

Ministers-at-Work

The Journal for Christians in
secular ministry

Number 99

October 2006

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.

Contents	Page
Editorial	2
Spiritual Direction for Ministry in Secular Employment	4
<i>Richard Spence</i>	
Spirituality at Work	11
<i>Mike Rayner</i>	
CHRISM Annual General Meeting 2006	16
Subscriptions	20
Reflections on Chrism	21
<i>Jean Skinner</i>	
Common Purpose	24
<i>Mary Coyle</i>	
Resources	32
Diary & News	33
CHRISM MSE Questionnaire	34
Book Review	35
Leadership from the Inside Out, Kevin Cashman	
<i>Adrian Holdstock</i>	
A Bishop for Urban Life and Faith	37
Who would Jesus tax?	37
Are you a self-employed MSE?	39
Christmas In The Mining District	39
Some Windows messages you may have missed ...	40

Copy deadline for the next edition: Friday, 5th January

The views expressed in this Journal are those of the author unless otherwise stated. If you would like to reproduce any items in another publication, please contact the Editor.

Editorial

I was greatly saddened to learn last month that John Hawkins, whose self-published autobiography *Mea Culpa* I reviewed in the last edition of MaW, had died. John's love of God and his fellows shone through the book, the review copy of which will be added to the Michael Ranken Library at the Royal Foundation of St. Katharine, Limehouse, east London.

Another feature it clearly demonstrates is what I have come to call the biographical approach to ministry. What we are called to do within the ministry of the church of God will vary over time and place and we should expect it to. It certainly did in John's case. CHRISM too changes as both an organisation and network, partly as old stalwarts decide it's about time to give younger blood its turn, and partly as we respond to the changing nature of work and the ways in which the churches relate to it. In that vein we welcome Susan Cooper and Pauline Pearson to the Committee, whose experience and wisdom the rest of us will appreciate!

Not that Jean Skinner was lacking: her contribution to the work of CHRISM is inestimable, especially in organising a superb Conference in her home city of Newcastle this summer. Speakers included the Lord Mayor and representatives from One Northeast and community groups deeply committed to the regeneration of the region as it seeks to rebuild after the loss of heavy industries in recent years. The visits too were very much appreciated and included the Byker Wall housing estate, the Sage (*which I affectionately call 'Slug on the Tyne' – Ed.*), the Baltic, and the largest casino in the North East. Jean's reflection on her Committee roles is featured below, as she takes a well-deserved rest. She is modest about this, but her role in building up a strong MSE network in the Region is an inspiration, with many 'newer' MSEs benefiting from her support and wisdom.

Phil Aspinall has relinquished the role of Secretary and taken on a new brief, as Publicity Officer. We have long thought CHRISM would benefit from having someone specifically looking for op-

portunities to make MSE and ourselves more widely known, and as Phil has been doing a great deal of this anyway, he is clearly the right person for the job. So just when he thought that escape from the Committee was imminent, he was co-opted back on! Also co-opted is Felicity Smith, who is organising the 2007 Reflective Weekend at the lovely Holland House, near Evesham. More details elsewhere in this edition and in the flyer mailed with it.

I'm continually grateful to all those who contribute such cracking good copy for this Journal. Our farthest flung member, Richard Spence, in New Zealand, has come up trumps with a thoughtful and challenging piece on spiritual direction for MSEs, which dovetails rather nicely with Mike Rayner's piece on conversations about spirituality at work. Pick of a bumper crop at the Conference was the talk given by Mary Coyle, Director of Common Purpose, which she has kindly allowed to be reproduced here. It is full of story: beloved of MSEs!

A quick 'domestic': as you renew your subscriptions (worth every penny!) please do review the contact details we have for you and let either myself or Richard Dobell know of any changes. Also if you have changed your e-mail address and think we may not have the current one (and have no objection to us contacting you via that medium), please let us know.

And another reminder. If you take a look at the cover you will notice that this is edition 99 – and you know what that means! I'm expecting a deluge of serious / witty / pithy / irreverent / heart-warming contributions for the 100th – *so get writing*. It really doesn't have to be long either; if it legal, decent and truthful (and relevant) it is welcome.

Many of the questionnaires I've received have had covering notes or comments, and one sums up the tenor: "thank you for being there." That's the most humbling thing I've received as Editor, especially as I just put together what you contribute (alright, perhaps adding the odd witticism). Thank you.

Rob
Spiritual Direction for Ministry in Secular Employment
Richard Spence

“Our position requires that we act with authority; our faith requires that we live in submission. ... Our already healthy propensity for pride is goaded a dozen times a day with no one in sight to check it. It is not merely nice for pastors to have a spiritual director; it is indispensable.”¹

Spiritual direction takes place when two people agree to meet to give their full attention to what God is doing in one of their lives, and seek to respond in faith. According to Peterson, spiritual direction sessions are based in the belief that God is always doing something; an active grace is shaping this life into a mature salvation. Responding to God is not sheer guesswork: the Christian community has acquired wisdom through the centuries that provides guidance. Each soul is unique: to apply that wisdom it is necessary to discern the particulars of this life, this situation.²

Kenneth Leech describes the traditions of spiritual direction and its significance for the prayer life of the individual. Yet Leech makes no attempt to relate spiritual direction to life in the secular world, rather the reverse –

“... the work of spiritual direction has brought us to the point of crisis, or conflict with the world organized apart from God ...”³

It is clear that such a programme needs to be re-interpreted if it is to relate spiritual direction to a life spent largely in the secular world, and resolve its conflict with a world that denies the holy. Bi-vocational ministry is a situation where prayer itself, in so many ways the antithesis of activity, has to form an integral part of ordinary existence. The *prêtres-ouvriers* themselves needed to communicate with God in the midst of assembly-line toil. In so doing found that their employment and its orientations nourished their interior life.⁴

The common one-on-one format for spiritual direction does stand in

some danger of reinforcing the self-absorption to which an isolated MSE is naturally subject. Awareness of the problem is probably its own corrective. And insights from the group encounters of the American programme *Education For Ministry*⁵ might provide a fruitful model in which the spirituality of MSEs could be nurtured.

Identity and Identities: what of the fellow-traveller ?

Preserving spiritual integrity, or identity, is a constant challenge to the MSE and to any who would offer them spiritual support. If we follow Nash, there are several dichotomies to deal with. In her interviews she observed three spiritual strategies for dealing with them: generalising, justifying and seeking. If faith and economic thinking are too close, Nash says, then they will collapse into a secular, wholly rationalised mindset. If they are too distant — as in a completely privatised faith — faith concerns will no longer impact on the economic world.

If we want to give expression to a profound connection between faith and economic activity, we are in a delicate position. Trying to maintain a traditional biblical worldview while participating in the modern culture of the corporation — neither constructing an invisible wall between these two, nor suggesting that they are wholly complementary ... is not easy.⁶

The seeker, then, must attempt to reconcile these two worlds and make them relevant to each other by using the tension between business and faith to create a combination of economic and spiritual activity. The trick, Nash concludes, is to maintain some distance — but not too much distance — between the opposing forces of faith and business. Conventional approaches to seeking a spirituality can induce considerable ambivalence in the MSE as for other Christians in secular employment.

