connecticut, over the weekend of April 1-3, 2005, hosted by the Yale Center for Faith and Culture. The consultation’s theme will be “Called to Purposive Life and Work: New Perspectives on Vocation and Occupation.”

Keynote speaker at the opening dinner on Friday, April 1, will be renowned Yale theologian and Croatian native, Miroslav Volf. Distinguished practitioners and thinkers from Evangelical, Catholic and mainline Protestant traditions will participate in two panels on Saturday, with ample time scheduled for consultation attendees to en-

gage in small-group dialogue.

The Ridley Hall Foundation hosts a residential conference at Ridley Hall, Cambridge, over the weekend of 8-10 April 2005, on the theme "What makes trade fair?" The conference forms part of the Global Week of Action on Trade Justice, 10-15 April. Cost is £145 for delegates attending privately or on behalf of a charitable organisation (non-residential rates available). Bookings and further details: Janine Stewart, Ridley Hall Foundation Administrator, Ridley Hall, Cambridge, CB3 9HG, e-mail jmps2@cam.ac.uk. ***Ridley Hall*** has also produced a Lent study guide, 'His story, our story', available at £3.00 (£2.50 each for multiple copies, from Lent Books, Ridley Hall (rest of address as above).

CPAS has a programme of "You and Ministry" conferences during 2005, five 'centre' and three 'church' weekends, at locations throughout England and Wales. For full details see www.cpas.org.uk, or contact Pauline Walden on 01926 458480, pwalden@cpas.org.uk.

Also available is the Arrow leadership development programme, aimed those 25-40 age group already in leadership positions. For details contact James Lawrence, 01926 458419, jlawrence@cpas.org.uk. The autumn 2004 edition of CPAS's newsletter "On Call" includes an interesting item on the lack of younger ordinands in the Church of England of late. While informative it regrettably omits to note the increasing numbers ordained to forms of self-supporting ministry, who by definition are likely to be in older age groups. Still available are resource sheets on Non-Stipendiary Ministry (No. 7) and Ministers in Secular Employment (No. 15), 90p each.

The 2005 Bishop Wickham Lecture (in memory of Ted Wickham, whose inspirational leadership of the Sheffield Industrial Mission led to him being 'promoted' to Bishop of Middleton to shackle the venture) will be held at Manchester Cathedral on Monday, 23 May, at 7.30pm. Canon Dr. Andrew Shanks, Canon Theologian at Manchester Cathedral, speaks on "An Honest Church".

German Protestant Kirchentag, Hannover, 25-29 May.

The 'church day' takes place every two years in a different German city. Usually around 100,000 gather in an event that was focal to the renewal of the Lutheran Church after the Second World War. Various fringe and main meetings tackle the sort of issues the church structure tends to shy away from, especially social justice and the role of faith in politics. Further information and registration forms can be obtained from Sheila Brain, 1 Cavendish Road, Eccles, Manchester M30 9JZ, kirchentage@sheilabrain.com. More details on the websites for the event: www.kirchentage.org.uk and www.kirchentage.de; a knowledge of German is useful but not essential.

[Christians@work](http://www.christiansatwork.org.uk) holds its 2005 Annual Conference on Saturday 11 June at Rugby Baptist Church. Guest speakers are: Rev. Owen Jones, Prof. Andy McIntosh and Dr. David Kellett. Further details from CaW at office@christiansatwork.org.uk.

MSE Resources

The Coalition for Ministry in Daily Life ...

... is a US-based umbrella group representing a range of cross-denominational ministry, church and academic organisations with an interest in 'making the Sunday – Monday connection. It runs a straightforward and informative (if basic) website at www.dailylifeministry.org, which is well worth a visit. Details of the 2005 annual meeting are in the Diary section of this edition.

CMDL issue a quarterly publication called LayNet, host Internet sharing groups and run periodic projects.

A speaker at the 2004 gathering was George Bauer, former executive with IBM. The nature of this business assignments meant he was regularly 'on the move' and has been a member of no less than 12 church congregations, variously teaching in Sunday school and serving on parish committees. He observed that in this time not a single pastor "asked me what I did as a vocation, visited me at my workplace, or conceived of that workplace as a place of ministry."

