

Ministers-at-Work

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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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“When I give food to the poor, they call me a saint.

When I ask why the poor have no food, they call me a communist.”

— Hélder Câmara, Dom Helder Camara: Essential Writings

Editorial

My attention was recently drawn to an observation made by Dorothy L Sayers. No, nothing to do with Lord Peter Wimsey, but an acute lament: “In nothing has the Church so lost Her hold on reality as in Her failure to understand and respect the secular vocation. She has allowed work and religion to become separate departments.”

Made over 50 years ago, this is just as true today, perhaps even more so. Our churches may profess support for ministry outside the local church from time to time, but the behaviours tell a very different story: the ministry of laity and voluntary ministers is generally assumed to be to support the churches’, and stipendiary ministers, ministry. But shouldn’t the reverse be true? Isn’t the role of the paid pastor to support the sheep of their flock in their ministries: in the family, community, or workplace?

As readers will recall, I have for the past three years or so been mentoring a group of new curates in Manchester diocese (all bar one voluntary of one type or another) through the second part of what is known as IME (Initial Ministerial Education). One of the frustrations is the almost complete absence of outward looking ministerial formation in the programme. The competencies developed during IME are all relevant, but the examples of how they may be demonstrated are written from a local church perspective. I have written, on behalf of CHRISM a commentary on how the competencies can largely be demonstrated from workplace and community ministry (available on our website), but the bias remains.

By this kind of behaviour our churches actively promote a sacred / secular divide, both among their members and in the perception of an increasingly unchurched society. And there is no quick fix. Reversing this will take a complete change of attitude within our churches, and probably a generation of hard graft.

Yet there are grounds for hope. As is clear from the examples referred to in this edition, individual churches and training courses are actively developing ministries that support lay folk in their workplace ministry. Yet still our churches as institutions seem to lag behind. For example, I recently read the prospectus for ‘Mission Shaped Ministry’ (MSM), (see www.missionshapedministry.org) a training initiative from Fresh Expressions Nowhere is ministry in the workplace referred to; the local

church is the limit of mission. When ‘Mission shaped Church’ appeared I lamented that it smacked of ‘Church shaped Mission’; so does MSM.

A starting point to change this mind set is for all of us to be committed to breaking down ‘spiritual’ hierarchies that cause people to see one vocation as more important or spiritual than others, encouraging everyone to see all of life under the Lordship of Christ, including work.

With this in mind, CHRISM has always sought to work with people and organisations who share this vision. I’m very pleased therefore to recommend the main article in this edition, by Bill Mash, of the Black Country Urban Industrial Mission. Many readers will have met Bill at a CHRISM event, and most entertaining he is too! Chaplains and MSEs have much in common: in our ministries, our experiences and in being on the edge – sometimes marginalised – by the churches. We have much to share with each other.

Also included are an item on terms of appointment for SSMs and a report on the North West SSM conference in the autumn. And there is information about a wide range of useful resources.

The sharp-eyed will notice that Mike Harrison is taking over from Lyn Page as Membership Secretary (details in the front inside cover). Our grateful thanks are expressed to Lyn for the job she has done. I’m also pleased to report that Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, has agreed to be our patron (in succession to his predecessor). We are checking his availability on three weekends in July next year so we can arrange our Conference at the same time!

Speaking of Conferences, thus year we are going to Sheffield, 19-21 September – more details on page 34. There is still time to book for the Reflective weekend (see page 33), and next year’s provisional date is 27 February to 1 March, in Northumbria!

To end here on a light note, a highlight of the CHRISM conference in Liverpool a couple of years ago was visiting Liverpool One, the new shopping and business precinct near the waterfront. Taking advantage of the high footfall, Everton FC recently opened a club shop in the precinct, and cheekily named it ‘Everton Two’. So its address is: Everton Two, Liverpool One.

Mission in the Economy – Workplace Chaplains and MSEs

Bill Mash

As the Second World War ended, the Church of England published a report, “Towards the Conversion of England”, dedicated to the memory of Archbishop William Temple. Sadly the energy and vision which were put into its compilation were not matched in its implementation, and many of its recommendations became missed opportunities in the years that followed.

Though the report recognised that “the very great mission of Christianity was in reality accomplished by means of informal missionaries”¹, and urged, “the mobilisation of the laity”², a church centred on professional (male) priestly ministry was set in its ways and was slow to adapt. An “Appended note on Priests in Industry”³ conceded, “In exceptional circumstances an industrial worker should be ordained as a deacon or priest, to remain in industry and exercise his ministry as an industrial worker.”

The development of non-stipendiary ministry in the Anglican Church which followed in the years after that rather grudging reference is helpfully covered in Patrick Vaughan’s paper in Chrism 12. He notes that most NSMs see their ministerial role as being within their home parish, but that a few “expressed a conviction that their vocation is primarily within their workplace” even though “Bishops and parochial clergy simply take no interest in what they are doing”⁴ in their secular employment. Many workplace chaplains have experienced the same attitude.

This is despite the fact that “Towards the Conversion of England” recognised the enormous potential for Christians, ordained and lay, to exercise a ministry within the working world and the economic order:

Evangelism in the working world means more than bearing personal testimony... it also means claiming for Christ the whole of

¹ “Towards the Conversion of England” 1945, para 112, page 50 quoting Harnack, “The expansion of Christianity”

² ibid., para 120, page 55

³ ibid., pages 64f

⁴ Chrism 12, page 18

the occupation in which we are engaged, and the doing of our work to reflect his likeness... To extend God's kingdom ... includes the bringing of our every activity, and our performance of it, into harmony with God's sovereign law as revealed by Christ.⁵

There is ... the... Christian witness of acting like Christ in the economic order as it now exists. Christians are under a constraint to carry their faith and loyalty into concrete situations, the daily business and personal relationships of their life.⁶

Had this vision been taken seriously in the years that followed, with appropriate attention being given to it in theological education, ministerial formation and the day to day life of the church, Malcolm Brown and Paul Ballard would have had less reason to write:

The neglect of the economy as a location for practical theology and Christian ethics has been, and remains, an omission that diminishes the ability of churches to witness to the claims of the gospel in the contemporary world.⁷

Posts like mine, with responsibility for Mission in the Economy, may help to rectify this omission. Learning very much on the job, I have come to summarise my work under three headings:

- Engaging with the economic order
- Workplace Chaplaincy
- Promoting “Faith at Work”

Engaging with the economic order

This agenda is especially relevant at a time when economic news dominates our media, and when significant sections of society find that they are not sharing in what may, at last, be increasing overall economic growth and prosperity. As the Times reported recently, “Household finances have deteriorated sharply as pay rises fall behind increases in the cost of living, suggesting that people are entering the Christmas period in

⁵ op cit., para 135, page 61

⁶ op cit., para 137, page 61

⁷ Ballard and Brown, “The Church and Economic Life”, 2006, page 5

dour spirits.”⁸ The economy affects us all. Many different policies are proposed as remedies, and Christians have an important perspective to offer.

