

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

*The Journal for Christians in  
secular ministry*

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## Editorial

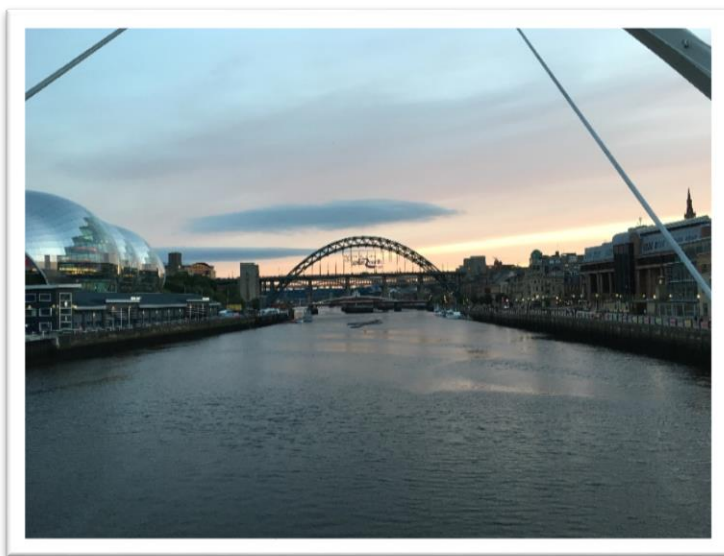
What is good work? What is good about it? Does it have to be paid? Can something of the positive side of work be found when paid work has ceased, as people enter retirement, particularly if they are freed up to take on other tasks of their choosing? Is goodness about human *being* and not human *doing* as one of our contributors suggests – or as another writes, about following God’s call to realise our human potential and to give back fully and freely what was first given to us..? Are those or might they be the same thing?

And when we take on work, how do we deal with the ethical dilemmas that it throws at us – whether working to build nuclear submarine pens or train sugar factory workers, or teaching students from countries whose governments appear despotic. Phil suggests that it is important to have those conversations in a workplace, but on the whole also critical, having weighed the pros and cons, to stick with the work and seek to minimise the harm it might do.

Thinking about some of those issues, we are seeking to gather comments to contribute to the Church of England consultation on its draft Covenant for Clergy Care and Wellbeing. Please do read this (it is available on line – details later) and send comments to me or to the Secretary before December 14<sup>th</sup>, so that MSE wellbeing is part of the overall picture.

There is a lot to mull over in this edition of the journal. There are also pieces about the annual conference, about some of the changes which have taken place in the committee, and sad news recently received of the death of Jim Cummins, a Welsh hill farmer and priest who was a very longstanding member of CHRISM, and its predecessor organisation. We hope to include a fuller tribute in the next Journal. We also have questions about themes for the next International Worker Priest meeting, notice of our Reflective Weekend – you are assured of a warm welcome in Newcastle (summer in the city below) and Northumberland! – and enclosures about membership: yes, it is that time of year again!

*Pauline Pearson*



## Thanks to those stepping down from the Committee – by Ruth Brothwell

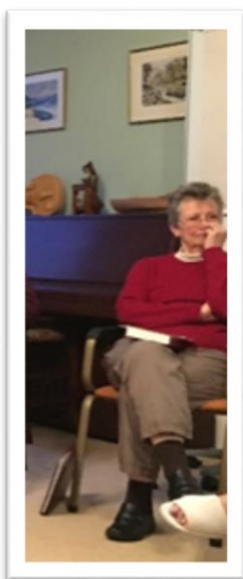
As members will know the committee is elected at each AGM and so over the years there have been many moves. Some members offer much of their time and talents and we have been really helped over the years by those who have worked tirelessly on our behalf.

One such is Margaret Joachim. I first came to know Margaret as a result of an introduction by my Director of Diocesan Ordinands who felt that my 'call' would be well helped by CHRISM. And so it was that we met in the City – well you would as busy workers – and we had supper in Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese in Fleet Street. This was quickly followed by a CHRISM Reflective Weekend and the rest as they say is history.

