

# ***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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## **Editorial**

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Don't let the short contents list fool you: this is another edition I think readers will – like me – appreciate.

First, a change of date to flag up. Having booked the **2014 CHRISM Conference and AGM** at Whirlow Grange Conference Centre, on the outskirts of Sheffield, we were disappointed to learn soon after that the decision had been taken to close it at the end of July. An inconvenience for CHRISM, but far more for the staff, and our prayers are with them as they go through the sad process of winding it down while still maintaining high standards of welcome and service to the groups who will use it over the next few months, and as they seek alternative employment.

I suspect many of us have been through the experience an office closure or redundancy. It is akin to bereavement, and we run through a range of emotions: tears are shed, anger vented, and blame apportioned. Talk of rebirth is trite at the time, but as we emerge from the darkness takes on a growing significance. I wonder if there might be a CHRISM paper in this. There doesn't have to be a single writer – it could be a collection of stories. What do you think? Have you a story to contribute? Let me know.

In the event we were able to book into **Luther King House, Manchester** – well known to generations of ordinands of several denominations! – for our conference. We have moved forward a week, to 12-14 September, and full details are included later in this edition and the enclosed flyer.

The return of the Reflective weekend to Holland House was enjoyed by all. Margaret Whipp was inspiring and thought-provoking as she led us in considering compassion, and the food was as good as ever! A feature particularly enjoyed was the use of sheep – in various shapes and sizes, from soft and cuddly to fired and textured. Some became rather attached to their chosen sheep; a former Treasurer was particularly taken with hers! We also learned that the island of Patmos is littered with small white stones – we were each given one - so when in Revelation John speaks of those who have overcome being given a white stone, he was speaking from his surroundings. It was a pleasure to welcome Adrienne Hymes, a

seminarian from the USA, whose contributions were well received. Lots more about the weekend below.

As an advance note, we've settled on the weekend of 20-22 February, 2015, for next year's Reflective Weekend, and we're heading North! The venue is Shepherd's Dene Retreat House, near Riding Mill, Northumberland, which is in delightful countryside, not far from Hadrian's Wall. It isn't difficult to get to either, being close to a rail station and the main Newcastle to Carlisle road, half an hour from Newcastle on both. Further details later (including who will lead us), but put the dates in your diary now. If you want to extend your stay then the area is well worth exploring: the Roman Wall, Kielder and Hexham to start with. View the venue on its website at <http://www.shepherdsdene.co.uk/>

Also included in this edition is one of the most perceptive articles I've read on workplace ministry in a long time. From the research of Kenneth Barnes, at Ridley College, Melbourne, Australia, it rewards repeated reading. It also draws on writings from past and present members of CHRISM, Michael Ranken and Jim Francis. I heartily recommend it.

Many thanks to all those who have sent me revised Standing Order mandates or Gift Aid declarations. Mike Harrison and I have been going through the current membership list and find that there are still some members out there whose SOs are too low. The current standard subscription is £35 a year, so please check that you are sending us the right amount.

For those with long memories, it may have occurred to you that it is nearly **21 years since CHRISM was launched** (as the 'operational' arm of CHRISSET, Christians in Secular Employment Trust). Therefore, **I'd like a contribution from every reader for the July edition please!** It will be a celebration of the 21 years of CHRISM and I'd like your memories – no matter how long you've been a member. It can be anything from 100 to 1,000 words, a story ('How CHRISM saved me from going mad / drove me mad'), a poem, photographs, reminiscences ..... I will be descending on particular folk for particular pieces. So get writing. You have been warned!

Finally, let's make this a year when we each introduce a new member. As the Churches increasingly retrench, we are an increasingly important part

of God's mission in the world. The more who realise they are MSEs the better.

*Rob*

## **CHRISM Reflective weekend**

### **3 Compassion – the heart of workplace ministry**

Margaret Whipp is both an experienced health professional and a skilled reflective practitioner as an MSE. She proved an excellent guide through this topic. The weekend comprised 6 sessions led by Margaret, interspersed with varied worship, time to relax and relate, and excellent food.

The first session was '**A God merciful and graceful**', starting from Exodus 34 and looking at the compassion of God: in refreshment, renewal and blessing. Margaret spoke about the impact of the Francis Report into the NHS, which highlighted the lack of compassion in the way it operates. There is a real need for compassion as a key component of life, individual and institutional. So how can we learn to be more compassionate? This is particularly important for MSEs, ministering on the interface between two worlds.

The Hebrew word for compassion is closely related to the word for womb. This gives the image of God as creator, giving birth to creation. Islam has 99 names for God, the first of which is 'the compassionate one'. The covenant bond is thus one of compassion, calling us back to him.

What do we do when we show compassion? Miroslav Wolf describes the drama of embrace to illustrate it. In embrace there are four moments or actions:

- Opening arms – creating space,
- Waiting for a response,
- The enfolding, sharing, closeness, exchange – touched by one another, and
- Letting go.

Both participants are changed in that transaction.

Margaret then asked us to consider two questions:

1. Where do we see and experience compassion?
2. Where is God calling us to deeper compassion?

### **Surely he has borne all our griefs?**

Compassion is found in all the great faith traditions. In Christianity compassion is considered part of being human and essential for human growth.

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Margaret led us on a silent reflection here, based on 16 prints of the stations of the cross (see Margaret Trivasse's reflection, below).

### **Learn to be compassionate, "as your Father is compassionate."**

Drawing on experience from Paul Gilbert (Compassionate Mind Training, Derby) and Karen Armstrong, Margaret took us through connecting compassion with the Christian story.

Gilbert talks about an operative model of compassion:

- A deep awareness, intimate understanding, of suffering;
- Coupled with the skills and determination to do something about it.

Where does this capacity come from in us?

Armstrong writes of the link between kinship and kindness – we are wired to care for our kin. Our innate capacity for this can be extended further, and the way we do so is important for the future of our race. Compassion is a blend of sensitivities and skills, both of which can be trained.

However compassion is not without cost; it is a costly way of being. Developing compassion for others is inherently linked with compassion for ourselves. Learning self-compassion is integral. Western culture though is good at helping us to be hard on ourselves.

The cultivation of compassion in individuals is bound up with doing so in institutions. Put another way: if we can't be compassionate as individuals, including compassionate with ourselves, how can we expect our institutions to be compassionate?

### **Like sheep without a shepherd.**

Margaret produced a rather interesting flock of sheep, inviting us to choose one. Some became rather attached to theirs!

We were invited to consider:

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- How and why did Jesus lead?
  - Who are the harassed and helpless around us?
    - What does it feel like for us?
    - What are the dangerous, rocky, places?
    - What is a 'good pasture' and how do we recognise it?
    - Have we the skills to find a sheepfold (or go out from it)?