The task of carrying our “faith and loyalty into concrete situations” is one we all share, but MSEs and chaplains, being somewhat conspicuous as Christians, have particular opportunities and responsibilities. Miranda Threlfall-Holmes and Mark Newit’s remarks about chaplains in “Crucible” would refer equally well to MSEs:

Churches should work harder to gain insights and experiences from chaplains since the issues that chaplains face daily are often the very issues that the church more widely will soon need to face. Chaplaincy may well be the canary in the coal mine for the churches’ relationship to society...⁹

A few very general examples of where those insights and experiences are to be gained and applied are set out below.

If we are to take seriously our role as stewards of God’s creation, as economically active Christians we must think carefully about how we spend and invest our money. Our choices are significant and can effect change, as the development of Fair Trade has shown. These goods are now on the shelves of large supermarkets. The major companies which manoeuvre creatively around national taxation systems are also responsive to public opinion and consumer choices.

We will be concerned about the plight of those under economic pressure. Whilst we will contribute to meet immediate needs, we will also need to ask what causes those needs to arise. The government tells us that its major welfare and benefit reforms are intended to make work pay, but all too often they appear to be penalising those who already have little. We need to question the impression which has been created that people are poor because they are feckless and irresponsible. A helpful Christian response is contained in “The Lies We Tell Ourselves: ending comfortable myths about poverty.”¹⁰

⁸ The Times, 18.11.13

⁹ Crucible, December 2011

¹⁰ 2013, published by the Joint Public Issues Team of the Baptist Union, Methodist Church, Church of Scotland and the United Reformed Church.

Those who are suffering most from the government's austerity policies are not those who caused the original problem. The scale of economies which can be made is small compared with the amounts of money committed by the government to rescue the banks in 2008. It is difficult to put a final figure on this, but it has been estimated that it would have funded the country's Job Seekers' Allowance bill for around 150 years!

Churches have the potential to be involved in economic and other regeneration projects which bring new hope and vitality to their area. Still part of every community, and made up of local people, where a church grasps the concept of an incarnational ministry, it will use its resources to improve conditions and may be able to access funding to be applied to local needs.

Christians also need to think carefully about our involvement in the economy and its effects on the environment. We can no longer think of the environment as an inexhaustible supply of resources available to satisfy and increase our economic activity. Environmental considerations must be seen as constraints on our activity and encourage us to explore ways in which we can live better rather than live with more.

Workplace Chaplaincy and Promoting Faith at Work

All too often chaplaincy has been marginalised from the mainstream life of the churches which have provided and resourced it. This may have been by the choice of chaplains, who have been critical of aspects of the gathered church, but has often been a result of the assumptions of the church. Whatever the reason, it is unfortunate and it is wrong. Similarly, MSEs often feel that their incumbents do not understand the "SE" part of their role. If the church is to witness to the claims and power of the gospel in the economic sphere of life, all its members, ordained and lay, chaplains and employees, must work together.

It is particularly important that chaplains and MSEs share with all working Christians the task of "claiming for Christ the whole of the occupation in which we are engaged." As "Towards the Conversion of England" makes clear, this is not just about opportunities for personal witness, important as they are. Christians have particular reason to see the value of their occupation, and to claim it for Christ. The production of goods and services is, theologically, very much at the heart of a Christian understanding of us

being made in the image of God the Creator and Redeemer who continues to work in his world. Claiming an occupation for Christ opens the possibility of it being transformed.

For people who pray, “Your kingdom come, your will be done,” claiming an occupation for Christ and looking to transform it will mean taking opportunities where we are able to influence policy and the way in which work is done, offering a perspective informed by Christian values. We will be concerned wherever we see people treated without proper consideration, for we are guided by our understanding of the value of each person, created by God. People are an end in themselves and are not to be used as a means to an end. When Norman Lamont said, “Rising unemployment and the recession have been the price that we have had to pay to get inflation down. That price is well worth paying,”¹¹ he was making the cardinal error of treating people as means. We have all seen the effects of decisions to make groups of people redundant, which, whilst they make economic sense for a company, have significant detrimental effects on the community in which the business operates.

One way that some seek to bring a Christian voice and influence to the working world is through workplace Christian groups, such as Transform Work UK. Meeting together for prayer, bible study and fellowship, these groups have great potential, especially where they seek to bring a Christian perspective to the real issues surrounding the business and help members with the choices they make in the course of their work. MSEs and chaplains can bring an informed theology to give workplace groups something of a wider picture, and help them avoid simply replicating church in the sense that they exist for themselves and become a refuge for their members.

A helpful basis for this theology is to be found in the writing of Tom Wright. In “Justification” he challenges the view that the gospel is about “me and my salvation”, likening this to the notion that the sun goes round the earth. A true view, he believes, is that “soteriology is rooted in the single-plan-through-Israel-for-the-redemption-of-the-world.”¹² For Wright, “The great story of scripture, from creation and covenant right on to the New

¹¹ Hansard, 16 May 1991

¹² Wright, Justification, SPCK 2009, p.217 and throughout

Jerusalem, is constantly about God's overflowing, generous, creative love – God's concern, ... for the flourishing and well-being of everything else.”¹³ He looks to the renewal of the whole of creation, “what the whole world’s waiting for.”¹⁴ Timothy Keller, in “Every Good Endeavour”, develops this theme to show how it gives our day to day work eternal significance.¹⁵

There are many practical ways in which churches can affirm the working lives of their members, learn from their experiences, and help them make connections with their faith. MSEs and chaplains are well placed to bring examples based on real situations and events into their preaching. Something as simple as a “This Time Tomorrow” item in a church service offers congregations an opportunity to learn about someone’s working life and to pray for them in the role to which God has called them. Ministers can visit workplaces, either at the invitation of church members, or as groups organised by chaplains.

In an increasingly complex world, choices and decisions are far from straightforward for those who make them. They can be problematic and unsettling for those who find themselves affected by the choices and decisions others make about their working lives. A perspective based on Christian ethics, guided by the principle that we should not be looking only to our own interests but also to the interests of others¹⁶ may offer a way to consider issues that arise in the workplace. The Nobel Prize winning economist Joseph Stiglitz came to a similar conclusion:

Paying attention to everyone else’s self-interest – in other words the common welfare – is in fact a precondition for one’s own ultimate well-being.¹⁷

Conclusion

The death of Christ on the cross is God’s means of reconciling all things to himself.¹⁸ As dwellers in time and space (for now), we understand this to work out in the past, the present and the future. Timothy Keller writes:

¹³ ibid p.51

¹⁴ ibid p.207f, quoting Romans 8:19.

¹⁵ Keller, “Every Good Endeavour”, Hodder & Staughton 2012, especially Introduction and chapters 1 & 2.

¹⁶ Philippians 2: 4

¹⁷ The Price of Inequality, Penguin 2013,p. 361

Whatever you are seeking in your work – the city of justice and peace, the world of brilliance and beauty, the story, the order, the healing – it is there. There is a God, there is a future healed world that he will bring about, and your work is showing it (in part) to others.¹⁹

The workplace is a place of relationships. Economics allows us to be in relationship with people we will never meet, yet whose circumstances may depend on the choices we make. The Christian faith, having at its heart a relationship with God through the reconciling death of Christ, must be expressed in our day to day relationships. In those relationships we will seek to live by ethical standards which demonstrate our allegiance to Christ, our gratitude for the grace we have received, and our respect for God's creation.