Margaret has always balanced tireless energy for CHRISM with her political work and somehow also managed to fit in being an IT Manager for a couple of household names!! Where did she find the time?? We would meet up at every committee meeting and she always took her fair share of action points! She helped organise conferences. She contacted and worked with speakers. She met the Archbishop for us and endeavoured to stimulate our patron to more activity on our behalf!

When I finally came to ordination myself it was an obvious choice to ask Margaret to support me. In Guildford Cathedral one day in 2012 she sat robed on the chancel and laid hands on this new MSE. I value her support hugely and have fond memories of the gathering around the table in the pub afterwards!

Many may not know that Margaret has been following an academic dream and studying the production of books, poring over manuscripts, working in antiquarian bookshops, climbing Scottish mountains to find obscure libraries and is now embarked on the final throes of her PhD. She is no longer able to offer all the time in the world to CHRISM but I somehow suspect we will see her back around the committee table soon. Meanwhile we all wish her many more years of fulfilment in her ministry and work. Margaret is also and remains a CHRISSET trustee and keeps a weather eye on what we do financially as an organisation. Our thanks Margaret.....



The committee would also like to applaud Mike Harrison who leaves us after many years as Membership Secretary. Many will not know the amount of work that Mike has completed behind the scenes! The advent of GDPR was especially irksome but it has forced us to take a long hard look at our membership database and how we use it. A huge amount of work has been completed by Mike and we now

have a list which is wholesome and official! So we are all indebted to Mike. He managed to sort out Chrism amidst huge efforts for schools and charities including regular trips to Tanzania with Ros. It was always a pleasure to meet up with them both at conferences and hear of their recent exploits. Thank you both – because I am sure Ros helped out in the background with all that membership work! We really appreciate your efforts for us.

## **CHRISM Annual Conference 2018 – a report by Karen Chaplin**

I had recently read – and enjoyed – John Lees’ book, “Self-supporting ministry, a practical guide” so I was very interested to hear what he had to say. John’s talk was in two parts; firstly a review of the current status of SSM/MSE, followed by a discussion of some of the issues.

Although the concept of ministry in secular employment is not new, and can be traced back to the apostle Paul, most people – including most clergy, it seems, still do not understand the concept. It might even be argued that perhaps the only people who really understand it are those who are engaged in it. We have much work to do.

SSM currently constitute around 15% of the total clergy numbers (CofE, 2017). Which doesn’t sound a lot, but Stipendiary Ministers make up around only 39%, the balance being mostly those with Permission to Officiate. It is clear that the church relies heavily on non-stipendiary ministry. However the total numbers of clergy overall are falling, which means the dependency on non-stipendiary ministers will increase as time passes.

I was musing that in this era where Government relies more and more on the church and voluntary sector to provide public services, and the church itself is relying increasingly on non-stipendiary ministry, there is a conversation which needs to be had about suitably training and equipping SSMs, but also about caring for and supporting them.



SSMs in general and MSEs in particular are also significantly affected by the changing world of work. The rise of the so-called “gig” economy and zero hours contracts may not affect them directly, but they almost certainly affect some of those with whom they work.

Here, John offered us some words of encouragement; primarily from the Collect for the 6th Sunday after Trinity:



“Pour into our hearts such love towards you that we, loving you in all things and above all things, may obtain your promises.”

And also a quote from Lesslie Newbiggin:

“The primary action of the church in the world is the action of its members in their daily work.”

Thus John reminds us that for a Christian, work is not a secular activity, but is – or should be – carried out as an expression of our love for God, and his for us. The particular ministry of the MSE is, therefore, to the people alongside who they work (the inference being that this is to people of all faiths and none); to the organisation within which they work, its structures and processes; and to the work itself. Pastors, prophets and models of the Kingdom.

But from this workplace focus we must not forget the ministry of the MSE to the church. Yes, the MSE can and should bring the challenges – and the strengths - of the world of work to the church. But the MSE is also ideally placed to contact many of those mid-life people who are too otherwise engaged to attend church especially perhaps the 20-50 age group whom we would love to see in the pews on Sunday, but don't. MSE as a Fresh Expression of church, perhaps.

