

CHAPLAINS AT WORK



September 2018

supporting the workplace, caring for people

It's been a long time since the last newsletter—a long and very busy time with lots going on, but here we are at the start of a new term—and a bit of a new beginning for CIGB as we say goodbye to Hayward and hello to Steve (see page 3). As always there is a variety of articles, updates and reports and the opportunity to meet another of our wonderful Chaplains.

The Future of Shopping?

Peter Sellick writes ...

When was the heyday of British High Street shopping? 1960s or 1970's? Actually there were more shops on British High Street in 1920's than there were in 1970's. It is estimated that in 1920's there were 1 million retail shops: only 400,000 in 1970 and about 200,000 today.



There is much talk about a 'crisis' in High St shopping today. Retailing has been declining in numbers since the 1920's. "Is the High St Finished?" was

the title of just one recent BBC programme. One in ten town centre shops now lie empty, and in some places these units have been empty for years. Our retail Chaplains hear the anxieties about the future on a daily basis.

But even now Retailing (and Wholesaling) is a bigger employer than our Financial Services Industry – and contributes more to national wealth. In 2018 about 4 million people work in Retailing, and it generates about 10% of our national wealth. Changes to the High Street are not always a bad thing: shopping needs and tastes change and novelty can attract more business. But sadly 300,000 retail workers have been affected by the 30,000 store closures in the last ten years.

High Streets are more than places for purchasing: they are places to meet and build community relationships. Town centres are usually locations for services (eg hairdressing), professions, leisure, health and business. Churches, community centres and faith buildings add to the life of a neighbourhood.

So one recent review calls for the establishment of 'Community Improvement Districts' not just of 'Business Improvement Districts' (which exclude non-businesses). Town centre success needs a wider mix of partners to tackle the problems.

Small independent retailers are also good news, according to Alan Hawkins of the British Association of Independent Retailers (BIRA). Speaking at the national Workplace Chaplaincy Mission UK conference, he said that many small stores are locally owned and have a direct interest in what is happening on their street. If you visit an independent store, you may well be served by the owner themselves.

BIRA are asking customers and retailers to take part in a survey: bit.ly/healthofthehighstreet as part of their campaign to persuade the government to develop a more coherent strategy to our High Streets. The challenges of internet shopping and 'peak stuff' may be here to stay. But lawmakers can do something about business rates (Internet shopping warehouses pay much lower rates than shops) and local parking charges, for example.

We need 'Curators' of Town Centres according to the 'Grimsey Review 2'. Curators are people who care for. Like the church use of the word 'curate', curating is also about healing and wholesomeness. In the arts world curators care for the works and help them to 'have a voice' by bringing a varied range of resources together in the same place. Likewise High Streets need to be co-ordinated places that 'have a voice' that speaks of broader social health, as well as shopping.

Some of our CIGB Chaplains are involved in the new Longbridge Town Centre. With a bit of active co-ordination with the older town centres, this new place, which includes shopping, education, old and young residents, arts, churches, and chaplains, could help the whole area to become a healing place.

Jesus and the early disciples like Peter and Paul recognised the importance of the market place to faith, and of faith to the market place. In these places healing happened and belief came to life.



We need Town Centres to have a future as places of healing faith.

**QUOTABLE-
QUOTE**

Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy,
Whose trust, ever childlike, no cares could destroy,
Be there at our waking, and give us, we pray,
Your bliss in our hearts, Lord,
At the break of the day.

Around the Chaplaincies . . .

Thelma writes about **Balloons and bon-bons** at Bournville College



The Chaplains marked the end of the academic year with a fun engagement activity as a thanksgiving for all the activities and achievements of the last twelve months.

A prayer and a reading from the Hebrew scriptures, Ecclesiastes 3, 1-8 which begins; *“To everything there is a season and a time to every activity under the heavens”*, summed it up perfectly.

We gave out sweets, and balloons on strings which were particularly popular! There was plenty of time to talk to staff and students as we strolled around The Street.

We met one young woman from Syria who is very thankful to be here and able to continue her education. She truly appreciates the welcome she has received at the college and the opportunities afforded. A new member of staff who met us for the first time, is also a Catholic youth worker and is keen to work with us when possible.

It was a good morning, positive and part of our remit of presence. Now we're looking forward to being part of college activities in the autumn.



Wishing all staff and students - and Chaplains! - a time to rest and relax over the summer. We'll see you at the Freshers' Fair in September.