Accountability to God and the spiritual values of justice, the common good, sustainability and the wholeness of community may be in conflict with the accountability to the corporate institution or the workplace. That conflict has to be understood and should invigorate a spirituality of the community at work. While traditional spirituality may separate itself from the ordinary working world, a spirituality at/

for work must be sought which affirms the working environment as part of God's world.⁷

Dualities abound. Duquoc writes of a dichotomy of inwardness and outwardness — we are entering an era in which the ecclesial monopoly has disappeared and each individual, so it would seem, can live the inward and social dimension of faith other than by proxy and without fear of schizophrenia.⁸

Another duality MSEs must deal with is science vs. religion, relevant because science underpins business' secular orthodoxy. Christians who are trying to reconcile science and religion often ascribe different functions to the two fields, for example, turning to science to answer the 'how?' questions, while religion responds to the 'why?'. In the secular world, evolution has replaced creationism, and the MSE may need to wrestle like Teilhard de Chardin⁹ with the idea of an evolving God, while sustaining their mystical faith. And because the church usually affirms the parish as the context for ministry, taking little account of employment-focused ministry, another tension exists for most MSEs. As almost all have a valued parish base, MSEs try to hold the world of the parish and the world of the workplace together as one so that the experience of employment may become an experience of ministry. It's an ongoing task, made more desperate by the incomprehension each of these worlds exhibits for the other.

Pitt¹⁰ emphasises that the minister in secular employment needs to be secure enough in God simply to wait for God to disclose God's purposes in the situation. This he calls 'secular contemplation in the secular desert'. It is a fascinating image, for it paints the MSE as a pilgrim in a barren land — the secular employment is to be endured, not celebrated. According to Pitt, the spiritual disciplines appropriate to the MSE's employment situation are: not to be constantly talking about God or sharing Christian things, not to be anxious about being successful, not to have unrealistic goals about making converts — they are disciplines of self-control.

The quest for spiritual identity is for MSEs likely to be a continuous and enduring activity. Those people who accept the challenge of

their spiritual direction need to be more than well-intentioned: they need to be well-informed and above all, robust.

Motivation and Motivations: what of Call?

While one may hope that the discernment process brings to light the motivations that lead individuals to the calling of minister in secular employment, little attention has been paid to factors that might be found in common among MSEs as group. The following is a partial inventory, probably incomplete and in any case some of the items in the list are incompatible with each other:

- hope of escape from a meaningless secular job into a fulfilling church role
- hope of using the riches of the secular workplace to relieve the barrenness of church life
- hope of using the riches of church life to relieve the barrenness of the secular workplace
- desire to follow a particular exemplar of the MSE ideal
- belief in the godliness of both secular and the sacred vocations, and a dream of uniting them
- admiration for the vicar model of ministry and a desire to minister as much like that as possible
- disgust with the vicar model of ministry and a desire to minister as differently as possible
- vision of a perfected model of lay ministry
- frustration with the limitations of lay ministry

MSEs need to consider which of those motivations lie close to the spiritual heart of their calling, take hold of them and own them. They are the motivations that will energise their spiritual life and give their ministry its character. Those same ones will also enliven their spirituality and their experiences in spiritual direction.

Values: clashes - integrity

It has been repeatedly affirmed that a thirst for spirituality can be detected in the very midst of secularity. Pitt (above) may be reading the situation more pessimistically than is warranted, for McLaughlin, a secular writer, asserts¹¹ that business is far from being a spiritual desert. It is her observation that people at all levels in corporate hierarchies increasingly want to nourish their spirituality and bring more meaning and purpose into their employment life. Spiritual val-

ues that are widely embraced in business include integrity, honesty, accountability, quality, cooperation, service, intuition, trustworthiness, respect, justice, and service. And, she says, they want their spirituality to be practical and applied — to bring heaven down to earth.

Niebuhr would agree, and would have us respect that spirituality: "Modern secularism was forced to resist a profanisation of the holiness of God both in the realm of the truth and in the realm of the good, in both culture and ethics ... No Christian theology, worthy of the name, can therefore be without gratitude to the forces of modern secularism insofar as their passion for truth was a passion for God."¹²

To bridge the gaps between two worlds, two cultures, is no small challenge, for, as the participants in a Lichfield training course re-

At work I am called upon to be innovative, creative and participative.	At church, by contrast, I am expected to be passive, conforming and controlled.
--	---

At work I am required to identify my strengths and seek recognition.	At church I am expected to confess my weakness and claim forgiveness.
--	---

At work there is often conflict, if not always of the aggressive kind, and this is acknowledged in various ways.	At church, conflict is denied or suppressed.
--	--

Work demands intense periods of intellectual and/or physical activity.	Church places emphasis on being rather than doing, on silence, contemplation and reflection.
--	--

Work puts a high value on logical thought convincingly articulated.	The spiritual life has a point at which logic must cease and words are shown for the dangerous things they are.
---	---

Work demands performance measures and is concerned with outcomes.	Church puts emphasis on doing one's best and leaving the outcome to God.
---	--

The Lichfield group went on to delineate the culture gap between the two worlds and to specify the challenge. They concluded that ‘the culture of church and the culture of working life are so different as to create a barrier which few are motivated to remove.’¹³ Few perhaps, but finding ways to break through the barrier — for themselves and for others — the MSE is called to this specific challenge and opportunity.

The calling to ministry in secular employment is the call, not to build a bridge between these conflicting elements, but to *be* that bridge. For oneself, in finding a spirituality that will energise one’s ministry; for others, to demonstrate to fellow Christians — in the only way that ultimately matters — that faith-at-work *works*.

Recollection: how to centre oneself with God other than in a religious place

MSEs are called to do their religion wherever they find themselves. To exercise their spirituality in places designed for that purpose, is an opportunity rarely accorded to them. The question that faces them daily therefore is: how to access one’s spirituality while in the secular setting?

The search in secular spirituality for ways to understand faith to be present in real life and not to be merely an intellectual structure is not reductionism but points to new ways of religious experience, an expansion of faith, deepening it. The worker-priests and industrial chaplains witnessed to their experiences of being close to God in the activity in the world of work cooperating with workers and combating oppression. Some worker-priests said they felt more close to God in such types of activity than in church.¹⁴

The nub of the matter is that the MSE will truly be a person in secular employment, one who —
“... will identify with the work people, experience the same contention, take part of the blame, carry the anxieties, be among those needing forgiveness, and release him/herself with compassion as well as the institution, organisation or system.”¹⁵

There is the rub. Conventional approaches to the quest for spirituality can prove too simplistic for MSEs as for other Christians in employment. Accountability to God should invigorate a spirituality of one's business community. While traditional spirituality may separate itself from the world of employment, the MSE must find a spirituality that not only takes account of non-Christian spiritualities but also affirms the working environment as part of God's creation. Access to well-judged spiritual direction will be the MSE's greatest single support on that pilgrimage.

