

LINK

supporting the workplace, caring for people

Summer is here and Birmingham city centre is basking in the sunshine. From the office windows the trees that surround the cathedral make a lovely cool oasis of green. Lots has been happening since the May edition of LINK ... I hope that you will enjoy reading all about it!

Parting is such sweet sorrow ...

Stephen Willey, who amongst other things has led the chaplaincy team at the NEC Group for a number of years, looks back for a moment before moving on.

As I look back over 9 years of work with CIGB and 13 years of chaplaincy with large commercial organisations, I note that this expression of ministry, which came into my life unasked for, is a vital expression of God's love for all people.

I have found that developing a relationship with God, within a culture and economy dominated by the power to buy and sell, and money and resources, is a continual challenge. But, chaplaincy, and engagement with the world of work and the economy, where people spend so much of their lives, is key to keeping faith alive and relevant.

In the early years of my work with CIGB, I was encouraged by the late Bishop John Austen, CIGB chair at the time, and others like Tom Pyke, Colin Corke and Beryl Moppett (yes they were around then too!). Yvonne Blakemore, who loved the chaplains, was also a wonderful support. And, when the NEC Chaplaincy was going through a challenging time, I discovered, at the heart of the Birmingham churches, a love for ordinary working people and a willingness to take commerce seriously.

Many things have been important to me over the years with CIGB, but here I'll mention three.

Firstly the delight of seeing CIGB's work recognised and valued in more and more places. In particular, the excitement of the developing Birmingham City Centre Retail chaplaincy and the way its management group and Elaine's commitment have developed chaplaincy support right at the heart of the city.

Secondly the anti-trafficking work which continues with the work of Deacon Kerry Smith and many others through Adavu and the Regional Anti-Trafficking network. For a time this work was very fragile. Without the support of the Methodist Chair of District, Bill Anderson, it might not have continued. The thought that in the West Midlands (and further afield) human trafficking is harder to perpetrate, and that those who are trafficked are more likely to receive support, brings me hope and courage.

And thirdly, the developing work of Transform West Midlands CIC. The company, focused on empowering young people through employment, is gaining momentum and, if successful, could be transformative to many young people and their communities. It is a response to the Church Urban Fund/Frontier Youth Trust's report, I am One in A Million. It is now more than half way to the £100,000 that it needs to get started, having begun with financial support from the Methodist District..

Now my especial thanks go to all those (especially the long suffering Juliet Bakker at the NEC) who make it somewhat easier to move on. The trafficking work continues with Kerry and the NEC Chaplaincy with David Butterworth.



With Hayward chairing CIGB's Management Council and Peter as development director along

with the very able support of Val in the office, I have no doubt that CIGB will continue to have a significant impact in Birmingham and Solihull in the years ahead.

Finally, thanks to my family, who for my first year put up with my weekly commute between Birmingham and Bradford, and since then have had to tolerate some strange working hours!

So I am ready to depart for a while – to go into a kind of wilderness to read and reflect more upon the market-places I have dwelt in.

Stephen, we wish you every blessing for the future and To quote from Isaiah 35: 1—2

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,
and rejoice with joy and singing.



Chaplains' AwayDay at St John's, Berkswell

"The Power of the Good News of Jesus Christ"

CIGB Teams Away Day

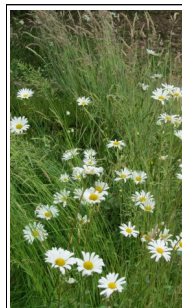
What sort of sacred places and objects do our workplace chaplains encounter in their ministries? What powers at work do we have to overcome? How can we help workers themselves feel empowered? 18 members of CIGB's teams met together for a day in the beautiful surroundings of St John the Baptist Church in Berkswell to grow relationships and discuss these questions.

Some examples of the 'sacred' in workplaces included prayers that people have posted at their desks, areas where people can go to pray, and pictures of important family members. Important memorials to past events can also have a significant role.

Although workplaces nowadays tend not to be so architecturally orientated into levels of 'power', 'time' is a tremendous presence and pressure. In some places people feel they are being constantly overlooked by CCTV. Other people feel they are powerless in a losing battle against societal changes.

Gospel powers that chaplains can locate are values like relationality, vulnerability and authenticity. The Good News of Jesus Christ is a story of loving one another, of overcoming 'the principalities and powers' through courage and integrity.

We celebrated all of this in song and worship, enjoying Val Dalton's musical accompaniment. To socialise, we were met with a tricky quiz – to match the organizations to the motto: 'Save Money, Live Better' Walmart, 'Where do you want to go today?' Microsoft. 'In somno securitas – in sleep there is safety' GCHQ???? Thanks to all for a useful day.



Another fond farewell

We also say goodbye to Deborah Walton who has been working with Chaplaincy Plus in Birmingham City Centre's commercial district, organising and inspiring their network of younger commercial workers.