Richard reports on celebrations held to celebrate 10 years of Waterways Chaplaincy



In June the Waterways Chaplaincy celebrated 10 years of service to the people who are associated with our canals and rivers. This celebration started with a service of worship at the St Peter ad Vincula (St Peter in chains) church in the Tower of London. We were greeted by the Rev Canon Hall who led the service and the preacher was Pam Rhodes of “Songs of Praise fame. “

After the service we enjoyed refreshments with the congregation which included the actor David Suchet and some of us had the opportunity to speak to him. He was very interested in what we do. The picture shows us gathered outside the church.



The rest of the day was spent wandering around the Tower before we gathered for an afternoon tea and then went our separate ways.

Recently in the West Midlands we have appointed 5 new probationary chaplains and although only 2 of them are in the Birmingham/Solihull area this does mean that more of the area can be covered. The work load doesn't decrease, indeed as more and more people see life on a canal as a cheaper option, that means more work for us as many people find living full time on a boat isn't as idyllic as they thought—but that's what Chaplaincy is about!



If you think you might be interested in becoming a Workplace Chaplain yourself, or know some who might be interested, CIGB will be running an introductory training course in the autumn:

**Introduction to
Voluntary Workplace Chaplaincy**

6 sessions on consecutive Monday evenings
5—7pm starting 1st October

8th Floor, 1 Colmore Row, Birmingham, B3 2JP

For more information please contact Peter Sellick at
peter.sellick@cigb.org.uk
or by phone to 0121 426 0425

**QUOTABLE
QUOTE**

Lord of all eagerness, Lord of all faith,
Whose strong hands were skilled at the plane and the lathe,
Be there at our labours and give us, we pray,
Your strength in our hearts, Lord,
At the noon of the day.

Endings and beginnings . . .

It was with great sadness that we heard the announcement at CIGB's Annual Meeting in May that Hayward Osborne was stepping down from his role as Chair of CIGB.

When Hayward first agreed to Chair CIGB, it was for just one year – but we are so grateful that he stayed thirteen years! During that time CIGB has worked on a number of social issues including Business Ethics, Unemployment Action, Banks, Migrant Workers.



However, the bedrock of CIGB has been the Workplace Chaplaincy itself, providing a distinctive resource for workplace managers and staff. Hayward has had a hugely positive impact on all our work. Hayward has not only chaired the Board of Trustees but has been very much a 'hands on' supporter of the day-to-day life of CIGB. He enjoyed meeting prospective Chaplains on the training course, encouraging both new and existing Chaplaincies, and offering support to Peter Sellick, our Development Director.

When we said farewell to Hayward at our AGM, Mark Fisher (Vice-Chair of Management Council) commented that the trustees had appreciated his leadership in their strategic decisions and planning too. As a representative of a different denomination, Mark thanked Hayward on behalf of other churches for steering this ecumenical organisation.

Hayward replied that he had enjoyed it 'hugely' and was sure that a great future lay ahead for CIGB.

Thank you, Hayward, for 13 years of dedicated service!

New Chair for CIGB



The Presidents of Birmingham Churches Together have been delighted to agree the appointment of The Reverend Steve Faber as the new Chair of CIGB Workplace Chaplaincy.

Steve Faber is the Moderator of the United Reformed Church West Midlands Synod. He has oversight and responsibility for the 123 United Reformed churches in the Synod – covering an area from Staffordshire to Herefordshire.

He has been a URC Minister in Lincolnshire and before that he had a career in computing, including running his own business as a freelance consultant. Steve has already been part of CIGB's annual commissioning services and has known about different sorts of Workplace Chaplaincy from his ministerial positions. His arrival has been warmly welcomed by members of CIGB Management Council, who have already worked with him in other roles. Steve is looking forward to getting to know many of CIGB's chaplains and friends as he takes up this role.



A Day of Refreshment

Being a Workplace Chaplain brings with it all kinds of stresses, and once in a while we like to offer Chaplains an AwayDay—a chance to meet together informally, to worship together and to spend some time in Godly reflection. Irma and Lyn share some of their thoughts:

The CIGB Chaplains AwayDay held on 17th July 2018 was a very positive and uplifting experience. The venue was in a most beautiful setting at St John Baptist Church in Berkswell.



The church itself is over a thousand years old and if you happen to be in the area we would recommend a visit and stroll around the lovely village.

Our day was divided into Worship and Reflection, which perfectly combined relaxation and inspiration. We had an excellent shared lunch which provided the opportunity to get to know other CIGB Chaplains and to share our varied roles and experiences in a relaxed atmosphere.