1. Peterson, Eugene H: Working the Angles - the shape of pastoral integrity (Grand Rapids, MI, Eerdmans 1998) p 167
2. Peterson, op. cit. p 150
3. Leech, Kenneth: Soul Friend - an invitation to spiritual direction (San Francisco, HarperCollins, 1992), p 193
4. Arnal, Oscar L: Priests in Working-Class Blue- the history of the worker-priests (1943-1954) (NY, Paulist Press, 1986)
5. University of the South School of Theology: Education for Ministry (Sewanee, Tennessee)
6. Nash, Laura: Believers in Business (Nashville, TN, Thomas Nelson, 1994)
7. Johnson, Dorrie: "Ordained Ministers in Secular Employment", Theology vol 101 no 799 (Jan/Feb 1998) p. 26
8. Duquoc, Christian (trans John Griffiths): "Spirituality: A Private or a Public Phenomenon ?", in Concilium, vol 9 no 7 (London, Burns & Oates, 1971) p.28
9. Teilhard de Chardin, Pierre: L'Avenir de l'Homme (Paris, éditions du Seuil, 1957)
10. Pitt, Trevor: "Spirituality and the minister in secular employment", in Francis, James M.M. & Francis, Leslie J (eds): Tentmaking: perspectives on self-supporting ministry (Leominster, Herts, 1998) pp 296-8
11. McLaughlin, Corinne: "Spirituality at Work", The Bridging Tree Summer, Vol 1 Iss 2 (Lifebridge, New York, 1998)
12. Brown, R.M (ed): The Essential Reinhold Niebuhr (New Haven, Yale, 1986) pp 88-89
13. Diocese of Lichfield, Local Ministry Training Course: Christians and the Economic Order (4ed) (Lichfield 1998) pp 10-11
14. Erlander, Lillemor: Faith in the World of Work (Univ. of Uppsala, Stockholm, 1991) pp 169-172
15. Johnson, op. cit. p 24

***Spirituality at Work:
Conversations at the Old Road Campus of Oxford University***
Mike Rayner

One of the issues for ministers in secular employment (MSEs) – it seems to me – is what can they learn – if anything - from their parochial counterparts. Parish ministers hold services for those they minister to. By service I mean events at which people gather together to worship God. What sort of services could MSEs hold?

I'm only a trainee MSE. I am doing my training on the Oxford Ministry Course – so perhaps my experience of services held by MSEs is limited but they appear to me to divide into two sorts: the small(ish) event for the already-fairly-engaged Christian – a prayer meeting or a bible study for example and the large(ish) event for anyone interested – a carol service, a funeral service for a work colleague, for example. Of course as such they do not differ from those held by parochial ministers. It's just that MSEs seem to hold services less frequently.

I wonder whether there is scope for MSE's holding more and/or different types of service. To explore this idea in practice – and partly to fulfil the requirements of my course – I have recently experimented with holding something called 'spirituality at work conversations' at my place of work – the Old Road Campus of Oxford University – where various parts of the medical school are based.

I got the idea of holding spirituality at work conversations from David Welbourn - Churches' Officer for Industry and Commerce with the Surrey and NE Hants Industrial Mission and former chaplain to QinetiQ whose head office is in Farnborough, Hampshire. Spirituality at work conversations – at least as David Welbourn describes them – are small group meetings for people of all faiths and none – organised around a particular 'spiritual' topic connected with work. The aim as I see them is to provide a space for people to connect with themselves, one another and/or God.

In the end I held eight conversations at the Old Road Campus between November 2005 and March 2006. I started by advertising the

conversations by e-mail to everyone on a list of about 200 people working on the bit of the campus where I work. The e-mail outlined the purpose and nature of the conversations and asked people to reply if they were interested in attending. 23 people originally expressed an interest and 13 people have ended up attending at least one conversation.

The conversations had the following format: firstly everyone introduced themselves, and then we had a discussion around a particular topic for about 40 minutes; at the end of the 40 minutes I lit a candle and there was a period of silent reflection for about 10 minutes which ended when I blew out the candle.

A few days before each conversation I sent an e-mail to everyone who had expressed an interest in coming with the topic for the conversation and a bit of text – either a single sentence or a longer piece of writing. Topics for the sessions ranged from 'Finding meaning at work' to 'Connecting with God at work'. Texts have ranged from a short aphorism: 'I work to live rather than live to work' to one of Jesus' parables: the Parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard (Matthew 20: 1-16).

On average between five and six people attended each conversation. Most were not regular churchgoers. Generally the informal feedback was positive. People seemed to enjoy the conversations and some found them useful. Here for example is an extract from an e-mail I received after the second conversation (it's reproduced with permission): 'Someone's comments ... about researchers having autonomy and creativity struck a chord with me and it's really helped to unblock my thinking processes. I've felt really weighed down the last few weeks because I was trying to fit in with what I thought was the right thing to do with the questionnaire I'm designing, now, at the eleventh hour, I'm redesigning it in a completely different and I think, much better way. It's great; I'm actually beginning to feel excited about it again!' However not all the informal feedback was positive. Some people who came clearly decided not to come again. Some people were distinctly 'fazed' by the candle. One person seemed to have been put off by one of the texts that I circulated prior to the conversations: some quotes from

Jung!

The results of a consumer satisfaction survey were also interesting. About a week after the fourth conversation I sent a 'feedback form' to the 23 people who had expressed an interest in attending the conversations and received nine responses. Three had not attended any of the conversations because of conflicting demands. Six respondents had attended at least one session.

In general the respondents who had attended a conversation said they had found them enjoyable and useful. They said that they provided an opportunity for hearing other people's views and to meet people they would not otherwise have met. The reflective nature of the discussions was specifically mentioned by two. Three of the six respondents particularly liked the time for meditation at the end of the session. However one respondent expressed frustration about the lack of discussion about God and one expressed sadness at having to listen 'to how unhappy some people feel about their working lives'.

So were these conversations a success? For a start did they fulfil my aim of providing a space for people to connect with themselves, each other or God? Of course this is quite difficult to say. My guess it happened up to a point but I am not sure that it happened in any major way. I guess it happened to the same extent as at your average parish church service but how can you tell?

On the face of it not many people came to the conversations. But is five and a half people out of a possible 200 a lot or a little? At the 8 o'clock communion at my local parish church the average congregation is about five and a half though the morning service at 10 o'clock attracts about 100. Can the success of a service be measured by the number of people who attend? Obviously not.

But is five and a half people worth the effort? The conversations involve time to organise and attend. They require, at least the tacit, support of the management, to which they constitute a threat – if only minor. They change the way those organising and attending the sessions are viewed by their work colleagues.

What I do think is that conversations provided two things which, for some people, are not necessarily easy to find elsewhere: Firstly they gave people a chance to complain about their work situation. Their lamentations were fairly common but nevertheless heart felt: workers are not valued enough by their colleagues or their bosses, there isn't enough time in the day to be anything other than reactive, no one knows what anyone else is doing, etc. etc. Secondly they gave people a chance to express deep personal needs and longings: feelings of meaninglessness, loneliness, etc.

One way of following up complaints about work is to feed them back to the management. David Welbourn has done this with his spirituality at work conversations that he has been holding at QinetiQ by ensuring that at least one member of the senior management team attended each conversation. I could not do that and indeed one of the 'rules' for our conversations related to confidentiality. It is not clear to me how, or indeed whether, the expressions of needs and longings should be followed up.

So in what way were the conversations similar to services in a parish church and in what ways were they different? Services in parish churches fulfil many other purposes besides providing a means for Christians to gather to worship God: they enable people to learn more about the Christian faith and of the activities of the church, they provide a way for people to meet other people to share needs, views, news etc. for individuals to reflect on their own and other's needs, views, news etc. and to bring these reflections before God in prayer. Indeed where does worship stop and these other activities begin?

In our conversations at the Old Road Campus, those of us who were Christians talked about our Christian faith when discussing such topics as finding meaning in work; we all shared our needs – starting with those relating to our work but extending to those relating to the rest of life; we reflected on these needs during the time of reflection. Those of us who believe in God presumably prayed about those needs. So it does seem to me that there was some similarity between our conversations and 'ordinary' parish

church services.