Deborah has carefully nurtured the city's staff through events (eg 'Retreat in Daily Life'), study (eg 'God at Work – the Hard Questions') and individual support. She has also been a useful contributor and support to CIGB. At the beginning of July, Deborah moved into work as the Pioneer Minister/Team Leader of a Church for young people, 'Vitalise', in Wolverhampton.

Deborah, we pray for God's grace in your new ministry.

Using Bank Accounts and Share holdings faithfully.



The Banking Standards Parliamentary Report (published on 19 June), amongst other things, criticised the role that shareholders themselves played in the run up to the financial crisis. They highlighted the need for more investors to engage with companies on long term issues. They also adopted recommendations about banking practice as highlighted in The Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility (ECCR) report: 'The Banks and Society: Rebuilding Trust' (eccr.org.uk)

ECCR and Church Action on Poverty are urging the church investment community to use its leverage to address the growing problem of inequality. For the **National Ethical Investment Week: 13–19 October** there is a leaflet and worship booklet on ethical investment (www.neiw.org/church-guide). Action Aid's '**Tax responsibility: an investor guide**' also provides questions for shareholders to ask of corporations (www.actionaid.org.uk/tax-responsibility-an-investor-guide). **Green Light** is a campaign to fight climate change through pension power: ([ShareAction fairpensions.org.uk](http://ShareActionfairpensions.org.uk)).

Addressing Banks themselves, the Parliamentary Commission also proposed that they should do more on financial inclusion, and basic bank accounts. The Archbishop of Canterbury has also recently called on churches to engage with their local **credit unions**. As recommended in ECCR's 'The Banks and Society: Rebuilding Trust', The Commission further suggested that banks should disclose the geographical pattern of their lending.

(The Parliamentary report can be found on parliament.uk)



"Is the Financial Crisis a Moral Crisis"

a talk by
Donald Hay

Formerly Professorial Fellow at Jesus College, Oxford, author of "Economics Today", and Reader in Oxford Diocese

6.00pm, Thursday 17th October
College Hall, Lichfield.

Please contact Bill Mash if you would like to go
bill.mash@bcuim.co.uk or 01902 710407
places are limited.



Introduction to Workplace Chaplaincy

Would you, or somebody you know, be interested in voluntary chaplaincy ... perhaps in retail, offices, public transport, a college ...

CIGB will be running a training course in the Autumn covering various aspects of chaplaincy. Contact Peter.Sellick@cigb.org.uk for more info.

CIGB AGM report:

CIGB's Development Director, Peter Sellick reports on the AGM held on 13th May.

“Part-time / Temporary Working: Dynamic and Precarious?”

Dynamic and precarious were themes of the AGM!

Introducing the evening, Councillor Ken Hawkins, Mayor of Solihull, said that he had been delighted to discover the good work the Solihull chaplaincies; and that with such a valuable resource we ought to be doing much more to raise awareness of it. Peter Sellick, introduced himself and highlighted some of the rich treasures within the work of CIGB that he had already discovered. He spoke about youth unemployment as an area he was keen to concentrate on. Major Sam Edgar, President of CIGB, and Divisional Commander of West Midlands Salvation Army, said that economic engagement was clearly a very timely ministry for the church.

Greg Dengate, church member in Knowle, spoke of the opportunities to meet members of the community that his retail work presented. It also gave him the chance to build up companionship amongst the staff.

Rob Johnston, TUC West Midlands Regional Secretary, spoke about the need for quality work opportunities that paid a living wage. In many places employers and employees were nowadays able to come to sensible arrangements, but there is still a large number of people who are excluded from consistent, stable work.

Tim Watts, CEO of Pertemps employment agency spoke of their learning from being one of the ‘Work Programme’ contractors. But despite the difficulties, he thought that most problems were still better to be solved through private sector competition, rather than public sector governance. He spoke about the wider national financial restrictions which meant that the UK still had too much government debt and not enough income generation.

In a lively exchange of opinions in response to some of Tim Watts’ views, members of the audience questioned his views of unions, Thatcherism and the place of money above people’s lives. Mr Watts had warned the Development Director on arrival at the AGM that he would be a lively speaker!

Energies consumed by the lively debate were replenished by the high quality refreshments and hospitality of Wragge’s. The annual report and accounts were presented and accepted by the meeting and the Chair, Archdeacon Hayward Osborne, thanked Paul Dilkes, Treasurer and the Management Committee members for their support.

Mission at Work—the Church that Helps

With Mark Greene, London Institute of Contemporary Christianity

**Birmingham Cathedral, Colmore Row
Tuesday 1 October from 2pm to 5pm.**

Jointly organised by ChaplaincyPlus and CIGB to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of CPlus here in Birmingham.

“Work – too much of it for some, none at all for others. Work – anxiety, joy, stress, satisfaction. Work - a huge opportunity to share the love of Jesus with others and contribute to our city's life.”

Come explore a variety of simple, tested ways in which you can create a church community that helps your people in paid work to be fruitful day by day – without compromising other church ministries or collapsing from overwork yourself.