*Karen Chaplin is a new member currently exploring a vocation towards MSE.*

### Karen asks:

I have an action to try and find out **what sorts of conversations MSEs have with their employers prior to going to BAP**. Would it be possible for you to put out a request in the magazine for me please? I'd be happy for my email address to be published. I appreciate some people might not want to share that information but if even one or two did it would be very helpful. Thanks, Karen  
([karen.chaplin03@gmail.com](mailto:karen.chaplin03@gmail.com))



### Questions for discussion

- What is MSE for? How can it make a difference?
- What would we like it to look like in 3-5 years?
- What steps can CHRISM/others take to achieve this?

**Please add your thoughts – contributions for next quarter's journal, small or large, will be welcome.**



## Visits around the International Conference at Manchester - June 2018 - Phil Aspinall

Following the requests from the 2017 conference, and the planning meeting last December, this year's International Worker Priest conference was intentionally only held between Friday evening and Sunday lunchtime. However, some 15 people stayed over for additional days before and after the core weekend and so we organised for them a variety of very successful visits.

Those who participated discovered many aspects of Manchester, and their experiences showed the value of visits as part of such a weekend. Our thanks go to the many people who helped enable and facilitate the visits.

*"50 / 100 / 150 - Marking the Fight for Equality": Mechanics Institute*

The weekend of the conference coincided with the 150th anniversary of the first meeting of the TUC. 2018 marked the celebration of the 100th anniversary of votes for women in the UK, and the 50th anniversary of the strikes of the women workers at Ford, Dagenham.

On the Thursday evening we attended a conference of prominent women, hosted by the TUC at the Mechanics Institute, to discuss what has been accomplished and what remains to be done. The speakers were very impressive and included: Frances O'Grady, Secretary General of the TUC; Laura Smith, MP for Crewe and Nantwich; Brenda

Warrington, of the TUC Regional Council. One of our European colleagues said at the end of the evening: “I read in the media that the Unions in the UK are dying, but this evening has shown so much energy and hope for the future”.

*Meeting Room of the first TUC Conference - Mechanics Institute*

The Mechanics Institute was the precursor to UMIST, the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology, now merged into the University of Manchester. It contains the room in which the first TUC meeting was held in 1868. So we were able to make a visit and to look at the exhibition celebrating the 150th anniversary - conveniently next to the bar where we consumed TUC ale “Brewed for the Workers” by Brewsmith Beer in Bury.



### « Women in Union »      *Mechanics Institute*

Several people stayed on in the Mechanics Institute to continue the 150th anniversary celebration at an evening of folk music by two musicians: Kathryn Williams and Claire Mooney. Kathryn has issued many recordings; and Claire describes herself as a “radical female singer” – “she writes about protest and of justice, peace, love and life”.

### *Dinner in China Town*

The Mechanics Institute is located on Princess St near the heart of China Town, so the rest of us went for an excellent Chinese meal in one of the local restaurants, just around the corner – an opportunity to show our visitors some of the richly textured cultural life of Manchester.

### *Booth Centre      - Pimblett St.*

On Friday morning, one group of us drove up to the Booth Centre to learn about their work with those who find themselves homeless. Their stated mission: “to help make positive changes in the lives of those who are homeless, or at risk of becoming so, and to help them to organise themselves and to build a better future”.

We were given a tour by one of the regulars who rose to the challenge of his first time showing visitors around. The centre organises activities to help build confidence and to teach new abilities. There are sessions each day for art, work and skills, and advice is available on finding accommodation and overcoming problems. And all the participants can have breakfast and lunch.

*Supporting Immigrants from Iran - Church of the Holy Innocents,  
Fallowfield*

The Church of the Holy Innocents has become a focus for Iranian refugees in Manchester and has a weekly Eucharist with parts of the service in Farsi. Hilary, one of the Church Wardens, gave us an introduction to the work they do, the engagement with the refugees and the support the congregation are able to give to asylum seekers as they try to work through the asylum system.

This was followed by a sumptuous lunch prepared by three of the Iranian members of the congregation, who joined us as we ate together. A special thank you to Jamil who had been up since 3am making the preparations.

