

# ***Ministers-at-Work***

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## Editorial

The work environment has never been so demanding, so pressured.. Whilst on some measures unemployment is at an all-time low, on others there are many more people juggling various contracts in the ‘gig’ economy, or working part-time in a variety of enterprises. Many whose work seemed secure are finding themselves caught up in job cuts – as I write even Sainsbury’s – surely food retail is one of the most secure areas? - is looking at cutting jobs. In traditional workplaces, (healthcare, education to name but two) staff are under increasing pressure. Where is God in all of this? Or perhaps where do we see glimpses of the God we know is there somewhere? And how can we walk alongside other people as they negotiate this unstable, helter-skelter world?

The CHRISM Annual Conference 2017 ‘Ministry in modern ways of working’ took place at Westminster College, Cambridge (the URC Training College) between 14th – 16th July 2017. We welcomed Richard Higginson as our keynote speaker to look at Christian Entrepreneurship. A summary appears below. A review of his book will appear in our next journal (there is just too much in this one!) We looked at ‘Traditional’ work, Consultancy, Portfolio working and Retirement, and worked in smaller groups to unpick each of

these. Again, group members have summarised discussions below. In addition, we undertook visits, (one is described below) and reflected on our own experience. John Lees, who sadly was not able to be with us, contributed an extended paper on fragile work and workplace ministry, foreshadowing his book to be published next year.

In addition in this issue there is a summary of the Taylor Review which also looked at some of these questions and was published in the summer. We have several further contributions relating to this summer's meeting of international worker priests, and also looking ahead to next year in Manchester. This will be a fantastic opportunity to meet some of these pioneers, whose work is very often in rather different sectors – often piece work, temporary and unskilled work – raising different opportunities to glimpse God acting... We also hear from two organisations for ministers at work which have called it a day. However, on a more upbeat note, a meeting for SSM Officers following the publication of the 'Setting God's People Free' report took place early this month and was very positive.

able to  
our next

We hope to be  
report more in  
edition.



## **Conference Contributions: Christian Entrepreneurship – Richard Higginson**

Richard Higginson is – among other things - Director of Faith in Business at Ridley Hall, Cambridge. A former student at Ridley Hall, Kina Robertshaw, began to explore just what might be Christian entrepreneurship during her study and has pursued this work as part of a collaborative project with Richard. Kina is now curate of Bromyard.

43 Bishops were asked to nominate ‘entrepreneurs’. Ten of them responded – and some of those nominated suggested others. A large cluster were identified in the North West but others across England. They were at different stages of faith, and aged from twenties to mid-seventies. They worked in a variety of sectors including car sales, construction, toy retail and ceramics. Most were white, with a few Asian or African. Most were Anglican. Most were men, but a few women. Each of them were interviewed by Kina, with 23 questions in all. Interviews were recorded and transcribed.

Richard highlighted some entrepreneurs in scripture: Jacob – an entrepreneur in the shadows; Nehemiah – a project manager; Lydia – a dealer in purple cloth; the virtuous wife of Proverbs 31. God is also presented as an entrepreneur – as a shepherd, potter, king and judge – as visionary, creative and risk taking. In history, Richard identified some 19th century Christian Entrepreneurs: the Clark brothers (shoemakers); Titus Salt who manufactured textiles at Saltaire; George Cadbury – chocolate manufacturer of Bournville, and in the twentieth century, John Laing, in construction.

Thinking about current entrepreneurs, he cited Richard Branson, Anita Roddick and James Dyson. He suggested that there has been an expansion of entrepreneurship in the past decade, and an increase in social enterprise. In the global south, the church is often involved in entrepreneurial activity.



The definition provided for an ‘entrepreneur’ was, at its simplest: ‘someone who starts their own business’. More explicitly, it might be ‘someone who habitually creates and innovates to produce something of value.’ Richard and Kina suggest that it might be unpacked as someone who: ‘pursues opportunities to commercialise innovation, taking the lead in marshalling resources to provide goods and services in the marketplace in a new and different way.’

Among their respondents, some saw it as a calling, some came to see it as such over time, and some were resistant to the idea that they might be doing God’s will. Where they were motivated by passion this was often seen as a gift from God. Some saw it as contributing to the advancement of God’s Kingdom. For some, making an excellent product makes the world a better place. For some their focus is on embodying Christian values. Some interpreted it as talking about their faith – for example inviting customers to carol services or to Chinese meals at which there might be discussion about faith. Some identified the importance of charitable giving from their wealth – like many of the 19<sup>th</sup> century philanthropists – for example restaurateurs giving money to charities in Africa. Prayer was important to all. Most were optimistic, seeing challenges as opportunities. As to their relationships with churches, these varied – from some who received

considerable support to many others who were disappointed. Richard concluded by suggesting that these were faithful followers – disciples – who felt they had a special responsibility because they set an example as outgoing confident people. He encouraged the church to ask them to help it think outside the box and not to marginalise them.

## A visit to Churchill College

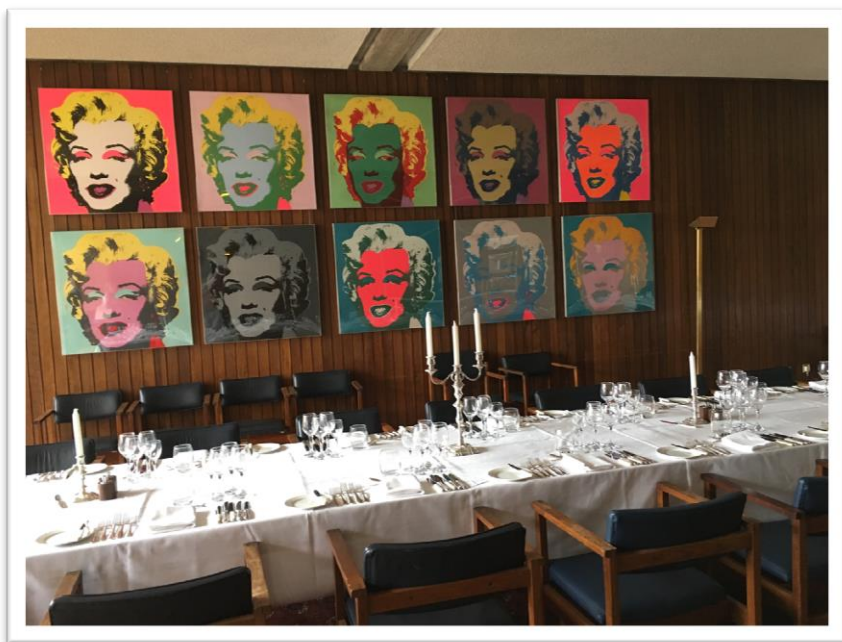
A group of us went to Churchill College, Phil Aspinall's alma mater, to meet with Shelley Surtees, the Domestic Bursar.

