



# Newsletter Autumn 2008

Our **Annual General Meeting** was very well attended, and supported by Bishop David Urquhart, one of the Presidents of Birmingham Churches Together and our President Elect, Major Samuel Edgar of the Salvation Army. Our Patron, the Lord Mayor of Birmingham joined us with his wife and we had the pleasure of the company of the Mayor and Mayoress of Solihull again this year. Our thanks to all who made this an excellent event, particularly our hosts Wesleyan Assurance for the loan of their splendid board room. Our speakers, Professor Peter Braithwaite and Doctor Simon Slater gave a thought provoking and innovative presentation on 'Can climate change save the West Midland economy?' and answered some searching questions on the West Midlands' heavy industry heritage and environmental sustainability from our invited guests. The presentation was reported in the Birmingham Post and Mail 13.6.08.

Our website contains details of the event, a copy of the presentation, a summary of the 'Q&A' session and the Birmingham Post and Mail report at [www.cigb.org.uk](http://www.cigb.org.uk)

Incidentally, Professor Braithwaite was recently appointed as Director of Sustainability for the 2012 London Olympics!



Onto finance, our **Annual Report** shows that we are currently running at a slight loss and are, therefore, very aware of the need to increase membership and support for the CIGB, to enable the continuation of this very important work with the people of Birmingham. As the Mayor of Solihull wryly commented at the AGM, we do appear to 'survive on fresh air and faith'. Without our members and supporting churches that would be true!

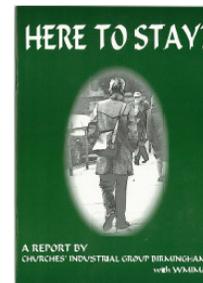
CIGB continues to grow in **workplace chaplaincy**. Our newest Chaplain, Elaine Lewis, was commissioned on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2008 as Chaplain for the Town Hall and Symphony Hall during a service at her Church, Elmwood URC. It was a wonderful event led by Richard Becher and attended by our Chairman, The Venerable Hayward Osborne and Team Leader Barbara Hayes. During the service Elaine, who is a student at Queen's, confirmed her belief that God was calling her to Chaplaincy and promised

to affirm the value of people's work at the Town Hall and Symphony Hall. She committed herself to playing her part in building a company that values its people and the local community. We wish Elaine every success in her ministry and look forward to guiding her and sharing her experiences.

We are now working towards reinstating **chaplaincy in the Birmingham Markets** after a gap of a few years following the retirement of Shirley Vettes. CIGB have enthusiastic, young chaplains who have completed the free training course run by our Team Leader Barbara Hayes, in spring this year, and are now eager to take on this exciting challenge. We hope the staff and customers in the Markets will soon grow to appreciate a friendly face amongst the stalls as they struggle, in these difficult financial times, to make a living and bag a bargain!



Anyone who is interested in considering workplace Chaplaincy should contact Barbara at the CIGB offices, contact details overleaf. **Free Chaplaincy training courses** are planned for the New Year!



CIGB still has a small number of the booklet 'Here to Stay?' available. 'Here to Stay?' is a report on migration issues specifically facing the Midlands prepared by the West Midlands Industrial Mission Association and discusses topics such as the Church's contribution to the needs of migrants, employment rights and impact on communities. The copies are free and may provide fuel for a stimulating discussion group or out reach possibilities. Please contact the office either by phone or e-mail and we will forward one to you.

CIGB is delighted to announce a **rededication and commissioning service** to be held in St Martin's in the Bull Ring on 16th November at 3 p.m. We are endeavouring to ensure this will become an annual event to celebrate the work of our chaplains and thank God for the Spirit that works within them. Hopefully, our Presidents will attend the event (diary commitments

permitting), the Mayors of Birmingham and Solihull and many of our supporters.

The service is being organised by NEC Chaplain Rev. Stephen Willey, with the able support of some of our chaplains and is sure to be a gloriously, uplifting event. Invitations will be sent out at the beginning of October.



This issue of the newsletter seems to be full of good news as we announce funding for a **new Faith and Work Project** from St. Peter's Saltley Trust. We will shortly be appointing to the part time project worker role to lead this initiative. Below Dr Ian Jones, Director of the Saltley Trust explains why the Trust decided to support CIGB in this new venture.

*'St Peter's Saltley Trust is an educational charity working across the West Midlands region to support innovative projects in adult theological education, further education and RE in schools. The Trust are pleased to support the new faith and work project out of a recognition that while work (in all its forms) plays a huge part in the lives of many people, the churches have sometimes struggled to know how best to support Christians in their everyday discipleship in the workplace. The connection between faith and work is by no means a new issue: each generation of Christians must seek to understand their occupations in the light of God. Equally though, the church needs to keep reinventing the ways in which it supports and nurtures whole-life discipleship in changing times for every fresh generation, and the faith and work project takes up this challenge. With increasing role specialisation at work, the time seems particularly ripe to explore ways of growing confidence in Christian discipleship amongst sector-specific groups. The Trust looks forward to working with CIGB as this project unfolds.'*

CIGB is very grateful to the Trust for its support and are sure you will join us in praying for the success of this exciting new venture.

### **Trafficking Update June 2008**

Since the events linked to the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the abolition of the Slave Trade last year, Believing in Birmingham have been focusing on the issue of Human Trafficking. City Centre Churches are invited to be a part

on the theme of Human Trafficking. The prayers will take place every first Monday of the month at noon.

The event, which launched the Human Trafficking theme (on 29<sup>th</sup> February) included speakers from the University of Western England and Eaves Housing Project. Since then, several things have been quietly happening. For example, we are hoping to be part of a conference in December on the theme of Human Trafficking and next year, possibly in Lent, there will be a festival of art on the Human Trafficking theme. Thanks to Revd Mary Gilbert from St Paul's for her input on this and for organising the monthly prayer rota.

We are also exploring the idea of providing Safe Spaces for people who have been trafficked and the idea that Birmingham might be (like Sheffield) a City of Sanctuary.

Several people have expressed an interest in knowing more about this work and if you too are interested, please contact Central Mission on [centralmission@btconnect.com](mailto:centralmission@btconnect.com) or 0121 233 1915.

..... NEWSFLASH .....

A day conference on Trafficking is to be held at Carrs Lane URC, Birmingham City Centre on December 12<sup>th</sup> 2008. Contact the Central Mission direct for more details.

And, finally, a word from our Chairman, The Venerable Hayward Osborne.

*With financial institutions going through very troubled times and huge economic uncertainty in the air, we are being uncomfortably reminded of the importance of integrity and sound values in business life. Our chaplains are present in a range of places of employment, available to individuals with anxieties and concerns. But their presence also speaks of God and his kingdom, where people are rather more than economic units, and where value is based on more than finance.*

*At CIGB it is our hope that the world of work and the hours spent by people in their place of employment are taken seriously by Christian preachers and by local congregations in their worship and reflection. We urge churches to include in their prayers those whose welfare is affected by the current turbulence, and those who are wrestling with the financial upheaval to bring stability and hope for those who feel under threat at this time.*

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