*150th Anniversary of TUC - People's History Museum, Spinningfields*

The timing of the other visits did not allow us to join a guided tour of the museum, focussed on the exhibits related to the history of Unionism, but a group of us went during the Friday afternoon and made our own visit, and discovered many interesting things.

*The Pankhurst Centre*

On both Thursday and Sunday afternoons different groups made visits to the Pankhurst Centre – and on both occasions, some people stayed there a considerable time, talking with the volunteers and the organisers of the women's support groups which use the centre.

In this house (which was saved from being swallowed up by development of the Manchester Royal Infirmary hospital) Emmeline Pankhurst and her daughters collaborated with

other militant women to organise protests and other political actions to gain votes for women in the UK. 2018 is the centenary of the 'Representation of the People Act' which gave the vote, initially to 40% of British women.

### *The Manchester Arena*

Catherine Binns led us on a tour on Sunday afternoon which started at the children's building of the Manchester Hospital where the most seriously injured were brought after the Manchester Arena attack last year. We also saw the new memorial garden which had just been opened to mark the first anniversary.

We then went on into the city centre, to the site of the IRA bomb attack in 1996. Catherine had researched expertly and had many photos of the devastated streets in which we were standing – making the point that the IRA used to give warnings of bombs (unlike more recent attacks). We then went on towards the Arena and up to St Anne's Square, which became the place of remembrance in the days after the attack. Catherine spoke movingly of the effect on hospital staff who had cared for the injured and for grieving families.

We also had many encounters with the worker bee – a well-known symbol of Manchester. It was adopted during the Industrial Revolution, and symbolises the city being a hive of activity in the 19th century. Following the Manchester Arena bombing, the bee emblem gained popularity as a public symbol of unity against terrorism, appearing on protest banners, and graffiti - and tattoos.



### *Football at Old Trafford*

On Sunday evening a group went over to "Old Trafford" to join the crowd of spectators at the "Soccer Aid" charity match in aid of UNICEF 2018 – the England team against a team of celebrities. The main purpose was for them to see the historic ground – I gather some of the celebrities were not too expert at football! And we had not allowed for the difficulty of using public transport when so many people were leaving the ground.

### *Dinner on "Curry Mile"*

Those of us who were less enthusiastic for football joined together for a meal on "Curry Mile", just adjacent to LKH – the name does not now convey the diversity of the many different types of international food available in the area. So some 12 of us shared an excellent Persian meal – only as we were leaving did the restaurant suddenly fill up for the breaking of the fast.

### *Manchester Airport*

As many people were leaving through the airport on the Monday, we arranged a visit to the Airport Chaplains to fit in with their travel times (through Susan Cooper and her contacts with Airport chaplaincy). As well as visiting the chaplaincy centre and multi-faith worship facilities, they met with one of the Muslim chaplains, and were looked after as they went on their journeys.



## **What is “Good Work” in the context of retirement? A personal reflection by Margaret Yates**

The short answer to this question is, “becoming the person God created”. If we accept – and this is more an act of faith than fact – that humans are created by God, for God, and that our primary purpose in life is to develop our relationship with God. Then, in the mysterious economy of God this implies a relationship with give-and-take on both sides. We are because God loves us first and wants our love. Everything follows from this supposition. Thus the great commandment to: “love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind ..... and love your neighbour as yourself” (Matt 22.37-39), presupposes that you have learnt to

love God and yourself before loving your neighbour which flows from the primary relationship. Life's work then is to realise to the best of our ability the full potential that lies within each God-created human. As Gerald Manley Hopkins puts it in his poem *As kingfishers catch fire*,

Each mortal thing does one thing and the same:

Deals out that being indoors each one dwells;

Selves – goes itself; *myself* it speaks and spells,

Crying *What I do is me: for that I came.* (italics original)

How then to be fully human in the context of retirement? It may involve the reframing of the sense of self apart from the work role and an acceptance of self, others and God for who one is rather than what one does. (*Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counseling*, pp. 808-9) Nevertheless, it has to be acknowledged that this is a very privileged view. I write from a position of having good-enough health, financial and relational stability. It is a situation probably more available to my generation than that of my children who are employed in today's economic environment and is certainly a feature of affluent western society whose primary concern is not in finding enough food to eat. That said, addressing the question of what is required to be fully human remains valid.