### **Let us not grow weary** (Galatians 6).

Compassion fatigue is a real issue. When we give 'felt warmth' to others we act out of compassion, flowing through our bodies. This may be in a surface way, or digging deep, coming from our depths. It costs us; but also replenishes us.

Margaret used Proverbs 4.23 as an anchor text, "Above all guard your heart, the well-spring of life", to speak of the spirituality of compassion in 5 aspects:

- a) Of calling; a call to be perfect, in the character of God. She referred here to Paul Tillich's use of the cycle of grace.
- b) Structure (of some kind) – safe boundaries from within which compassion is sustainable.
- c) Someone to talk to, attentive and compassionate enough with us. Someone to watch over us. Who are they?
- d) Self-awareness – compassion and care for ourselves.
- e) Space – taking the long view, making space for ourselves and for others.

This led into a meditation on Mark 6.

### **In the bowels of Jesus Christ.**

Our calling to share in the priesthood of Christ has compassion at its heart. Compassion is a shared theme of the Abrahamic religions, articulated by God and giving birth to creation.

Compassion in this sense is a gift, but there is also compassion that we learn. We are called to respond in compassion, which always returns to itself, refuelling and re-rooting ministry.

Margaret then took us through Paul's prayer at Philippians 1:3-10, and invited us to write our own prayers for and expressive of compassion in our ministry. Many of these are reproduced below, but first some reflections on the weekend.

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## ***Reflections***

### ***Margaret Trivasse***

Whatever ideas about "compassion" we brought with us to Holland House, I am sure we took many more away. Common to the understanding of God found in all the Abrahamic faiths, compassion is the essence of the nature of God. It is God's compassion which beats at the very heart of the universe. It can be defined as many things: "with passion", "waiting", "longing", "yearning".

Margaret Whipp (doctor, priest, teacher, chaplain) took us into a deep exploration of the nature of compassion, using a variety of methods. Each session began with a piece of music, and ended with an instrumental setting of a Taizé chant. Thus the mood was both set and settled at the outset and the close. Margaret spoke of compassion as dwelling within the very womb or bowels of God. I thought of the words of the hymn: "And when human hearts are breaking/Under sorrow's iron rod / Then we find the self-same aching / Deep within the heart of God." The tactile imagery continued with the idea of the embrace: the offer, the wait, the enfolding and the letting go.

We were offered a set of Stations of the Cross drawn by Sieger Koeder and were invited to encounter the face of God within them, and write reflections as we felt moved. I found these images particularly powerful. An experiential exercise of a very different kind came later on. Margaret created a field of sheep from which we could choose an individual and meditate on ideas of caring and belonging. Who are the "harassed and helpless"? When are we shepherds and when are we sheep?

Alongside these visual sessions was material on the "compassionate mind" ideas of Paul Gilbert, pointing to compassion as a skilled to be learned. Margaret stressed finally the importance of being compassionate towards ourselves. To sustain us in this, we needed "5 S's": Spirituality, Structure,



Someone to talk to, Self-awareness, and Spaciousness. We were invited to write prayers relating to our own situations.

As a counsellor, this material was very much up my street! Others wondered about the place of compassion in institutions. One of the most interesting discussion areas was around the relationship of compassion and power. We wondered whether there were potential dangers in seeing ourselves as saviours and thereby appearing condescending to others or objectifying them. In some models of counselling, there is an illusion of equality between therapist and client whereas the power differential needs to be recognized. A counterbalance to “doing compassion to others” is to become powerless with the powerless, and there encounter God.

Margaret’s input made the weekend very worthwhile. Add to the sessions the splendid surroundings (in which some of us walked), the calm, dignified worship led by Ruth (including the gift of a stone from Patmos itself!), the excellent food and company, and the result was a very refreshing experience.

### ***John Cotterill***

One of the questions on the evaluation sheet for the Reflective Week-End asked ‘Did the event live up to your expectations’, or something similar. Being my first CHRISM event and not really knowing what to expect I went with an open mind and without any clear expectations. What I can say though is that the week-end has certainly provided me with high expectations for any future reflective week-ends.

Speaking personally, the week-end was exactly what I needed. For a variety of reasons, not least redundancy and becoming self-employed my MSE role/calling, call it what you like, had become even more ‘fuzzy’ than it was before, when I was part of a large organisation with an established Christian Union with a group of colleagues who I engaged on a daily basis.

For me, the opportunity to share time and conversation with other MSE’s energised me and rekindled a fire within me that had threatened to die out altogether. The beautiful surroundings of Holland House, the glorious weather on the Saturday, as many of us explored the local Worcestershire countryside and not least the opportunity to explore issues around compassion in the workplace expertly guided by Rev Margaret Whipp

made it a memorable week-end. And that's not mentioning the delicious food!

One of the most memorable sessions was when Margaret produced a motley crew of sheep, of all shapes, sizes and materials, to illustrate how we are all individuals. Like our colleagues in the workplace the sheep had different attributes and we explored how a loving shepherd might show compassion to them, not in a one size fits all approach but by getting alongside and understanding what makes them tick (pardon the pun).

So CHRISM you have set the standard and my expectations for the next event are high. I can't wait for the next one.

### ***Rob Fox***

I must confess to being inspired to some different thoughts around compassion than others. This itself is a tribute to Margaret in that where she pointed was indeed a fertile field.

First some questions:

- Does compassion become condescension and condescended to? (Compassion to the 'deserving poor' and those who know their place). If so, why?
- Is the travel of compassion from the one with to the one without?
- Is it necessarily asymmetric (as grace is)?
- Conversely, should we have compassion for the rich and powerful?
- Is compassion a gift, a sharing, a recognition? All of these?
- Is compassion individual? To what extent, and in what ways, can an institution or organisation be compassionate?
- How can we work to embed compassion as a key social value?
- Does compassion mean always giving the other what they want?

When Christ is recorded as being compassionate it is often hard won, given or shown in response to something the other has done: touched the hem of his garment in a crowd, lowered through a roof on a stretcher. Just as common – if not more so – is his exasperation: "Jerusalem, Jerusalem!", "woe to you, hypocrites". Can this too be compassion? When Jesus did 'go out' it was often only reluctantly and after persuasion.

Compassion is often disguised, encountered as something else, for example in Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well. It started as an encounter, but the terms are radical: speaking to a woman, bringing a vessel used by Samaritan. The message though is clear: "I value you and yours."

Compassion can be at its most efficacious when it is not recognised as compassion. Compassion as a challenge, as well as an invitation.



You don't have to be called Margaret to come on a CHRISM weekend, but ..... A surfeit of Margarets: Joachim, Whipp, Yates and Trivasse.