Of course one reason why churches hold services is as a means of building church. I half had in mind that the spirituality at work conversations would turn into a regular event – a ‘fresh expression’ of church if you must – but they haven’t. Numbers dropped off over the course of the eight conversations from nine at the first to four at the eighth. It seems difficult to build churches at workplaces. For instance there is no category of ‘workplace church’ for the ‘Fresh Expressions’ database (<http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk>) and when I last trawled through that database I couldn’t find a single fresh expression based in a workplace.

Perhaps there are reasons for this: one being the fragmented nature of modern work. Where I work I know very little of most of the people working on the same corridor – not even their names – let alone on the floors below or in nearby buildings on the campus. Most of the people who came to the conversations were people I did know. Most of the people who stopped coming were people who I knew least well. The conversations do provide people with some opportunity of getting to know one another but may not be a sufficient means for building a community – let alone a church.

Nevertheless were these conversations worth having? Well yes, I think so. I personally enjoyed them and learnt a lot from them. They gave *me* a chance to talk about the spiritual dimension to work and the 10 minutes of silent reflection with a candle (‘borrowed’ from a CHRISM reflective weekend where I encountered this for the first time) forced me to pray for 10 minutes, which otherwise I wouldn’t have done.

So if anyone else (besides David) has any experience of spirituality at work conversations (of any description) and would like to get in touch I would be interested in talking to them. Here’s my e-mail address:

Mike.Rayner@dphpc.ox.ac.uk.

CHRISM Annual General Meeting 2006

The CHRISM AGM took place during the summer conference in Newcastle. *Phil Aspinall* summarises some of the highlights.

Adrian Holdstock (Presiding Moderator) noted that CHRISM works for and through its membership. He reviewed the highlights of this year for CHRISM, with emphasis on three things: how those elected are serving CHRISM; how we can all shape CHRISM's future; and how best to resource that future. Although we have moved forward, he noted that we lack the momentum in our present approach to take us beyond our present scale and reach. However, he reported three significant areas of progress: involving our patron, meeting NSM officers and starting the working groups.

Four Committee members met Archbishop Rowan for almost an hour in Lambeth Palace last October, in a conversation to seek ways in which MSEs can be of service and more widely understood by the church. They were warmly received and intensely listened to about our own experiences of ministry. We are now pursuing his offers and encouragement in four areas: to make a presentation to the General Synod; to have a bishop allocated for especial liaison on MSE matters; to build a close relationship with the new Head of Ministry Division; and to involve him in a CHRISM event in 2007.

We discovered a national forum for Anglican NSM Officers and two members attended their annual meeting this May – and led the afternoon session. A number of delegates realised they were MSEs and we are now a welcomed part of that forum.

Following last year's AGM, we have formed four Working Groups covering: Theology, Editorial Board, Local Groups and Publicity & PR. If these are to grow in significance in support of CHRISM's work, more members need to become involved. (Modern technology will limit time spent travelling and the associated costs). The framework is place but resources are needed to support the work without relying on Committee members alone. The Committee is vital to the effective running of CHRISM. We highly value the way we start each meeting by listening to each person's latest life story.

The power of being heard by Christian friends builds bonds and trust that sets us fair for good committee work through and far beyond the day's meeting.

This year we focussed each meeting on what needed our keen attention to help us manage time and deliver our programme. He thanked Margaret Joachim for organising the reflective weekend at Launde and Jean Skinner for this Conference. They were also both thanked for assembling the CHRISM Worship booklet. Work is advancing on three more, all designed to enrich our thinking and practice as MSEs.

He thanked the Committee for all their hard work and mutual support, and also thanked all the membership for their support, encouragement and interest in the work of MSEs. While not wishing to overlook the many people, both on and off the Committee who have supported and advanced the work of CHRISM, he expressed thanks to Phil Aspinall for his work as Secretary for the past six years – which were endorsed by the meeting.

But the Committee alone will not and cannot achieve all that CHRISM desires. How can we find and serve the many hundreds if not thousands of MSEs there must be across all denominations and throughout the UK ? What is CHRISM's capacity to grow much further, while we remain resourced only by volunteers, who give what they can out of a busy working or busy retired life ? To overcome our limited capacity for expansion, Adrian proposed that we should consider the value of building a financially resourced development programme, based on our development plan – a paid resource, perhaps in the form of a secretary general or development officer. If we regarded CHRISM as a body worthy of charitable support – regular gift aided giving – rather than a membership organisation with a fee for membership rights, we may then be able to fund the outreach of CHRISM and growing support for MSEs and their work. Fresh expressions of church are already present in MSE life and networks – we just have to release the potential. He urged the meeting to ask the Committee to research such a development.

Phil Aspinall (Secretary) reported that the Committee had met four

times during the year: twice in Birmingham, once in Macclesfield and once at 1 London Bridge, where we were given an insight into this example of an initiative to provide office space for small organisations.

The business covered many issues, in addition to those already raised, in line with our key objectives:

- Matters to follow up from our personal stories
- Arranging CHRISM weekends
- Help people to understand their work as ministry
- Become the official organisation for MSE
- Maintaining communications – through the website and Journal
- Developing working groups
- Supporting members through local groups

He described the time taken in maintaining contact with the various departments at Lambeth Palace, but was pleased that constructive conversations had taken place.

Peter King, Stan Frost and Phil had attended the International Worker Priest meeting near Aachen at Pentecost and Margaret and Phil the NASSAM / APT conference in Chicago. Phil would be joining the Old Catholic Church of Germany and the Association of Presbyterian Tentmakers from the USA for their conferences in the autumn – and invited others to join him on these and future visits. During the Aachen conference it became clear that next year would be our turn - so the European Worker Priests have been invited to the UK for Pentecost, 26th – 28th May 2007.

Richard Dobell (CHRISSET Trustee) reported a slight loss on the year of £46 (offset by £85 interest) in 2005, reducing the total funds to £ 6513 at year-end (compared to £6774 in 2004). He thanked Ashley Hawkes for his work as “Independent Inspector” of the accounts. It was agreed to permit the committee to continue an annual subscription up to £30, but with a reduced rate for those not in full time employment.

In his capacity as Membership Secretary, Richard also reported an

increase in paid membership to 128 in 2005, with 118 paid to date in 2006. The committee have been systematically following up members whose payments had lapsed.

The committee had reviewed the pros and cons of amalgamating CHRISSET and CHRISM and concluded that, although this might simplify the financial arrangements, it would give no significant benefits for the time and effort that would be required.

Following the elections, the Committee now comprises:

Presiding Moderator	Peter King
Incoming Moderator	Margaret Joachim
Outgoing Moderator	Adrian Holdstock
Secretary	Susan Cooper
Journal Editor	Rob Fox
Committee Members	Ruth Brothwell
	Catherine Binns
	Pauline Pearson
	Felicity Smith (co-opted)
	Phil Aspinall (co-opted)
CHRISM rep to CHRISSET	Hugh Lee (co-opted)
CHRISSET representative & Membership Secretary	Richard Dobell

Peter King (new Presiding Moderator) paid tribute to the contribution Adrian had made over the past year as an excellent chairman, noting that CHRISM had achieved much and had set a sound basis on which to build.

Peter noted the, sometimes very frustrating, lack of perception of stipendiary clerical colleagues and congregations as to MSE. But perhaps things are about to change in a dramatic fashion – propelled into a new era at the forefront of change. As the structures of the Church will change so people's perception of church will change. He noted that formal church takes up 1% of people's time – 99% is spent elsewhere, and the MSE is there.