The Five Wells of Wellbeing theory argues that we consist of five elements: physical, spiritual, intellectual, creative and relational (social relationships). For human flourishing and wellbeing, we need to maintain each 'well' at an optimal level,

neither flooding over and wasting precious self, nor becoming stagnant or running dry. For the majority of our working life in order to survive and succeed we tend to prioritise one element over the other. Speaking personally, as an academic it was the intellectual 'well' that demanded all my attention at the expense of the others.

Richard Rohr in his book *Falling Upward* divides the human span into two. The first half of life is devoted to building the container of who we are. That is, our identity in terms of career, core relationships, purpose and wealth. The container needs to be strong to hold all the demands and contradictions of modern living and working. The second half of life is about filling that container because a good container can hold a broader and deeper humanity. (See book review in *Ministers-at-Work* July 2016) Or, in the Five Wells sense, we can adjust the water levels in each of our five wells. Perhaps, to mix metaphors, even integrate the wells into one container?

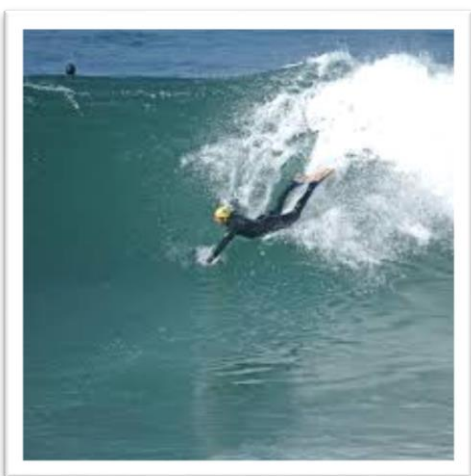
'Good Work' can be our response to God's call to realise our human potential and to give back fully and freely what was first given to us. Speaking personally again, my intellectual self was satisfied (to the point of overflowing) in my career as a medieval historian and God's call to ordination meant that I began to address my spiritual self. MSE was the solution and way forward. There remained, however, unfulfilled areas of my life. Retirement from paid work and licensed ministry has provided opportunities to address my creative self through watercolour painting and textiles, there are times for friends, deepening relationships, and (dare I say it) play. Godly play

delighting in being fully human and experiencing the joy and freedom of being fully me - most recently body-surfing with Nick in new wetsuits in Bude!

Nevertheless, the underlying work that makes this possible is the time and space now allowed by me to give to my relationship with God. From a frenetic life of doing and achieving, I am moving towards a more contemplative way of being and praying that requires much silence. And now, in the mysterious economy of God, I find I have more capacity to give to others and graciously respond to need when it arises. The yearning, driving years are fading and in the words of TS Elliot's poem *Little Gidding*,

We shall not cease from exploration  
And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time.

*Margaret Yates is a Retired Historian and former Moderator of CHRISM*



## What work is acceptable ? Questions about choosing clients – by Phil Aspinall



During the CHRISM conference of 2011 we explored this theme of what work is acceptable. At the time, I put together a table with a selection of the different industry sectors in which I had worked for over the recent years – and started the process of considering some pros and cons of each of them. This is still only a beginning and you might think of many other factors which could be added. In all of these, my involvement has been in the promotion of process safety – reducing risks to people, the environment and to the business.