She told us that this is one of 31 colleges in the University of Cambridge, and a national and Commonwealth memorial to Sir Winston. He had visited MIT in the US, and saw the potential for a science focused college. He raised money to endow such a college, planted two trees on the chosen site, and then died. The college is now a world class centre for science. 70% of its student body are scientists (STEM - Science Technology Engineering and Maths) and 30% arts. It is one of two colleges in the University whose Head of House is appointed by HM Queen. The current Head is Dame Athene Donald, a physicist, a feminist, passionate about equality and women in science.



There are 550 undergraduates in the college, most for 3-4 years. More are now staying for four years, so the College has built new accommodation to save them from having to rent outside in their final year. The College currently has enough accommodation for all undergraduates. All students live in during their first year then often live out in their second until the exam term, when they realise the benefits of college – for example ‘bedders’ (cleaners) don’t use their hoovers in exam time; there are cakes and biscuits available in the library!

There are over 250 advanced students (postgraduates) – some doing MPhils, others PhDs. There are 140 academic Fellows and 140 non-academic Fellows. Each tutor has a private office. Some Fellows live in in Fellows’ ‘sets’ (flats) consisting of bedroom, study and sitting room. Junior Research Fellows (competitive postdoctoral appointments) are appointed for 3 years and teach in their sets.





We met Allen Packwood, the Director of the Churchill Archives Centre. This was funded by wealthy American donors and opened at the College in 1973 with 2500 boxes of Churchill's own papers and related materials. In 1995 a Heritage Lottery Fund grant enabled the archive to purchase papers from great contemporaries and successors of Churchill. The collection now includes papers from Thatcher (who helped raise £5m for a new wing), Kinnock, Brockway and Powell as well as some military and scientific pioneers – for example Frank Whittle. Most papers are closed for 20 years after the owner dies, some are closed for 30 years. The archive has ring fenced endowments, but has obtained grants – for example from the Wellcome Trust to top up materials and develop the catalogue. Big collections are now digitised. Churchill's papers are free at the point of access.

Shelley was keen for us to understand that the college is not a business, it is a charity, to advance learning and knowledge in support of research. Endowments are invested and make interest. Properties are let for income and appreciate in value. The development team work with alumni and other potential donors. The commercial operation, which Shelley is responsible for makes around 2m a year with a 70% margin. The objective for every member of staff (140fte) is to achieve academic excellence – everyone is encouraged to reflect on how they contribute to this. There is a sense of communal coherence. Everything is in house – window cleaning, pest control, fire safety, gardening etc. The site covers 42 acres. Conference business is important but they try to balance this and look at how far values align. Staff turnover is very low. People are motivated. The living wage foundation rate is paid as a minimum, and every member of staff receives a free lunch. Between 12-1.30 academics, other staff and students all sit and eat together. Shelley talked of a meeting of minds – and it seemed that this fostered a strong sense of community. For events, permanent staff are offered options in advance, and if more staff are needed, casual staff are often drawn from children and grandchildren of staff

(over 16 unless parents on site), sixth formers or university students. They are invited to events with permanent staff. Some move into permanent employment.

Around 52% of students come from the state sector. Some may offer to work in the vacation if they cannot go home for various reasons. The Senior Tutor might direct some to apply for work or



prioritise accommodation needs. Bursaries and welfare funds are available in case of financial hardship. The domestic staff notice if something seems wrong with a student – Shelley said they all have good judgement as to whether there is a need to escalate to Shelley or the Senior Tutor. Shelley keeps her door open and has a dog in her office to make it informal.

Shelley herself has an interest in training and development and gave several examples of facilitating people to take on new and extended roles. She noted that whilst many lower level staff had been recruited from Europe, with Brexit the pool had largely dried up.

The college is a secular foundation, and it had no chapel at its inception. When the Trustees decided to build a chapel (right on the boundary) Sir Francis Crick (an atheist) resigned his Fellowship and gave a small sum of money to be used for a brothel! Interfaith provision is still at a very early stage: a quiet room for prayer with

washing facilities was shown to us but is really a partially repurposed cupboard- better than nothing but not yet close to optimal.

We completed our excellent visit with a tour of the site, then thanked Shelley very much for her time. Overall we were all impressed by the strong sense of community and values which shone through, and which appeared to make this a very positive work environment.

## **Contexts of Ministry: Traditional work**

Two academics, a judge and an insurance underwriter. Traditional mainly in that we each work for a large organisation (whether public or private). We spent a little time outlining the day to day realities of each of our jobs, and uncovered the importance of physical space (ranging from shared or open plan offices, a temporary portacabin, to individual offices which can be personalised). We noted that relationships with colleagues, staff and customers/ clients / students are important – and that some experiences of change (of office, or technology for example) can facilitate closer bonding. We noted that in all our work we experienced an ‘institution v individual’ mentality. Technology was changing the nature of work in all of our workplaces, whether by automating processes, making it easier to be contactable at distance, or speeding up work. Finally we talked about status and identity – each of our roles inhabiting a particular space in the organisations we were part of – and how it was looked at by colleagues, staff and customers/ clients / students.

Looking at ministry in our traditional workplaces, we spoke of challenging injustice. We sought to advocate for humanity over against productivity and administrative efficiency. Quality – the quality of our doing -and safety in the work we do is also an aspect of ministry. We also recognised that there were times when our ministry was ‘being’ or seeking to bring the fruits of the Spirit to bear in situations. Finally we also discussed offering mental health first aid, given the prevalence of mental distress in many of our workplaces, as elsewhere.

## Contexts of Ministry: Consulting

### What do we do ?

We were a group of four people all engaged in some form of consultancy: undertaking project work for the international coal industry; providing training and risk assessment support to the high hazard industries; assisting villagers in Tanganyika: working on contracts with SMEs in supply chains. All of us now work as self-employed, working from home, although one had worked for 16 years employed by a consultancy and therefore based in a community.

As we talked, we listed some of the characteristics of this form of work:

- Home office – working alone, and without travelling “to work”
- Choice – we have the flexibility to decide which contracts to take
- Constricted time-scale – contracts are often pressurised for time
- Remote relationships – work may be done only at home, without physical contact
- Expertise – this is principally what we are selling; it is about us and our skills
- New communities – we find ourselves, short term, with new groups of people
- Delivering training – “converting” people to new ways of thinking and behaving
- Care - for the environment (climate change issues); and people (safety)

Even the consultant employed in a consultancy business found that these same principles applied: true there was a base community (an office of 120 people – where relationships developed and were very important) but he visited there perhaps once a month and so was also mainly working from home or out and about on short term contracts at clients’ sites. So we can see that for many employed consultants, the same principles may apply as to the self-employed.