Mission in the Economy is shared responsibility for all Christians, lay and ordained, chaplains and MSEs. We are all in this together, and it is one way in which we can work with God to advance his single plan accomplished in Christ. Mission in the Economy must take its rightful place within the whole mission of God, as he has entrusted it to his church.

Every one of us is under a constraint to carry our faith and loyalty into concrete situations, the daily business and personal relationships of our lives.

Overview and History of Modern-day Faith and Work Movement Os Hillman

I began traveling and speaking about faith and work issues in 1996 after having a career in advertising. God led me to study the topic of faith and work and its role in the average person's life. I began writing and speaking on the subject. Since that time I have been in twenty-five countries and spoken to hundreds of thousands of people about their calling in the workplace and the value it has by God. I have encouraged believers to know that their calling in their working life is a Holy calling, not a second-

¹⁸ Colossians 1: 20

¹⁹ Keller, op cit, p.30

class calling. Now, twenty-five nations later and ten books later, I have learned one overwhelming fact: Christians do not have a theology of work.

When I travel and speak I often ask this question: "How many of you believe that your local church has effectively trained you to apply biblical faith in your working life?" The answer to that question consistently reveals only 10% of people respond affirmatively. The issue is not a question of being taught the Bible, for many of these respondents are in dynamic, Bible-teaching churches. It is a question of relevance. Churches have not been breaking down the Word of God for their average member in such a way that they can understand it and how it relates to their lives where they often spend 60-70% of their waking hours.

Without a theology of work we cannot form a Biblical worldview. George Barna, in a 2003 survey found that only 9% of born-again Christians hold a Biblical worldview. If that is true, how can we expect to see culture impacted for Jesus Christ?

Another survey was done back in 1998. This survey was conducted among a general population in the United States. It asked the question, "Do you believe in God? Of those surveyed, 93% of responders say "Yes, I believe in God." However, when the findings were broken down among different industries the findings were very disconcerting. Here were their findings:

- Military: 90%
- Business owners: 70%
- Politicians: 50%
- Arts and Entertainment: 3%
- Media: 2%

If you were like me you were encouraged to see the top three categories reflective of a culture that believed in God. However, the last two categories are alarming. Arts and Entertainment and the Media are the two main industries that actually define culture. They shape what we believe and don't believe. Those operating in these industries do not hold any form of Biblical worldview and contributes to why we are seeing our culture move to being more liberal. All of this has a direct relationship to not

teaching a theology of work in our churches, seminaries and Christian colleges.

The faith and work movement had its beginnings in the 1930s through CBMC (Christian Businessmen's Committee) and the Full Gospel Businessmen International that began in the fifties. This movement was an evangelical movement designed for Christian executives to have a platform for sharing Christ. The next phase of the movement began in the 80s and had a focus on applying the Word of God to *how* I do business. In 1985 the International Christian Chamber of Commerce (ICCC) was founded and now operates in 105 nations. This focus was about applying the Bible to all aspects of work.

In the mid-nineties another shift took place. This was when groups like Pinnacle Forum and Bob Buford's Halftime came into being. These groups had a focus of impacting culture and the community through social entrepreneurship. Our organization, Marketplace Leaders, was birthed in 1996. The late nineties was also the time when the Billy Graham organization, Ed Silvoso, Dr. Henry Blackaby and Dr. Peter Wagner began to speak about this new move of God in the workplace. In the 2000s we now see an emerging trend to help churches better equip men and women in their work life calling through groups like His Church at Work.

Today we are also seeing another trend to refocus our attention on helping Christians have a Biblical word-view. In 1975 Bill Bright and Loren Cunningham both got a "Word from God" as they put it. The word was that "if we expect to impact culture for Jesus Christ, we must focus our attention on seven mind-moulders (some say gates or mountains or pillars) of the culture. These include business, government, arts and entertainment, media, family, religion and education. These seven sectors are the core sectors that define culture. "Win these and you win the culture," they would say.

In 2006 to our present time we are seeing a birthing of teaching programs from groups like Focus on the Family that produced The Truth Project; Rick Warren, pastor and author of *The Purpose Driven Life* launched through his church, Saddleback, the Wide Angle: Framing Your Worldview program. Other notable ministries began speaking out and teaching about a biblical

worldview and the need to focus on reclaiming the seven mountains of culture. Our organization, Marketplace Leaders, holds an annual conference on the theme, Reclaiming the 7 Mountains of Culture (see www.Reclaim7MountainsofCulture.com).

Reprinted by permission from the author. Os Hillman is an international speaker and author of 15 books on workplace calling. To learn more, visit <http://www.MarketplaceLeaders.org>".

SSMs – terms of appointment

Rob Fox

Some further contributions to the long-running debate around terms of appointment for SSMs.

The first comes from the Baptist Church's guidelines on the appointment of Baptist Ministers in part-time pastoral service, which includes those unpaid. They are recommended, not binding. Each church is free, subject to trust deeds or any other requirements, to appoint a part-time minister as they think appropriate. However, nothing should be done to call into question the minister's status as the holder of an office. Employment legislation would apply to any secular employment engaged in by the minister, without prejudicing the holding of a ministerial office, and it is advised to take legal advice before any final draft is signed by the church. (The point about employment legislation is one that some dioceses in the Church of England appear not to have grasped!)

Generally, the same conditions apply as for full-time ministers. Particular points to note are:

- The minimum time available for ministry duties must be agreed.
- If any stipend is paid, advice on tax and NICs should be sought from HMRC.
- Expenses payable must be agreed.

On the other side of the world, there are some interesting lessons to be learned from the Uniting Congregations of Aotearoa New Zealand. The Methodist and Anglican Churches in New Zealand have ordained a number of variously designated self-supporting deacons, priests and presbyters. Some are ordained on the understanding that their primary but not sole

sphere of ministry will be in a non-parish setting. Their parish duties and responsibilities are relatively few. Others are ordained on the understanding that their ministry will be primarily exercised within the life of the local parish. There is recognition that ordained (and lay) ministry is very varied and this diversity is – at least on paper – encouraged.

Meanwhile, in the Church of England, Rochester Diocese last year published a new policy on the deployment of SSMs.

It notes that “the ministry of SSMs is to be valued and received alongside that of their stipendiary colleagues; their roles will often vary, but they are affirmed equally as deacons and priests within the ordained ministry of the Church.” It goes on to recognise that while there is a wide variety of callings and roles among SSMs, they are to be valued for their contribution to the diocese and the Church of England.

The main body of the document is parish focussed, but there are encouraging signs of flexibility, especially when it is noted that the content of IME (training in the four years after ordination) can be adapted to best support the role of the SSM, including those who are MSEs.

The policy refers to *The Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Regulations, 2009*, which is the legal basis for *Common Tenure*, the current framework for clergy appointment in the Church of England.