The purpose of doing this is to explore the assertion that it is hard, if not impossible, to find an industry sector that is “clean” (in many senses of the word). And, indeed, our support services, social services and health systems are supported by taxes raised on such industries and on the

<b>Business sector</b>	<b>Points against</b>	<b>Points for</b>
<b>Bio-ethanol</b>	Using grain that could be used for food Impact on grain prices	<b>Reduces fossil fuel consumption</b> <b>Cleaner burn than oil based fuel</b> <b>Creates jobs – in construction / operation</b>
<b>Nuclear Weapons</b>	Nuclear defence industry	<b>Avoid hazards and reduce risk to workers</b> <b>Many people work here</b>
<b>Sugar refining</b>	Sugar products feed obesity crisis Supply to the fizzy drinks industry	<b>Supports UK agriculture</b> <b>Provides work in rural areas</b>
<b>Oil and Gas supply</b>	“Colonial presence” in African country Oil wealth not cascaded to population	<b>Bringing higher standards in globally</b> <b>Education in new methods</b> <b>Brings money into the country</b>
<b>Coffee manufacture</b>	Exploitation of coffee growers Unhealthy, addictive product	<b>Convenient beverages we all use</b>
<b>Pharmaceuticals</b>	Exploit people's ill health Involved in animal testing	<b>Drugs safer for consumers</b> <b>Processes safer for operators</b>
<b>Steel making</b>	Risks of pollution and other environmental damage Highly-competitive global industry	<b>Provides significant employment</b> <b>Feeds into and sustains many other industries</b>
<b>Auto catalysts</b>	<b>Helps sustain reliance on auto engines</b> <b>Requires mining of rare resources</b>	<b>Improve environment when vehicles used</b> <b>Provides jobs in many different countries</b>

people who work in them. And, of course, many of our pensions are dependent on investments in them. (Forgive my over-simplified economic model).

None of this should, I believe, detract from looking for forms of “ethical investment” and campaigning for changes to the demands made by society for a whole range of products and services, and to ensure high safety and environmental standards. This could well be part of our prophetic role in working for the values of the Kingdom of God.

But what are the criteria that an MSE should use to decide where to work, and in my case as a consultant, which jobs to take. Are we to only work where we believe we can keep ourselves “clean” ? Thus, of course, we condemn other people to do the dirty work. Rather, I believe we should take the view that if people have to work in a place, the role of the MSE is to be there with them. This takes us back to the motivation of the Worker Priests: “to be with”.

I am often reminded of the phrase much quoted by Felicity Smith: “to encounter God in the Mass on Sunday and in the mess on Monday”. When we encounter God in these messy, ambiguous, compromised places; when we see the signs of the Kingdom there, then perhaps we should be building cairns on the way to say: “Lord, it is good that we are here”.

## **Good work – Hannah Hesselgreaves**

“What do you do?” It’s often a question that people hate to be asked but love asking. The “doing” of people in this context is largely determined by their employment, career, profession, or scope of ‘work’ in some capacity. Society has now largely extended its acceptance to parenthood as one such role.



However, we still find additional definitions of individuals helpful in understanding others.

A good job can be appraised in several ways. It may be judged by its employment features as well paid, permanent, of the 'professional' variety. This may appear to offer its occupant value. Or it may be judged by the nature of its content, for example, in the service of society: public sector working, voluntary work, emergency services.



However, there are problems with these definitions. The former, contractual "goodness" does not account for the experience of work and may achieve hygiene factors (wages, policies, working conditions or relationships) with little to offer in motivation and satisfaction. On the other hand, the latter, service focused industries are coming under increasing pressure from all angles – there is a 24/7 demand for society to be 'served', and there is a relentless scrutiny of resource use. These occupations are becoming increasingly unsustainable to work in, as they erode human resources in

numerous ways. For example, physical capabilities deteriorate with chronic cardiovascular illnesses (predominately for men), and digestive illnesses (predominately for women), and musculoskeletal problems. Stress-related problems also exist as a direct function of poor job quality, for example non-standard employment, working conditions, work-life imbalance and issues about working time. For these reasons, individuals tend to embark on multiple careers over their life course, now a normal trajectory for Generation Y and Z (or Millennials).

However, people who serve society in such roles are among the most dedicated and loyal to their jobs – as a researcher in public service occupations, one is hard pressed to find someone who does not care passionately and devote in excess of 100% to their jobs. However, one is also hard pressed to find a member of such occupations who do not have grave frustrations about job quality, and concerns over their own wellbeing. Here, a distinction may be made between commitment to, loyalty to, and satisfaction with one's job or profession, which offers the satisfaction humans require – serving others. This does not always extend to commitment and loyalty to employers, as organisations. It is in this domain where work becomes not “good”.