Mark Greene will lead this interactive workshop with contributions from clergy pioneering in this area and from people on the frontline of work.

Many will know that ChaplaincyPlus seeks to support, encourage and resource professionals here in Birmingham’s city centre by being part of daily business life whilst CIGB places and supports teams of voluntary chaplains in workplaces across Birmingham and Solihull, and helps churches to be faithful parts of their local economy.”

For further information and to reserve a place please contact Chris Dinsdale at ChaplaincyPlus 0121 236 9742 or email chris.dinsdale@chaplaincyplus.org.uk”

An invitation from Elaine to the Birmingham City Centre Retail Chaplaincy AGM



**Birmingham City Centre
Retail Chaplaincy
AGM**

Thursday 5th September 5.30pm —7.30pm
at

Boys Brigade Birmingham
89-91 Hatchett Street, Birmingham B19 3NY

For more information contact Elaine Hutchinson
Tel: 0121 643 6151
Email: chaplain@carrslane.co.uk

QUOTABLE QUOTE “... an album of casual photographs of labourers ... a book by workers, about workers, for workers—that is the Bible”

P. Minear, 'Work and Vocation in Scripture'.

“God’s heart for Longbridge—Churches and Regeneration”

Longbridge chaplain Stephen Plant updates us on what’s happening in redeveloped Longbridge

Walking around the Longbridge development, I see the paraphernalia of construction: concrete, bricks, mud and buildings. But construction is a creative process. Out of the once-mighty Rover Plant a new entity is emerging. It is an entity that will give life and hope and aspiration to the people of Longbridge. It will bring business, commerce and hopefully, a vibrant economy to a part of the city that has languished for a few years. When I visit the housing developments I don’t just see remediation, mud, concrete, bricks and houses. What is being created, by skilled and dedicated construction workers, are houses, homes, a community. A community where people will live, work, raise families, go to school, experience trouble, divorce, sickness and death and birth and joy and hope and generations growing up and moving on.

On Saturday 15th June we held an 'Event for the Churches of Longbridge' at The Factory youth Centre to inform the Churches what was happening on the site, update them on the Chaplaincies and engage with them in 'Discovering Gods' Heart for Longbridge.' Between 50 and 60 people attended representing many of the local churches. Our purpose was to enthuse the churches to take ownership of what is happening on their patch.

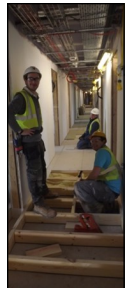


We began with a networking session and the opportunity for attendees to view the facilities at The Factory (or 'Purple Palace as it is known locally!). The theme of the afternoon was 'Journeying' ie Journeying together to discover Gods' heart for Longbridge. There was an update on the new town centre development, an experience of a Chaplain to the Retail sector, an interactive session led by the Chaplaincy team to Bournville College, a challenge to look into the setting-up of a community hub and an invitation to get involved and join the journey. No, it wasn't sponsored by Lloyds Bank, now there's an idea !!

The event had an interactive dynamic feel to it. Both Rhiannon Jones and Fred Rattley, from Birmingham Diocese, contributed and led 'break out' groups. Many ideas and issues were discussed and the Longbridge Development Steering group, soon to be renamed as Gods' Heart for Longbridge.' (GHLF, an association) has much to think about and develop in the coming months The event ended with a simple, but moving, ceremony of commissioning and 'sending out' of the Chaplains to Bournville College. It was felt to be important that this group of dedicated Chaplains knew they had the

support, encouragement and prayers of the local Church community and that they were a vital part of a wider vision.

When I am on site, construction workers often say to me 'Oh you've brought God with you today then!' my answer is always 'No He was already here, I've just come to work with Him today.' It is a pleasure, privilege and working out of a vocation to be involved with the Longbridge Development.



“Ministry in the City of Birmingham”

A day course for Church leaders and Church organisers For those who are new, or those who want to know more

Thursday 24th October 9am—4pm
The Council House, Victoria Square, Birmingham

**How is the city changing
What are future prospects
What role are churches playing in this?**

The day will include introductions on Public and Private sectors, Education and Community Safety, and the Voluntary and Faith sector along with examples of Church engagement in Lozells and Longbridge There will also be an open-top bus tour of Birmingham!

The cost of the day will be £20
Please contact Peter Sellick for more information and booking
peter.sellick@cigb.org.uk

An early welcome

As a change from the farewells, we’d like to welcome Revd David Butterworth to Birmingham.

David comes to us from Edmonton, North London (Enfield Circuit) and will be working for the Birmingham Methodist District from September. David will also be the lead chaplain at the NEC chaplaincy. We look forward to introducing him properly in the next edition of **“LINK”**.

LAST WORD

Wherever life takes you this summer I hope you will find enjoyment, refreshment and re-creation. See you in September!

DON'T FORGET ...

Send us your news, your stories, your pictures, your quotable quotes and your jokes and stay in touch:

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