

# LINK

supporting the workplace, caring for people

It's a glorious May morning as I write this introduction—just the kind of day for a leisurely day-trip ... speaking of which, read on for news of two exciting new chaplaincies for Birmingham. Other items in this newsletter include news from the training course, news of another training course and all sorts of other delights! Don't forget our AGM on 13th May. It's very soon now ... but it's not too late to come!

## Canals & Rivers Trust chaplaincy

Richard Alford writes of a chaplaincy which is established in other parts of the UK but is new for us here in Birmingham.

Over 20,000 people in the UK live on their boats, many on the canals. Many suffer from deprivation and find it difficult to access benefits, doctors and the like because they have to move frequently. The Continuous Cruising Licence from the Canals & Rivers Trust (the new set-up for the British Waterways) means that people have to move every 2 weeks.

A boater can rent a long term mooring in a marina, or alongside the canal and river where permitted, or just have a cruising licence. Every boat that cruises on the waterways needs to have a cruising licence either from the Environment Agency or from the Canal & River Trust (formerly British Waterways). Most of these moorings, even in marinas, do not come with a postcode and this can discriminate against the boaters. No postcode means no right to be on the Electoral Register, no right to vote in elections (unless you go through a particular registration process), to register with a GP, to retrain, or to sign up for a current account.



Living afloat does not prevent the circumstances of life happening either. Boaters become sick, are bereaved, experience family or marriage breakdown, loss of income, in fact any of the situations

experienced on land, happen in the boating community and that is where the Waterways Chaplains have a place in providing pastoral support and care.

Boating communities are very good at caring for each other in times of trouble. They look out for each other; provide meals and other practical help when they know another boater is going through a difficult time. Sometimes though, it is good to have someone to talk to who is not part of that community, someone to listen and someone to talk the issues through with to try and find a way forward.

It is said that Birmingham and its surrounding areas have more canals than Venice. Across the UK, especially in the south there is now a dedicated Chaplaincy for all those who use the rivers and canals. This, at present, covers the Southern Grand Union, the Rivers Lee & Stort, the Great Ouse from Bedford to Cambridge and the Gloucester to Sharpness Canal.

Do you have Boaters who are moored near to your church and would like to minister to them but don't know how? Why not set up a chaplaincy team? All that is required is that you walk the towpath every week, talking to all who use the canals, whether boaters, fishermen, or walkers and make friends with people. Then as you gain people's trust they will come to you for help. Full training (not too onerous) would be provided by Jenny Dibsall, the Senior Chaplain and I, and we would also liaise with the statutory authorities so that they know you are out on the towpath.



Chaplains share in the good and bad times and they are supportive and encouraging of all, regardless of religion, orientation or race. They support people of all faiths or none. They are always happy to discuss spiritual and practical matters if invited to do so.

Being a chaplain is challenging, rewarding and humbling and never dull.

If you feel God is calling you, or your church, to this new ministry please contact Richard on 0121 243 9912 or 07702 842 794.

West Midlands Region Churches Forum presents:  
**"Active participation in a changing society: mission in disadvantaged communities"**

Thursday 6 June 2013 10:30-2pm  
 The Workspace, All Saints Rd, Wolverhampton WV2 1EL

If you would like to attend please contact Colin Marsh **before Monday June 3rd.**  
 Tel: 0121 236 3966 or email: [office@wmchurches.org.uk](mailto:office@wmchurches.org.uk)

The Church of England Mission and Public Affairs Division will be visiting CIGB in May as part of their investigation of the Church of England's involvement in chaplaincy across a variety of contexts. The hope is that recommendations for how chaplaincy can be supported and developed as part of the Church of England's strategy for mission and ministry will come out of the work. The research is being carried out by a joint team from The Cardiff Centre for Chaplaincy Studies (CCCS) and The Oxford Centre for Ecclesiology and Practical Theology (OxCEPT).

Beryl Mopett, Team leader of the Solihull Town Centre chaplaincy will be running a short introductory training course in Solihull. Details below ...



Solihull Town Centre Chaplaincy is looking to expand the chaplaincy team. If you think you might be interested and have time to give to this valuable work, or would just like to know more about workplace chaplaincy then come along to

## Exploring Town Centre Chaplaincy

and learn the **Why, What and How** of town centre chaplaincy

The course will be held on consecutive Fridays

**14<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> June**

**11.00am – 12.30pm**

**St Helen's Church Chapel (St Helen's Road) Solihull**

If you are interested and would like to book a place, please contact

Beryl Mopett [beryl.mopett@virginmedia.com](mailto:beryl.mopett@virginmedia.com)

## Chaplaincy to National Express West Midlands

Another new chaplaincy for Birmingham!

National Express operate most of the local bus services in Birmingham and Solihull and the company have expressed some interest in chaplaincy services at a number of key depots in Digbeth, Perry Barr, Acocks Green and Yardley Wood.

CIGB is looking for a couple of voluntary chaplains who would be willing to give 0.5 days a week to visit a depot, engage with all the staff and be good listeners.



Voluntary chaplains are likely to receive a free bus pass, which will, it is hoped, enable them to experience life 'on the buses'. Chaplains will need a referral from their local church

and CIGB will provide training, support and oversight as normal. Contact [peter.sellick@cigb.org.uk](mailto:peter.sellick@cigb.org.uk) if you feel this might be for you.