Val Dalton introduced the day with prayer, readings and music leading us into our journey and this perfectly complimented the thought-provoking themes of our reflections for the day led by Mark Berry.

Mark worked in the Theatre as a lighting and visual designer, he also played in several bands in the 90s before

**QUOTABLE
QUOTE**

Lord of all kindness, Lord of all grace,
Your hands swift to welcome, Your arms to embrace.
Be there at our homing, and give us, we pray,
Your love in our hearts, Lord,
At the eve of the day.

moving into Youth Ministry and then into Pioneer ministry and mission helping form Safespace, a missional community in Telford, Shropshire. Safespace has from the beginning sought to explore it's own creativity in liturgy, visual arts and music, making resources for their own spirituality which were authentic to the context and vision of the community. Mark told us that part of the ethos of Safespace was inspired by St Brendan – sometimes called ‘the Navigator’ who built a boat and after praying with other monks for 40 days set sail in the name of the most Holy Trinity: he took risks. Much of the material produced by Safespace is focused on mission and compassion for the place they find themselves and God's call on them to take risks for the Kingdom.

Mark's decision to work alongside particular individuals and groups, often considered to be marginalised, was both humbling and truly inspirational. Mark seems to be very effective in being open and sharing his Christian faith alongside his personal struggles when and where appropriate. The importance of authenticity in our Chaplaincy roles was shown to be as equally important in our Christian lives and was communicated in a very refreshing and thought-provoking way for the here and now and for the future. This was a very reaffirming experience for daily life and finished his talk with one of St Brendan's prayers:

*“Help me to journey beyond the familiar
and into the unknown.
Give me the faith to leave old ways
and break fresh ground with You.
Christ of the mysteries,
I trust You to be stronger than each storm within me.
I will trust in the darkness
and know that my times, even now, are in Your hand.
Tune my spirit to the music of heaven,
and somehow, make my obedience count for You.
Amen”*



A national conference

Ten CIGB Chaplains were able to attend a recent national conference for Workplace Chaplains from all across the UK. Chris shares some reflections

The Hayes Conference Centre in Swanwick provided the setting for the 2018 Workplace Chaplaincy Mission UK (formerly Industrial Mission Association) Conference. This was a pre-summer opportunity for Chaplains from all over the UK to get together for some learning, encouragement and times of refreshing.



A short trip from Birmingham, I was most grateful to our driver and despite delays on the A42, we were still able to get to the Conference in time for the lunch. Though it seemed that many attending were from shop-based Chaplaincies, as my first Conference, nonetheless I did feel welcomed and able to connect with those attending.

The aim of the Conference was, for us as Chaplains to gather ‘together to reflect on how we keep Chaplaincy sharp and effective in a changing world’. The speakers were from a variety of different Chaplaincies and featured Warren Evans from Sports Chaplaincy UK; Alan Hawkins from The British Independent Retailers Association; and a telephone interview with a manager from a Marks & Spencer store. Worship was led by Cat Harland, Chaplain at Sheffield University.

Although the Conference only lasted for 24 hours, a lot was packed into our time! I think my high spot was being able to share and reflect on my own Chaplaincy, and my work alongside people of other faiths. The stories and different approaches we shared and challenged each other made an interesting discussion!

It was great to have relationships renewed with existing colleagues, working in Birmingham, whilst also meeting some new Chaplains, and catching a vision for Chaplaincy, in other parts of the UK. The hospitality was faultless with full tasty meals, maybe even too much (!) and well provided, clean and welcoming accommodation. I was glad to have invested the time to attend and will find it difficult to find a reason not to be there next year!



**QUOTABLE
QUOTE**

Lord of all gentleness, Lord of all calm,
Whose voice is contentment, whose presence is balm,
Be there at our sleeping, and give us, we pray,
Your peace in our hearts, Lord,
At the end of the day.

MEET THE CHAPLAIN

This time it's the turn of Peggy Baker to appear in the spotlight of our 'Meet the Chaplain' series:



Becoming a voluntary Retail Chaplain began with a Humpty Dumpty experience in late 2010. I had broken my shoulder and after recovery, physio etc an Occupational Therapist encouragingly said, 'Don't worry about the

things you can't do - focus on the things you can'. Easy to say – but things I loved but could no longer do included playing for church services and admin. Long after retiring from NHS secretarial work I had been very active; apart from family and friends, life revolved around Longbridge Baptist Church for my husband John and I.

