

Ministers-at-Work

*The Journal for Christians in
secular ministry*

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Contents

Editorial	3
‘Setting Gods People Free’	5
Mission challenges for the church – the place of ministers in secular environments – Andii Bowsher	10
News from the Association of Presbyterian Tentmakers - Phil Aspinall	14
Navigating Ministry with a Changing Church	15
Premises underlying this programme	15
Theme for the International Worker Priest Conference 2018 - Phil Aspinall.....	18
An Invitation to Meet the European Worker Priests - Phil Aspinall	19
Responses to the Lettre Ouvert – the Open Letter from the Meeting of International Worker Priests gathered in Essen (Germany) 4 June 2017	22
From the TUC.....	22
From 10 Downing Street	23
CABE to close	24
And Finally.....	29

Editorial

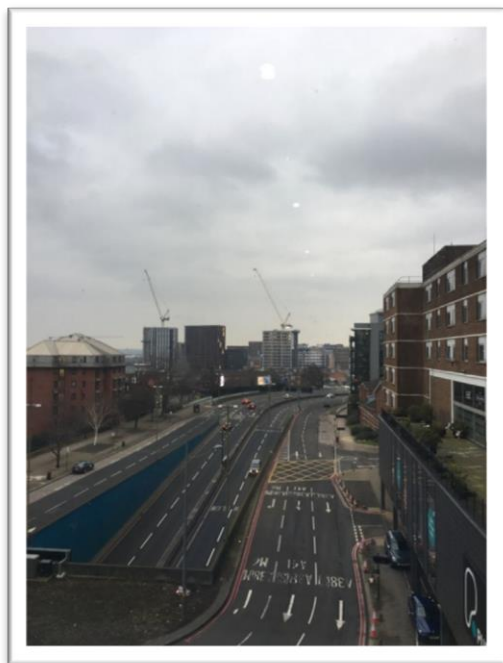
The theme agreed for this edition of the journal is **‘Mission challenges for the church – what is our place as ministers in secular environments?’** The spark which set us off on this as a theme was the publication and subsequent wave of interest around the report ‘Setting Gods People Free’ – which whilst exciting in engaging with the Monday to Saturday world outside church buildings inhabited by lay people, and pushing for lay – clergy partnerships in mission, nevertheless pays scant attention to those authorised ministers – clergy and lay – who form the bulk of our membership and yet pursue their ministry – and call to mission – in the everyday places of the world – in paid work, in consultancy, in voluntary work and education as well as in some cases in retirement.

In this edition therefore, we have a brief overview of ‘Setting Gods People Free’. We also have a piece about our theme written by Andii Bowsher – a chaplain and theological educator. Because it is from a slightly different perspective, I hope that it will generate further material from all of *you* – agreeing or disagreeing as much as you like! I am anticipating that another paper (delayed because its author is very busy working on ‘Setting Gods People Free’) will be with me for the next edition, to further stimulate your little grey cells – or get your backs up!

Meanwhile, in this edition, these are supplemented by a review of Richard Higginson and Keira Robertshaw’s recent book about Christian entrepreneurship – which I think offers some further thoughts on the theme of work and mission. Again, you may or may not agree – and please do send me your thoughts!

In this edition we also have a piece examining a programme of eight monthly one day workshops put together by the Association of Presbyterian Tentmakers in US – obviously working with a different model of ‘bivocational’ ministry, but certainly interesting to consider as a model. Should we consider something similar?

There is also a warm invitation to the International Conference of European Worker Priests which will be held this year in Manchester UK over the weekend from Friday 8th to Sunday 10th June 2018. This is a great opportunity to meet with colleagues working in a range of settings, but most in low status and often insecure jobs. If you are interested, please fill in the flyer you will find with this journal, or contact one of the committee members named for more information. The journal also contains an invitation for you to help to frame the UK contribution to discussion at the conference.