Much of our time is spent acquiring new contracts. How do we sell ourselves ? • Long term contacts – the networks where our expertise is known • General marketing – blanket mailings and “cold calling” • Networking events – technical symposia and conferences Relationships are the most important factor for most of us and blanket marketing is generally found not to prove effective. When being interviewed for a job with a consultancy, the key question is always: “Which contacts can you bring with you ?”.



We came back to the question of choice, and identified some key factors: • For whom we work – different companies and their reputations • For how much – what is our value / what is the “Market price” or going rate • Where we work – locations and travelling – are all countries acceptable ? • Moral choices - what types of industries and Clients (we referred back to the CHRISM conference in Liverpool where we talked about acceptable work: what is safe ? What is clean ? But we acknowledged the pressure to say “yes” to a piece of work – because we do not want to lose the work, or to become known as not available, and so closing down the possibility of further jobs.

### How is this Ministry ?

Our key objective was to explore how we describe this way of working as ministry, when so many of the existing models are based around a fixed physical location: the gathered community church in strictly church-focused terms or an office, factory or institution for many MSEs. We find that we speak from a new platform of patterns of work not attached to a permanent location.

So we began by considering the work we had described and asking how it might be described as ministry.

Ministry is:

- Thinking outside the box – challenging to new ways of doing things
- Showing people how to do something – helping them learn, not telling them
- Finding people who can be/are entrepreneurs – those who can lead with vision
- Giving faith something can be built – building self-confidence in people
- Building trust – the clients who rely on us to speak with the corporate voice
- Getting our hands dirty – in commercial contracts and the fees we charge

We asserted that: All this is Priestly Ministry. And we reminded ourselves of the CHRISM Conference at High Leigh in 2015 when we talked about the ABC of MSE. (Absolution, Blessing and Celebration in our work).

Ministry is:

- Hanging about at event / meetings - Ministry by presence. Being in the space which is not “church” (and being available)

- In the small / short duration tasks / contracts / training courses - in what we bring though our own skills; and in the way we quickly build relationships and trust
- In long term relationships with key clients – which can become personal and pastoral (and through repeat contracts, build relationships with others in the firm).
- Recognising the person who is doing it (Building the Kingdom of God) – such as Shelley, who some of us had met on the visit to Churchill (see the visit report).



We talked a little about the specific meaning of ordained ministry, although recognising that all Christians are called to ministry where they are, in the spirit of CHRISM. Ordination is a sign that the church is engaged with these new ways of working, and, at least, means that the church has to talk about it. But we recognised that we do not have to do it all (indeed, cannot) - we have already referred to the prophetic role of seeing and encouraging those who do exercise “ministry” (and maybe, if the circumstances are right, identifying them).

But we ran out of time to talk about the itinerant model of the Friar, as opposed to the Monk who is based in a fixed community. There is much to be said for developing further this model of the Friar,

based on a model of Ministry which the church might actually be able to understand. But that will have to be the task of another CHRISM conference !

## **Contexts of Ministry: Retirement / Volunteering**

Following a stimulating presentation by Margaret Joachim on Saturday morning outlining some of the opportunities and losses created through retirement, a group of six of us met to explore the contexts in which we lived and ministered. Being a CHRISM Annual Conference we were, of course, a varied and articulate group of individuals who brought different identities, experiences and stories to the discussions. Our commonality lay in a shared interest in the nature of retirement, whether experienced or in anticipation. Moreover, we were a privileged age-specific group who were positively skewed in terms of health, financial well-being and educational advantage.

We were encouraged by Margaret to itemise the things that we did every day as individuals and then reflect on what our ministries as MSEs (Ministry in Secular Environments) might look like. The lively discussions by Sunday morning revealed the varied contexts in which we lived and ministered. Nevertheless, certain shared aspects of our ministries became apparent:

- The importance of Jesus' second commandment, subsequent to the centrality of our primary relationship with God, which presupposes that we have learnt to love ourselves before we love our neighbours.
- We create opportunities for intentional pastoral work.
- On retirement we don't lose our social responsibilities within our various communities and these can be augmented with things like volunteering.
- Making ourselves accessible for encounters with others – including the use of social media.



- The significance of the ripples that we can create in the different ponds of our daily activities and communities.
- We have choice in the number and type of opportunities that we accept to participate in 'formal' ministry.
- We have an important role to perform in supporting other people's employment.
- Encouraging social interaction and avoiding the pitfalls of isolation and introspection.
- In all of the above, there is a deliberate choice that we make in the use of our existing skills, wisdom and past experiences where they are valued, and, crucially, where we enjoy using them.

Retirement can offer a wide variety of choices and the freedom to be creative in our use of time no longer constrained by the disciplines of employment. Nevertheless, we were very aware that our priorities and enthusiasms will shift over time and as our circumstances change. There is always a need to be mindful and maintain a level of positive regard, self-worth and value. Nevertheless, we have each been given the gift of life and it is our privilege to seize each day with all its opportunities and live intentionally. God continues to call and we are free to respond.



*One member who was not able to be present at the conference was John Lees, who has written widely on ministry at work, and the changing workplace. Below he has contributed a paper on some of the issues which he identified the conference theme*

## **Work – fluid or fragile? Key issues for workplace ministry – John Lees**

### **Job Fragility**

In the UK, a lot of people are working – around 32 million in 2017. According to the Office for National Statistics, in July 2017 the proportion of people in the UK aged 16–64 in work reached a record high point, and so did the number of job openings - in August 2017, 774,000 job vacancies were recorded.mp

In short, the UK's job market appears buoyant. However behind these figures we can identify a new reality – work has become more fragile, and less secure. A Guardian article in May 2013 reported that work pressure and job insecurity felt by UK workers had reached a 20 year high. Many surveys reveal that workers feel insecure in their work – they feel that job security is diminished, their career progression uncertain, and opportunities for promotion and development are less forthcoming. Organisations often 'churn' talented staff – laying some off and acquiring new workers within a short period of time. Confidence about long-term job security has certainly weakened. For example the CIPD in Autumn 2013 reported that 23% of workers in the public sector felt it was likely or very likely they would lose their jobs. Unsurprisingly, those who felt insecure in their jobs also felt less engaged.

A range of factors are in play - the speed of change in the modern workplace is evident, but so is deep uncertainty about the future of the British economy and its position within Europe. Job fragility is

reinforced by the way organisations reshape themselves repeatedly. Where organisations restructure extensively, the psychological contract is often weakened, if not torn up. Some staff have to re-apply for their own jobs, or work in departments which are re-organised on a yearly basis. Research published in early 2016 by Professor Karina Nielsen of Norwich Business School revealed that extensive restructuring has a measurably negative effect on employee well-being, even where there are no job losses.