### ***The Prayers***

***Michael Harrison***

Lord, help us to see beyond the labels which block our view: Immigrant, football supporter, criminal, mentally ill, welfare dependent, terrorist, unemployed, paedophile.

So that we may recognise you, and have compassion on those seen as the least of your brethren. *(Matthew 25:40)*

**Phil Aspinnall** (*Process Safety Engineer*)

*Based on Paul's letter to the Philippians and following the structure of his thoughts in Chapter 1 verses 3 - 11 – and also following his frequent use of subordinate clauses.*

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I thank God for all those who I am given to work alongside:

- Those in the office in Baskerville House in Birmingham (those I know well, those I know by sight, those I do not know yet, and the frequent new-comers).
- The faceless people who drive our internal systems; the managers that I never see.
- The contacts at the IChemE, British Sugar and other clients with whom I am in regular contact and often develop quite close relationships.
- The groups of clients I meet and work with for short, intensive periods (a vast cumulative raft of people who I may never see again).

I am certain that in all we do we are doing good work to build the Kingdom of God in the many places we touch and engage with:

- By making the world a safer place.
- By protecting the world God has given us to avoid damage to the environment, and more efficient use of the earth's resources.
- By providing buildings, structures, systems which enhance the lives of communities and people, and enable them to flourish, grow and discover their fuller potential.
- By enabling groups of people and organisations to work more effectively - and compassionately - together.

Help us in all we do, in all our particular places and roles, to work for your greater glory.

Help us to support one another, with that shared compassion which comes from the depths of our being.

I pray especially that:

- Colleagues may get to know each other “by name” – to know and to have compassion for the person behind the role.
- People may work with a sense of calling – to use their unique skills and talents with a sense of purpose, and to grow and follow that call.
- We may see those who are under pressure and need support and encouragement – and direct additional help.
- The strong and the confident may see those who are struggling (to understand, to comprehend, to complete the task) and respect one another.
- We may all be alert to personal situations which affect us and our colleagues – and may be open to provide discreet support when it is needed (requested).
- We may see the bigger picture – to see the worth of what we are doing and the aim of our calling.
- By the way we work together and treat each other; people may become aware of the power of God’s love and the presence of God in all we do.

***Catherine Binns (neo-natal nurse)***

Father, I lift up to you tiny fragile lives, their tiny hands and feet,  
the precious gifts they bring; despite their struggle in life they teach us  
strength, they teach us compassion by their very being.

Help me to see you at work through me, to remember that special place  
within my heart. Help me to share your compassion with those in a  
vulnerable place in their life.

I pray that your love through me overflows for them.

May my hands be your healing hands as I touch the lives of the babies,  
their parents and family and the staff who care for fragile lives.  
Amen.

***Margaret Trivasse (counsellor)***

Loving God, I thank you for the immense blessing of all the people I encounter. As we meet in our mutual wounded-ness and struggling, grant us your wholeness.

Purify my love and let your compassion flow through me that we may know ourselves accepted and treasured.

May I be fully present for them, and always mindful of your abundant goodness towards me. May my compassion not waver for those I find difficult.

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Wonderful counsellor, when I feel overwhelmed by the vastness of human suffering and cruelty, remind me that I cannot solve it all by myself, and to trust that in your time all will be well.

Amen.

***Margaret Joachim (manager, IT services)***

Lord, I thank you that you placed me on the edge and hold me there.

That you have given me:

- opportunities to challenge,
- the perspective to envision a better way,
- and the ability to unite people to work to make that vision real.

I thank you that you have given me cats to herd and contacts to exploit.

I pray that we may maintain our courage and integrity.

That we will refuse to lose sight of people in the process.

That we may convert 'Corporate Social Responsibility' from a platitude in the Annual Report to the essential foundation for successful business.

I pray that we may respect each other and acknowledge the contribution made by all our differing opinions, and that we may have the grace and generosity to enable others to carry on the work when our time is up.

Use us, I pray, whatever our backgrounds and beliefs, to increase the justice, mercy, love and joy in our individual worlds and the places where we come together.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

***Royden Harrill: Prayer said at the Eucharist on Sunday at Holland House.***

Father God,

I pray and give thanks for the opportunity to serve you as a compassionate priest in the community and workplace.

As a serving brother I know that I am blessed with the power of the Holy Spirit and know the depth of the compassion of Christ my saviour.

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May I serve you always trusting in your nature and confident that you will work through me to bring peace and consolation to all who call me to witness.

Loving Father, thank you for loving me, so that I may love others and be seen to be a torchbearer for the Compassionate Christ. In Jesu's name. Amen.

**Rob Fox** (*Tax Adviser and trouble-maker!*)

*A prayer for all of us in our churches who are sure we are right.*

I beseech you, in the bowels of Christ, think it possible you may be mistaken. *Oliver Cromwell*

**Adrienne R. Hymes** (*Seminarian, Virginia Theological Seminary*)

Lord, work in me and through me as you form me to be your instrument of grace in the world. Help me to tend your sheep and to feed your lambs according to your will for them, wherever they may be.

Create in me a heart that listens with compassionate curiosity, and not of judgment. Give me the courage to cross into frontiers - hospitable and hostile - to witness to your Gospel to the church, the un-church and the de-church.

Surround me with the light of Christ as you send me out to be the salt of healing for those who are poor and for those who feel poor, even as their poverty of spirit remains invisible and unknown even to them. In Jesus' name. Amen.

**Susan Cooper:** Paraphrase of Philippians 1:3-10

*This paraphrase is an attempt to use Paul's prayer— as a Christian myself – to affirm the ministry of those I work with in multi faith chaplaincy who do not share my Christian faith but are people of faith themselves. I think it begs quite a few questions, most obviously whether words such as 'Creator' and 'God' are acceptable to those of other faiths – even where they share a faith in a deity. I am sure that I really need to change it even more for my Buddhist colleague who does not share a belief in a deity.*

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I thank my God whenever I think of you; my prayers for you are always joyful because you take the work of God and cherish and further it for the sake of all creation.

It is only natural that I should feel this about you because I have a great affection for you and know that even when I am not with you, you are furthering the privilege of the work of the creator – you know how I yearn for you, inspired myself by the deep yearning of Christ for me.

And this is my prayer, that you may grow in knowledge and insight of every kind and of your own faith, and that you experience the things that really matter. So that at the day of reckoning you will stand flawless and without blame before your God. Amen.

### ***Reflections on the Last Supper***

*Andrew Walker, PwC Christians*

In his final prayer before his death (see John 17), Jesus prayed for unity among his disciples. He had just shared a meal with his friends and commanded them to keep on doing this (remembering him) until he returns. What a tragedy that the meal that should unite has caused some of the sharpest divisions among Christians. At PwC Christians, we seek to work together according to where God has placed us. God places us in our workplaces and in our churches. That also means that He has placed us within a Christian tradition that has a certain view of this meal.