CHRISM continues to develop its profile. We hope for further engagement with Archbishop Rowan, our Patron. The meeting in Bir-

mingham with the NSM officers of 28 out of 48 dioceses was a major step forward. The task of locating where NSMs/MSEs are will be followed up by the working group, possibly through organising open regional meetings. We also need to encourage the non ordained, and Readers in particular, in their MSE – to be proactive and go and sell CHRISM.

Publicity and PR is a role which Phil will be undertaking to raise our profile. We need to get regular articles in local and national church newspapers, and to keep our website up to date and interesting.

CHRISM maintains wonderful contacts with friends in Europe France and the States, and Peter noted with pleasure the presence on this weekend of Old Catholics, Tentmakers and a member of the Mission de France for the new ideas they bring to us. We hope to be hosting the European meeting next year – which will be an opportunity to meet other people and for further growth.

The growth of CHRISM depends on wider involvement – of outsiders, not just of the Committee – to bring a fuller and wider sharing and new ideas, through the working groups. Peter encouraged those at the conference to sign up.

Finally, he trusted in the Holy Spirit to guide CHRISM on the coming year, and each of us in our own individual ministry.

Subscriptions

Thanks to everyone who pays their subscription to CHRISM. It is much appreciated.

The subscription rates for 2007 are:

Normal: £30

Reduced: £10 (applies to those studying on accredited ministry training courses; maximum of 3 years)

What do we use your money for?

- a) publishing four editions a year of our Journal,

- 'Ministers-at-Work',
- b) one additional publication each year,
- c) the costs of four committee meetings a year, usually in London, or in Birmingham,
- d) maintaining our website,
- e) purchases of relevant literature.

How can you pay your subscription?

- a) by cheque made payable to 'CHRISM'
- b) by standing order, completing the form accompanying the October Journal
- c) by using a credit card.

What would help us?

- a) if you paid your subscription (if you don't already),
- b) if you started to 'gift aid' your subscription if you don't already and you pay tax. For every thirty pounds you pay us, we can claim an extra 8.46.

How can I gift aid my subscription?

Complete a Gift Aid Declaration, which requires your name, address, signature and the date. It couldn't be simpler!

If you have any questions or queries, please contact me on:
r.f.dobell@btinternet.com

God bless!

Richard

Reflections on Chrism

Jean Skinner

This is a reflection of my involvement with Chrism over the last 8 years and particularly the two spells I have spent on the committee.

I have found the support and encouragement of my fellow Chrism members extremely important; they have made a difference especially at those times when life feels like an uphill struggle.

I have always looked forward to the Reflective weekends and Conferences as an opportunity to catch up with old and new friends. During my involvement with Chrism I have had the privilege of organising two Summer Conferences in the North East. The first in Durham, 1999, and this year in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. I have also had the privilege of serving as Moderator and compiled the Worship Resource book.

As I have now come to the end of my time on the committee, I have been reflecting on the difference it makes being on or off the committee. As a committee member I have been involved with and contributed to what Chrism is trying to achieve. I have been part of the decision making process and had regular (very regular) e-mails from fellow committee members between meetings that happen four times a year.

Having had a two-year period between 2001 and 2003 when I was off the committee, I have been reflecting on the difference it makes in terms of knowing what is going on within Chrism as an organisation. During my previous time off the committee I felt bereft of information and the contact and support from my fellow members. I was not part of the decision-making process and therefore not in a position to contribute to where the energy is channelled.

I think there is a danger of Chrism having a clique, an inner circle of people who are in the know and an outer circle of people who have no idea what is going on (sounds a bit like church). Now this might just be me, I just like to know what's happening, but I wonder how many of the journal readers have any real sense of knowing what Chrism as an organisation is doing?

Which brings me to the point of this article; I feel the journal could be more informative in relation to what the committee are up to. Perhaps there could be a discussion forum where members can make suggestions and or comments on what they expect Chrism to be doing on their behalf.

Perhaps there could be a short resume after committee meetings about what is being discussed, considered and acted upon?

If we want to be taken seriously we have to more transparent in what we are doing, and more accessible to a wider readership of the journal. The reason is two fold, one to enable members to offer their services and skills short-term for a specific piece of work.

Not everyone wants to sit on a committee, but if there was a particular project that required particular skills it might be a way of drawing on new blood to contribute to the decision making process. It also prevents the committee from feeling overburdened with all the work it is trying to achieve not least and the second point of trying to establish and become the lead organisation for MSE's.

I have enjoyed very much being part of the Chrism committee and it is time for me to move over and make way for new people to join. However I will continue to be interested in what is happening and would like to see the journal be more informative about what the Committee do.

2006 Conference ...



... was as multinational as ever.



Whilst the Lib Dems held their own fringe meeting!

Common Purpose

*A particular highlight of the 2006 CHRISM Conference was the presentation by **Mary Coyle**, Director of Common Purpose. As she describes its work the links to ministry in secular employment become obvious, and not least in the use of story! I am very grateful to Mary for allowing this to be appreciated by a wider audience.*

I must admit that, prior to Jean inviting me to address your conference, I hadn't heard of CHRISM, or about Ministry in Secular Employment.

I guess that most of you haven't heard about Common Purpose before today either, so that's one thing we have in common. I bet that when someone says to you "So what is CHRISM? What is Ministry in Secular Employment?" you have the same experience as I have when someone says to me "So what is Common Purpose?" I think, how long have you got? Which version shall I give? It's at

times like that that I wish I'd stayed in my first career choice, teaching. Tell someone that you're a teacher, and they all know what it means. It's simple!

But, that's not the only similarity that I think there is between CHRISM and Common Purpose. Although we wouldn't use the word ministry, we in Common Purpose would say that we contribute to our dream of improving the way society works through the work we ourselves do daily.

One of the questions we ask ourselves continually is "Are we walking the talk?" We expect Common Purpose staff to behave as leaders themselves, delivering quality, taking risks, building on successes, adapting and evolving as society does, across time and place and context.

Common Purpose prides itself on being independent and non-aligned, so it owes no historical or other allegiance to any other group. Amongst other things, that means that *SOME* of my colleagues are of faiths which are not Christian, and *MANY* of my colleagues are of no proclaimed faith. But the majority of them certainly do have a deep spirituality, even if it is of a secular nature.

What is Common Purpose?

So, what is Common Purpose? I'm going to start the answer to that question by sharing with you our Vision.

Vision

In every democracy there is an invisible, open space. It lies between the citizen and the state; between the immediate responsibilities facing each individual, and the institutional responsibilities of the government. It's a place where people come together and act for the greater good. And it is open to everyone, from every sector of society.

In an unhealthy democracy, this space is empty. People may exercise their votes, but, other than that, they leave the decisions to the governments they elect. They are active in their private lives, but

passive towards the society around them.

In a healthy democracy, however, this space is full. It teems with individuals, businesses, community organisations and political groups. It is alive with energy, and entrepreneurial activity. People hold institutions, and the powerful, to account. They oppose, and they propose. Unlike elected politicians, they are free from the short-term pressures of the election cycle. This means they can think and act for the longer term, and in the wider interest.

At Common Purpose, we have a passionate belief in the importance of this space. In our view, this is the true meaning of democracy; active, not passive; every *DAY*, not just every election. We believe that we should look for and encourage the best leadership from all parts of the community, not just from the people we elect.