Pastors and their staff, he continued, “urge and reward engagement with parish activities. Ministry outside the church is rarely recognised.”

While he was in Paris in the early 1970s, IBM had a need for key punch operators in their South African facility. George arranged to train blacks for the jobs, quietly undermining the apartheid system. Shortly after this IBM had to evaluate its presence in South Africa. All executives found apartheid repugnant but were split on whether to leave or stay and try to change the system. “In my opinion,” says Bauer, “we had meaningful debates among faithful people struggling with what to do about evil in God’s world.”

www.actapublications.com ...

... is the website of the publishing house of that name, run by Greg Pierce, former President of the National Center for the Laity, the US Roman Catholic faith and work organisation CHRISM is pleased to be associated with. There is a wide range of resources available to purchase, extending beyond what you might expect to find from a Christian publishing house to include such CDs as:

Bill Burke et al., ‘Veil of Veronica’, or as the blurb says, ‘ACTA Publications proudly re-releases on compact disc the hilarious comedy skit Veil of Veronica. This classic routine focuses on the foibles and absurdities of the quintessential post-Vatican II Catholic parish, Veil of Veronica.’

There is even a book described as the definitive Baseball forecaster! More to the point, there is a good section on the spirituality of work.

Greg also runs an e-mail exchange on spirituality in the workplace; to join in, send him your e-mail address at:

gpierce@actapublications.com.

www.episcopalservices.com/NASSAM/tentmakers.htm ...

... is the web address for NASSAM, the National Association of Self-Supporting Active Ministry, our US Episcopalian colleagues. The is a good introduction to this arm of ministry by Jim Short, a research paper on Bi-vocational Ministry and a report on last year’s Tent-maker Conference. The ‘Message Board’ includes up to date event

information and links to other useful sites, including CHRISM's: we are described as "a UK-based Anglican sibling." (*Yes, I know! Ed.*).

www.allbelievers.org ...

... the website of the Peterborough Diocese People and Work Programme, developed by John Raymond and others, is alive and kicking! John has recently moved to Norwich but continues to run the venture. Amongst a wealth of resources Allbelievers runs Connected Community Learning – e-courses in Christian discipleship and ministry; the learning environment can be found at www.e-quip.org.uk. There are currently 8 courses, including "The Challenge of being a Christian at Work" and "Christian at Work".

www.cabe-online.org is the website of The Christian Association of Business Executives, one of our partners in the 'Co-ordination Group' of faith and work organisations. CAFE established the Hugh Kay Memorial Lectures in 1989, which continue to attract eminent speakers from different walks of life, and in 2002 launched the CAFE Paper series, which are held 2 or 3 times each year.

Copies of papers available are:

1: 'The Impact of Global Urbanisation – a Christian Critique' in May 2004 by Rt Rev'd Laurie Green, Bishop of Bradwell.

2: 'Building Trust within a Business' in February 2004 by Philippa Foster Back, Director of IBE, Trustee of CAFE.

3: 'A Just Business – Are There Christian Criteria?' In September 2003 by Clive Wright, Chairman of SPCK, Trustee of CAFE.

4: 'Business and the Church – Oil and Water?' in July 2003 by Ven Malcolm Grundy, Archdeacon of Craven, Chair of MODEM.

5: 'Values and Ethics in Leadership' in March 2003 by Tim Melville-Ross, recently Director General of the IOD.

6: 'Ethical Auditing Post Enron' in September 2002 by Fr Keith McMillan SJ, Lecturer in Accounting, LSE.

7: 'Integrity in the Financial Markets: the Christian Perspective' in June 2002 by Stephen Green, Group C E, HSBC PLC.

8: 'Christian Social Responsibility – Faith and Aid Agencies' in April 2002 by Humphrey Norrington, Trustee of World Vision and other Charities.

Should a copy of any of these Papers be required, please contact the Chairman, Clive Wright, at **CABE**, 24 Greencoat Place, London SW11P 1BE.

U. S. Elections

Not many UK-based voluntary organisations can have had a member running for office in the autumn elections in the USA, but CHRISM did! Regrettably Charles Ayers, Presbyterian Tentmaker and Kansas farmer, whom many will have met on one of his excursions to this side of the pond, was unsuccessful in the election to the State legislature – but it shows he is, happily, recovered from recent illness. Good on you for standing Charles, and our best wishes for the next time!