As we become less certain about work, we move around more. In January 2015 the CIDP reported that 37% of people planned to leave their job in the year ahead, and in mid-2015 the Daily



Telegraph reported that nearly half of UK workers wanted a career change. The Office for National Statistics indicates that in any 3-month period around 650,000 people change jobs in the UK – that's in addition to people entering work for the first time. Close analysis of this data shows an increase in the number of people who are actively choosing to resign from their job to take up another. Financial Times journalist Sarah O'Connor calls this the 'take this job and shove it' index. In March 2015 she found that over a third of people moving jobs had resigned in order to do so.

The media suggests significant growth in self-employment. Self-employment in the UK increased from 3.8 million in 2008 to 4.85 million in 2017 (about 15% of workers). Self-employment can provide significantly increased autonomy and flexibility. It can also lead to professional isolation.

There has also been a surge in temporary and part-time jobs. Recruitment agencies place over a million temporary workers each year.

8.5 million people were working part-time in November 2016, 86,000 more than four years earlier. The vast majority of part-time workers are women. The UK has also seen a growth in what has been described as 'portfolio' working, i.e. where an individual has a range of separate contractual arrangements with a number of organisations. Portfolio working may include some salaried work, some freelance work, and volunteering.

### Work – the new deal

About a million UK workers are on zero hours contracts. With a zero hours contract an employer can send someone home with no notice, and make no promises about the availability or steadiness of work. Critics of the practice say it subverts a century of employee protection by allowing employers to turn the pay tap on or off at a whim. Many zero hours workers would like to work more hours and have more predictable work patterns. Others say that the system offers useful flexibility, allowing organisations to create new jobs and offer hours that some find convenient.

One interesting spin-off of zero hours contracting is that workers are sent home when work pressure slackens off. This means that they sometimes only experience work when it's busy, and don't have the opportunity of doing the things that employees do when work is quieter – learning how to do the job better, or spending time getting to know work colleagues. Like many other trends, work is decreasing as a place of socialisation.

Many job seekers today find that the quality of jobs on offer has diminished – jobs are available, but they are sometimes poorly paid or offer only limited prospects for skill development or



advancement. More than a few people in the economy have taken on more than one job just to keep their heads above water, particularly where there is no guarantee of working hours in their main role. Some parts of the working population have taken a real hit, particularly 16–24 year olds, but the market has been tough on workers over 50 too. Underemployment is as big a problem as unemployment.

Poverty has not reduced as a result of more people working. Calculations show that ‘absolute’ poverty has increased. A recent report from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation indicated that one in eight UK workers is now living in poverty, meaning a total of 7.4 million people, including 2.6 million children, are in poverty despite being a working family. There are approximately 130,000 unpaid family workers in the UK: people who work in a family business who do not receive a formal wage or salary but benefit from the profits of that business. Around 7 million people in the UK economy work as unpaid carers supporting family members, providing huge savings to local authorities and the NHS.

### Seeing a bigger picture

Anyone engaged in workplace ministry, whether in a formal chaplaincy role or as an MSE embedded in work will no doubt wish to consider the way work is changing, and to consider the impact of these changes in their ministry. For example, a weakening of the psychological contract between employer and employee has profound effects on job satisfaction and personal confidence. There is also evidence that work is becoming more isolating – pointing to clear pastoral needs.



As MSEs we might all reflect on the way the experience of work is changing:

- Work continues to be an important source of fulfilment, motivation, and provides important opportunities for socialisation.
- While many economies experience significant levels of unemployment, the UK offers a relatively buoyant picture, but this picture can mask high levels of job insecurity and a large number of part-time and zero hours jobs.
- The UK is a highly flexible labour market allowing for a wide range of employment mechanisms including self-employed

contractors, retained professionals, part-time working, zero hours contracts, short-term and seasonal contracts. The flexibility of the UK labour market suits many employers and workers, but can also lead to insecurity, social isolation.

- Self-employment continues to increase, although most jobs are permanent salaried positions (not necessarily full-time).
- The graduate marketplace remains highly competitive with a large number of graduates entering the marketplace, sometimes unable to secure 'graduate' roles.
- Many British workers are under subtle psychological pressure to work long hours, sometimes while they are at home, sometimes at the weekends.
- Volunteering is common in the UK economy, and is undertaken for a variety of reasons. Sometimes the volunteer city wishes to contribute free labour to an attractive cause. Sometimes voluntary work is taken as a stopgap in order to improve skills and to provide CV experience. It is an increasingly common entry route for young people, including graduates. However there is also evidence that volunteers get 'stuck' in unpaid work, and employers can sometimes over-exploit this resource.
- Although the UK expenses low levels of unemployment, working poverty has become a significant feature of the economy.

MSEs perhaps need new opportunities to think about how we respond to this rapidly changing environment which, for many, redefines what work is.

**John Lees** is a career strategist and writer, and an Anglican priest. He serves as an MSE in Exeter Diocese where he is Bishop's Officer for Self

Supporting Ministry. He has written 14 books including the best-selling **How to Get a Job You Love**.

His latest book is **Self Supporting Ministry – A Practical Handbook**, to be published by SPCK in April 2018.

## Information Resources

### ONS

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/uklabourmarket/september2017>

### Self-employment

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/articles/trendsinselfemploymentintheuk/2001to2015>

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/self-employment/is-self-employment-right-for-you>

### Voluntary work

<https://blogs.ncvo.org.uk/2016/04/11/sharp-increase-in-young-peoples-volunteering/>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/2017/01/11/demanding-experience-graduate-employers-fueling-exploitative/>

### Job insecurity

<https://www.theguardian.com/money/2013/may/20/british-workers-less-secure-more-stressed>

### Zero hours contracts

<https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/fundamentals/emp-law/terms-conditions/zero-hours-reality-report>



<http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/want-to-know-the-depressing-reality-of-zero-hours-contracts-take-a-look-at-sports-direct-a6769896.html>

## **Temporary and part-time jobs**

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/uklabourmarket/jan2017>

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2015/may/21/temporary-and-part-time-jobs-surge-promotes-inequality-says-oecd>

## **Working Poverty**

<http://www.economist.com/news/britain/21701216-number-working-poor-growing-blame-high-house-prices-low-productivity-and-too-little>

<https://www.jrf.org.uk/press/work-poverty-hits-record-high-housing-crisis-fuels-insecurity>



## **Unpaid care workers**

<https://www.carersuk.org/news-and-campaigns/news/unpaid-carers-save-the-uk-132-billion-a-year-the-cost-of-a-second-nhs>

## **Working Hours**

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2005/aug/20/britishidentity.health>

<http://startups.co.uk/business-reality-entrepreneurs-work-an-average-50-5-hours-a-week/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/money/2016/nov/18/daily-commute-of-two-hours-reality-for-37m-uk-workers>

## **Concerns about automation**

<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2017/mar/24/millions-uk-workers-risk-replaced-robots-study-warns>

## **International Conference of Worker Priests - June 2017 - English Contribution**

### **Condemned to Insecurity?**

*This is the translation back into English of the paper originally written in French in the early spring, and presented at the Pentecost conference in Essen, Germany.*

### **1. Our experiences of work and of life in the current situation in our societies**

Think of a city such as Coventry – once regarded as the principal English city for the production of cars. Now the sites of the car factories have become shopping parks with large shops, or buildings for the new industry – the university. In the USA, they talk of the “Rust Belt” – the towns with factories in ruins that remain “as gravestones throughout the land”.