‘Setting Gods People Free’

“Setting God’s People Free” is a report from a Task Group of the Archbishops’ Council, which was considered at General Synod (GS 2056) in its February 2017 group of sessions. It was commissioned in order to examine lay leadership within the church, but found itself grappling with what it calls ‘lay discipleship’ – ordinary people seeking to understand the journey they are on as they follow the Way. The authors of the report state at the beginning:

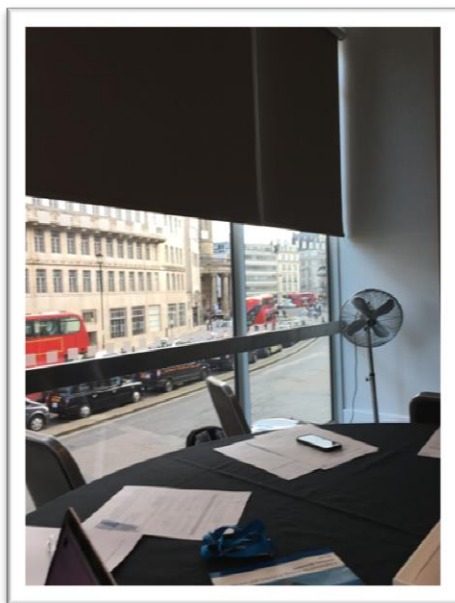
‘At the outset, to avoid misunderstanding, we emphasise the following points about this report.

- It calls for a shift in culture – not a narrow, centrally driven strategy.
- It looks beyond and outside Church structures to the whole people of God at work in communities and wider society – not to ‘fixing’ the institutional Church.
- It seeks to affirm and enable the complementary roles and vocations of clergy and of lay people, grounded in our common baptism – not to blur or undermine these distinctions.
- It proposes steps to nourish, illuminate and connect what is working already in and through frontline parishes – not to institute a top down approach.
- It aims to see confident involvement, engagement and leadership of lay people wherever they are called to serve – not to devise lay alternatives to clergy’

They are clear that ‘the Church, as the whole people of God, clergy and laity, gathered and sent, are charged with continuing Christ’s priestly work of blessing, mediation and reconciliation on behalf of the whole of humanity, to bear witness to, and participate in the mission of God.’

They state that they are not looking to train up substitutes or volunteers to fill the gaps left by declining clergy numbers nor are they seeking to ‘rescue’ the institutional church. Instead they suggest, their aim is ‘that all should be able to respond to the saving work of God in Jesus Christ and rejoice to the full in following the vocation and using the gifts he has given them’. They want all Christians to fulfil their call to follow Christ.

The report concludes that what needs to be changed is the Church’s overall culture. The authors are clear that the Church’s culture over-emphasises the distinction between sacred and secular and therefore fails to communicate that God’s good news is for every part of life – and that every follower of Jesus is called to follow actively in the Way. They say ‘We will not raise up cadres of godly leaders unless we create communities of whole-life disciples. ‘



‘Setting God’s People Free’ identifies the need for two shifts in culture and practice which the authors suggest are critical to ‘the

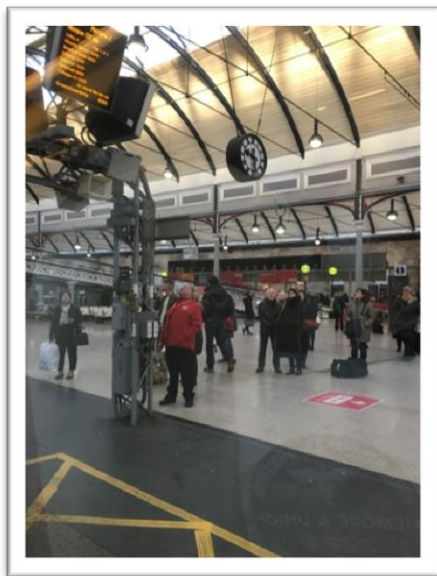
flourishing of the Church and the evangelisation of the nation.’ Firstly forming and equipping lay people to follow Jesus confidently in every sphere of life in ways that demonstrate the Gospel - otherwise, they suggest ‘we will never set God’s people free to evangelise the nation.’ Secondly, the authors suggest, until laity and clergy are ‘convinced that they are equal in worth and status, complementary in gifting and vocation, mutually accountable in discipleship, and equal partners in mission, we will never form Christian communities that can evangelise the nation.’