We forget that the original institution of the Lord's Supper was something utterly shocking to the devout Jew. Being in contact with a dead body made a Jew unclean. Consuming anything with the blood still in it was also not allowed. So, to drink blood was abhorrent - a strict Jew would never go anywhere near such a thing. To Jesus' disciples, it would have been totally outrageous - tantamount to indulging in cannibalism.



We've become over-familiar with the shock that Jesus must have caused at that final meal with his disciples. He was identifying himself with the Passover lamb and making it quite clear that he was the Lamb whose blood was to be shed once and for all for the salvation of the world. The symbolism of the Passover lamb was about to be fulfilled in such a way that the Passover would not be needed again. Instead we are commanded to eat bread and drink wine to remember him until he comes again.

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What is it about the Lord's Supper, the Sacrament of Holy Communion, the Eucharist or the Mass that is so central to Christian worship and yet so widely separated in form, nature and understanding? Too much blood (literally) has been spilt over this issue. We need to learn from each other. For some this meal is the place where they feel closest to Jesus. For others it is something they undertake after a time of worship and meeting the Lord in Scripture. Or it could be anything in between.

Perhaps each of us could ask, "What could I learn by attending one of these celebrations in a different tradition to the one I call my own?"

And then do it!

### ***A Theology of Work for a post-Industrial Age***

*Rev'd Dr. Kenneth J. Barnes, Dean of the Marketplace Institute,  
Ridley College, Melbourne, Australia (produced by permission)*

In his collected papers entitled, Reflections on Non-stipendiary Ministry As Ministry in Secular Employment (1989-96), Dr. James Francis of the University of Sunderland states quite succinctly the paradoxical nature of work as both blessing and curse in the Bible. In an article entitled, *God as Worker: A Metaphor from Daily Life in Biblical Perspective*, Dr. Francis notes:

In so far as work forms a major and essential part of human life it is to be expected that the modeling of the transcendent in religious discourse will in some way reflect the idea of God as himself a worker, if not (as in Biblical perspective) *the Worker* par excellence. In the metaphorical understanding of God in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament there is a projection (and perhaps a discernment) concerning the value and

significance of work. That projection and that discernment relate to the subjective awareness of work as toil on the one hand and as creative struggle on the other, of labour as an enjoyment of the rhythm of life and yet as touched by decay and dissolution, and of an instinctual contrast between creation and fabrication.

There are in fact many different words used throughout the Scriptures that we may translate as “work.” Two of the more important ones being (*m<sup>e</sup>lâkâh*) and (*mal’ak*); the former being used to describe God’s work in creation (Gen. 2:2-3), the latter to describe the work of artisans and craftsmen in the building of the Temple (Ex. 36:1-8) and the reconstruction of the Temple wall (Neh. 4:15-13:10).

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These words are in sharp contrast to (*’itstsâbôwn*) which is used specifically to describe the “painful toil” resulting from the ground being cursed at the Fall (Gen. 3:17; 5:29) and the Greek word (*kopiaō*), used to describe “painful” or “burdensome” work in the New Testament (Matt. 11:28).

In observing that we, in English use different words to distinguish between “toil” and “work,” Dr. Francis has suggested, in a sermon preached at St. Chad’s Church in Sunderland on Good Friday, 1996, that:

... toil is what we have to do by way of tending to life’s necessities. And since life’s necessities, like attending to our bodily needs, is based on the cycle of nature there is no lasting outcome to all our toil, since it is consumed and we have to start the process all over again. The round of visiting the supermarket is toil! But work is different, and though work may be hard and toilsome, it is productive and creative in a way in which the cyclical process of toil and labour are not. Work...is a uniquely human activity whereby we can envisage a future and work in our creative powers to construct that future. Architecture, planning, design, music, writing and all else is not labour - it is work because it expresses who we are and aspire to be, in using creatively all the materials of our life which are to hand.

Yet the distinction between that which Francis would describe as “toil” and that which he would define as “work” is not always as clearly defined in the Scriptures. There are, in fact, more generic words used in the Bible to

describe work, than those specifically relating to creative activities and necessary activities, that have a more neutral connotation; such as (*ʾāsâh*) and (*maʾāseh*), the latter a derivative of the former which is used throughout the book of Ecclesiastes, and its Greek equivalent (*ergon*), used extensively in the New Testament.

The previous paradox (mentioned by Francis) is especially evident however, in the case of the Book of Ecclesiastes, as the writer recognises

17 some nature of manual labour, yet rejoices in its divine origins and  
se.

What does the worker gain from his toil? I have seen the burden God has laid on men. He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from the beginning to end. I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live. That everyone may eat and drink and find satisfaction in all his toil - this is the gift of God. (Eccl. 3:9-13)

Here the writer demonstrates a clear understanding of the “burdensome” nature of work, yet still sees intrinsic value in it. The value of work is not defined by either its creative merit, or its utility (in order to eat and drink), but in the recognition of work as being a “gift of God.” The writer sees in labour, the participation of Man in the creative process, begun by God “from the beginning” and made “beautiful in its time.” This is also implied in another Greek word used in the New Testament (*kopos*), which is used to describe “labour” (as in child birth), as well as one’s “labour of love” in the service of the Lord (1Thes. 1:3, Heb. 6:10).

This provides a very powerful metaphor for work as being procreative, in the sense that it is a continuation of the Lord’s work, both creatively and redemptively, whether the purpose is practical or aesthetic.

In his book entitled The Relevance of the Church (1935), F. R. Barry makes the case that:

... God is the Creator of the world, and we cannot isolate His work through Christ from His other creative and redemptive activity...the other knowledge, in the mastery of technical skill...comes to us as summons and awakening modes of His self-disclosure. All the divine activity in the world...is at once creative

and redemptive. His every disclosure to our sleeping spirits, whether on the peaks of heroic insight or the pedestrian walks of daily duty, whether in the achievement of new, inviting us to communion with Himself. (p.115)

In the opinion of the researcher, a theology of work that emphasises the positive, creative, and redemptive qualities of work must be at the core of workplace ministry in a post-industrial era; especially as the nature of work itself is changing on a regular basis. In order for workers to not only survive, but also thrive, and find fulfillment in an emerging post-industrial economy, they will need to develop new paradigms for how they contribute to organisational effectiveness, relate to others around them, and integrate their lives at work with their personal lives. 18

The changes taking place in contemporary business are so significant that they are almost incomprehensible; the primary driver, of course, being technological advancement. Technology has always been at the heart of economic change, but never at such a breath-taking rate. It has been estimated that at the time of the Renaissance the world could expect one significant technological innovation every twenty-three years. By the time of the Industrial Revolution the rate had risen to one significant innovation per year. It is estimated that today, the world experiences one significant technological innovation every second!