Our aim is to fill this space with as many people as possible. And in order to do so, we need to give them the knowledge, the inspiration and the networks they need to be effective. We want to encourage all kinds of people into this space, and to see all kinds of initiatives coming out of it. We want to discover new leaders, and to show lone voices that they are not alone.

So how do we set out to translate that rather ambitious vision into a reality? Well, we believe that the best way we can do it is to expand the vision, the decision-making ability and the influence of all kinds of leaders.

Leadership

So you could describe us as a leadership organisation. We believe that the UK needs more, and more diverse, leaders. We run a variety of educational programmes for leaders of all ages, from all backgrounds, from all sectors, in order to provide them with the inspiration, the information and the opportunities they need to change the world. The programmes are specially designed to help people in leadership and decision-making positions to be more effective, in their own organisations, in the community, and in society as a whole.

The community is both our subject and our venue. Our participants don't just sit in meeting rooms studying abstract management problems or wrestling with intellectual exercises. They go out into their own community and grapple with real life problems at first hand, visiting prisons, housing developments, businesses, hospitals and manufacturing plants in order to find inspiration outside their usual experience. Together they tackle topical issues, trade leadership experiences and strategies with other leaders from a variety of fields. They meet new people, make new connections, find new ways of working with people who may not view the world in the same way.

By the end of a programme we hope we have created better leaders:

- leaders who have a better understanding of the complexities that lie behind many of the problems we face as a society;
- leaders who have better, and more diverse, networks to call upon to help solve their organisational problems;
- leaders who are more willing to move outside the comfort zone of their own working environment, and play a more active role in wider society, bringing their skills and abilities to play on a bigger canvas.

Common Purpose would argue with conviction that society works better:

- If our senior police officers appreciate more fully the challenges facing businesses in the private sector
- If our head teachers understand better the world of work into which they dispatch our young people
- If the voluntary sector understands the importance of wealth creation to a healthy society
- If our business leaders recognise that they don't have all the answers and that the public sector has much to teach them
- If our urban leaders have an understanding of the difficulties and challenges faced by our neighbouring rural areas
- If our small businesses can make their voices heard in the wider debates that are always ongoing about how society should be ordered.

I could go on but it is in the mix, in the flux, in the diversity that the

Common Purpose 'thing' happens. A few stories may help to illustrate:

Story 1

The Nissan car plant in Sunderland is the most productive car plant in Western Europe. It is also the biggest single private sector employer in the City of Sunderland. Each year for 17 years Nissan has placed a senior manager on the local Common Purpose programme. To what benefit? Well, there are several, not least for the reason I will now illustrate.

Four years ago the senior Nissan staff member on the Common Purpose programme was the person responsible for staff training at the plant. About half way through the programme he approached the Programme Director during a coffee break on a programme day.

"Paul", he said, "I was too embarrassed to tell you this earlier, but I have been working at Nissan for seven years now, and every day I drive to work from my home in Durham to the plant on the A19, and then I drive back again. If my wife and I go out in the evening we either go out in Durham, or in Newcastle. In the seven years I have worked at Nissan, before Common Purpose, I had been into Sunderland City once".

Think about that and its implications.

However as a result of undertaking the Common Purpose programme he had been all over Sunderland visiting schools, training centres, the council, the hospital, the Minster, small and large businesses etc.

We, Common Purpose, gave him – the head of training at Nissan – his first real understanding of the environment in which the work force he was responsible for training had grown up, and now live.

Is he now a better Head of Training? Yes, without doubt.

Story 2

For many Common Purpose participants the Crime and Justice pro-

gramme day with its prison visit lives long in the memory. On such a programme day a year or so ago, the group toured Acklington Prison, located in rural Northumberland.

Later, during a full group discussion at police headquarters at Ponteland, the senior police officer on the programme complained that her officers had to deal with shoplifters in Newcastle's West End on a daily basis. On arrest, they were discovered to have been recently released from Acklington Prison.

The reason they were shoplifting was to feed a drug habit but, as they had only just been released from prison, they often had no proper accommodation and no GP. Without an address and a doctor they were unable to access drug substitutes from the health service. Hence the immediate return to crime to pay for drugs.

At this point the participant from a Primary Care Trust in Co Durham said that in their area this gap in provision had been closed recently. They were now being notified, by the local prison, of prisoners being released who had a drug habit; as a result they were able to provide the prisoner with a GP prior to their release.

The day after this conversation the police officer travelled from Newcastle to Co Durham with a colleague to learn the details of the scheme with a view to it being extended to Newcastle.

Such a scheme is clearly of advantage to the newly released prisoners, the shops affected and the police. But it is also of advantage to you and me and the rest of society because the cost of stolen goods from shops is simply incorporated into the price we pay for the goods we buy.

Story 3

A story from our early years: The Chief Executive of a newly formed mental health trust came to share some of his challenges with the Common Purpose group.

One of his challenges was that he had inherited St Nicholas's, what

might best be described as a Victorian asylum, with significant grounds and gardens, situated behind high stonewalls. This imposing edifice effectively separated the comfortable neighbourhood of Gosforth from the less well-off Coxlodge. He wondered how he could open the hospital up to become part of the community.

One of the Common Purpose participants was Director of Northumberland Wildlife Trust, and he was looking for a suitable base in Newcastle.

The result? Northumberland Wildlife Trust now has its headquarters within the grounds of the old hospital, along with an impressive reed bed.

Has it brought the people of Coxlodge closer to the people of Gosforth? Well, yes, although not always to everybody's pleasing, but hey, Common Purpose doesn't cure all ills!

Story 4

We run a programme for young people, for 14 year olds, young people who are showing signs of peer leadership. They take part in a 3 day programme, where they explore power, what power is, what kinds of power there are, where the levers of power lie, who holds those levers, and powerlessness. And then they consider what power they hold, what power they could hold, and, using that knowledge, explore how they can make change happen. It's a fabulous programme.

And it's a fabulous programme because the idea for it came from the graduates of our adult programmes. One of the most overwhelming outcomes for many of our graduates on completing a Common Purpose programme seems to be the realisation that we have a duty, a responsibility, to invest in our young people.

And indeed it's the Common Purpose graduates who deliver most of the programme. We organise it, but we couldn't deliver it without the support of our graduates from all sectors.

Story 5

The impact of Common Purpose, whilst often profound, is not always quite so serious.

A participant from last year's programme said to me that Common Purpose had changed his life. Of course I got excited, as anyone would. How? I asked.

"Well, on one of the visits you sent us on I took Richard with me and, while he sat in the passenger seat and I drove, he re-tuned my car radio from Radio 4 to Radio 3. I am now much less informed about what is happening in the world but I am a lot more relaxed and much happier!"

I hope these stories – all of them true – give you a flavour of the Common Purpose experience.

Conclusion

Our job at Common Purpose is to help develop more and better leaders, leaders who can articulate a vision of how society could be, in contrast to how it currently is. For you know as well as I know that "where there is no vision, the people perish."

I would like to conclude with an extract from Nelson Mandela's inaugural speech in 1994. He doesn't mention leaders or leadership within it, but I think, if we were to take up the challenge implicit in his speech, we would all be leaders within that space I described to you earlier.

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.

Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.

It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us.

We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, successful,
talented and fabulous?

Actually, who are you NOT to be?

You are a child of God.

Your playing small doesn't serve the world.

There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people

won't feel insecure around you.
We were born to make manifest the glory that is within us.
It's not just in some of us; it's in EVERYONE!
And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously
give other people permission to do the same.
As we are liberated from our own fear,
our presence automatically liberates others!"