The report goes on to state some things which are obvious to our membership. They say that in the Church of England, the 98% of people who are not in ordained ministry are not appropriately educated or trained, not ‘consistently prayed for, nor enthusiastically encouraged for mission nor ministry in the ~90% of their waking lives that they do not spend in church related activities.’ They go on to comment that people in congregations felt a lack of confidence in applying their faith in the everyday world of work and leisure – ‘their Monday to Saturday lives’.

The authors cite evidence from a survey of 2859 respondents conducted in 2009¹ in which 82% of respondents had been Christians for over 10 years, 67% in some kind of leadership role in the Church, and 1204 were Anglicans. They indicate that the survey found that: ‘59% of those in working age said that the most challenging context to be a disciple of Christ was the workplace. 62% of those in full-time paid employment experienced little, not much, or no help/preparation from the life and ministries of church to deal with the issues they faced at work. 47% said they did not have a story to tell about how God had worked in their lives [.. and that ..] 59% of Anglicans surveyed said that their church does not equip people well for life in today’s world at home, work, or elsewhere.’

¹ Apprentice 2009, Spring Harvest/LICC

In another survey considered by the authors², though 95% of respondents agreed that they should take responsibility for their own Christian growth, only 37% felt that their local church actually helped them with that task. Looking at surveys conducted in the 1990's on preaching³, the authors found results showed that 47% of adult respondents felt that the teaching and preaching they received was irrelevant to their daily lives, and especially irrelevant to the workplace.



Thinking about encouraging and promoting lay involvement and leadership in secular environments (described in the report as the Sent church), the Task Group identifies 'at least 8 categories' of resources and initiatives designed 'to equip and train lay disciples and leaders in workplace and society'. These include Diocesan

² What helps disciples grow? A Report from the Saltley Trust, Birmingham, 2016. www.saltleytrust.org.uk/whdg

³ "Is Anybody Listening?" Anvil 14.4 (1997)

initiatives, Para-church organisations such as Theos , Sector groups such as CMF, publishing and web resources, local church initiatives, chaplaincy, conference provision, and national initiatives such as Leading Your Church Into Growth..

Many of these resources could be very useful. However, the one resource not mentioned at all are ministers in secular environments. The authors note that through their training and formation ‘clergy inevitably develop distance from their prior workplace experience’ (clearly assuming that this is not current). They indicate that relationships between clergy and lay people are not always as robust or productive as they ought to be partly because of an unhelpful clericalism and lay disempowerment, partly because clergy do not appreciate the skills lay people bring or the complexity of the environments in which they operate. Of course this can be true of many, but those embedded in secular employment are probably more likely to see transferable skills.

The report concludes with a number of recommendations. Among these they ‘recommend that the College of Bishops set time aside to consider their own praxis with regard to both the shifts in culture we highlight in Section I and to be mutually accountable in the way whole-life lay discipleship is developed in their Dioceses. We recommend that the voice of laypeople be clearly heard in such discussions.’ They advocate for a ‘designated Episcopal Champion for the culture shift to whole-life discipleship.’ They also recommend that steps should be taken ‘to ensure that every Parish and every member of the Church of England is able to access fit-for-purpose support and resources around whole-life discipleship, lay vocation and lay leadership.’ Another key recommendation is that ‘Parishes and Dioceses work together to recover worship as the work of all God’s people, incorporating Monday to Saturday lives’. Looking at the relationship between clergy and laity, they suggest changes to clergy training: Placements should ‘involve lay people, perhaps as placement supervisors. At least one placement should be in a

workplace setting'. The Task Group conclude by suggesting that Synod should consider establishing a group of '5 or more 'Pilot Dioceses' supported and resourced nationally, that prioritise whole-life discipleship, meeting regularly as a learning community.' I think that each of these recommendations – and this whole report – raise questions for us about how we, as ministers in a wide variety of secular environments might (or might not) engage with them. General Synod in February welcomed the report and committed itself to carrying it forward. This is a challenge to us to get involved in the discussion and development.