Rochester diocese appears to have noticed that the Regulations are often permissive (“may”), rather than prescriptive (“shall”), another point apparently missed by many other dioceses. A number seem to be under the impression that as SSMs are office holders, just as stipendiary clergy, *Common Tenure* is the sole basis for their appointment. The Regulations themselves make it clear this is not so:

2(3) Where an office holder holds an office in pursuance of a contract of employment, these Regulations shall not apply to the office holder in respect of that office, without prejudice to the application of the Regulations in respect of any other office held by that office holder.

In simple terms, *Common Tenure* has no bearing on a contract of secular employment, or on self-employment for that matter. Where there is a conflict the latter take precedence.

If you have an experience of terms of appointment that would be useful to others, please do let me know. And don't forget the CHRISM recommended working agreement, on our website.

SSM with a difference

From 1933 to 1954, Alexander Riall Wadham Woods was the Chaplain of the Red Ensign Club and honorary curate of St Paul's Dock Street, in London's East End. Sammy Woods, as he was known, was born in 1880, son of an admiral, and during World War I was captain in charge of signals for the Grand Fleet of the Royal Navy, being awarded the DSO and later retiring with the rank of Vice Admiral.

At the age of 50 he followed his 'higher command' and, despite suffering with muscular dystrophy, spent two years training for ordination, choosing to spend the rest of his days in a docklands parish, working with and befriending seafarers. He was awarded an honorarium of £5 a year, which he rarely accepted. He was a respected figure in the parish, but was reticent about the details of his naval career, and was dubbed by some 'the shy parson'.

A reminder that SSMs are nothing new, and we can learn much from those who went before us!

2013 North West Self-Supporting Ministers conference

Rob Fox

The conference was held at Waddow Hall, near Clitheroe, overlooking the Ribble and in the shadow of Pendle Hill, on 11-12 October. Some 25 various SSMs attended, drawn from Carlisle, Blackburn, Liverpool, Chester, Manchester, Ripon and Leeds, Bradford and Wakefield dioceses. The theme was '**Prophetic Ministry in an Age of Change**', most apt for SSMs.

The speaker was Revd Dr Jules Gomes, Canon Theologian of St German Cathedral, in the town of Peel, Diocese of Sodor and Man. Jules recently held the same office at Liverpool Cathedral and had previously served in parishes in Bangalore and London. Jules is a superb speaker and deep thinker; I thoroughly recommend his blog, www.journeyingwithjules.com.

The talks were divided into four sessions, with input from Jules then an opportunity to ask and debate questions. Talk one took the Dickensian title of **Prophecy in the best of times / the worst of times**, expressed in wisdom and foolishness. Prophetic ministry was borne in this context. Hebrew prophets were neither optimists nor pessimists, but realists. They saw a different kingdom as the climax of history – the kingdom of God. Jules took three periods of history, all of upheaval, to illustrate this.

The 8th century BC was the golden age of Israel and Judah, and saw the prophets 1st Isaiah, Amos, Hosea and Micah. Their confidence was expressed in using the affirmation “This is the word of the Lord!” This was classical, written, prophecy, against the backdrop of Hezekiah’s reform of the Temple. It was the best of times for the rich, but not for the poor, the needy, and the oppressed. The prophets took up their cause and called on the powerful to act for the powerless.

The following century was the worst of times. The times are recorded in Kings and Chronicles, as are the main prophets, Elisha and Elijah. Ahab embarked on a building programme, married Jezebel, daughter of a Phoenician king, set up altars to Baal and oppressed the followers of Yahweh. Elijah speaks truth to power.

The 6th century BC was also the worst or times – exile, despair; 2nd Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Habbakuk, Zephaniah and Daniel. Jules asked, rhetorically whether the last was a prophet, concluding that by Jesus’ day he was so regarded, so yes. Daniel, he considers, is the missing link, making sense of prophecy. Often considered as apocalyptic rather prophetic, Jules thinks this is because the prophetic canon was closed before Daniel was written. When it was written isn’t particularly important, as whenever it was, it was at a time of upheaval. Daniel sees the kingdom of God as the climax of history. In the vision of the four kingdoms, the first three are animalified – bestial an inhuman, whilst the last, God’s Kingdom, is personified, a gift from heaven to earth. The book of Revelation reflects this vision.

In the Bible, Jules observed, heaven and earth overlap. In his view, liturgy expresses this, almost that it is the scene of the overlap. A prophetic ministry is continually pointing to this alternative reality. But this reality has been misrepresented and sanitised.

When will God's Kingdom come? Daniel's answer is when it is time for Jeremiah's prophecy to be fulfilled. Jeremiah suggested to God 70 years, but He replied 7 times 70 (490 years), which is the time from the Jews return from exile in 457BC to the beginning of Jesus' public ministry in 27AD – the 'real' end of the exile.

So if the kingdom of God has begun, why is our world still full of war, evil and violence? One analogy is the period between VE Day and VJ Day: the war is in effect over, but there is struggle to endure until it ends. We prophecy in the midst of this - pointing to God's alternative reality.

Talk two addressed **the vision and mission of prophetic ministry**, and the role of eschatology in prophecy, characterised by "Thus says the Lord." Jules asked "Who were the prophets, and what is their place in Biblical theology?" They were acute and incisive observers of reality; they 'saw' the message (Isaiah, Amos, Micah). They said what they said because they saw what they saw, and saw as God saw.

What and how did they see? They saw sin, idolatry and social injustice, clearly and in depth. They also saw at length – the long-term consequences of sins for Israel, but also of repentance / home-coming and the redemption of the world. And in breadth, not only Israel / Judah but all nations and creation (cf. Amos ch.2). And height: God is, and is above all.

Here Jules highlighted the danger of Christianity being seen as therapy for individuals. To see it so is to lose the prophetic vision.

As the OT prophets preached according to what they saw, so too did Paul, notably in Athens (Acts 17), dismayed at the idolatry he saw there.

All the prophets confronted by the dominant versions of reality, the meta-narratives of their day. (I found this a powerful point. Often, when faced with a meta-narrative that denies the reality of the kingdom of God, we seek to conform what we do to that narrative, rather than confront it prophetically). The prophets' strategy was to use forth-telling, fore-telling, re-telling – rhetorical strategies of poetry and metaphor. They assaulted the popular imagination, demolished strongholds of dominant versions of reality in peoples' minds, and then disclosed to them God's alternative version of reality.

Jules thinks the popular view of prophecy in the pews is that it is about fore-telling only. But while pagan prophecy was and is about fore-telling, Biblical prophecy is much more about forth-telling. It challenged royal power and popular opinion when they went away from God, warned of the consequences of not repenting and affirmed the promise of reconciliation if they did. Prophecy was never for individuals, but was always intertwined with God's plan for salvation; never for private spirituality, but a call for repentance.

The prophets made use of the most effective preaching techniques from the world in which they lived: poetry, laments, law, metaphors, dirges, puns, and word-play, making preaching colourful and memorable. They got the hearers' attention.

All human societies seek to maintain the status quo, stifle dissent, dumb down critical faculties. We are drip fed a diet of consumerism, and a culture of fear or not being relevant. There is a real temptation for the Church to retreat into a cave and seek to be undisturbed. (If I may add an observation: the Church is also not sure of the distinction between seeking to be relevant and being accessible to the world around it).

