

CHAPLAINS AT WORK



October 2017

supporting the workplace, caring for people

Well, here we are in Autumn—glorious colours, fruitfulness, mists, a former hurricane on the way ... just the time for a CIGB newsletter! This edition introduces another Chaplain and shares some Chaplaincy stories. There are details of our Commissioning Service and a thought-provoking article from Peter Sellick. Pull up a comfy chair and have a good read!

Has Capitalism fallen off its pedestal?



Peter Sellick writes ...

The Russian Revolution took place 100 years ago. 50 years ago Sputnik successfully orbited the earth. The Western world was deeply shocked that the apparently



dysfunctional Soviet political system had managed this scientific leap. Leaders in Europe and the US had believed that the Russian economic system was completely flawed: Moscow could not possibly organise finances to out-compete the west in the space race. But they did.

Is Capitalism really the best economic system? Recent political party conferences have been discussing this question. Is the free market economy the best way to organise the prices and distribution of goods and services? Should the government be intervening more for the Common Good? The concern is particularly acute for those who are poor: is Capitalism working for those who do not have any capital?

The 1950s Soviet Marxist experiment produced both economic success and human cruelty. The Soviet economy was truly growing at an extraordinary rate: averaging 6% GDP growth a year, compared to growth in UK of 2%. That is the level of growth that we now admire in China.

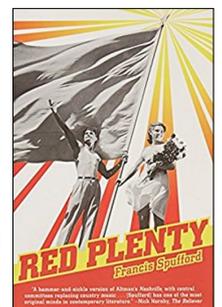
By 1960s Soviet citizens were increasingly living in smart apartments with radios and pianos, and, in some cases, fridges and other 'mod-cons'. Although much of the headline Russian wealth was locked up in heavy industry, engineering and science, the communist model was lifting the living standards of ordinary people at a faster rate than many other places. Even if average personal income was still well below that of American citizens, it was catching up quickly.

But the USSR also had toxic pollution, deadly social

control and people locked into unrewarding work. Human relationships were marked by suspicion and distrust: back-scratching and blackmail ruled the day.

So by the 1970s incompetence and bad management meant that the soviet economy was in a dreadful state. In the next twenty years it all collapsed. "The loudest and most important lesson of the Soviet experience should always be: don't ever do this again" says Francis Spufford, author of 'Red Plenty'. But the times of progress mean that there may still be good bits to learn from the soviet communist story?

We currently have increasing homelessness and use of Foodbanks, and an over-heating world. We are led by politicians who are probably rich enough not to be touched by any of the consequences of mistaken decisions that they make. If it all goes wrong, they can drive off in their Mercedes to their Chateau in the countryside.



Many business leaders recognise that the British economic model needs fundamental reform. CEOs from McKinsey, Siemens and John Lewis, along with academics, civil servants, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, say our current version of the market economy is "not fit to face the challenges of the 2020s".

The IPPR report 'Time for Change' calls for more partnership working between the institutions of state: government, business, civil society; more devolution and open data; and greater justice in taxation and spending.

Pope Francis grew up in Argentina and recently prayed in public at the tomb of a famous liberationist priest, who had stood up for the poor against the powers of capitalism. The Pope spoke about the sins of divorcing economics from social values: "we cannot live on bread alone" (Matthew 4:4). We need an economy based on better values than we have now.

**QUOTABLE-
QUOTE**

“For the beauty of the earth, for the beauty of the skies,
For the love which from our birth over and around us lies
Lord of all, to thee we raise
This, our joyful hymn of praise.”

Folliot S Pierpoint

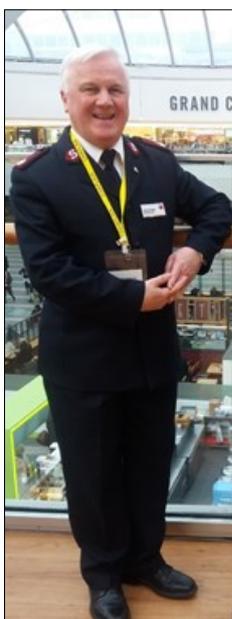
MEET THE CHAPLAIN

This time it’s Major Samuel Edgar who has agreed to stand in the spotlight..

After 45 years of Christian ministry as a Salvation Army officer I officially retired. I read somewhere that ‘retirement’ is that period in your life when you wake up in the morning with nothing to do and go to bed at night with it still not done! Like so many I wonder how I ever had time to hold down a full time job with the busyness of my life now. However supposedly I now have choice!! So I chose to attend the Chaplaincy training course and then take on the role of Chaplain at the new shopping mall at Grand Central.