Mission challenges for the church – the place of ministers in secular environments – Andii Bowsher

A parish church can be one of the most selfish institutions. Moving from being a vicar to being a chaplain had, for me, the effect of revealing how much local churches are so often, in practice, 'incurvatus in se' -to borrow Augustine's oft-quoted phrase. The struggle of being a minister in a secular work context is in part to educate the wider church to what mission more fully involves and to

raise the institutional eyes to the further horizons. When it comes to mission strategy there is an inkling abroad that mission isn't just posteriors on pews and that is good. However, from a chaplain's perspective, it seems that we can't hear what the churches say because what they actually do shouts too loudly.

What they actually do, all too often, is simply default to what Frost and Hirsch⁴ characterise as Christendom mode and relying heavily on 'attractional' thinking. Interestingly, this is the mindset that Fresh Expressions initiatives have been trying to dislodge but find that fresh expressions (and their ilk) tend to be subverted and domesticated in such a way that this central challenge is lost. That challenge is to de-emphasise what churches already do as the central thing that needs to be grown with a few tweaks to make it do its thing more effectively but rather for churches to become to be ec-centric and to give themselves away into new contexts.

The mission challenges for the church in England most crucially come out of those foregoing observations: to become missionally-minded rather than Christendomly attractional; to develop a corporately owned commitment to Spirit-spotting; to see their ministry and mission in the rhizomes represented by the presence of their members in many different walks of life; to have a generous 'Kingdom' mindset as against a Christendom mentality. All of these things are interlocked and are enhanced by the ministry of MSE.

To become missionally-minded means becoming less obsessed with the survival of what we think we have now especially when that survival means pulling in punters for our projects rooted in cultures of deference, hierarchical organisation and didacticism and presupposing some basis for understanding what Christian faith is about as if what we have to do is convince people to be committed

⁴ See particularly, Frost, Michael & Hirsch, Alan, *The Shaping of Things to Come: Innovation and Mission for the 21st-Century Church*, Baker Books, Ada MI, 2013

to something they already 'kind of know' rather than inviting them to discover from the ground up. The extra challenge is that what they may already 'kind of know' may well be the misconceptions and detritus left in a post-Christian situation. Here the MSE representing Christian faith in an alongside manner in workplaces encounters people in contexts that the recent Christendom model rarely majored in and so offers a chance for people to think differently. It is here that the dynamic of mission seen in the sending of the twelve and the seventy-two comes into its own: we do mission by joining people where they feel at home; where they are the 'hosts' rather than in Christendom-style where we host, inviting enquirers and those we would persuade into contexts where we feel safe but they feel anxious or wrong-footed. It is in those places where we are



guests that the best fresh expression intuitions encourage us to participate in the Spirit's work of calling the assembly of those being drawn to Christ.

This is also the work of 'Spirit spotting' - the first stage of involvement in the Missio Dei: to be alert to the signs of God at work and asking whether and how we should be involved. These

contexts may be where our churches reach into the wider world but whereas the attractional mentality says "now bring them to church" the missional mentality recognises that this is a rhizome which could become rooted 'over there' and which our churches need to offer nutrition to over there. This requires a generosity of spirit because it doesn't grow our churches' average Sunday attendance, but it does grow the Kingdom. It requires a generosity of spirit because in those places 'over there' it may be that Christians from several different churches are acting as catalysts, drawn together by providence and the work of the Spirit.

So the challenge to the established and institutional church is how to be able to count and value the responsiveness of its ministers in secular contexts when the figures don't show up in statistics as currently gathered and may not produce financial flows which can be readily observed. In short, how to make sure that the institutional dimension of the churches is serving the agenda of God in mission rather than mere self-preservation -bearing in mind that it may be applicable to consider that those who would keep their lives will lose them while those who lose their lives will gain them. It is MSEs who may have to remind the churches of this.

It may be also that they will be well placed to keep representing the



challenge to remember that God's mission is bigger than the first two of five marks: that serving God's mission agenda means valuing and lining up with God's work in justice, peace-making, the integrity of creation. And indeed that God is calling us to be involved in more than five marks' worth of mission⁵: that there is a part to play in knowledge creation, artistic endeavour, celebration and building community all of which God blesses and works with. MSEs are a standing challenge to the church to take that seriously along with the dialogical and prophetic ministry inherent in it.