## DON'T FORGET our Annual Meeting

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> May

Venue: Banking Hall, Wragge & Co.,  
55 Colmore Row, B3 2AS.

Refreshments will be served from 5.30pm, the business meeting will follow at 6.15.

Guest speakers Tim Watts, Chair of Pertemps; and Rob Johnston, TUC Regional Secretary will open a public discussion on the theme

**"Temporary Working: Dynamic and Precarious?"**

**Tim Watts** will be speaking of his experience of the labour market. Tim is chair of Pertemps Recruitment Partnership Ltd., founded fifty years ago as a family business. Pertemps has been listed in the 2013 Sunday Times "Top 100 Companies To Work For" for 7 successive years.

An impressive 40% of staff have worked for the firm for at least five years, while almost 20% have chalked up more than a decade. There is a 5:6 female-to-male split on the executive board.

The business employs over 500 people, has a network of over 100 branches across the UK and a turnover of £350 million.

**Rob Johnston**, TUC Regional Secretary, West Midlands, will speak about the living wage.

**Greg Dengate**, a member of Knowle parish church and previously a Surveyor and Project Manager, will speak from his experience of working on the check-out at his local supermarket.

**It's not too late! If you would like to come please contact us by phoning 0121 426 0425 or email: [val.dalton@cigb.org.uk](mailto:val.dalton@cigb.org.uk)**

## CIGB's 'Introduction to Workplace Chaplaincy' training course

As part of the on-going chaplaincy training course, the 7 'explorers' went on a Chaplaincy visit with Peggy Baker to the Great Western Arcade Shopping Centre.

Gay Faulkner, Centre Manager, said that Peggy's ministry was a boost to the Arcade and she was a very important addition to the community of staff there.

The 6 week training course covers topics like 'What is work all about?' 'What is chaplaincy?' 'What does the economy mean to us?' 'How do I do chaplaincy?' 'Connecting this ministry to the local church'.



Another course will be run in the Autumn.

**QUOTABLE QUOTE** Work involves sociability, gossip, personal relationships, and indispensable human contact. Nowadays when people retire it is common for them to say that they will not miss the job, but that they will miss the people.

### Canon Denis Claringbull 1933 - 2013

**Industrial Chaplain to the Bishop of Croydon: 1962-71,  
Industrial Chaplain, Coventry: 1971-75,  
Senior Industrial Chaplain, Birmingham: 1980-1998.**

Denis Claringbull, who died on 24 January, led the Churches Industrial Group Birmingham in the 1980s and 90's when he was vicar of St Paul's in Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter. Then, more people worked in the Jewellery Quarter than lived there, although that position is now reversed.

Denis led a core team of chaplains which met regularly to plan and deliver CIGB's work. There was an annual service in the Cathedral, speakers with a national profile, a very successful employment and training agency set up when unemployment was high from the demise of much Midlands manufacturing. It was later sold on to a company and still exists. Subsequently the Group organised a local hearing for the churches national enquiry into Unemployment and the Future of Work.

No doubt being part of a strong team helped, but Denis was a person of enthusiasm, commitment and a great encourager. Among his contributions to Industrial Mission [IM] was his book 'Frontline Mission' which sought to make the ministry more visible beyond IM. He also co-founded the Birmingham Centre for Business Ethics [BCBE] which he had established in co-operation with Birmingham Rotary and Aston University. BCBE brought together local business people to explore ethical issues from a business perspective. Academics and others were involved but the key group were small and medium size businesses. This was innovative and BCBE flourished for many years. It was perhaps typical of Denis' enthusiastic and entrepreneurial approach.

He retired to Ross-on-Wye but for many years continued to attend BCBE events in Birmingham, to speak at events and seminars, and to act as a consultant to the Kidderminster Parish Church Team Ministry where he won the trust and affection of everyone through his passion and wisdom. Typically, he recalled them to God in the world and reminded them that the Church (and they) were not an end in themselves.

Those who visited Denis and Andrew, his partner of 30 years, at home in Ross would have witnessed the amazing railway in the garden – the other great passion in Denis's life.

From Barbara Hayes, supplemented by colleagues and friends from the West Midlands

### Ron Farish 1922—2013

It was with great sadness that we heard of the death of Ron Farish in March this year.

On his retirement Ron chose not to 'put his feet up' but instead to work towards a degree in Theology. This success was followed by a post-graduate course in Industrial Mission after which Ron became a member of the Solihull Town Centre Chaplaincy Team.

Ron was a keen member of the team for many years and always took great interest in issues of industrial chaplaincy.

### Moving on ... Rev'd Caroline George

**Colin Marsh (Birmingham Churches Together) who is based at St George's Hub , writes about Caroline George's ministry there.**

Caroline's bright and cheerful personality will be greatly missed at St George's Community Hub where she has been serving as Chaplain for several years. As well as regular visits around the offices, her engaging style of conversation, a readiness to listen, and willingness to support has been greatly appreciated by all who work across a range of organisations in the Hub, from the Children's nursery to refugee support workers. We wish her well as she moves on to new ministry.

**Caroline has lots of ideas about a future chaplaincy and we hope to hear from her again very soon!**

**St George's Hub in Newtown is undergoing major changes with the exciting growth of Titan Education Partnership.**

### LAST WORD

**"Milton produced 'Paradise Lost' for the same reason that a silk worm produces silk:  
It was an activity of his nature."**

*Karl Marx*



### 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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