

Ministers-at-Work

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Editorial

When I was planning this edition (yes I do try!), it seemed the most appropriate theme as we near the end of the second year of a pandemic would be Wellbeing at Work. However, for various reasons a key piece on that theme has been

delayed. If anyone has thoughts to contribute on that theme, I look forward to receiving them for the next edition.

As it turns out, leadership is the thing on everyone's mind as I write. By the time you receive this, there might be more clarity about the leadership of our Government and country – but it is clear that leadership – and the culture created by the leader - are important.

Recently I went to an orchestral concert for the first time in more than two years. The music was wonderful – a really joyful – and amazingly energetic – programme. As I watched the energy transmit itself from the bouncing of the young conductor into the liveliness and life of the various instruments, and watched different members of the orchestra take the lead at different times, I reflected on the way in which an orchestra comes together, weaving in its different threads of music. In so doing it creates something which, in each performance, is unique.

The CHRISM Theology Discussion Group's most recent paper looks at what we can learn from Jesus' leadership style. It helpfully unpicks the notion of Servant Leadership, and examines the way in which Jesus engaged with and trusted his co-workers to help him in fulfilling God's purpose. The English contribution to the International Worker Priest Conference last year offers some counterpoints to this as it looks at managing risks and dealing with vulnerability, and asks who will speak for the voiceless and those who are not valued. We also have a substantial book review, and importantly, notice of a last-minute change to our reflective weekend – now to be online for one day. Enjoy! *Pauline Pearson*

Management and ministry: What can we learn from Jesus' leadership style?

Julian Blakemore and the CHRISM Theology

Discussion Group

There has been much debate over the years about management and ministry and whether these disciplines are distinct or complementary. When we respond to a call to a ministry of word, sacrament and pastoral care, we find that there are a heap of other management and administrative tasks that are loaded on top.

The question is: are these additional tasks also part of our vocation, of equal standing and importance as the other three dimensions, and as having the potential to provide further opportunities for ministry and mission? Or, do they represent a lower order of activities that are viewed, at best, as a necessary evil, or, at worst, a distraction from the more worthwhile things clergy might/should otherwise be doing?

In my day, and it may be different now, training for ministry focused on proving a strong grounding in theology, church doctrine and practice, whilst paying scant attention to developing the skills and capabilities – such as leadership, and the management of people, time and projects - that would be helpful in dealing with these possibly more mundane but nonetheless essential aspects of the role.

By contrast, in non-church settings, ensuring that people have the right skills for the job is given much higher priority. As MSEs, many of us will have benefited from training and development in our work that is not ordinarily available within the church.

At its heart, the tension between management and ministry reflects the age-old argument between ‘functional’ and ‘representative’ views of ministry – are we defined by what we do or who we are?

Perhaps, to meet the challenges of today's world, it's time to recognize that both are important.

Management and ministry

Job descriptions for managers and ordained ministers contain common elements – both are positions that imply status and authority. Both involve: stewardship of resources (people, time, assets, money); providing a sense of direction; setting standards; maintaining governance and administration (processes, procedures and meetings); recruitment, training and development; communication; problem solving; measuring delivery against expected outcomes, etc.

There was a trend that gained momentum in the church in the 1990s to 'professionalise' the clergy, to bring in tools and techniques from business and commerce to improve the effectiveness of church management in an increasingly complex and challenging world. I'm not saying that the 'secular' world doesn't have some good ideas that the church can learn from and make use of, in the same way that the Christianity can teach the secular world about spirituality, wholeness, community, respect, and treating people fairly. But there are also some significant differences between management and ministry that we mustn't lose sight of either.

Managers are appointed to specific roles in specific places. Whilst they have no remit or responsibility beyond this, within that context they have conferred power and authority to guide the operations of the organisation they work for. Typically, a manager relies on established control structures to achieve compliance with rules, policies, standards and objectives that have been set by the organisation to enable it to succeed. When push comes to shove, a manager's relationship with those they manage is contractual, based on the exchange of time and skills for financial or other reward.

Ordained ministry, on the other hand, is first and foremost God-centred and includes the provision of spiritual nourishment and guidance, theological reflection, preaching and teaching, administration of the sacraments, pastoral care, contributing to and helping to sustain the prayer and worship life of a church community.

But perhaps the most important distinction between management and ministry is that aspects of ministry are shared with, and equally the responsibility of all Christians, lay and ordained, and not the exclusive preserve of those who have a particular status. All God's people are called to exercise Christ's ministry where they are. This means that within the church, ministry is exercised amongst people who are there by choice because of their shared faith. There are no contractual obligations. It's a free association of people involved in a common endeavour based on personal commitment. As such, the decisive power and authority is held by the church body. Relationships between the participants depend on mutual respect, love and trust.