During my years of ministry I have been involved in various Chaplaincy roles. I have been involved in Prison Chaplaincy in Belfast, in Military Chaplaincy in Berlin, and in Hospital Chaplaincy in London. The common denominator in those roles was that I was regarded as being there in a semi-official capacity. Retail Chaplaincy was something very new to me and very different from anything I had done before. However my years of experience in ministry stood me in good stead when facing quite a new challenge.

The staff at Grand Central are often young, from many countries, and with a variety of faiths as well as no faith at all. I really thought they would view me with some suspicion and as someone who had just landed from the planet Zog! I could not have been more wrong!



I am amazed at how overwhelmingly welcoming they have all been. ‘We think this is a great idea’ was the oft repeated phrase I heard at the beginning. Now it is: ‘We look forward to you coming each week.’ I am fortunate to have as my associate Chaplain John Taiwo. It is, for us, both a privilege and an opportunity. Our constant prayer is that we will continue to be used by God in this unique service.

Jesus says, “When the Master comes and finds the servant doing his work, the servant will be blessed.” I can honestly say that I am already blessed in the work that we are doing.

Around the Chaplaincies . . .

“Showered with Flowers”

Val Dalton had a wonderful surprise one day in Sainsbury’s . . .

Chaplaincy is always interesting.. However, as we tread the well-beaten tracks of our different Chaplaincies sometimes ‘interesting’ becomes ‘surprising’ and sometimes it even has the ‘WOW! Factor’.



Part of my Chaplaincy involves the large Sainsbury’s store in Longbridge. A couple of weeks ago I was walking around the store as usual, and stopped to speak to one of the staff. While we were chatting, someone else from Fresh Produce came over, and told me that she’d got some flowers for me! I thought she had got the wrong person, but when I queried this, she told me that the new Store Manager, Tim Smedley, had said that all the flowers which had gone over their sell-by date were to be given to “The two ladies who come every Tuesday because they’ll probably be able to find good homes for them – possibly in the churches”.

Maxine and her colleague went to fetch the flowers and to my amazement there was a whole trolley-full! Two of those big black buckets absolutely stuffed with flowers ranging from spray carnations through to those lovely big gift bouquets of mixed flowers. What a wonderful surprise— and definitely worthy of a huge WOW! factor!

This was all so unexpected—where could I take so many lovely flowers? It just so happened that I was due to visit a Nursing Home that very afternoon, so I took them with me. Needless to say, the Activities staff were thrilled because a lot of the ladies love to do ‘flower arranging’ and, of course, cut flowers are really expensive and usually only come to residents on special occasions, so this was a huge and delightful treat which all the residents—and staff—could share.

Tim, the Store Manager, has said that we can have these leftover flowers every week. So Peggy and I will be taking the flowers to bless people in the local area and beyond, and we will pass on the thoughtfulness and goodwill of the Sainsbury’s store.

This all took place as our thoughts turn to celebrating Harvest and thinking about God’s good gifts to us. I thank God for these flowers which will bring so much joy into the lives of the people who receive them; and I thank God for the thoughtfulness of the store Manager.

**QUOTABLE
QUOTE**

“For the beauty of each hour of the day and of the night night,
Hill and vale and tree and flower, sun and moon and stars of light.
Lord of all, to thee we raise
This, our joyful hymn of praise.”

Folliot S Pierpoint

Freshers’ Fair at Bournville College

Bournville College recently held their ‘Freshers’ Fair’ and the Chaplains were there to meet the new students! Thelma Mitchell shares the experience.

"Have you any prayer requests, by the way?" Becky asked the student. "Yes! Please pray for me to meet One Direction!"

The chaplains were doing a number of engagement activities for the Freshers' Fair to encourage staff and students to get to know us at the beginning of a new term. Payers were requested during some conversations. Meeting One Direction was the least serious!

Bournville is now under the new management of South and City College. It is a new start for all of us. Chaplaincy presence and work is a new practice for South and City. The Chaplains have shared with a member of management what we have been doing for the past five years: covering many of the major religious festivals, as well as being a presence in college each week.



Becky, Jason, Gillian, Lyn and Thelma were out in force from 9am for Freshers' Fair. We asked questions such as 'Describe yourself in 3 words'; 'What

are your 3 priorities for life?' Answers were put on post-its, displayed and rewarded with sweets!