Our task is to re-imagine the world with God as a reality in it. To Re-utter Yahweh as a decisive agent in a world that largely assumes He is an irrelevant memory. Ahab's response to Elijah was to call him the "troubler of Israel." Why have we lost this? Contemporary prophetic ministry is to declare the reality of God. It is a vocation to speak truth to power. We are God's trouble-makers. But too often we are satisfied with a 'nice sermon in a nice church.' When were we last called troublemakers?

In the third talk, Jules looked at **Prophecy and Discernment**. Prophecy, he told us, is difficult to define and resists categorisation. Its defining nature though is that the initiative lies with God. When someone claims to speak for God, even with authority and conviction, this is not necessarily prophetic ministry. So how do we discern whether prophecy is authentic (cf. 1 John)? Here he drew on Walter Brueggemann, in particular *The Prophetic Imagination* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1978).

What if two prophets appear to say different things? "The truth seldom goes uncontested." The primary opposition to Jeremiah was from within Israel – false prophets, part of the Temple establishment, enjoying royal

patronage. They kept the people ignorant of the real dangers the nation faced, spouting the official line that all would be well. Jeremiah defends truth telling; the false prophets, he declares, are nothing but wind and “prophesy falsely”, drink, and lead the people astray.

Jeremiah’s test of their prophecy was four-fold:

- They had no vocation. God did not send them; they were in it just for the money (cf. 14:14-15).
- They had no moral standards.
- Their theology was not rooted in God’s revelation but pandered to political demands.
- Prophecy will be shown to be true or false; just wait and see whose turn out to be true!

Brueggemann notes that the false prophets endorse the status quo, the key point of difference with Jeremiah. While the establishment prophets declare “peace, peace”, Jeremiah’s analysis is opposite: “there is no peace.” Events vindicate Jeremiah as the true prophet, as Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians. Later, when the Jews planned a revolt against the King of Babylon, Jeremiah says don’t; he makes a yoke and where’s it, urging the people to accept what has happened. Hananiah, a false prophet, breaks the yoke from Jeremiah’s neck and pours scorn on him because he is so negative. Jeremiah writes a pastoral letter to the people: unpack your bags – you’re not going home now; settle down, for the exile will be for 70 years. Pray for the welfare of Babylon, and immerse yourselves in it (ch.29). Jules drew an analogy here to Lent, comparing it to the experience of the Jews in exile, and in particular Holy Saturday, with its – often overlooked – experience of desolation.

In exile, the nation rediscovers God. Six major works were written or compiled in this time: some Psalms, Lamentations, the Deuteronomic history, Jeremiah, second Isaiah, and the priestly writings in the Pentateuch. Exile was an experience of extreme exhaustion (cf, Isaiah using “tired”, “weary”). The people of God expended energy in keeping themselves distinct, retaining Jewishness, instead of conforming to the Babylonian worldview, when it would have been easier to acquiesce.

When our Church is ‘establishment’ it is acquiescent.

In exile the people often thought that God too had succumbed. Second Isaiah is recruited by God to smash this, using a logical sledgehammer (ch.40: 6-8). “All flesh is grass ...”, the empire is fallible and the myth of its might is soon exposed. The prophet’s role is to restore confidence in God: “Have you not heard? Have you not known?” He reminds the people of God’s creation and redemption, the Exodus and sustaining them in the wilderness. He rekindles a radical imagination in wearied peoples’ minds, using inspired poetry (“on eagles’ wings”). There is just one condition: wait for the Lord.

What does this mean? Isaiah uses nine synonyms to explain, none of them passive. Prayer is the highest form of waiting; worship the centre of identity and resistance.

Jules concluded this talk with a story show how central prophecy is. A prophet goes to a city and calls for repentance. After a few days people stop listening; but he carries on. A boy asks him why. “Because”, he replies, “If I don’t carry on they will start to change me.”

In his final talk, which was mostly a Q/A forum, Jules turned to **prophetic voices for our times**. The voices that stand out for him are Oscar Romero, Jawani Luwum (Archbishop of Uganda, killed on the orders of Idi Amin in 1977; I had the privilege of listening to him a few years earlier and agree wholeheartedly with Jules), Cardinal Sin, Desmond Tutu, and Jonathan Sachs (who has recently stepped down as Chief Rabbi of the British Isles).

The question was asked: how do you handle it when someone in the church thinks they have a word from God? Jules drew us back to what prophecy meant in the Old Testament, and asked us to think about how this linked to New Testament prophecy, asking “Does that cease when the charismatic phase of the churches ends?” He noted here that the Corinthian church was largely made up of people with pagan – not Jewish – backgrounds, where ecstasy and prophecy played a major role in religion, as opposed to the more structured, liturgical, worship that was the Jewish experience. What is important is to test the word.

As noted at the start of this article, Jules’ blog is a prophetic treasure trove. Let it inspire you.

International Conference of the European Worker Priests

Pentecost 2014, Friday 6th – Monday 9th June

Phil Aspinall

Many of you were able to meet and engage with the European Worker Priests during last year's conference held in London, and we hope this has encouraged you to want to deepen the connection.

The 2014 conference will be held in a former Monastery in Avigliana, 25 km west of Turin, over the Pentecost weekend, 6th – 9th June. For details of the venue, please visit www.gruppoabele.org. As well as the usual intense and deep discussion on the theme, the weekend will include visits which have been proposed to major projects in the area, and to Turin to see the redevelopment of the Fiat site and a refugee centre.

The preparatory group met in November at the Hermitage run by Mario on a hill top outside Bergamo, and we were joined by three member of the Turin Collective who will be hosting the conference. We finished our work within a day, so had time to enjoy the location and Mario's wonderful hospitality!

Based on some 18 propositions made at the conclusion of the London conference, we selected the theme of migration:

The Current Waves of Movements of Migration - “We are Citizens of the World”

The suggestions for reflection include: (it is not necessary to answer all – you can choose)

1. Recall the historical migratory movements in our own country (emigration and immigration) and the principal causes. What are the reasons for migration today?
2. How can refugees (like other marginalised peoples) become subjects instead of being treated like objects? How can we contribute to this?
3. The politics of migration in our country. How can we influence those who have the power to change the structures? (in institutions, government, the Churches etc.)

4. How can we fight against the growing racism in our places of work, in our local areas etc...?
5. "I have seen the oppression of my people" (Ex. 3 v 7). Biblical examples of migration. How do they shed light on our actions?

We are asked, as usual, to prepare a two-page paper with our responses to the questions. So **even if you cannot attend**, we would welcome any thoughts or comments you may have on this theme. Please send these to me **by 31st March 2014** - and please remember that we have to write the paper in French, so please keep contributions short and in simple English.

But we do hope you will want to come and join us ! It is always an opportunity to expand our horizons, meet old and new friends, and to be challenged. Please contact me if you are interested and would like more details, and please register **before 31st March 2014**.

Resources

The Way Ahead: Grown-up Christians

Ian M Fraser

Wild Goose Publications. ISBN: 9781905010257

From Shenectady, New York, Bill Dodge contacted me about this book, which he has found profoundly insightful and an inspiration. It is my pleasure to include details and encourage our readers to explore it! Ed.