Resources

The **Presbyterian Church (USA)** has several very useful documents on it's website (<http://www.pcusa.org/>), under 'Ministry & Vocations', then 'Ministers', then 'Types of Ministry', then 'Tentmaking Minister'. Tentmaker Ministers are also often known as Bi-Vocational Ministers ('Bivos').

The website gives an overview of Tentmaker ministry and has a link to excellent guidance, written by Linda Kuhn, herself a Tentmaker, and endorsed by the Association of Presbyterian Tentmakers (APT). There are in addition:

- Guidance to churches on how to prepare a CIF (Church Information Form - the "dossier" or résumé prepared by a congregation that is seeking a new pastor) for Tentmaker ministry (*I strongly recommend referring to this for appointments of ordained MSEs on the UK – Ed.*);
- Links to the APT website and it's Journal *Tent-Talk*;
- An on-line store to buy several books, videos and the *Tentmakers Manual*.

Veteran MSE **Michael Powell** has produced a collection of 26 **building sermons** drawing on his long experience as a lecturer in the built environment. They come in a spiral bound A4 binder and are related to different days of the liturgical year. Titles include: *Connecting Faith and Education*, *The Towering Inferno* and *Sent to Coventry*.

Copies are available at £5 (inc. p&p) from Michael at:
27 Longacre, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 3BJ; mjvp@btinternet.com.

Diary & News

The Christian Association of Business Executives (CABE) is holding a formal launch of the it's **PRINCIPLES GUIDE** on Thursday, 2 November 2006 at 6.00 for 6.30 pm, at the offices of KPMG LLP, 8 Salisbury Square, London EC4Y 8BB.

Copies of the pack—ethical principles for running and organising a business—are available from Jackie McMillan (e-mail address below)

The speaker is **Eddie Donaldson**, Head of Human Resources, KPMG, and the Guide is backed up by a website, www.principlesforbusiness.com, about which **Charles Eve**, MD, Europe, Middle East & Africa, Goldman Sachs International will speak. Refreshments will be served.

If you are interested in attending please contact jackiemcmillan@onetel.com or 01892 515248.

Also sponsored by CABE is the **2006 Hugh Kay Lecture**. This, the 17th Lecture, will be given by Stephen Green, CABE member and Chairman, HSBC on Thursday 30 November 2006 at 6.00 for 6.30 pm in the OBE Chapel, St Paul's Cathedral, followed by a Reception in the Crypt.

Thurs 30 Nov 2006, Listening to culture
Wilson Carlile College of Evangelism, Sheffield, 10.00-4.30pm Understanding and reflecting on culture, mission and the church, with Paul Thaxter, CMS Mission Movement Team Leader, and Steve Hollinghurst, Church Army Researcher into Evangelism in post-Christian culture.

Cost: £25 incl. lunch (cheques made payable to Church Army). For more information and booking, contact: Wendy Evans w.evans@churcharmy.org.uk Tel: 0114-278-7020

Christians in Government ...

... is a new umbrella organisation for Christians from across Government and from different parts of the UK. The aim is create opportunities to come together to worship, pray, build relationships and develop a sense of shared identity. An inaugural conference is planned in November, at time of writing this not yet fixed, but likely to be a Saturday, 10am to about 2.30pm, at the chapel in Methodist Central Hall, central London.

More information from Julian Shellard, Christians in Government UK, e-mail: julian.shellard@dwp.gsi.gov.uk.

The **2007 CHRISM Reflective Weekend** is booked for the weekend of 9th – 11th February 2007 at Holland House, near Evesham, with Donald Eadie as our “guide”. A booking form accompanies this edition of MaW and is available on the CHRISM website.

If you would like any further details please contact;
Felicity Smith, 14 Oakwood Grove, Warwick, CV34 5TD;
iansmith@ntlworld.com.

CHRISM MSE Questionnaire

Many thanks to all those who have sent me completed questionnaires – fascinating reading – and I’ve made a start on collating them. As this will take a while, there is still time to send me yours if you haven’t already done so! A blank questionnaire can be downloaded from the CHRISM website. Alternatively, I can send you one by e-mail or snail-mail, on request.

Keep them coming!

Rob

A reminder from our roots

"Among our own people also the church sorely needs clergy in close touch with the ordinary life of the laity, living the life of ordinary men, sharing their difficulties and understanding their trials by close personal experience."

Roland Allen (1868-1947)

Book Review

Leadership from the Inside Out, Kevin Cashman,
K. 1998, Minneapolis: LeaderSource; ISBN 0-9752765-0-6

Adrian Holdstock

Intrigued by the title? Is this just another way of introducing a fool-proof formula for succeeding as a leader? Or is there something original here that speaks both to the heart and science of leadership? I found it was that and more. Indeed, any business book that describes the importance of the word “love” in business has got my attention. Moreover, Kevin Cashman is writing from the perspective of coaching rather than training. Although his clients all appear to have been pretty high-flying executives, his coaching philosophy – and for that matter his leadership philosophy – attunes with my own. We both agree that change starts with the self and leading others starts with knowing and leading oneself.

Kevin Cashman is founder, chief executive coach and CEO of “LeaderSource” a Minneapolis based outfit that describes itself as “passionate about the transformative growth of leaders, teams, and organizations.” Based on over 20 years of improving leadership for individual executives and across whole businesses, Mr Cashman opens his book by reminding us that: “our ability to grow as a leader is based on our ability to grow as a person”. He suggests the reader doesn’t hurry or anticipate completing the book, but takes time to reflect and absorb the thoughts and ideas it promotes. And if we “feel like taking a short walk” through the book we can nibble on the feast of quotes that are liberally scattered throughout its pages.

Example quotes include: *Socrates* - “Give me beauty in the inward soul; may the outward and inward man be one” *Epictetus* - “No man is free who is not a master of himself” and *Tao Te Ching* - “Whatever is flexible and flowing will tend to grow; whatever is rigid and blocked will wither and die.” Kevin Cashman’s own wisdom is also much in evidence and here are three examples: “Leadership is authentic self-expression that creates value”; “Every belief we have transforms our life in either a life-enriching or life-limiting way”; and “We rarely see the world as it is; we principally see the world

through the lens of who we are. As a result, if we want to become more effective in relationships, we need to become more aware of how we are interpreting these interactions”.

The author gives us plenty to think about. But how is his book organised? A usefully extended introduction sets the scene as a journey of discovery along “seven pathways to the mastery of leadership from within.” These are not sequential pathways but a complementary set. In fact they are portrayed on a seven-spoked wheel around a hub declaring *Leadership from the Inside Out*. Now the cynics will recall the management fad for good things coming in sevens. Why, perhaps, were there not nine pathways or just five or six? After all, there seems to be much overlap between them. For example, amongst other descriptions, *Personal Mastery* is described as “appreciating the rich mixture of our life experiences and how they dynamically form our unique existence” whilst *Being Mastery* “is the awareness of the eternally present moment at the basis of our experience”. Vice versa works quite well! Nevertheless, I found the book absorbing, entertaining with anecdotes from the author’s own coaching experiences, and instructive about the essence of leadership.

My reader is likely to ask what are the seven masteries. So here they all are, each backed by one of many Kevin Cashman descriptions of its nature. *Personal Mastery* “is about growth towards wholeness”; *Purpose Mastery* “Leading by expressing our gifts to create value”; *Change Mastery* is about “mastering our ability to *adapt* to change”; *Interpersonal Mastery* “is leading through synergy”; *Being Mastery* “is learning to live in the eye of the hurricane of life”; *Balance Mastery* “is a dynamic reconciliation of extremes”; and *Action Mastery* is “leading as a whole person”.