In Spring 2011 our minister, Stephen Harris, asked would anyone like to hear about voluntary Chaplaincy to future businesses on the demolished Austin car factory site. Feeling useless at church I accompanied him. Another strong emotional response was that being the wife of a former Austin apprentice/longstanding employee, something positive needed to come out of the sudden 2005 collapse of the Austin, which devastated our local community. We listened to Barbara Hayes (CIGB/ Airport Chaplain) and Stephen Plant (Longbridge construction workers Chaplain). This had such an impact on me that I booked a place on the next CIGB Introduction to Workplace Chaplaincy training course.

After the course I shadowed Elaine Hutchinson in the Bullring shopping centre. An amazing experience but on going back to her office I said, 'I can't do this'. I'm so thankful that Elaine persuaded me to reconsider as God was opening a new door for me. I shadowed the Chaplain to Great Western Arcade, who was



leaving soon. She introduced me as someone who was considering Chaplaincy. When a young lady in one shop said 'Does this mean we won't

be having a Chaplain?' my doubts disappeared - I said that I would do it!

I come across many initiatives encouraging people to come to church, but believe that Christians need to offer support to people where they are - at work. As Chaplains we are their guests in the areas we visit so building relationships is easier. The Arcade was a community comprising small independent businesses often staffed by their owners. I found it very humbling when staff greeted me as I wandered about, checking if shops had customers and hearing about what was going on in their lives as well as their businesses. There, and at Longbridge with Val Dalton, there have been frequent opportunities to offer to pray at home for people's concerns. It is strange that one moment you will be chatting about the weather or pets, etc., and then someone tells you how they are worried about a terminally ill friend. It's not all bad news—we hear about new babies, childrens' achievements and many of the other events and happenings in the lives of the people we visit. Retail Chaplaincy has been amazing. I never know what to expect! The way people of different ages and cultures welcome you is perhaps the most surprising thing – but I'm learning something new each visit.

To sum up, I feel truly privileged, humbled and blessed through being a Retail Chaplain, and thankful for all the support and encouragement I've received from so many people.



STOP PRESS

**CIGB
Annual Commissioning Service**

Sunday November 25th
3pm

Acock's Green Methodist Church
1 Botteville Rd, Birmingham B27 7YE
Guest Speaker: Paula Gooder

**More information to follow later—but please
put the date in your diary!**

**QUOTABLE
QUOTE**

"Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much."

When Managers change

Managers come and managers go in the modern ever-changing workplace. How does this affect us as Chaplains, and what, if anything can we do about it? Peter Sellick writes:



A number of our workplace Chaplaincy teams have been through re-negotiations when workplace managers have changed and a new pattern of Chaplaincy relationship has to be established. At our Chaplains' Team Meeting in June we discussed how we respond to these situations and how we can learn from them.

Often chaplains found the experience difficult and dis-spiriting: a lot of work that may have been put into an old pattern of working that might be lost, and going around the cycle again was not attractive. But sometimes the change brought good news: new managers have allowed Chaplaincy developments that predecessors had not favoured.

But our experiences are only a small taste of what it was like for staff when their own managers change.

Some recommendations from our chaplains:

- ◇ Pray for the change and the organisation; and discuss the situation with chaplaincy colleagues.
- ◇ Have a written specification / agreement of the chaplaincy pattern: even if there is change, there is an agenda for the conversation
- ◇ Seek an early meeting with the new manager and be ready to clearly highlight the benefits and scope of the chaplaincy
- ◇ Seek advocacy of chaplaincy from members of staff: ask them to mention chaplaincy to their manager
- ◇ Persevere with chaplaincy, even if it is hard to develop a relationship the new management
- ◇ Aim for an open chaplaincy relationship with managers – they are staff too. Try to have a regular update meeting with them as matter of course.

Do share your own experiences and suggestions with us!

Peter Sellick has developed a template for a one-page annual report about chaplaincy, for managers, which is available from CIGB office.

It seems appropriate to include a prayer of blessing which was sent to one of our Chaplains by a senior manager who had been very supportive, but who was leaving the company ...

A blessing, as we manage change:

When we have to manage change affecting ourselves and the lives of others, bless us with the courage to notice and name the cost and the pain of change, with empathy and emotional intelligence as we let go of old patterns; and bless us with clarity to notice and nurture the creative possibilities of change, with resilience and self-knowledge as we embrace new horizons.

May we travel the path of change, in all its risk and potential, all its failures and achievements, with compassion for ourselves and others, with clarity of vision and with integrity of heart.

And may we journey together, supporting and encouraging one another, regaining perspective, working with the head and the heart, as we embrace the changes of life, in the workplace and beyond.



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' 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".

STAY IN TOUCH

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