Ian M Fraser has been a pastor/labourer in heavy industry, a parish minister, Warden of Scottish Churches House in Dunblane, an Executive Secretary of the World Council of Churches, and Dean and Head of the Department of Mission at Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham. He is author of nineteen books, including *Strange Fire*, *Salted with Fire* and the spiritual classic *Reinventing Theology*, which is used as a standard theological sourcebook around the world.

Ian is one of the original members of the Iona Community who helped George MacLeod to rebuild the common life and the Abbey buildings on the isle of Iona. Throughout his life Ian has travelled the world, alone and

with his wife, Margaret, visiting basic Christian communities. He has walked alongside slum dwellers in India and Haiti; Nicaraguan and Cuban revolutionaries; priests, nuns and catechists facing arrest and/or death in Central and South America; small farming and fishing communities in the Philippines. His life has been a search for the vision and reality of a church in which all voices are heard and all parts of Christ's body are included. One place where he found such a model was in the underground church in Eastern Europe during the Communist era. He writes about that discovery here, among other life experiences.

Eighty-eight years old at the time of writing this book, Ian calls *The Way Ahead* his last will and testament, the capstone and distillation of his work and thinking. At a time when many people cannot see the future and feel that the church is dying, Ian feels hope and sees great possibility. He writes:

It is difficult to read the signs of one's own time. In the West, are we at a time of a decline in Christian belief? I think that there is a chance that we are in Kingdom territory where humanity is shouldering church to the side not rejecting it but giving it its true servant place in favour of direct Kingdom priorities.

This is a book for anyone who cares about where the church is heading. Will the Christian church live or die? What is the way ahead? Perhaps the church will live if it has the courage and humility to take Ian Fraser's inclusive message to heart.

Available as a downloadable book from <http://www.ionabooks.com/the-way-ahead-downloadable-book.html>, priced at £7.80. The site gives access to all books published by Iona published under the Wild Goose imprint.

***And a free book for download –
Heaven's Dole Queue - Waiting for your ministry – the quest for
fulfilment,*** Grantley Morris, a denizen of South Australia who describes himself as a Christian writer. Quirky and perceptive. Available in several formats, including audio, at <http://www.net-burst.net/dole/dole.htm>

Worcester SSMs

Our friends in Worcester clearly have a techy in their number, as they have produced a visual presentation on self-supporting ministry, available at:
<http://prezi.com/veco6ycnssng/self-supporting-ministry/>

It has Jane Fraser's name on it, but I suspect other she had a little help!
Very good though.

Workplace Matters ...

... is an initiative providing workplace chaplaincy services in the south east Midlands that has its roots in ministry at the Luton Vauxhall plant in 1948.

Workplace Matters is the working name of Ecumenical Partnership Initiatives Co Ltd, and the venture has cross denominational support. More information at <http://www.workplacechaplaincy.co.uk/>

London City Mission

When it comes to experience in workplace ministry, LCM is hard to top. Founded in 1835, it quickly recognised the importance of ministry where people worked and in January 1844 a new dimension was added to the Mission's work, with the appointment of John Adams, himself a former cabby, as 'Missionary to Cabmen'. Missionaries to further industries were commissioned over the following years.

This work had been continued ever since, and LCM chaplains are currently placed alongside a wide variety of workplaces and services, including the Rail networks, British Transport Police, London Underground, the City and Met Police, London Ambulance services, Post Offices, taxi drivers and West End theatre workers. They aim to provide support for staff in their work environments and personal circumstances, to be a listening ear to those they meet, and to show Christ's love to the workers of London.

They fulfil this through regular visiting and by making themselves available to any who ask for support, whether it be at a time of emergency or just as the pressures of daily life in this city are being felt. Many appreciate the presence of a chaplain when dealing with a trauma or accident, and the long term nature of the Mission's work means that the chaplain will often be able to keep in touch with contacts for many years, building up

friendships and becoming a well-known, approachable and friendly face around the workplace.

LCM's website is well worth visiting and includes many useful resources:

<http://www.lcm.org.uk/>

London Institute for Contemporary Christianity

... continues to produce more resources for ministry in the workplace (see <http://www.licc.org.uk/resources/>).

Among the recent additions are a videocast - Amy-Orr Ewing | Sharing your faith at work: Embarrassing, inappropriate and unprofessional? And an article - Cultivating Trustworthiness in a Climate of Suspicion.

All Souls Langham Place ...

... has just started its 2014 programme for workplace ministry for the first half of 2014. There are lunchtime services, with a themed talk, on Thursdays, 13.05 – 13.35 (followed by a sandwich lunch), and a Workplace weekend away is planned for 2 – 4 April. All the talks are recorded and available from the website, at

<http://www.allsouls.org/Groups/137830/Networks/Workplace/Workplace.aspx>

All Souls is also running a day conference on 7 June as part of its “Integrated” programme.

ISR: Churches for Work and Social Justice

Working under the title ‘ISR’ an ecumenical project based in Bristol (but working as far away as Swindon) is working steadily away in workplace chaplaincy and ministry. ‘ISR’ used to stand for Industry and Social Responsibility. Now it simply stands for ISR.

ISR is an ecumenical body, committed to supporting all Christian denominations as they engage with the world around them. It works largely through volunteers and describes itself as “a prophetic organisation, seeking to speak out and act where necessary, to question social injustice and to work with those who exercise power to bring equality and inclusion to social settings.”

Among the services it provides are: training in workplace ministry, workplace chaplaincy, mentoring (particularly as part of change management), and consultancy to local churches in helping them engage with issues of work and social justice.

The website includes a wealth of resources, especially on social and economic justice (see <http://www.ccisr.org.uk/>).

Workplace Ministry Malaysia

Based at St Mary's Cathedral, Kuala Lumpur, Workplace Ministry's (WM) aim is to get Christians together to remember the gospel and the bearing it should have on our lives as workers. Events aim to give time to think and talk about what the Bible says about workers and work, serving to encourage and equip workers to serve Christ in their own workplace.

The website (<http://workplaceministrymalaysia.org/>) notes:

It is easy for us to compartmentalise our lives as Christians dividing our lives into work, family, friends, and church. We can then be tempted to let Jesus influence our lives when we are at church or at home, but to live otherwise secular lives in our workplace. But as Christians we know that Christ's Lordship extends not over just one part of life but all of it. We need to bring Christ to work. Overwhelmingly, this means being godly in priorities, moral integrity, faithfulness, diligence, wise use of time and money, and seeking first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness rather than career progression or promotions.

WM's first goal is to encourage workers to bring Christ to work. To think together about what God's word says we are to be like as workers and to each other stand out as different as we live transparently for Christ in our different work contexts.

WM recognises the huge potential for the workplace as a platform for ministry, and there are some interesting resources, particularly recorded talks, on the website. On the other hand, ministry is perhaps seen too heavily in terms of evangelism, and there doesn't seem to be a recognition that Christ may already be in the workplace.