Many towns and cities in England (as throughout the rest of Europe) had for many decades large industrial businesses in which employed many thousands of workers. But the factories have disappeared; and people find themselves without work, and without the possibility of finding work. Perhaps some of the younger ones are able to find work in the service industries or the IT sector. But most of them

are the forgotten ones, “the left behind”, left outside the life of the world of business.

But we know many young people who want to find a different way of working – not employed by a business, but working from home in many different activities, for example, in the new media of the internet. They talk of a “portfolio lifestyle”. They can decide when they want to work, and for whom – perhaps from time to time working with friends or sometimes alone. They want to remain free – happy to rent a flat, without the need to own a house as their parents did (but on the other hand, houses have become too expensive!)



Sue said: “I work for the largest life assurance company in the UK. As underwriters, we are a department of 150, working in 5 different towns. It is a profession which requires high levels of knowledge and technical competence. So underwriters were very much in demand.

But today customers demand instant decisions when they are looking for life assurance on the internet. So advances in technology have led to 85% of the decisions being calculated automatically by computer. In January, the group of 13 Underwriters in the Birmingham office were made redundant. It was a great shock! Certainly for our colleagues in Birmingham, but also for those in the other locations. A profession that was once secure has now become very fragile. The knowledge that *only* 10% of the underwriters had been made redundant was not a comfort for those who remain. Everyone is afraid – perhaps it will be me next time. Insecurity engenders insecurity!”

Phil said: "I was made redundant in October 2015, at the same time as three other friends of our group working as consultants for dangerous factories in the high hazard industries. We were a small piece of a large company called "Arcadis" - most of the employees work in the construction of major buildings, offices, and 'infrastructure' projects. So many friends remained in their jobs - but what has happened with them?

During the last few months, those who remained in the process safety group have been moved out of the company and put into a small independent business. Some have opted to take early retirement; just four of my former colleagues remain. And now the members of the group working in the safety of the nuclear industries are under threat of redundancy. Always insecurity!"

## **2a. Where do the fears and feelings of insecurity come from - for us and for the people around us?**

We are living with many causes of insecurity, including:

- Globalisation leading to insecurity in employment
- Zero-hours contracts
- Subsistence salaries and a drop in the level of social security free at the point of contact
- New employment laws and further reductions in the power of unions – and hence in their attractiveness to new members
- Budgeting for health services
- Immigration and the fear, actual or imagined, that salaries are reduced by new arrivals who are prepared to accept lower pay
- Immigrants and their children facing up to prejudice and violence for the indigenous population

- With more and more automation (in factories and agriculture)

A programme on Radio 4, “The Digital Human”, talked of an “epidemic of anger”. A rise in resentment caused by the new media such as Facebook and Twitter. They generate and propagate an anger which is used by politicians (for example, such as Trump, Le Pen and Modi). They create a frenzy among the general population and a politics of exclusion and hatred. People only see society from their own perspective and do not think of the situation of others. People are simply completely overcome with anger – they no longer see the issues of injustice and inequality in society which should truly move them to anger.

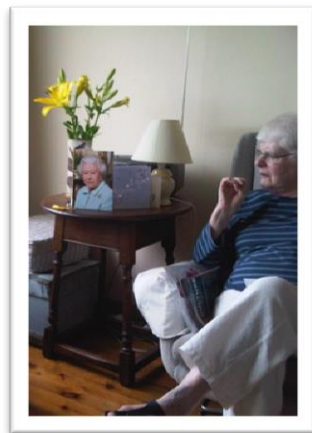
We have many fears for the environment: concerns linked to pollution, the destabilisation caused by global warming. In addition, we are scared by those who argue against the science of climate change among the movements of the right, especially in the United States.

In countries such as the United Kingdom and Hungary, people make demands for legislation against immigration. But they do not understand that some categories of workers are important - agriculture, health, conservation, service and leisure industries etc.

All societies have demographic changes. One country has many young people who need education; another has many older people in need of care and assistance - who will pay for all this? And how?

## **2b. What view do we take of the rise of nationalisms around Europe?**

There is an entire class who feels, with some justification, that their current Government has abandoned them. They have subsistence



wages or benefits without hope of improvement - the “Precariat”. Where can they turn? Looking for nationalistic renewal may seem too easy an answer.

Popular political parties are talking about the possibility of recreating industrial life once again. It is a direction that is ill-advised - the world has moved on. Industries are modernised, or are inappropriate because of pollution or are no longer necessary. The hard work is done automatically; so the new jobs are being created in computing and automation.

Those who chose the parties of the right will be disappointed. Either the Foreign workers and immigrants will remain; or they will leave (or be forced out) – will people from the industrial cities of North of England move to the agricultural landscape of the East to work in the fields of lettuce?

### **3. What helps us in this situation to create together a way of stability, security and confidence?**

We can support activities at the political level, such as:

- The idea of a guaranteed basic income can give hope; it is being tried in Finland, Utrecht, Ontario and is planned for Glasgow,
- An end to the programmes of austerity,
- Tax reform to begin the redistribution of incomes,
- Political reform - perhaps proportional representation in the United Kingdom

But we still have many questions:

- There are many people who talk about the construction of barriers, fences - how can we destroy them and open the doors?

- How can we talk with each other, across borders, languages, cultures, faiths, different political ideas...?
- How can we reconnect the forgotten people with society and the political system - and reconnect the system with them?

But we find signs of hope in our commitments, in activities together, e.g. in working for charities and among the churches, and in new forms of work such as small cooperative workshops, and in the creativity of the human spirit.

Psalm 133.1. How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!



Habakkuk 3.17 Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Saviour.

"I, Daniel Blake." A film - a story of the current reality in England.

For the first time in his life, Daniel Blake, a 59 year-old English Carpenter, is forced to rely on social assistance as a result of heart problems. But although his doctor has told him not to work, he is required to seek employment or lose his benefits. During his regular appointments to the "job centre", Daniel comes across Katie, a single mother of two children who was forced to accept a property 450 km from her hometown in order not to be placed in foster care. Caught in the nets of administrative traps of the Britain of today, Daniel and Katie try to help each other...