We must have encountered upward of 100 students between us. We talked about the role of Chaplains in the college, and had some often deep discussions.

There were opportunities to meet other stall holders: I enjoyed a talk with the Army representative from the Parachute Regiment. Memories flooded back of my father. I shared some of his stories - he was in the first wave of the D Day landings, parachuting into Normandy where he was holed up in a trench outside Caen for 3 weeks. He had devised a code for his new, young wife - my mother, a Wren - so that she would know where he was. As he walked out of the door she immediately forgot and so she never had any idea where he was. The soldier enjoyed the

story! He said he would like to use this and other stories of my dad's in talks!

It was a wonderful day with so many opportunities to talk and share our reasons to be in college: a faith presence, ready to talk (to pray when asked) and there for all. Our next encounter activity will be on Monday 13th November when we will mark Remembrance Day again in the largest social area of Bournville College.



Here’s Becky with students who were ‘tickled pink’ that their photo might be included in our newsletter!



She did it!!! Over £1000 raised...

Christine McAteer, one of the National Express Bus Chaplains, completed the Birmingham Velo on Sunday 24th September, to raise money for QE Hospital

1500 cyclists left Birmingham city centre to pedal their way through 100 miles of Staffordshire and Worcestershire countryside.



Christine completed the ride in 8 hours 31 minutes—what an achievement! Her efforts raised more than £1000 for Birmingham’s QE hospital.

WELL DONE CHRISTINE!



**QUOTABLE
QUOTE**

“For the joy of human love, brother sister, parent child,
Friends on earth and friends above, for all gentle thoughts and mild
Lord of all, to thee we raise
This, our joyful hymn of praise.”

Folliot S Pierpoint

Annual Commissioning Service

You may have had the date in your diaries for a few months, but here are some details about our Annual Commissioning Service.

3pm, Sunday November 26th

New Testament Church of God, The Rock
11 George Street West
B18 7HD



This is the service where we commission new Workplace Chaplains and pray with our existing Chaplains for the work they are doing. It is a chance to worship together as Staff, Chaplains, Trustees, Friends and Church Leaders from our sponsoring churches —something that only happens once each year! As always, we expect the service to last for approximately an hour and to be followed by refreshments and time to chat.

Our guest preacher will be Bishop Wilton Powell OBE, MBA. Bishop Powell is a National Overseer for the Church of God of Prophecy. He has been an Engineer and worked for Dunlop Engineering Projects. He also serves as Vice Chair of Nehemiah UCHA, a West Midlands Housing Association. He recently spoke at a conference for Christian Entrepreneurs to encourage them to use their faith to make a difference in the economy.



We'd like to take this opportunity to invite you to join us on 26th November: it would be really helpful if you could let Val know that you're coming to make sure that there are the correct number of service booklets and, of course, enough cake!

val.dalton@cigb.org.uk

JOB VACANCY

**Birmingham Airport Chaplaincy Team:
Part-Time Team Leader**

We are looking for a Team Leader with Chaplaincy experience, in good standing with a church community, to help people from diverse backgrounds to flourish within the working context of an airport, and to lead a team of volunteer Chaplains.

To work a flexible 14 hours per week,
with on-call availability;
£9,800 plus Pension Contribution

**Closing Date for applications:
26 October 2017**

More information is available at
www.cigb.org.uk/vacancies

For informal enquiries please contact Peter Sellick at
peter.sellick@cigb.org.uk
(07746 299676)

LAST WORD

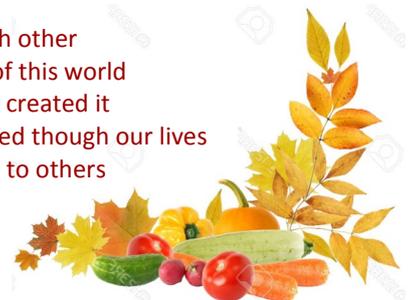
We love hearing your stories—and there are a few in this edition— both the exceptional ones and the more everyday ones. It's great to be able to share these stories as they are so encouraging. We're very good at 'anonymising' stories so we can make sure important details and individuals are not identified, if necessary ...

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to this edition of "Chaplains at Work".



A PRAYER AT HARVEST

God of Seed and Harvest
We bless you,
And we bless each other
That the beauty of this world
And the love that created it
Might be expressed though our lives
And be a blessing to others
Now and always.



STAY IN TOUCH

CIGB
1 Colmore Row
Birmingham
B3 2BJ

Tel: 0121 426 0425
email: val.dalton@cigb.org.uk
www.cigb.org.uk