As a life coach with an interest in developing an executive coaching practice, I thoroughly recommend this book for its insights into the executive mind and its desire to help executives attain leadership success through authentic being rather than following the prescribed methods. As a priest and theologian I am encouraged to find the book’s implicit acknowledgement of both a spiritual dimension to business life (e.g. the references to love in business life)

and a focus on the wholeness of human beings if we are to truly lead our fellow life travellers. A final quote inserted by Cashman illustrates this last point: *Teilhard de Chardin* said, "We are not human beings having a spiritual experience. We are spiritual beings having a human experience."

A Bishop for Urban Life and Faith

The eagle-eyed amongst English Anglicans may have spotted the Appointment, from November, of the Church of England's first Bishop for Urban Life and Faith. The appointee is Stephen Lowe, Bishop of Hulme, Diocese of Manchester, which will go down from 3 to 2 suffragans as Stephen is seconded full time to work with the Archbishop of York. Coming as it does more than a decade after *Living Faith in the City*, and two since *Faith in the City*, it is not exactly a hasty appointment, but is one MSEs can broadly welcome. Provided that is that urban life is recognised for the enormous diversity it is, and that most work is carried on in cities.

Stephen Lowe has earned a reputation as a "no-nonsense" pragmatist, for whom getting positive results is paramount. On appointment to the episcopate he chose to live in an empty vicarage in the middle of a council housing estate (as was). His strong identification with ordinary people has won him a great deal of respect. He is not shy of courting controversy: some readers may recall he described the hymn *I vow to thee my country* as "heretical" last year (*quite right! Ed.*), and on 8 October he hit the headlines as author of a leaked internal Church of England report criticising the Government for apparent greater willingness to consider Muslim interests over those of Christians. We wish him every blessing in what will be a challenging but important role.

Who would Jesus tax?

... Is a debate exercising minds on both sides of the Atlantic. Across the pond, Susan Pace Hamill has been spurred to crusade for tax justice, a polite phrase for "tax the rich." Tax policies that oppress those least able to pay violate Judeo-Christian standards, Hamill says, while a moral society will place the greatest burden on the well-to-do.

Hamill believes those age-old principles of tax fairness are being undermined across the United States, and Christians should be appalled. Too few are. She attributes the lack of outrage as evidence that greed is trumping faith. In her view the wealthy would "rather hear they need a root canal" than be told to pay their fair share of taxes. She labels as hypocrites religious people who oppose abortion but are silent when government cutbacks target poor women and children. And she asserted that President Bush calls himself a Christian but on tax issues talks "like an atheist."

Strong words, but Hamill should not be dismissed. Her rhetoric is backed up with degrees and experience in two divergent disciplines. First, Hamill is an attorney and tax law expert, having worked for the Internal Revenue Service and a New York City firm. These days she is a law professor at University of Alabama, where she teaches tax law, business organization and ethics. But Hamill, a Methodist, also brings a spiritual perspective to her understanding of tax law. During a sabbatical, she completed a master's degree in theological studies at Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham, Ala., and launched a campaign for tax reform in Alabama based on Judeo-Christian ethics.

In speaking out in Alabama, Hamill called it wrong for the state to take almost 11 percent of the income of people making less than \$13,000 but only 4 percent of those earning more than \$229,000. She also found Alabama's under-achieving, under-funded public schools morally offensive, saying bad schools deprive the poor of a chance to better themselves. Inspired by Hamill's campaign, Alabama's Republican governor in 2003 proposed the largest tax increase in the state's history only to see it defeated in a state-wide referendum. Tax justice isn't just an Alabama issue. In a listing of the 50 states according to tax regressivity, Pennsylvania is among the worst, ranking third behind Alabama and Indiana. Pennsylvania is one of only six states that taxes the income of the poor and the well-to-do at the same flat rate. In 2002 a Pennsylvanian making \$9,100 paid 11.4 percent of his or her income in state and local taxes; someone making \$897,000 paid only 3.5 percent. No one needs to read the Bible to wonder if that's fair.

Hamill finds support for her positions in the Bible. She says the Bible forbids oppression, teaching that all people should have a reasonable opportunity to reach their divinely created potential. While charitable giving pleases God, the sin of greed suppresses contributions and interferes with a society's obligation to raise sufficient revenue for the common good. When the wealthy keep a tight grip on their money, the weak are oppressed. Taxation is a necessary tool for a moral society, and taxation that is just abides by the biblical teaching, "To whom much is given, much is required."

People professing non-Christian faiths or no faith may correctly argue that government policy should not be based on the Bible. But it is Hamill's right to work for a better world by challenging Christians to be true to their faith.

Are you a self-employed MSE?

From time to time MaW has featured articles written from the writer's personal experience of MSE as self-employed, usually in some form of consultancy where their expertise and experience is marketable. As CHRISM encompasses quite a number such folk, I'd like to include a Directory for our information (and our wider readership) in the next edition. If you would like to be included, please let me have the following information by 31 December:

Name, Where you are (town / city will do fine), How you can be contacted, What your marketable expertise / experience is, Your target audience / expected beneficiaries of your wisdom!

Please be succinct. The editorial quill will be wielded over anything too wordy.

Christmas In The Mining District (Bergslagsjul)

This is a Christmas hymn from Sweden and can be found – in Swedish - on the CD Vintervisor, Westpark Music, MMCD 016, by the folk band Triakel (pronounced 'treacle') – soft sweet liquorice. The band's concerts are helped along by specially brewed real ale!

The flakes dance in silence between the steep hills
Of the mine country, buried in snow.
For once the blast furnace is cool and quite still
And the charcoal stack's heart doesn't glow.

For the first chimes of Christmas are now being rung
On bells forged of local ore
And a seasonal hymn of remembrance is sung
As it has been each Christmas before.

With fists hard as Bessemer steel these strong men
Hold the hymn-book's pages down
And in broad, lilting dialect they sing once again
Of the miracle in Bethlehem town.

From their tunnels and galleries the miners have come,
Their toils and their tools put away,
To breathe the clear air of the hills and the woods
On this bright, blessed, Christmas Day.

Some Windows messages you may have missed

Smash forehead on keyboard to continue.
Enter any 11-digit prime number to continue.
Press any key to continue or any other key to quit.
Press any key except... no, No, NO, NOT THAT ONE!
Press Ctrl-Alt-Del now for IQ test.
Close your eyes and press escape three times.
Bad command or file name! Go stand in the corner.
This will end your Windows session.

Do you want to play another game?

Windows message: "Error saving file! Format drive now? (Y/Y)"

To "shut down" your system, type "WIN"

File not found. Should I fake it? (Y/N)

Runtime Error 6D at 417A:32CF: Incompetent User.

Error reading FAT record: Try the SKINNY one? (Y/N)

WinErr 16547: LPT1 not found. Use backup.

(PENCIL & PAPER.SYS)

User Error: Replace user.

Windows VirusScan 1.0 - "Windows found: Remove it? (Y/N)"

Your hard drive has been scanned and all stolen software titles
have been deleted. The police are on the way.

COFFEE.SYS missing ... Insert cup in cup holder and press any key.

CHRISM

CHRistians In Secular Ministry

ISSN 1460-8693

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

Teilhard de Chardin