Michael Ranken Memorial Library

The Memorial Library, is located in the main Library of the Royal Foundation of St. Katharine, Butcher Row, Limehouse, London E14 8DS; Master: Revd. Ron Swan, 0207 790 3540.

E-mail: Ron@stkatharine.demon.co.uk

website: www.stkatharine.demon.co.uk

The Library is open for reading (it is not possible to borrow books) at all the usual main Library opening times. MSEs visiting London are also welcome to stay at St. Katharine's – giving more time to browse!

If you have any books or articles that you would like to donate to the Memorial Library, please contact Phil Aspinall, PhilAspinall@vectragroup.co.uk in the first instance.

Invitation to Pentecost 2005

Phil Aspinall

You are invited to join the group of CHRISM delegates who will be attending the international worker priest conference this summer.

It traditionally takes place at Pentecost, which this year is Friday 13th - Tuesday 17th May. It will be organised by the Belgian collective and take place in Gent. Fuller details of the programme will be available nearer the time, but the themes were agreed at a planning meeting in Paris in October:

- Workers, Unemployed, Pensioners – what do we do in these situations? With whom, for whom, for what do we therefore take action?
- In these situations, are we conscious of the new enslavements which are developing? Which enslavements do we live or do we spot in the society in which we live and work?
- Around us and with us people struggle for a better world, but in different ways from us. What motivates them? What can they give to us?
- European Worker Priests, in a secularised and multi-religious world – what meaning do we bring for the people with whom we share life and work?
 - how to be intelligible for our companions in work and struggles?
 - and in all this, of our experience of Jesus Christ?

We are asked to discuss these questions among ourselves and prepare a short summary paper for the UK delegation to present to the conference. So, even if you are not able to attend the conference, I should be very grateful if you would send me your thoughts on any or all of these topics by the end of February. Any per-

sonal stories of an experience connected with one of these headings would be particularly welcome – and probably make a point most effectively.

But the conference is not just about working on a theme. It is an opportunity to meet a stimulating group of people with diverse backgrounds, challenging view on the realities of our societies, and their own fascinating stories. It's also fun - with a tremendous spirit of bonhomie (the language of the conferences is French).

We hope you will consider joining us – do contact me if you would like more details.

Holding It Together

Phil Aspinall

Back in November, some 30 people gathered for the annual conference of the Association of Presbyterian Tentmakers in Raleigh, N Carolina. Although billed as a joint meeting with the Episcopalians, I was the only Anglican present. But this was the gathering of many of the regular participants but also a fascinating and encouraging mix of new people - from insurance to IT, from teaching to accounting.

The title set the theme. This conference set out to explore the experience of being ministers in work, in contrast to the significant role many of the Tentmakers have in supporting the life of often small and vulnerable local churches. The two keynote speakers were chosen to encourage us to think outside the box. Alan Blatecky, a leader in the development of computing technology, presented the challenging new world of increasingly rapid communications and the impact on inter-personal relationships and what this does to open up community – and therefore what it means to be church in these communities.

John Winnings turns around failing small and medium sized businesses. He goes in to fix organisations which are broken – to heal, convert and resurrect. And to work pastorally with a group of peo-

ple (the existing employees) to help them see what the future might be – even in those cases where the future might mean closure. John used the language of the church to describe many of the activities he has to undertake – but there is a cross over, as he uses the same approach to turn around ailing churches.

I was asked to contribute to a panel session on the theme of “making a difference” and was able to draw on the many strands we explored in our CHRISM weekend in February. Amy Hanschen, the Moderator of APT, drew on her experiences as a manager of workplace chaplaincy. This is a model somewhat different from that of IM. The firm (and we are talking big businesses, such as Pizza Hut and Taco Bell) invites the chaplains in on a contract – to do the things that people in the business cannot do and to be part of their team – to visit all those sites where the CEO does not have time to go. It challenges the assumptions of what areas might be seen as managerial responsibilities.

Raleigh is the state capital of North Carolina. At the centre of “The Triangle” it forms with Durham and Chapel Hill is one of the most successful industrial scientific development parks in the US. Several visits were made on the Saturday afternoon, but I joined Dave Vellenga (Editor of “Tent Talk”, the APT newsletter) to visit his place of work - a highly sophisticated microchip development and manufacturing unit. Creation on a microscopic scale under conditions of extreme cleanliness.