That kind of innovation, coupled with other phenomena such as globalisation, deregulation, mergers and acquisitions, day (stock) trading, free trade agreements, currency rationalization and the effects of the Crash of 2008 has naturally resulted in increased competition, accelerated product obsolescence, and intense pressure on company profits and shareholder returns.

Consequently, companies have had to completely re-engineer themselves in order to compete in a highly volatile and ever changing environment. The three areas of business most significantly affected are information technology, organisational structure, and people. While the last of these (people) is obviously of greatest concern to the church, the way in which all three inter-relate is important to our understanding of how work processes will affect the very nature of work in the coming years.

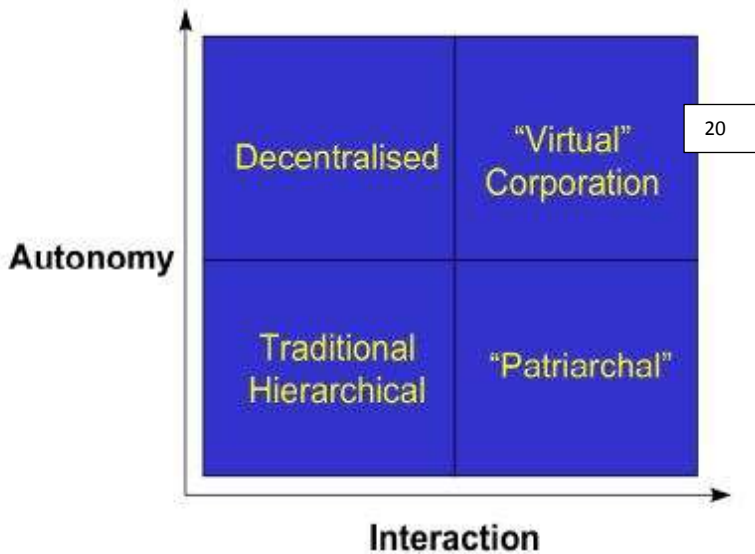
The changes brought about in the area of information technology are well documented and have become an everyday part of people's lives. Mobile telephones, fax machines, pagers, personal computers, the Internet, laptop computers, tablets, smart phones, etc. are as essential to business today as the telephone and typewriter were to the previous generation. However, their impact on business goes far beyond the obvious benefits of convenient communication. Their most significant impact is in the 19 shing of the power of information.

In previous generations, information and the authority to use it was the sole domain of a relatively small group of senior executives. Information was traditionally passed down an organisation through many layers of management on an "as needed" basis. The result being that the majority of workers received very little in terms of raw data and were merely expected to follow the instructions of supervisors. This trickle down flow of information and the hierarchy that supported it, helped to create an environment that on the one hand was secure (i.e. people knew their place and what was expected of them), but on the other hand was adversarial (i.e. labour vs. management).

The unleashing of raw information, however, has changed all of that. Now nearly every employee has access to critical information, and is being trained and empowered by organisations to use that information. Now instead of workers being told what to do and how to do it, senior executives are able to share overall business objectives with employees; and allow them to create the work processes necessary to accomplish specific goals. This shift from output to outcome has huge implications for how people work and how they interact with other workers and with management.

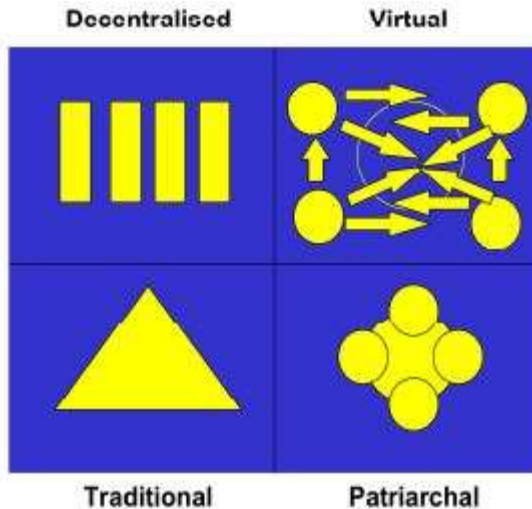
The combination of increased information, autonomy (in terms of authority to act upon information) and interaction among employees (often from previously disparate departments) however, has meant that the organisational structures themselves have had to change as well, in order to support the new work processes.

The diagram below illustrates the work process relationship between autonomy and interaction in different kinds of organisations (see *Steelcase Workplace Index, 1997*).



In a "traditional / hierarchical" organisation, very little autonomy is enjoyed by employees and there is little interaction among various disciplines within the organisation. In a "decentralised" company, individual employees and / or departments enjoy a lot of autonomy, but have little to do with other parts of the business. "Patriarchal" organisations allow for a great deal of interaction, but withhold autonomy, while "virtual corporations" (the model which is emerging most rapidly) embrace both concepts of autonomy (empowerment) and interaction.

Logically, if a company's work process is moving from a "traditional / hierarchical" model toward a "virtual" model, then the structure of the organisation itself will have to move from a traditional "pyramid" shape to a more "fluid" one (as demonstrated below).



Traditional organisations are pyramid shaped, with information, power and control concentrated at the top of the organisation. Decentralised organisations have a silo shaped structure, almost as if each department or business unit were a separate company. Patriarchal companies keep control at the centre of the organisation, and are less hierarchical than traditional organisations, but keep control through strict policies and procedures. Virtual companies however, have very little structure at all, and formal policies and procedures are replaced by a common culture and shared corporate values, goals and objectives.

Radical changes of this nature in both work processes and organisational structures will naturally have a dramatic effect on the people who make up the organisations and who do the work. This is where the need for a workplace ministry will be most acute.

As Davidow and Malone put it in their book The Virtual Corporation (1992), the trauma of dramatic change itself, can have a negative effect on both employees and on companies that are reluctant to embrace it.

For some employees the experience (of change) will be more traumatic than that of the changes demanded by past industrial transformations - though the threat this time won't be regimentation, exploitation or dehumanization but

unpredictability, lack of comfortable structure, and simply too much responsibility...Workers content to put in their hours, to do the work and go home, may suddenly find themselves saddled with responsibility and control they never desired. And companies content to maintain the status quo indefinitely may not only encounter change but be forced to endure continuous, unremitting, almost unendurable transmutation. (p. 9).

In other words, change is inevitable. The question is: how will businesses and their employees deal with it?