## Lettre Ouvert

***This is a letter conceived at the International Worker Priests conference in Essen and finalised in a plenary session. I have attempted to render this into idiomatic English maintaining the thrust and verve of the original quite militant meeting. I think that it could be the basis of a useful document to disseminate.***  
**Nick Yates**

### An Open Letter from the Meeting of International Worker Priests

Gathered in ESSEN (Germany) 4 June 2017

Delegates comprised Worker-Priests and brother and sister workers, Catholics and Protestants, from the Netherlands, Switzerland, Germany, France, Belgium, England, Italy, Spain and Catalonia. Who will meet again in England in 2018.

\*\*\*\*\*

This letter is in response to repeated calls from Pope Francis To “listen to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.” We want to add our words and deeds to those of all women and men of good will, campaigners and activists, who choose to speak truth to power, standing in solidarity in our common search of justice for all.

#### WAYS OF PEACE, WAYS OF UNIVERSAL LOVE!

How can we face up to and deal adequately with the precarious life that affects a large number of European citizens?

We must confront the challenges of those who face this insecurity!

\* Many of us are affected directly or indirectly as these challenges have many guises: - Salaries that are not enough to live on. - Work contracts that are often limited to part-time or zero hours. - Residence permits are very difficult to obtain. - The fear of job loss, of unemployment. - For those who lose their jobs near the end



of their working lives and are unable to find new employment before they reach retirement age. - For those who care for others: parents, loved ones, the elderly, the disabled, and who take on great extra responsibilities which take time. - The risk of illness.

\* This insecurity causes great concern for the future for those affected by it. The way forward is to be found in an ambitious political project.

Thus, we must work for a realistic political settlement that aims to:

- make life possible amongst all the difficulties; - enable people to overcome the shame of unemployment and dare to share problems with others;

- find ways of escaping the isolation caused by unemployment and to support each other.

\*Many, particularly the young, feel abandoned and excluded, be it from the world of work, or socially or economically, that they no longer expect anything from society and reject the process of democracy. They cannot see the relevance of participating in, or discussing, political issues. They are so marginalized that they cannot see the point in taking part in the political process, so they exert no influence over any decision-making process. As a result, they see themselves as abandoned by society and choose not to vote, or as a protest, they vote for nationalist parties that encourage and stoke the fears, apprehensions and prejudices of the general public and the elements of the press.

### Questions for Europe

- Has Europe forgotten its history, the bloody wars that devastated many European nations in the 20th century and before? - Has the succession of treaties rejected by some nations in the European Parliament not betrayed the generous idea of fraternity and of free exchange and acceptance of ideas amongst the peoples of Europe, which led to the formation of the European Union? - In the same

way, have the European countries, facing the influx of migrations induced by Climate Change, and linked to civil or fratricidal conflict and war, forgotten the fact that these are the same peoples that they exploited and oppressed during the colonial era? -What is more, these same nations are, for the most part, signatories of the Geneva Convention concerning the right of asylum? - This lack of consideration, this form of contempt, persists for those struggling financially as well as those populations of migrants who have come en masse looking for safety and security.

This state of affairs which affects us today will have severe implications for future generations unless we can devise a new political settlement where justice triumphs over profit.

We are making an urgent call for:

A Europe with open borders: - a Europe which welcomes all those fleeing wars and their evil consequences. - a Europe which respects human rights, of which the right of asylum is fundamental. - a Europe which refuses to criminalize migrants, or to repatriate them to the last country of origin without a legal ruling, which could mean a return to a region of war or oppression. - a Europe which refuses to be an actor in the prevailing general indifference towards migrants which makes itself culpable of a crime against humanity.

A common European political and economic settlement: - Which does not cause suffering amongst the peoples of Europe by confronting the ruin of old heavy industry with its consequent loss of employment and the means of production. - Which responds to the growing destruction of the environment by confronting globalization and the unfettered free competition among nations and among workers. - Which refuses 'partnership treaties' that are often the cause of exploitation of third world peoples. - Which respects the rights of all workers and promotes decent working conditions.

**BECAUSE WE DESIRE**

A living Europe - democratic on the political level – economically just – cohesive on the social level – pluralistic on the cultural level – regionally diverse – ecologically aware and respectful of the environment – ecumenical and inter-religious.

BECAUSE WE HOPE

THAT A FLOOD OF ENTHUSIASM AND FREEDOM STIRS IN OUR COUNTRIES so that a true European solidarity might come about that offers pride of place to all people ceaselessly promoting a meeting of minds and fruitful dialogue between all parties!

PARCE QUE NOUS ESPÉRONS qu'un ÉLAN DE GÉNÉROSITÉ ET DE GRATUITÉ SE RÉVEILLE DANS NOS PAYS pour qu'une véritable solidarité Européenne advienne ! ... offrant le primat à l'humain! et valorisant sans cesse la rencontre et un dialogue fraternelle entre tous!

“For behold, the kingdom of God is within you.” Luke chapter 17 verses 21



## The Future of the International Worker Priest Conference - Phil Aspinall

There was much discussion over the 2017 Pentecost weekend in Essen about the future of the event. I summarise here some of the key issues that were raised and ask you, please, to send me your thoughts and suggestions.

There are various reasons why a review is needed. Principally, the delegates who are still working come mainly from France, Germany (and the UK) but are hard to engage because those who work are constrained to take holiday outside the weekend. Also, many of the French Worker Priests in work are often also engaged in Parish work so it would help to avoid the Pentecost weekend.

Another factor is that the key members of several delegations are aging and some have found it difficult to travel in recent years. It would therefore help to reduce the effort involved in organising the conference to the minimum possible.

So the proposal made during the Essen conference is that the conference alternate between the countries with a regular national structure. So one year the conference would be held in France, to be organised by the French office of the worker Priests (ENPO), and the next year in Germany, to be held at the conference centre in Herzogenrath, near Aachen which is known for its social engagement. It is also convenient for travel from France, Belgium and the Netherlands, and is not too expensive. We have also proposed that the UK remain part of the cycle, but probably every 5th year, similar to recent years.

Everyone has been asked for our thoughts on this proposal for before the Preparation Group meeting in Paris in December, so could I please ask you to send me **your responses by 26<sup>th</sup> November**. Please also send me your thoughts on the more

fundamental questions: Why do we come to the conference?  
Which parts of the weekend are important for us?

## **Coming soon...**

### **Tent – Pitching God; Tent – Dwelling People**

23rd – 25th February 2018 Holland House, Evesham

You are warmly invited to join us at our Reflective Weekend. Rev Dr Rosalind Selby, Principal of Northern College will be leading us in a series of reflections on Exodus and John's Gospel. Rosalind is an ordained United Reformed Church minister, and the author of *The Comical Doctrine*, a study of New Testament hermeneutics.

Do not worry about the references to tents, as we will be staying at the rather more solid Holland House near Evesham, which has always proved a popular venue with our members. Come and join us for a time of peace and reflection, to meet new and old friends and to share in a journey together.