In a land down under

Moving south east, our Aussie cousins are rather active in the workplace ministry field.

For example, **St Alban's Anglican Church**, to the west of Sydney, ([www.
http://mbm.org.au](http://mbm.org.au)) provides workplace chaplaincies and what it calls 'Marketplace Ministry' – to Christians in the workplace. There are also a number of resources to be had on the website.

Along the coast, **Ridley College**, Melbourne, runs an 'Introduction to workplace ministry' module that can be taken by distance learning (<http://www.ridley.edu.au/studying-at-ridley/christian-thought/introduction-to-workplace-ministry/>).

Also well worth visiting is the site of **Brian Edgar**, Professor of Theological Studies, Asbury Theological Seminary. There is a range of thought provoking articles, including on ministry in the workplace (<http://brian-edgar.com/themes/everyday-theology/the-church-and-workplace-ministry/>).

The **Theology of Work Project** (<http://www.theologyofwork.org/>) "exists to help people explore what the Bible and the Christian faith can contribute to ordinary work." The Project is an independent, international organization dedicated to researching, writing, and distributing materials with a biblical perspective on non-church workplaces.

Many of the resources available are stories of workplace ministry, in a wide range of settings, while others are Biblical expositions relating to work.

Across the pond

I recently came across "A Comparison Study of Protestants in the Workplace; What Effect does a Church Workplace Ministry have on Protestant Workers' Job Satisfaction, Organizational Citizenship Behavior, and Organizational Commitment within Certain Faith Integration Types?"

This is a doctoral thesis submitted to Regent University School of Leadership Studies by Mark Walker in February 2005.

If you have half a day to study it is worth reading, at <http://www.princeton.edu/faithandwork/tib/research/walker-regent-university.pdf>. Yes, the context is the USA, but the findings are relevant over here too.

And round the Cape

Call42 is a national South African workplace ministry initiative. Originally launched as a national workplace survey in 2011, Call42 is now making the shift to become a national network platform for Christian workplace ministry.

The first phase of the Call42 process was a national survey designed to identify the obstacles that Christians are facing in terms of living out God's calling at work. The results of the survey were made public through a series of direct mail campaigns, media interviews, social media networks, and is published on the Call42 website (<http://www.call42.co.za/>).

Call42 now aims to serve current workplace ministry initiatives by developing a national platform, serving as a central point of communication for workplace ministry in South Africa. The platform will also serve individuals that are seeking to see God's Kingdom come in their own lives and the working environment. One of the outcomes is to connect the needs of people in the workplace with the ministries that are already serving in these areas.

There is a range of resources on the website, including books, DVDs and web links.

Keeping up with the bloggers

It's surprising how many blogs out there take up themes of interest to MSEs. This is the latest crop I have spotted:

<http://www.p2ptrust.org/blog/2009/05/problematic-ontology-of-ministry.html> - Mike Bursell, an SSM in East Anglia.

<http://davidkeen.blogspot.co.uk/2012/06/leading-of-5000-redesigning-cofe.html> - David is a vicar in Yeovil.

<http://gottesdienstonline.blogspot.co.uk/> - describes itself as “A Blog of the Evangelical Lutheran Liturgy” (USA).

<http://cranmercurate.blogspot.co.uk/2012/01/interviewing-self-supporting-minister.html> - “A blog for the public discussion of the state of Christianity in the United Kingdom with particular focus on the Church of England”. This item is well worth reading.

<http://gazsadblog.blogspot.co.uk/2010/04/last-day-at-work-self-supporting.html> - an SSM in darkest Northamptonshire (and Rushden doesn’t get much darker). Both entertaining and poignant.

<http://www.patrickcomerford.com/2012/10/the-church-of-ireland-and-its-identity.html> - from the Church of Ireland.

And not forgetting:

<http://mikeraynersermons.blogspot.co.uk/> - like the current Editor, Mike would probably have been up on Saint George’s Hill with Gerrard Winstanley if we’d been around in 1651 (search for ‘Diggers’).

Training and development

Durham University, Department of Theology and Ministry, offers a module on Ministry in Secular Employment (THMN1207). It isn’t running in 2013-14, but can run in 2014-15 if there is sufficient interest.

The module aims to explore ways in which secular employment, or engagement with the secular environment, informs (ordained) self-supporting ministry. It begins by exploring different attitudes to work from the ancient world to the present, and some contemporary analyses of the theology of work, particularly those that illustrate how attitudes to work, the understanding of God, human endeavour, and mission interact with each other. A particular study is made of the emergence of non-stipendiary ministry, including ministry in secular employment/environment (MSE), together with the Worker Priest Movement, Industrial Mission, and (most recently) some initiatives in Mission-Shaped Church. It explores how the theology and practice of MSE engages with the church’s understanding of ordained ministry, and develops skills to undertake a local audit relating to

ordained ministry in a secular context. To that end, a comparative study of existing theologies of MSE is undertaken, together with an exploration of models of spirituality shaped by ministry in secular contexts. It also affords an opportunity to construct a personal theology for MSE, and to reflect on how this contributes to the wider ministry and mission of the church at the present time.

There are 14 hours of contact time, and a written assignment of 2,500 words.

Further details can be obtained from the Department, at Abbey House, Palace Green, Durham, DH1 3RS; 'phone 0191 334 3293.

The Centre for Religion and Contemporary Society, at the University of Kent, brings together researchers from across the University who are interested in religion and the sacred in the contemporary world from a range of disciplinary perspectives. The Centre is a multi-disciplinary venture, and involves staff with expertise in anthropology, law, politics and international relations, sociology, social policy and religious studies.

The aims of the Centre are:

- to run a programme of academic events for national and international audiences exploring the meaning and significance of religion in contemporary society
- to create new knowledge in this field through externally-funded research projects and to develop new cross-disciplinary research collaborations
- to be one of the leading sites in the UK for the methodological training of postgraduate research students working in this field
- to engage with a wide range of audiences and organizations beyond the academic world through public events, collaborative research and knowledge exchange projects, or other forms of consultancy.

It is currently contributing to a project on Research Methods for the study of religion, as part of the UK Religion and Society Research programme.

For those contemplating study in this area, see

<http://www.kent.ac.uk/religionmethods/> and

<http://www.religionandsociety.org.uk/>

Philosophy, Religion and Public Policy is the title of a two-day conference at the University of Chester, 8th-9th April, 2014, as part of the AHRC Philosophy and Religious Practices Research Network.

For details see <http://philosophyreligion.wordpress.com/> or contact Carly McEvoy: c.mcevoy@chester.ac.uk, 01244 511031.

Events

Business in the new world economy – creating a vision for the future, Initiatives of Change (ICO). Talk by Peter Brew, on 4 February, 18.30 for 19.00, at 24 Greencoat Place, Victoria, London, SW1P 1RD. Entry fee; bookings from email@london.iofc.org

The next event by ***St. Paul's Institute*** is on 5 February, 2014, in the Wren Suite, St Paul's Cathedral, 6.30pm - 7.30pm.

What is Money?...and Why Does it Matter? Is a lecture from Felix Martin, author of 'Money: The Unauthorised Biography', on the nature of money and the mythologies we build around it.