Davidow and Malone further note:

... without a doubt, the new business revolution will be a shock to the system, a blow to our sensibilities. It will require new social contracts, ever higher levels of general education, and a frightening degree of trust. (p. 19)

In fact, they maintain, “trust...is the defining feature of a virtual corporation” (p. 9). Without it, corporations will be unable to properly equip or empower employees to do the work required and achieve desired results. Likewise, employees will not be sufficiently motivated to put in the extra effort required to develop new skills, adapt to new work modes, and accept new forms of reward and recognition.

The purpose of workplace ministry in this instance is to help establish an environment of trust and provide a foundation upon which the aforementioned “new social contracts” may be built. This may be done by communicating a theology of work that evolves away from the negative view of work as curse to work as procreative; from work as profession to work as calling; from relationships as contractual to relationships as covenantal; from work as individual to work as communal; from work as temporal to work as worship.

As alluded to earlier, a high view of work must be at the centre of one’s theology of work, if that theology is going to foster positive attitudes and constructive relationships. Such an understanding of work, however, is contrary to the historic teachings of the church, which has, over the years, emphasised the “work as curse” mentality. As Pete Hammond, Director of the Marketplace Division of Inter Varsity Fellowship notes in an article from the organisation’s newsletter, [Marketplace Reflection](#) (Edition One).



For too many generations the church has taught that work is the penalty for sin. Because we have viewed work as God's retaliation for our rebellion (ref. Gen. 3:17-19)...This terrible distortion has had devastating effects...

It is the responsibility of those involved in workplace ministry therefore, as representatives of the church in a secular setting, to combat that long held perception, and champion the idea of "work as procreation" instead.

The overwhelming biblical evidence (as suggested previously) is in support of this position. As Hammond mentions in the same article cited above, Work is intrinsic to our nature because we are made in the likeness of God, and God is a worker. Note that when Jesus found Himself in a controversy over the Sabbath, he asserted that "My Father is always at work to this very day, and I, too, am working" (Jn. 5:17).

Indeed, God is "at work" in all of creation, and we are His fellow participants in that ongoing and ever unfolding drama of creation and redemption. As Rev'd. Michael Ranken put it, in an article for Theology magazine (March, 1982), later reproduced by Francis and Francis in Tentmaking: Perspectives on Self-supporting Ministry (1998).

In the rite of Baptism we declare that "God is the creator of all things and by the birth of children he gives to parents a share in the work and joy of creation." He does the same thing in every other activity of life. The farmer tending the crops or animals shares in the work and joy of creation so does the canner or freezer of his produce, the supermarket assistant, the manufacturer of tyres for the tractor, the scientists testing fertilisers and the bank manager organising finance for them all. The creation they share is concrete; among other things it is part of the creation of you and me. Take the creative activity of any one of them away and we shall die, literally.

Work is essential to our very existence, and it is through our work (among other things) that the God who created us has continued to sustain us, for His purposes and to His ends. Work is central to our very beings, and it is a blessing, the fruits of which we enjoy on a daily basis. If, indeed, we hold

these things to be true, then it is logical for us to take a high view of our jobs as well; and see them not in terms of their professionalism, but to appreciate each individual vocation as a calling from God. In fact, the very concept of our being called by God to certain vocations is closely linked with our understanding of God's purposeful intent in creation and redemption. As Francis notes in the previously referenced *God As Worker* article,

The metaphor of God as worker, whilst it is derived from belief in God as creator, is also related to belief in God as accomplisher as the focusing of the significance of the redemptive possibility of that work (Is. 55:11). In so far as creation is itself purposive and the work of man itself creative the development of the idea of hope, and eventually of eschatology, is of relevance to the understanding of God as worker.

Addington and Graves convey a similar thought to that expressed by Francis in their work entitled, *A Case For Calling* (1997), where they state, Calling is God's personal invitation for me to work on His agenda, using the talents I've been given in ways that are eternally significant. To be called means I know that what I am doing is what God wants me to do. Furthermore, when I live within God's calling, not only does my work give me a sense of meaning, but it also fits into God's larger purpose.

Citing the Apostle Paul's assurance that, "We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28), they go on to affirm,

... work is not some arbitrary and random choice that makes no difference. Its primary objective is not to put food on the table and provide a comfortable retirement...(it) is part of God's larger agenda in history ...

To believe that our work is more than just an earthly vocation, but is part of God's greater plan for the universe is both humbling and inspiring. It humbles those who see their jobs as especially important, when they consider their relative place in the overall scheme of things. When considered against the backdrop of time and space, even the most visible and desirable of jobs seems like a rather small cog in the machinery of God's eschatological intent. Yet when considered as part of God's grand design, even the most seemingly trivial aspect of one's work takes on a

whole new meaning; lifting even the mundane out of the mire of irrelevance and elevating it to a place of eternal significance and divine dignity.

Armed with the belief that all work is intrinsically important, and a conviction that the company one works for, and the fellow employees one works with are also part of God's eternal design, workers should find establishing and maintaining "trust-based" relationships easier to do. The classic biblical model of a "trust-based" relationship, of course, and one that is central to the creation / redemption process is the covenant. As Francis states, again in the aforementioned *God as Worker* article,

Both redemption and faithfulness as the nature of divine activity come to expression in the idea of the covenant, and this in turn gives a particular meaning to the understanding of God's work or action in creation itself. We may note for example how the Song of Moses at the Exodus (Ex. 15) echoes the language of the Creation story (Gen. 1.1ff). Indeed the bringing of order out of chaos (in the Genesis myth) as God's work in creation is itself redemptive, and the redemptive purpose of God is likewise creative in the making of all things 'new.'

We can in fact find numerous examples from the Scriptures to support the centrality of covenantal relationships as paradigms for all divinely inspired intercourse. Whether it be the Creation account (cited above), the Flood and the subsequent covenant with Noah (Gen. 9:1-17), the Abrahamic covenant (Gen. 15), the Mosaic covenant (also cited above), the Deuteronomic covenant (i.e. the "Law"), marriage covenants, or the "New Covenant" in Jesus Christ, the model of mutual fealty, trust, promise-keeping, and faithfulness are at their core.

Therefore, if one's theology of work defines work as being a critical element in the divine plan, both as an extension of the creation process and as part of the redemption process, then relationships based upon a covenant model should, logically, be the order of the day. As Francis further states,

... the key value in human work and acting is fidelity, whereby the fulfillment of promise keeping is an inherent part of work and action, and which reflects the divine nature...this fidelity is given particular expression in Covenant, and the effect of this Covenant

also lies in its dispersed relevance whereby the people are bound...under its common moral and spiritual sanction.

The concepts of “promise-keeping”, and “common moral ground” are, as we have seen, critical to the future success of companies moving away from highly structured environments and strict processes to more fluid environments and cultures held together by shared core values. In order for the efficacy of those values to be realised, however, the very nature of the relationships themselves, which bind individuals together, will logically have to evolve away from being contractual (that is to say “adversarial,” based on a presumption of violation), and become more covenantal (i.e. based on mutual interdependence, trust and an assumption of cooperation).