We used the facilities of St Giles’ Presbyterian Church in the Raleigh suburbs – a very extensive range of buildings set in woodlands. We enjoyed a lot of Southern hospitality – and not least a good old fashioned Pig Pickin’ for dinner on the Saturday evening. The Church had invited us to join with them for their Sunday service – this itself gave another insight into the nature of the American Churches as we were given a very direct Reformation Sunday sermon.

Taking place at the beginning of November, the American election was very much to the fore. Most of those present were quite clear in their Democrat sympathies (with one notable exception); but the constant theme was of the painful divisions which had been created

in the nation, and would be difficult to heal regardless of the outcome.

The conference next year will be a truly ecumenical joint venture with NASSAM as the Episcopalians will be hosting the meeting in Chicago on 4th – 6th November 2005. Do put the dates in your diary now, and try to come to join with them.

I'll finish with a couple of quotations from the weekend:

"Only a few achieve the colossal task of holding together, without being split asunder, the clarity of their vision alongside an ability to take their place in a materialistic world...To my mind these last are the supreme heroes in our soulless society"

"Days pass, years vanish.....and daily we walk sightless among miracles"

CHRISM Papers

A reminder that most CHRISM Occasional Papers are available to download free of charge from our website.

An exception to this is CHRISM 8, "Making a Difference—an MSE journey of reflection", developed from the excellent guided reflection led by Peter Johnson at our 2004 Reflective weekend. Each member will be provided with one copy free of charge (if you have not yet had yours, please contact the Editor). Additional copies are available from the Editor at a cost of £3.00 each inc. p&p (cheques payable to CHRISM).

If you have not already thought about doing so, consider using it as a Lent and Easter Study guide!

Also available, from the Editor, are back copies of the Journal. If there is a particular edition you would like, or someone you would like a complimentary copy to be sent to, please e-mail me.

London Diocese tsunami action

Emma Loveridge, London MSE and CHRISM member who runs a travel company (Wind, Sand and Star Ltd), has been asked, because of her business and development and relief background through the business for the last 15 years to head up a relief team into Sri Lanka. She has also asked St Mary's Islington, where she is a minister in secular employment, to enter a partnership and support and the team are operating through the church network in Sri Lanka as well as through the Sri Lankan high commission and central relief permits.

Emma is taking a team of 6 medics and an engineer, and Jess Swift is coming from St Mary's. They are leaving on 19th Jan on a specific 10 day relief project to set up medical clinics, primary care and disease prevention and bereavement counselling for one of the worst hit communities on the coast, based beside a refugee camp operating out of one of the churches. They are also working through the EASL who have offered us transport, fuel and water access.

The team has unlimited free freight but are also taking only specific types of supplies asked for by the high commission and their links. Financial gifts are running through St Mary's, all other co-ordination through Emma direct.

If you would like to contact Emma, she is on:

eloveridge@windsandstars.co.uk

Please support Emma and her team in prayer - and funds, if anyone wants to make a donation or raise money elsewhere.

Reflections for 2005

Here he lies
for you and me and all the world.

Here he cries
for you and me and all the world.
Here he dies
for you and me and all the world,
past, present and to come.

Sarah Maxwell

"Unless the Gospel has been preached with contemporary relevance, it has not been preached!"

Martin Luther

"The essence of mystery is helping people to feel they have apprehended something beyond their expectation. ... 'Ministers' are every member of the congregation; we have to use our experience and imagination to bring this home."

Nigel McCullough
Bishop of Manchester

As a membership organisation CHRISM relies heavily on subscriptions as its main source of income. The rates for 2005 are:

Standard: £25

Students on an accredited ministry training course: £10

Members receive this Journal and bound copies of CHRISM Papers (No. 9, MSE worship resources, is due out later this year).

Copies of this Journal are also sent to course, colleges and Church Officers, as part of CHRISM's development work. If you receive a copy that you think you should be paying the subscription for, or

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*Our faith imposes on us a right and a duty to throw ourselves
into the things of the earth*

Teilhard de Chardin