Drawing on the topic of his book *Money: the Unauthorised Biography*, Felix Martin will give a lecture about the nature of money and the mythologies that we build around it. Showing how commonly conceived ideas about money and its history are not only wrong, but dangerous, this session will explore the secret history of money and explain the truth about what money is, where it comes from, and how it works.

Using stories from throughout human history and around the globe, this talk will radically rearrange your understanding of the world and show how money can once again become the most powerful force for freedom we have ever known.

This event is free and open to all and an audience Q&A will follow the lecture. Spaces are limited so registration is required.

To register your attendance please email Hannah Elias (helias@stpaulscathedral.org.uk) or call 020 7489 1011.

CABE (the Christian Association of Business Executives) runs a regular programme of events in London, which are:

London, West End – Every Tuesday Lunchtime, *Mayfair@One*, at The Lansdowne Club, Fitzmaurice Place, W1J, 1:05pm.

London, City – Every Wednesday Lunchtime, Informal Worship and Teaching, at St Margaret's, Lothbury, EC2, 12:50pm – 2:00pm.

London, West End – Every Wednesday 1.00-2.00pm, Light Lunch Wednesday, at Regency Hall, Oxford Street.

Canary Wharf – Every Wednesday and Thursday, *St Peter's Barge*, at St Peter's Barge, West India Quay, Canary Wharf – Wed 12:15 & 1:05pm, Thurs 1:15pm.

Canary Wharf - Thursdays 1pm, every Thursday at 13.00 in the Prayer Room. Lunch Break – An oasis in the middle of the week – listening to and reflecting on the word of God in the context of a Holy Communion Service.

London, West End – Every Thursday Lunchtime, Tuesday mornings, *All Souls Workplace Ministry*. Lunchtime, 1:05 – 1:35pm followed by a sandwich lunch at All Souls Langham Place Breakfast: 7.30 – 8.30am in the Waldegrave Hall, All Soul's.

Thursday lunchtime 1.05-1.40pm, *Covent Garden Talks*. Our lunchtime talks are held in The Swiss Church (79 Endell Street, WC2H 9DY from 1.05-1.40pm) Lunch is available.

Reading at Work: Sustainable work and lifestyle, talk by Revd. Dr. John Weaver, Chair of the John Ray Initiative, 19.45, 10 February, at Bill's Restaurant, Chain Street, Reading, RG1 2HX. Bookings: dave@ReadingatWork.org.

LICC: Making Trouble – talk by Greg Valerio, who has exposed abuses such as child labour, pollution and criminality in the international jewellery industry. 24 February, 18.30-20.00, at LICC, St. Peter's, Vere Street, London, W1G 0DQ. £7 (£5 concessions); bookings at 0207 399 9555.

Faith in Business Spring Conference: Alpha and Omega? The Lifecycle of Business. Businesses live and die, but can they be reborn? 4 – 6 April, at Ridley Hall, Cambridge. £175 non-residential; £250 residential (£290 en suite). Full details at www.ridley.cam.ac.uk/news-events/781-lifecycle.

Quakers and Business Group – Spring gathering – Cooperatives, 5 April, 09.00-17.00, at the Priory Rooms, Bull Street, Birmingham; £30, including refreshments and lunch. Bookings and details at qandb.org.

**28 February – 2 March, 2014
CHRISM Reflective weekend**

Compassion – the heart of workplace ministry

There is still time to book for our weekend of reflection, good food and good company at Holland House, Croftorhorne, Worcestershire.

Revd Dr Margaret Whipp will be leading us in various approaches to compassion and looking at both the Christian and Buddhist approaches.

As usual there will be time for silence and also free time on Saturday to walk, chat or sleep! We have also arranged access from Friday after lunch for those who like to arrive earlier and relax for a little longer, though our programme will start with dinner on Friday, as usual, and finish with lunch on Sunday.

Holland House is set on the south bank of the river Avon and is a familiar venue to CHRISM members. Details can be found at <http://www.hollandhouse.org/index.html>.

The nearest railway station is at Evesham, about 4 miles east, and Croftorhorne is just off the B4084, with good road links to the M40 and M5. If you are coming by public transport, please let Sue know and we will see if we can arrange a lift for you, at least from Evesham

The weekend costs £165 for member and spouses (£175 for non-members). A few double rooms are available, so spouses are most welcome. (Your church may be able to make a grant towards this cost).

We look forward to being with you then – book early to reserve your place (flyer and booking form enclosed). Contact Sue Cossey, 1 Bye Mead, Emerson's Green, Bristol, BS16 7DL Tel: 0117 957 4267 if you want any more details. Email: sue.cossey@yahoo.co.uk.

***19 – 21 September, 2014
CHRISM Conference and AGM***

New patterns of ministry – Broadening horizons

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).

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.

Full details and booking form will go out with the April edition, but you can find more about the venue at <http://www.whirlowgrange.co.uk/>. Whirlow Grange is on the south western edge of Sheffield, within walking distance of the Derbyshire border. It is about 15 minutes off the M1 and Sheffield is well served by rail services (if you are feeling really adventurous, local trains stop at Dore station, from where it is a 20 minute walk up the hill!)

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

At last – proof that MSEs can fly!



Catherine Binns swoops across the Manchester Ship Canal, at Salford Quays, for charity. I hope someone sponsored her to wear the fetching frog outfit!

Recipe for Theology of Work

(courtesy of 'Ship of Fools')

Ingredients:

- 1 original mandate (Gen 2:15)
- 1 dose of harsh reality (Gen 3:19)
- 1 portion wisdom (Eccl 3:22)
- 1 pinch of salt (to taste) (Matt 5:13)
- 1 measure of integrity (Matt 5:37)
- 1 cup of golden flakes (Matt 7:12)
- 2 measures of fair pay (Luke 10:7, 1 Tim 5:18)
- 3 slices of apostolic encouragement (for example Eph 4:28, 1 Thess 4:11-

12, 2 Thess 3:8 but there are plenty of varieties to choose from)

1 portion equality (Gal 3:28)

9 portions of fruit (Gal 5:22-23)

2 measures of perspective (Col 3:23, Eph 6:5-8)

Cook in a pressure cooker (most workplaces do fine for this) on a slow burner (for best results cook for a long time letting anything that bubbles up overflow)

This should result in (worst case) you being seen as a person of integrity who treats people fairly and (best case) results in transforming your workplace, infecting it with Kingdom values and creating the joy of work in others!

And finally ... (with a point)

A mother camel and a baby camel were talking one day. The baby camel asked, "Why do we have these big three-toed feet?"

The mother explained, "Well, when we trek across the desert, our toes will help us stay on top of the soft sand".

Then the baby asked, "Mum, why do we have these long eye-lashes?"

"They are to keep the sand out of our eyes on the trips through the desert" said the mother.

"And why have we got these great big humps on our backs?"

"Well, they are there to store water for our long treks across the desert, so we can go on without drinking for a long time".

"So, we have big feet so that we don't sink, long eye-lashes to keep the sand out of our eyes, and these humps to store water?"

"Yes dear".

"So what are we doing in Chester Zoo?"