Andii Bowsher is an ordained Anglican working in HE Chaplaincy and occasionally theological education. He has a strong interest in the intersection of culture and spirituality.

News from the Association of Presbyterian Tentmakers - Phil Aspinall

The October Journal included an update from our Episcopalian colleagues in the USA. So here is some news from their Presbyterian neighbours. The Association of Presbyterian Tentmakers (APT) took the decision some 3 years ago to cease holding their annual conferences which I have attended regularly, and been joined on several occasions by other CHRISM members. Members of APT have also participated in CHRISM events here in the UK.

But the concept of “Tentmaking” continues and is, indeed, one of the possible forms of ministry included in the Presbyterian Book of Order. It is a particular form of Self-Supporting Ministry very much revolving around supplying ministers to congregations which cannot

⁵ For an approach to missiology that is particularly helpful to those in secular contexts pushing us beyond the Five Marks, see Bevens, Stephen B. & Schroeder, Roger P, Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today, 2004, New York, Orbis Books. In this book they helpfully characterise mission as prophetic dialogue with context.

afford them. However, many of the APT members explored their ministry in their “Tent” as MSEs. Dave King and Linda Kuhn, in Wisconsin, have developed a training package for people and congregations exploring this form of ministry. Here are extracts from their promotional materials for their “Bi-vocational Incubator”, which are interesting to compare and contrast.

Navigating Ministry with a Changing Church

Explore ways to serve a church that can no longer afford you

A programme of eight monthly day-long gatherings, between April and November 2018, designed to help inform, form, and support faithful and effective bi-vocational ministers and their work with congregations through presentations, skill-building, tool development, peer support, and coaching/mentoring. The course includes an individual confidential consultation to assess personal strengths, challenges and questions in relation to a bi-vocational model of ministry.

Bi-vocational ministry is not about working for less or doing part of a job. It is about doing ministry in a different way.

Premises underlying this programme

Increasingly, congregations can no longer afford a full-time, fully-supported pastor. And pastors are needing to wrestle with tough questions about how to sustain themselves while being faithful to their sense of call. The Church is changing; the shape of ministry is changing. We think these times require a different way of thinking about ministry and a specialized set of skills, attitudes, and support. This bi-vocational incubator is designed to offer pastors a safe space in which to dig deeper into the theology of “call” and vocation, hone skills for doing ministry in a different way, develop tools to guide a congregation into making a transition into a more shared model of ministry, and find the courage to explore options for financial self-support. **With this approach, the sacred/secular division**

becomes artificial and all the world becomes an arena for ministry. When done well, bi-vocational ministry leads to a sense of freedom, the congregation feels empowered, outreach is expanded, and all experience a renewed sense of discipleship. This program recognises that there are shared issues in bi-vocational ministry models that bridge denominational lines.

“Bi-vocational ministry is not about giving a congregation half a loaf. Rather, it is about offering a different kind of bread.” - Tom Dietrich



The programme explores a range of topics, including:

Laying the foundation: Biblical models, theology of vocation and call, re-imagining "church", "pastor" and "ministry", stories of real-life bi-vocational ministers, role of spiritual discernment

Marks of excellence for bi-vocational pastors: balancing relationships and expectations, exploring personality/work/leadership styles, maintaining support, honing negotiating skills

Coaching a congregation into a bi-vocational model of ministry: strategies for starting and supporting the conversation, dealing with expectations, dynamics of change/grief/ anxiety, congregational vitality and mission

Earning a living & supporting a lifestyle: living in a “gig” economy, scoping out possibilities, fostering an entrepreneurial spirit, marketing your skills, budgeting and making ends meet, ensuring benefits

Leadership development and support: equipping the missional church, fostering a team spirit, ministry in the workplace, dynamics of church size & community values, knowing when to step out of the way

Managing expectations: the culture of the church, personal and family values, coping with demands, dealing with tensions, helpful and useful tools for evaluating, feeding your soul

Helping you and the church stay sane and healthy: developing appropriate boundaries, feeding your soul, juggling multiple balls, managing time and setting priorities, re-negotiating terms of call, self-care and family care as aspects of vocation

Denominational identity: maintaining support and connections, normalizing the bi-vo ministry model, building professional confidence

Putting it all together: professional self-image & validation, continuing support & education, the realities of risk and trust, role of spouse/partner/family, living into a new reality

Dave King served small-membership congregations in rural Wisconsin for 35 years while working jobs as the elected township clerk, farming, installing flooring, and substitute teaching. Linda Kuhn served over 30 years as an intentional interim pastor while balancing home-life, teaching, and putting food on the table. Both have been active in the formation and leadership of APT. They lead training programs for interim ministers and

lay pastors, help transform congregational conflict, offer workshops on the missional church, and guide churches through mergers, closures, and size transitions.