To join us, see the flier enclosed with the journal, or contact Rob Fox.

## **A date for your diary .....**

### **International Conference of Worker Priests, 8th – 10th June, 2018 – Phil Aspinall**

Next year's annual conference of European Worker Priests will be held in the UK and hosted by CHRISM in Manchester. So this is an ideal opportunity for you to meet the interesting and stimulating people from around Europe whose ministry has taken them into many different and often challenging parts of society and the world of work.

Please put the date in your diary now, and start thinking about whether you would like to attend the whole weekend from Friday to Sunday. But please at least consider coming to join us on the

Saturday, when CHRISM will also be organising a day event and then joining with the Europeans in the evening. More details to follow in the January Journal, but please contact Phil Aspinall if you would like more information. And don't forget! **Please send your suggestions for the theme of the conference to Phil by 26th November. All contributions will be considered and fed into the planning process.** Thank you.



*We have received the update which follows from our Episcopalian colleagues in the USA. It is sad news that NASSAM has come to the end of its life, but we give thanks for all the support and encouragement it gave to many people over the years, and for the fellowship and welcome we in CHRISM received from them. We made many friends across the country and particularly remember the many conferences held in Mundelein, IL, organised though the energy and enthusiasm of the NASSAM committee and members in the Diocese of Chicago.*

## **A condensed history of NASSAM (National Association for the Self Supporting Active Ministry) - Ed Hook**

The National Association for the Self Supporting Ministry (NASSAM) was founded in 1971 and dissolved in 2016. During its

history NASSAM stood for and supported forms of ministry that were not standard parish ministry but surely included parish ministry. NASSAM embraced expanded forms of ministry such as women clergy, bivocational clergy and lay persons performing ministry through their professions and employment.

Some non-standard clergy found a new and more open expression of “the church”, and through association with NASSAM, had a more open and comprehensive view of the greater church. Ministry is everywhere and the church and its varied members and participants are the conveyors of that ever expanding ministry action. Ministry is where one lives, not only expressed by the established church in “traditional” forms.

NASSAM was an organization that was needed for a number of years, to open up and discuss and promote and introduce what new ideas and forms of ministry, including ordained ministry, could be. This was not a denial of the traditional existence of parish ministry, but rather an expansion of ways and thoughts about ordained ministry, hence an expansion and greater inclusion of lay and clergy in new and very valid ways in ministry.

The Church kept me honest in the business world and the business world kept me honest in the church world---good combination. Each expands the other, with the goal of helping others. NASSAM conference leaders enthusiastically pointed to the beauty of both the church and the world helping us embrace the new and the un-tried.

NASSAM has been an important part of the experience of living one's life spiritually and practically in God's creation. NASSAM served its purpose faithfully and made an important contribution during its 45 year existence.

*Ed Hook has been a NASSAM Member, USA*

## Architecture in Orders - Michael Powell

*Architecture in Orders* was set up in 1990 to link up people who were both architects or similar built environment professionals and ordained ministers. In a year or two their paid up membership (£5pa) reached 37 and their circulation list over 60.

One of their founders John Hawkins gave Keith Holt of CHRISM eleven of their *Epistles* published between 1990 and 1993. Although an accountant Keith was interested but he thought that I as a Built Environment professional might find the *Epistles* useful. Well, I have, but only after inadvertently leaving them to mature in a cupboard for rather a long time!

*Epistle* is a great title because it means that having established a biblical nuance the editor and contributors are free to just get on with what they want to say and not get bogged down in quoting and making complicated or tenuous scriptural connections.

I have found four *Footprints* in the *Epistles*

*Footprint 1* Some of the contributors tell us about themselves. Some started life as architects or similar and then read theology and became full-time church ministers. Some remained de facto architects because church buildings are a fact of local church life. Others, probably the majority, were MSE's combining some form of architectural or similar practice with a church role of some kind.



*Footprint 2* Various contributors tell us about having to cope remedially in the 1980's with some dubiously built churches of the 60's. That is offset by a full and honest case study covering a particular building's design, construction and occupational phases from the points of view of designers and users; really it all seems to have turned out rather well. Another set of renovated premises



came to the day for the settlement of the final account. On that very day the whole site and building was sold on to a supermarket developer who donated a replacement site and new church and other buildings. While one member saw work on medieval buildings as a palimpsest, each generation overwriting its predecessors' work, another who was a specialist in glazing disliked 'Good Shepherd' windows and liked modern light-spreading designs.

*Footprint 3* A group of six members took themselves off to the Bishop's House at Iona and came back with a 9-point *Affirmation on the Spirituality of Secular Buildings* – nothing as crude as nine commandments! They start by affirming that 'All involved in the vocation of architecture have the potential to become, knowingly or unknowingly, agents of the creativity and purpose of God'. By affirmation 4 they are saying 'Architecture is the built environment of all the activities of human life and all buildings affect the lives of those who occupy, work in or even pass them'. And they end at number 9 with, I think, the hardest, 'In selecting building materials, notice must be taken of the stewardship of the world's resources'. I am sorry that little *Epistle* space was subsequently given to showing how this all works out in practice.

But anyway, three footprints – who they were, their church projects, their affirmations about the secular – and a *Footprint 4* to make a stable quadruped? Yes, an awareness in most *Epistles* of current issues. Redundancy in the profession came up as did unrest about the changing nature of professional obligations and commitments. At that time design for handicapped (their word) was in full swing as a technical topic.

Although a small, niche, transient organisation, I think *Architecture in Orders* leaves not just good but useful footprints. I am sorry that it does not appear to have survived beyond its enthusiastic founders.

22 August 2017

## Good work: the Taylor review of modern working practices – Rob Fox

As the July Journal went to press, the *Taylor review of modern working practices* ('the review') was published. Much talked about for a couple of weeks, its perceptive insights into modern ways of working should not be forgotten. It is particularly useful and relevant to MSEs, providing an excellent overview of the current employment landscape.

The report sets out three key aims:

- a. to tackle exploitation and potential exploitation at work;
- b. to clarify the distinction between workers and the self-employed; and
- c. to better align labour market incentives with modern industrial strategy and broader national objectives.

It then sets out seven principles underpinning how these can be achieved:

1. The national strategy for work – the British way - should be explicitly directed toward the goal of good work for all, recognising that good work and plentiful work can and should go together, with the Government accountable and for which we all take responsibility.
2. Platform based working (the 'gig' economy) offers welcome opportunities for genuine two way flexibility and can provide opportunities for those who may not be able to work in more conventional ways, but protections are needed
3. The law and the way it is promulgated and enforced should help firms make the right choices and individuals to know and exercise their rights.
4. The best way to achieve better work is not national regulation but responsible corporate governance, good management and strong employment relations within the organisation.
5. It is vital to individuals and the health of our economy that everyone feels they have realistically attainable ways to

strengthen their future work prospects and that they can, from the beginning to the end of their working life, record and enhance the capabilities developed in formal and informal learning and in on the job and off the job activities.