Such a set of assumptions may also help businesses and employees alike, view work and business activities in general, as more communal in nature than purely individualistic. In an article entitled, *Some Reflections from the Perspective of Ministry in Secular Employment* in the aforementioned Collected Papers, Dr. Francis contends,

... acknowledg(ing) (God) as Creator...is the very basis of our creative responsibility. And it is this creative purpose at the heart of life which should actually release us from wanting more and more in a selfish acquisitive sort of way, and which should turn us toward discovering an understanding of ‘more’ as a dimension to life which is inclusive and including-that is, an understanding of the Market in the context of community...it is the church’s particular responsibility to remind us all of the transcendent at the heart of life, our worship, so that the inter-linking of profitability and service can be both maintained and understood.

As part of a mutually interdependent community with a set of common values, shared goals and collective responsibility for results, workers should find the move from individual to team based activities, for instance, less frightening; and a move from individual compensation to performance related “group-pay,” for example, less threatening.

Even with a sound theology of work under-girding our assumptions, changes of this nature, to the way in which we view our own contributions to organisational effectiveness, the way we relate to others, and our

understanding of the relationship between one's work and one's worth will be challenging. However, in the opinion of the researcher, without such a foundation, adapting to the effects of a post-industrial revolution, the likes of which are beginning to emerge, will be infinitely more difficult; hence the importance of developing and communicating a sound theology of work.

Ultimately, one's theology of work should create an ethos that promotes a view of work that recognises the ontological significance of all human endeavours; and fosters a belief that work is not merely a temporal activity, but in its purest form, is an act of worship. As Dr. Francis notes in an article entitled *Church and Society in 1 Corinthians* (1991), found in the previously cited Collected Papers,

... (the Apostle) Paul's conviction...(is) that faith is that which holds worship and living in a single whole.

For the Christian, every aspect of our lives should be an act of thanksgiving and an act of worship. As the Apostle instructed the church in Colossae as well,

... whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him...whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord...it is the Lord Christ you are serving. (Col. 3:17, 23a, 24b).

Of course, this is the ideal scenario where people will respond both intellectually and spiritually to a positive and life-affirming view of work, and allow their theology of work to help them cope in a healthy fashion with the radical changes taking place in our post-industrial age. However, as Davidow and Malone note,

... like the Industrial age before it, the emerging era has the potential to raise the quality of life for everyone to unprecedented levels...But, also like previous economic transformations, it will leave some behind - people who cannot cope with the new responsibilities, the rapid pace of change, and the demands for mental adaptability. In the frantic pace of life in this new economy...it will be easy to forget these others. A just society, a virtuous society, will tend to the needs of the disenfranchised. Thus, the last requirement of the coming

business revolution is that it also exhibit the quality of mercy.  
(p.268)

It is the conviction of the researcher that workplace ministry has the potential to be an effective agent of mercy, not only for the aforementioned disenfranchised, but also for those who are in the midst of a transition to the new realities of our post-industrial age but who need some help in getting there smoothly is the conviction of the researcher that workplace ministry has the potential to be an effective agent of mercy, not only for the aforementioned disenfranchised, but also for those who are in the midst of a transition to the new realities of our post-industrial age but who need some help in getting there smoothly.

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## ***Working Brothers and Sisters Conference Ilbenstadt, April 2013***

### ***Good Work***

*Phil Aspinall*

Last year's Spring meeting of the German worker priests and other working brothers and sisters brought together the usual fascinating mix of people at Haus St Gottfried, the former monastery just outside Frankfurt. As usual, Phi Aspinall went to join them.

Much of the reflection revolved around what the participants do day by day and the situations in which they find themselves. But in particular we pursued two key themes: the meaning of well-being and "fullness for all" in our work places and society; and the concept of the Basic Income (different from the living wage). The second topic was supported by a film in on the Saturday evening, which gave a very comprehensive explanation of the suggested benefits.

One particular point of discussion was supported by an information poster on the meaning of Good Work. I offer this list to stimulate further discussion, and look forward to receiving your responses.

Good Work means: (not in any particular order)

- To work without time pressures and without unwelcome interference and distractions.
- To be able to see opportunities for chances of promotion in the workplace.
- To live and work collegially and to develop a sense togetherness.
- To receive a sufficient and appropriate income.
- To be valued and noticed by supervisors - and for this to be reflected in the way work is planned.
- To plan work independently and to be able to shape it oneself.
- A reliable work time plan, which allows the needs of individuals to be taken into account in the planning.
- Being given all the necessary information in a clear way to understand the demands of the job and what has to be done.
- The bodily / physical demands of the job or task are taken into account.

- Being able to offer one's own ideas and suggestions and to be creative.
- To be able to be human – to show feelings and to be treated well.
- To be given possibilities for further development and qualifications – through opportunities from the business, but also with working conditions which promote learning.
- Not having to worry about future employment.
- Being able to understand the meaning of the work and the ways of carrying it out.

How do these match up to your own working environment? Maybe you would like to add some other criteria.

This year's Spring Conference takes place over the weekend of 9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> May 2014 at Haus St Gottfried, as usual. Phil plans to go, and would be very pleased if you were able to come and join him. The theme for the weekend includes an exploration of our experiences, positive and negative, of racism and migration; the effects of the 1993 laws on asylum and where we find a welcoming culture for new arrivals in our own countries. Please contact Phil (details inside back cover) as soon as you are able if you are interested in attending or would like more details.

### ***Religion and politics in the Ukraine***

The role of the churches in recent events in the Ukraine has been under-reported, but was critical in ensuring the removal of Viktor Yanukovych was much less bloody than it might be. During the demonstrations and confrontation in Kiev and elsewhere, the Maidan, priests and other church members deliberately inter-posed themselves between police and demonstrators, as voluntary human shields, to prevent violence from both sides.

Religion in the Ukraine is both complex and political, partly for historical reasons. Orthodoxy as a tradition is organised on the nation-state model and less than four orthodox churches claim to be the national church. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate is part of Russian Orthodox Church – its members tend to be ethnic Russians. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Kiev Patriarchate was formed in 1991 and isn't



canonically recognised. The Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church was created in 1921 as part of the attempt to assert Ukrainian statehood after the Bolshevik revolution. Finally, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church has a Byzantine liturgy and tradition but recognises Papal authority (*I know one of its bishops. Ed.*); its strength lies in the west of the country, in lands formerly in the Austro-Hungarian empire.