Theme for the International Worker Priest Conference 2018 - Phil Aspinall

You will see that there is a separate piece inviting you to join us for the International Worker Priest conference in Manchester. But please read on, even if you are not planning to attend the event.

During the preparatory meeting held in Paris on the 2nd December last year, we agreed the theme, and some pointers to aid our discussions, for reflection before and during the conference:

The tradition of the Worker Priests: where are we today ?

- Politically (Regionalism / Nationalism)
- Socioeconomically (Rights and social exclusion)
- Religion and Spirituality (Liberation and oppression)

What experiences and what hopes do we have personally and in our groups ?

As usual, we are asked to prepare a paper of 2 pages with our reflections on this theme to send to the groups in the other European countries. **Even if you will not be there, please send me your thoughts (in English which it is possible for me to translate into French !) by 25th March 2018.**

These collected papers will form the basis for our discussions during the conference – but there will be opportunities for all the participants to share their thoughts on this theme over the weekend.



An Invitation to Meet the European Worker Priests - Phil Aspinall

You are warmly invited to join the annual international conference of the Worker Priests which will be held this year over the weekend from Friday 8th to Sunday 10th June 2018. As we noted in the previous Journal, this year it is our turn to organise the event, and

we will meet at Luther King House in Manchester, with colleagues from some 8 or 9 countries and regions of Europe.

On previous occasions when the conference has been in the UK we have held a separate CHRISM event and invited CHRISM members to join us for the Saturday evening for the celebratory Eucharist, dinner and a Soiree Festive. But the preparatory meeting held in Paris on the 2nd December last year agreed that we should extend the invitation to participate in the discussions on the theme throughout the Saturday. Some accommodation can be made available if you would like to stay over.

The full programme commences with dinner and an introductory session on the Friday evening. For Saturday 9th June we have planned the following:

- 08.00 Breakfast and Morning prayer (led by the French)
- 09.00 Session 1: Workshops in small groups on the theme (see details)
- 11.30 Session 2: Feedback from the groups and further discussion on the theme
- 12.30 Lunch
- 14.30 Session 3: Forum – current issues: Catalonia, Brexit
- 16.00 Session 4: “On the way of the Gospel” – work in small groups
- 17.30 Eucharist (led by the English)
- 18.45 Dinner

Followed by the Soirée Festive – national specialities, entertainment etc

On the Sunday morning, after Morning Prayer we shall have a session on the future of the international meeting followed by the usual evaluation and proposals for next year's theme.

The format of the international meeting is changing (as described in the article on the future in the October '17 Journal) so this could be the last chance to experience the current arrangement. **So do come and take this opportunity to meet with this interesting and committed group of people, who always challenge our way of life and our Christian living. You will be made very welcome.**

The language of the conference will, as usual, be French, but we shall attempt to translate into English as we go. The costs for attending are set out on the registration form enclosed with this Journal.

Please return it as soon as possible and by Easter at the latest - and please contact me or Margaret Joachim or Nick Yates if you would like more information and more details of the programme. You can also visit: <http://www.lutherkinghouse.co.uk/map.html>



Responses to the Lettre Ouvert – the Open Letter from the Meeting of International Worker Priests gathered in Essen (Germany) 4 June 2017

(published in October 2017 MAW)

From the TUC



The letter reads as follows:

4th December

Dear Nick,

Thank you very much for getting in touch and sharing the 'Open Letter'. In the same spirit I enclose a copy of the TUC's *Great Jobs Agenda* which we're providing across the movement and our allies, as well as with politicians and business.