Thus, these jobs, although delivering on the needs of society, are causing great damage over a lifetime to their occupants. However, the nature of work is evolving: work is becoming increasingly professionalised – one notable historic example is nursing; work is becoming digitised; and it's becoming 'flexible'.

The latter creates interesting problems for employers and employees. The notion of flexible work is conceived of as a “family friendly policy”, designed to increase the quality of work – making work ‘better’ for employees. Yet with this ‘flexibility’ comes other potential hazards – unpredictability, working time extension, blurred boundaries, and feelings of deficit, and the effects of these are becoming apparent in empirical evidence.

However, these should be considered in context – these are



work practices. For many individuals in work, these features have yet to define them. For many, they still identify with the product of their efforts – a safe, healthy, wealthy society, or with the essence of their professions. Identity is perhaps a saving grace in modern work – that individuals feel they “are” something, are “being” something. One is a human being, not a human “doing”. Thank you to all who produce good work in hard circumstances.

*Hannah is an Associate Professor at Northumbria University. Her research interests are at the intersections of human resource development (HRD) and healthcare. Specifically, she has developed a portfolio of work in the areas of learning transfer (and the evaluation of outcomes), job quality, and employee wellbeing, applying a range of methodologies. Her research is aimed at informing policy and practice in the workplace.*

## **Jim Cummins RIP**

We have just received the sad news that Jim died on the evening of Friday, 5th October, at the Four Rivers Home in Ludlow, where he has received excellent care.

Jim was a shining light in the movement of Ministers in Secular Employment which became CHRISM, and was a frequent participant in events and weekends.

We shall prepare a fuller appreciation in thanksgiving for his life and ministry, so please send us any of your reflections and memories of Jim.

But here are some of the tributes we have already received:

*Jim will always have a special place in our hearts and memories. His kindness, his encouragement and his love. Particularly his love of his sheep and cows. Good to have known him.*

*I enjoyed Jim's enthusiasm for life and the way he spoke about. I have missed him since he had been unable to attend weekends.*

*Jim was a real trailblazer.*

*Always a delight to talk to, always with a genuine insight, always with quiet humour. I will always remember the Christmas card he sent a few years*

*ago – him and one of his beloved Welsh black cattle entitled ‘The ox and the ass go to the stable’.*

*A fine man who will be missed by so many who are privileged to have known him as a friend.*

May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

RIP Jim, good and faithful servant.



*The hills and the view that Jim so loved.*

## **The Spread of the CHRISM Prayer Diary by Phil Aspinall**

I have written previously to extol the value of the CHRISM Prayer Diary for People at Work, and after now two years of continuous use I am still impressed by how a single word or job title leads me in many interesting directions, and

sometimes to reflect on changing jobs and workplaces. But its influence is spreading.

Following the Manchester Worker Priest conference, Maria Jans-Wenstrup took a copy back to Germany with her. She has written to say that she lets it inspire her every day, and she finds it very good. The prayers on that particular day were for Physiotherapists.

But more than simply using the prayer diary, each day she has decided to make a translation into German, sometimes with help from a website dictionary. So after a whole year of the prayer cycle, I hope we will have a full German version ready for further distribution.

A couple of recent titles presented some difficulty, however, and when she queried these with me, I had to consult other friends in Berlin. “Community Worker” led to a little uncertainty, mainly I think because of the different way we use the word “Community” compared to other European languages. One real challenge, however, was “Wheel



Clamper"! While we found a German word for a wheel clamp, we had to come up with a translation which somehow explained the concept – and settled on a phrase best translated as “Car immobiliser”. I feel there may be other queries as we go through the year.

*We have more copies of the Prayer Diary available, so please contact Phil Aspinall if you would like to buy some for friends and colleagues.*

## **Important - for your views:**

Comments are invited on a draft paper ‘A Covenant for Clergy Care and Wellbeing’ which has been drafted by a working party following a debate in the Church of England’s General Synod in July 2017. Though it is Anglican it may be of interest to colleagues from other denominations, not least for its theological analysis.