Politicians of all every ilk recognise the importance of faith and the churches in Ukrainian national life. However being seen to favour any one of the Orthodox churches is unwise. Interesting therefore that the interim President, pending elections in May, is a Baptist pastor, Oleksandr Turchynov. The Baptists have considerable moral capital, stemming from resistance to Communist attempts to stifle faith. Let us hope and pray he uses it well.

## **Resources**

### ***Westminster Faith debates***

We ran a trail for the series of debates taking place in London this spring in the last edition. The addresses from the speakers at the first debate, ***Can historic churches retain global unity?***, are now available on line at: <http://faithdebates.org.uk/debates/can-historic-global-church-maintain-central-authority-unity-or-devolve/>

Addresses from later debates will be available shortly after each.

***Saint Paul's Institute*** website holds a wealth of information about faith and work, at <http://www.stpaulsinstitute.org.uk/dialogue>

LICC has recently launched ***Fruitfulness on the Frontline***, two new resources by Mark Greene, a book and a DVD, for disciples who want to make a difference where they are day by day.

We all have a life on the frontline in the world that's significant to God. But we can see how God has been working in and through us? Can we imagine what God might be pleased to work in and through us on our daily frontlines?

The DVD follows on from the foundational *Life on the Frontline* DVD course and offers a fresh, simple framework for discovering a rich variety of ways in which God may work in us and through us right where we are. The 8 sessions include an 8-13 minute film, a Bible study, discussion questions and a takeaway action to help connect the theme to the frontline. Find out more at [www.licc.org.uk/fruitfulness](http://www.licc.org.uk/fruitfulness).

## **Events**

***12 – 14 September, 2014: CHRISM Conference and AGM  
Ecumenical Perspectives on the needs for the calling, training,  
development and support of Ministers in Secular Employment, in all the  
churches.***

**At Luther King House, Manchester** (please note change of venue and date)

We shall explore together the different strands needed in the development of MSE. (Many of these were considered at a national consultation in Southwark last summer).

- **The meaning of Ministry**
- **Vocations discernment**
- **Training for ministry**
- **Support required for MSE**
- **Recognition of the institutional contribution of SSMS**
- **Valuing the ministry of SSMS in their work and workplaces**
- **What CHRISM might do to help and support**

The weekend incorporates the CHRISM AGM and visits to local places of interest and of work.

Luther King House is located three miles south of Manchester city centre, close to Platt Fields Park and the 'curry mile', in a leafy oasis. It's easy to reach by train and car. Accommodation is en suite. Further details at: <http://www.lutherkinghouse.co.uk/>

At Pentecost last year, the Ministry division of the Church of England (MinDiv) hosted a consultation in Southwark on 'A New Pattern of Priesthood', looking at the current state and future of Self-Supporting Ministry in the Church of England (see the official outputs at [http://www.ministrydevelopment.org.uk/a\\_new\\_pattern\\_of\\_priesthood](http://www.ministrydevelopment.org.uk/a_new_pattern_of_priesthood)).

One of the questions raised was: how can CHRISM most effectively support MinDiv (and its sister bodies in other churches) and SSMs in shaping the future selection, training and deployment of SSMs? We are preparing a paper with initial responses. At our conference we will explore ways in which we can develop our role, as a network and as individuals, in the future. We have been asked – by MinDiv and by the SSMs at the consultation – to help. Now we need to act.

Please put the date in your diary; we look forward to seeing you.

### ***CABE 2014 Programme***

Here are some dates for your diaries:

#### **Weds 14 May – 1800 for 1815 start**

***Patrick Regan OBE, CEO of XLP: Transformational Society*** – looking at the key issues for those living on the margins of society and how we can respond to those issues.

This will also be the CABE AGM. This will start promptly at 1815. All CABE members and friends are welcome but only CABE members will be able to vote. Patrick will be speaking from 1900 and there will be time for questions and discussion and for networking over sandwiches.

Venue: All Hallows on the Wall, 83 London Wall, EC2M 5ND

**Tuesday June 10 – 1815 for 1830 start**

***Simon Ward – COO British Fashion Council***

Being Real in an Image Mad Culture. Venue: Church House, Dean's Yard, London SW1P 3NZ

**Weds 3 September –CABE Women– 1815 for 1830 start**

***Nola Leach, CE CARE: Women in Leadership***

Venue: Hoop and Grapes, 80, Farringdon Street, EC4 4B

**Thursday October 2 – 1815 for 1830 start**

***James Featherby – Chair of Church of England Ethical Investment Advisory Group and writer and speaker: Ethical Investment***

Venue: Hymans Robertson's offices 1 London Wall, London EC2Y 5EA

**Tuesday 4 November – 1815 for 1830 start**

**HUGH KAY LECTURE**

***Herta von Stiegel - Executive Chairman of Ariya Capital group and non-executive Chairman of Stargate Capital Investment Group***

***“Catastrophe, Complacency or Courage?”  
based on the story of the Titanic***

To book CABE Events contact Jayne Payne, [events@cabe-online.org](mailto:events@cabe-online.org)

***The Challenge of Leadership in a Changing Church: Religion and Churchgoing in the 21st Century.***

Symposium at York St John University, 17 June. £30. Keynote Speaker: **Professor Callum Brown** - Professor of Late Modern European History, University of Glasgow.

Details and booking via York St John website,

<http://www.yorks.ac.uk/education--theology/faculty-of-ets/faculty-events/challenge-of-leadership-2014.aspx>

2014 is the 25th anniversary of ***Faith in Business***. As part of the celebrations, a celebratory event is planned at the Athenaeum Club, central London, in June, hosted by the Chair of Ridley Hall Council, Bishop David Urquhart. Please see the Ridley Hall website for full details: <http://www.ridley.cam.ac.uk/news-events/>

Former Archbishop of Canterbury (and Patron of CHRISM), ***Dr Rowan Williams***, has taken up a post at the **University of Chester** and will deliver his inaugural lecture, “The Messiah and the Novelist: Approaches to Jesus in Fiction”, on 13 June at 7pm.

Admission to this event is free but booking is essential and tickets will be allocated on a first come, first served basis from <http://shopfront.chester.ac.uk> under the ‘Event Booking’ section.

### ***And finally – The Psalm of the Manager (John Hammersley)***

God is my gracious manager:

    I know I’ll always have a job to do.

You make certain I take responsibility:

    you see that I’m kept up to the mark.

You help me feel confident in my work:

    When things begin to get difficult you’re always on hand to listen.

When we’re successful, you congratulate us:

    you encourage us all in our common enterprise.

Into our community you bring your communion:

    as we work together you give strength to sustain us.

Now I have a purpose I can aim for:

    the final goal may not be clear but I see what I have to do next.

For you give me the target I need:

    And together with my colleagues we’ll achieve what’s to be done.