It's good to know that the important tradition of worker priests is alive and still working with such commitment.

All best, Frances

[Note: The TUC's Great Jobs Agenda is available at:

<https://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/great-jobs-agenda.pdf>]

From 10 Downing Street

We have also heard from a Communications Officer at No. 10 Downing Street in response to the Lettre Ouverte as follows:

Thank you for contacting the Prime Minister on behalf of the CHRISM Committee

Mrs May very much appreciates the time you have taken to write to her.

Your correspondence has been forwarded to the relevant Government department so that they may reply to you, in detail, to the matters you raise.

Thank you, once again, for writing.

We await a further reply.... From the relevant Government department....

CABE to close

As a result of comments received before the meeting and discussion at the AGM the Trustees have taken the decision to close CABE. A number of options have been examined. One of the most significant outcomes of CABE's work with Christians in business was in the area of business ethics. In 1986, the then Trustees took the decision that the initiative to establish a standard of ethics in business should become an independent body from CABE. The Institute of Business Ethics was launched and has become a national and international industry leader encouraging high standards of business behaviour based on ethical values.

Since the CABE AGM, discussions have been held between CABE and the IBE and the IBE has agreed to house the CABE archive and is delighted to take on the prestigious annual Hugh Kay Lecture. CABE is thrilled that an organisation that was launched by CABE will now preserve CABE's archive and continue to hold the event that has been for some time the highlight of CABE's year. The first Hugh Kay Lecture to be held by the IBE will take place in 2018, in what would have been CABE's 80th year.

We would like to thank you for your support of CABE and would ask that you continue to pray for both CABE and the IBE as we carry out the agreed arrangements between the two organisations. We are confident that much of what CABE stands for and its most valuable assets will continue to exist, albeit in a new form. In this we are reminded of the pattern of the Resurrection, of the assurance that life follows death, and we look to Christ Jesus to bring new life out of the closure of CABE. If you have any comments or queries please contact Pauline Hart director@cabe-online.org



Higginson R. and Robertshaw K.(2017) A Voice to be Heard: Christian entrepreneurs living out their faith, InterVarsityPress, ISBN 978-1-78359-565-5; also available as an e-book; £9.99

This book is based on interviews with fifty Christian entrepreneurs, from a variety of contexts. Over 15 chapters the authors, respectively Director of Faith and Business at Ridley Hall, Cambridge, and a curate with a background in retail entrepreneurship, set out some exemplars from their study, their context (both biblical and in society), examine the historical context of Christian entrepreneurship, outline their methods, and then share some of their main findings. In the final two chapters they look at the relationship between entrepreneurs and the church, and the potential contribution of entrepreneurs to mission.

The book is addressed primarily to entrepreneurs. So who are they? The five pen portraits with which the authors open the book cover people involved in selling toys, innovative cement, cars, roof lights and 'technical fibres'. Four of the five are men. All of them lead businesses which are significant in their field – and where turnover is mentioned it is in the millions. This doesn't sound like many (any!) people I know. In chapter two, some biblical examples are explored: Jacob, who was a schemer yet also listened to God; Nehemiah who is written off as not an entrepreneur but an effective project manager grounded in prayer (I warmed to him); Lydia – an influential and hospitable trader; the virtuous wife of Proverbs whose work and investment provide for those around her. All of these sound a bit more like people one might meet at work or in day to day life.. Then the authors suggest that God is the original entrepreneur-making things better – new – creative and risk taking. Yes – but perhaps a little too much exposure to marketing straplines makes

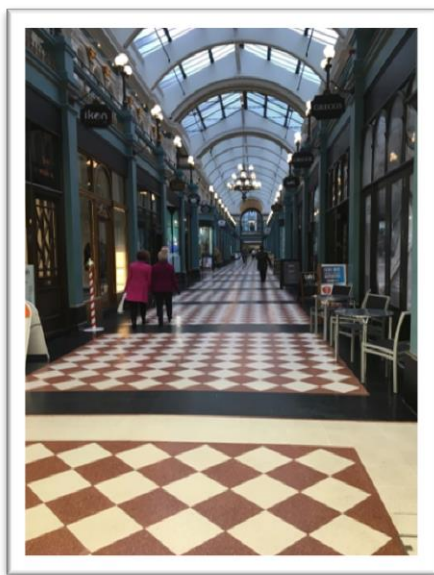
that somehow sound diminishing – as if God is a modern university or a technology startup. Perhaps the problem is because I am not an entrepreneur. It is not until chapter five that the entrepreneur as these authors see it is defined:

‘An entrepreneur pursues opportunities to commercialise innovation, taking the lead in marshalling resources and providing goods or services in the marketplace in a new and different way’ (p66)

The authors have both got a strong commitment to business, so perhaps this definition is not surprising – but it seems to me to be deeply rooted in a market economy, with commercial success at core. People like Stephen Davies and Drew Murray, ‘Team Unlimited’, who combined to make simple personalised prosthetic limbs for children using their innovative skills in a shed in South Wales, funded purely by donations (BBC news, 27 Dec 2016) and separate to their paid work would not fit such a model. Yet their ethos seems to me both entrepreneurial in its imaginative innovation and focus but also distinctively if not explicitly Christian in its absolute generosity. Does entrepreneurship require financial gain? Could you be an entrepreneur- and if so what do you think of the authors’ definition?

In subsequent chapters the authors explore a range of themes which emerged in their interviews.. Some of these would most likely resonate with many in our membership. For example, asked whether they saw their ‘work in business as contributing to the advance of God’s kingdom’(p77), all of the entrepreneurs interviewed said unequivocally ‘yes’. Asked how, some suggested that they are making the world a better place, or enhancing the quality of people’s lives through the work they do, whether developing a cement substitute which reduces carbon dioxide emissions, or a device to evaluate the quality of meetings. Others say that they work by embodying Christian values in the way they run their business, including, for some, the people they take on as

staff – ex-prisoners for example. Others again speak about their faith, or organise events such as company carol services (especially in car dealerships!) which then lead to people approaching them with questions about faith. A fourth group see their contribution as lodged in their support for charities – often explicitly Christian in their focus. Familiar territory. Similarly, a later chapter (11) focuses on the importance to interviewees of integrity in all of their dealings.



The last two chapters, as already mentioned, are differently oriented. The first examines the relationship between entrepreneurs and the church, and is directed to church leaders. However, they are warned that it might make ‘uncomfortable reading’. Interviewees were asked about the church’s attitude towards them. Ten of those (many of them women) said that they felt it was positive.. Many referred their answer to their local church. The authors suggest that male interviewees tended to also include the national church in their focus. Fifteen more respondents suggested a mixed but slowly improving attitude – with one saying

‘Archbishop Justin Welby “gets” business’(p190). The remainder – and the majority – expressed disappointment, finding the church either negative or even worse, indifferent. Asked why, they said:

‘profit is a measure of efficiency. It’s not wrong, it’s not evil, it’s not exploiting people. It’s a sign that you’re operating better than other people. There’s nothing wrong with profit; the key thing is to use profits wisely’(p193)

Others suggested they felt they were seen solely as a ‘funding source for mission’. Suggestions for doing better included church leaders visiting workplaces, offering slots to talk about work in the regular church services, considering prayer for issues in business and seeking to make preaching more relevant.

The next and final chapter is again at least partially directed to church leaders. It looks at the potential contribution of entrepreneurs to mission. It suggests that the four ways of advancing the Kingdom mentioned above should be integrated into every mission statement, and that church leaders should seek ways to include entrepreneurs in their thinking and planning for mission.

Overall this book is an interesting and thought provoking read. I did not by any means agree with all of it, but it is very readable and has undoubtedly got many resonances for our experiences as ministers in secular environments, and some useful insights to offer. It would also be mind stretching reading for those training for any sort of authorised ministry.





And Finally.....

Liberty towers over the huddled men.
Innovation trumpets its potential,
As yet a few scribbled designs...
Somewhere else
Nearby, earnest academics
And local Voices (Important them)
Debate belonging, engagement,
Equality.
They touch briefly on wellbeing,
And the way it makes you feel.
Happy; secure; confident:
Building assets for health.
Nearby,
Huddled in a doorway,
Homeless men wait,
Sharing smokes,
For food.

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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