The paper [A Covenant for Clergy Care and Wellbeing](https://www.churchofengland.org/more/clergy-resources/national-clergy-hr/supporting-clergy-health-and-wellbeing/proposed-covenant) can be downloaded at <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/clergy-resources/national-clergy-hr/supporting-clergy-health-and-wellbeing/proposed-covenant>

Comments are required by 31 December 2018. Your Committee are putting together a response from an MSE perspective to be sent in before Christmas (around December 14th), so **please send any comments to Pauline Pearson or Sue Cossey (contact details on cover) before then.**

## Forthcoming Events

### **International Worker Priest Conference, 2019**

As we noted in the last edition, next year's conference will be held at Herzogenrath in Germany over the Pentecost weekend, 7th - 10th June 2019.

Several ideas for the theme were put forward at the end of the Manchester meeting, but if you have any suggestions, please send them to Phil Aspinall or Margaret Joachim to feed into the planning meeting at the end of November. Thank you.





## **Coming soon – take some time out on our Reflective Weekend**

***Busking Theology and MSE: Reflective Weekend 22nd  
- 24th February 2019***

Shepherds Dene, Riding Mill, Northumberland NE44 6AF

We shall be led in an exploration of Busking Theology and Ministry in Secular Employment by Jim Francis. He was for many years a lecturer (in New Testament Studies) at Sunderland University and served as a self-supporting minister in two parishes in the city. He is the co-author of the book *Tentmaking: Perspectives on Self-Supporting Ministry*.

Jim explains: “The Programme for the Reflective Weekend is based on some of the content of a draft book I have been writing on a theology of MSE. It is called (as a working title) *Busking Theology. An Exploration of Ministry in Secular Employment*. It suggests that at the core of all MSE thinking is improvisation. The aim of the book is to give MSEs both reflective content and encouragement to work at shaping a



theology of their own ministry in a way that is coherent to the church and formationally satisfying to the individual. The aim of

the Weekend will be to present (with learning resource exercises for each session) some ways of doing theology relevant to MSE, and to invite and encourage participants to “busk” with them appropriate to their own particular context.”

The sessions will include some theological input from Jim and (as hand-outs) some “self-discerning exercises” relating to it for each of us to work on appropriate to our own context and circumstances, and lead us through:

- \* Introducing MSE as (a kind of) Busking.
- \* Finding One’s Own Model of MSE (Working (in quiet) with a discernment exercise.)
- \* Discovering a Focus on Kingdom and Incarnation
- \* Exploring the Dimensions of a Busking Theology
- \* Discipleship in Daily Life
- \* Busking Formationally with MSE.



In the usual format of a relaxing weekend there will be time for both reflective silence and companionship, and the opportunity to explore the area, including Hadrian's Wall, or simply have some free time to walk, talk, snooze, reflect, read, pray.....



Shepherds Dene is an outstanding example of the 'arts and craft' style of architecture. The 20 acres of grounds were also planned as an Edwardian garden. The house and grounds are remarkably preserved and full of original features. For more information, please visit [www.shepherdsdene.co.uk](http://www.shepherdsdene.co.uk). There is beautiful countryside for walking. There is a railway station in Riding Mill (change at Newcastle) and lifts from there to the house will be available.

Please see the enclosed flyer for more details and please return your completed Registration Form as soon as possible and before the deadline, 12th January 2019. We hope to see you in February



**And Finally.....**

## **Examining**

The smell of preservation  
Surrounds us.  
Hands shaking, this living body  
Confronts us,  
Teasing out slowly  
The intricate mechanisms  
Which sustain life?  
Brightens, confronted with what we do,  
How we construct our lives,  
With competence and function.  
And then,  
Standing amongst the living  
Engages with the dead,  
Seeking to understand from long gone peoples  
Disassembled parts  
A truth forgotten:

Tracing life's spaces, shapes and forms  
In gifts now left...

Complete, they leave,  
Anxious, uncertain,  
To negotiate a path forward  
Into the future  
Which is theirs.



**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 (see inside rear cover)

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

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