6. The shape and content of work and individual health and well-being are strongly related. For the benefit for firms, workers and the public interest we need to develop a more proactive approach to workplace health.
7. The National Living Wage is a powerful tool to raise the financial base line of low paid workers. It needs to be accompanied by sectoral strategies engaging employers, employees and stakeholders to ensure that people – particularly in low paid sectors – are not stuck at the living wage minimum or facing insecurity but can progress in their current and future work.

The following is a summary of the key recommendations and their implications.

The review suggests that the term ‘worker’ be replaced in employment law by ‘dependent contractor’. It also proposes that the current fairly brief legal definition of worker (at s.230(3) of the Employment Rights Act 1996) is expanded to take account of recent case law and best practice, so that the distinction between workers and the self-employed is clearer. Greater clarity will help protect those in more precarious jobs, particularly lower paid gig economy workers.

This will be no easy task as determining employment status is a notoriously grey area. It also suggests that individuals should have access to an online tool, similar to HMRC’s employment status indicator, to see where they stand for themselves.

The review recommends that, when considering who falls within the dependent contractor status, there should be more emphasis on control over the time and means of working rather than personal service and the ability to substitute. The challenge for any new

employment status test will be the ability to cope with further developments in technology and working practices that could further blur the lines.

In line with the review's aim to introduce clarity, the current requirement to provide a written statement of particulars of employment to employees would be extended to anyone who falls within the new definition of dependent contractor.

There is also a recommendation that employers should be obliged to declare the status of individuals when taking people on, and the statement of particulars may be the best place to do this. Another interesting proposal is that it should be for a business to show that



an employment relationship does *not* exist, rather than the individual to show that it does. Thus the individual would be deemed to be an employee (dependent contractor) unless the employee could demonstrate that they are independent.

The review goes on to recommend that individuals should be able to get a free, formal determination of

their employment status without having to pay employment tribunal fees, so that they know whether they can bring particular legal claims, such as concerning holidays, unfair dismissal or discrimination.

It also suggests that existing legislation be strengthened to make clearer the information that should be provided to agency workers before they accept work, such as who is responsible for paying the worker, rates of pay and the application of pay as you earn (PAYE)

and NICs. The review observes that whilst most businesses do this, 'unscrupulous providers can bury important information in the small print of long contracts'. I know from personal experience that HMRC is taking an increasing interest in the question of employment status and whether PAYE/NICs have been correctly accounted for.

A key point made in the review is that there is too much inconsistency in the taxation of work: the differences between taxing the self-employed and employed need ironing out. It considers that for tax purposes, being employed should mean being either an employee / dependent contractor, and taxed via the employer, or genuinely self-employed. Agency workers are already brought into the PAYE/NICs net via a gateway resting on supervision, direction or control and so care would be needed to avoid over-complicating the distinction.

The review recognises that the gig economy and the use of technology platforms provide people with greater freedom, compared to traditional employment models, over when they work. That said, it also notes that national minimum wage (NMW) legislation is there to protect the vulnerable and that it should also play a meaningful role too. The proposal made is to adapt the 'piece rate' provisions in the NMW legislation, while at the same time maintaining the flexibility inherent in the gig economy for both businesses and individuals.

The review acknowledges that translating gig economy work to piece rate rules is complex and that a suitable platform is needed to use data to model, understand and demonstrate how the likely demand for individual jobs translates to an hourly rate. This is so people would know in advance that in periods of low demand, the corresponding hourly rate would be that much less.

A further recommendation relating to the NMW is that the Low Pay Commission should be asked to consider the impact of the

introduction of a new, higher NMW rate for hours that are not guaranteed as part of a contract, e.g. a zero hours contract.

Where certain individuals have been in post for 12 months the report proposes a right for agency workers to request a direct employment contract with the end employer. Also for zero hours workers to request a contract that guarantees hours better reflecting the actual hours worked over the last 12 months. This would provide individuals with greater certainty on their hours and pay, albeit business would have correspondingly less flexibility.

There is support in the review for the trend towards self-reporting and self-regulation by employers, such as the recently introduced rules on gender pay gap reporting. In this respect, it recommends requiring companies to be more transparent about their workforce structure. This might take the form of declarations on:

- (i) the number of employees, dependent contractors and self-employed individuals engaged by the business;
- (ii) how it uses agency workers; and
- (iii) the number of requests made (and agreed) for permanent positions by agency workers etc. This approach would certainly add teeth to what may otherwise be regarded as mere aspirations.

The importance of good employee relations is also emphasised, with a broad recommendation that the scope of the existing Information and Consultation Regulations, which focus on the 'voice' in the workplace, should be extended to increase levels of workforce engagement. At the moment their application is restricted to organisations with 50 or more employees, and the suggestion is that fewer restrictions apply so they become more relevant. Generally there is more active involvement by workers through Workers Councils and other employee representatives in other European countries than the UK.

To summarise and conclude, the Taylor review is well written, thorough and thought-provoking. The challenge now is for government to take forward the necessary changes with minimum

disruption to the labour market. It sets out a framework around seven principles which encompass the end-point of what it sees as 'good work'. These bring together all the issues discussed above (together with a number of others) and the goal of 'fair and decent work with realistic scope for development and fulfilment'.

The full report is available at [bit.ly/2udwhLx](https://bit.ly/2udwhLx).

## And Finally.....

*Who comes to the party?  
Whose minds meet  
Over lunch,  
Solve subatomic problems  
Or design menus  
And hospitality?  
Who delivers  
Academic excellence  
By cleaning rooms  
And seeing something wrong?  
Who keeps the coffers filling  
Day by day,  
Places the jigsaw pieces  
Carefully  
And gently nurtures them?  
People  
Bringing possibilities,  
Hope, love:  
Building the Kingdom.*



**CHRISM** is on **Facebook**, 'Ministers at Work':  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/129656640430436/>  
And **LinkedIn**, at:  
<https://www.linkedin.com/groups?home=&gid=3756477>

## **CHRISM is the National Association of CHRistians In Secular Ministry**

for **all** Christians who see their secular employment as their primary Christian ministry, and for those who support that vision.

To further this aim, CHRISM publishes a quarterly Journal, releases occasional papers and organises an annual retreat.

Conferences are held regularly and worldwide links pursued.

CHRISM welcomes members, both lay and ordained, from all Christian denominations, encourages them to be active within their own faith communities and to champion ministry in and through secular employment.

If you would like confidential support as an MSE, please contact any member of the Committee

**Further information may be obtained from the Secretary or the Journal Editor.**

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