When practicing ministry in a work situation outside the church, we can't assume shared belief or commitment amongst those with whom we work. Usually, there's no authority to exercise Christian ministry (there might even be rules against it!). We may have management responsibilities but not necessarily. In a secular organisation, ministry is about being alongside work colleagues and under the same pressures and expectations as them. It's an expression of our shared humanity, and provides an opportunity to share Christ's love and compassion with them. It doesn't depend on status or authority but is very much about who we are and how we do things.

All that being said, for me, the management role can lend itself to ministry. Good management, even when it's embedded within a 'secular' command and control structure, can have a lot of priest-

like qualities about it. When a manager is doing their job well, conscious of God's action or not, they'll be looking after their staff, enabling them, counselling them, encouraging mutual respect, and building cooperation and teamwork.

Where does leadership fit in?

One of the potential downsides of too much 'managerialism' in ministry is that things can become overly bureaucratic, regimented and controlling. By contrast, a lack of management skills and capabilities can lead to ministry-related stress, burnout or work addiction.

Leadership is sometimes talked about in alternative terms to management or ministry, but I contend that in reality it enriches both. Leaders develop interdependent relationships with those they work with that rise above organisational structures or models of

Jesus' Leadership style:

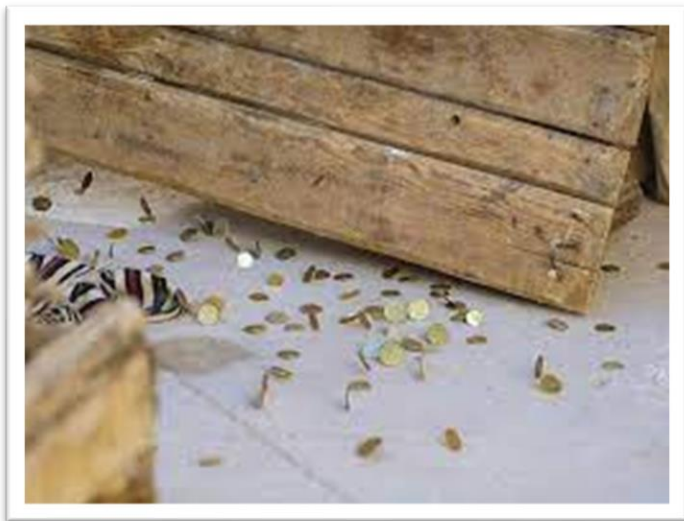
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| ▪ He recruited his own people | ▪ He told his followers he had high expectations of them |
| ▪ He won their trust | ▪ He trusted them and delegated responsibility to them |
| ▪ He taught and explained things to them | ▪ He forgave their mistakes |
| ▪ He gave them vision and purpose | ▪ He made them into a community |
| ▪ He acted to help those in need | ▪ He enabled and empowered them to continue his work |
| ▪ He was an activist and spoke truth to those in power | ▪ He was a servant leader |
| ▪ He showed his followers what to do | |

ministry and engender heartfelt loyalty and commitment. A leader inspires, builds confidence, and empowers people to do things that they might've thought were beyond them. In doing so, a leader helps people to realise their full potential. From a Christian point of view, this means helping them to become the people God created them to be.

Jesus' leadership style:

When it comes to Christian leadership, Jesus is our example. A survey of the gospels reveals a list of behaviours that contribute to his leadership style. The first point to make is that Jesus wasn't a program leader; he was a people leader. God's Kingdom wasn't to be delivered through impeccable planning, flawless process and faultless delivery but through people. Jesus was in the business of transforming ordinary people into exceptional disciples and leaders, who were equipped to continue his work by similarly transforming the lives of others.

The gospels describe how Jesus selected his disciples. It's fascinating to me that for the most uncommon of tasks, he chose common people who had nothing obvious to commend them and bore none of the usual marks of success: they had no social status, no wealth of their own or wealthy backers, no organisation behind them. Yet he saw something in them that marked them out and his choices were



justified by subsequent events. We might not have that privilege in our work situations. Often, we inherit the choices of others. However, even when the people we have to work with are chosen for us, we can still make them feel part of our plans and part of the community by getting to know them and valuing the talents they bring. Jesus invited the disciples into his life and invested himself in them. He spent time with them, he identified with them, he discussed things with them, he ate with them, showed sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence.

Jesus shared his vision and purpose with them. He gave them the sense of being part of a greater unfolding future. He told them that the Kingdom of God was at hand and that they had the distinctive opportunity of helping bring it to fulfilment. Through his preaching, teaching, and healing, he gave them a taste of things to come. In this way, he gave them a sense of mission and meaning in the sacrificial service he asked of them.

Jesus was open and honest with them. He helped them understand the reality that following him would be challenging and costly. He was no stranger to controversy, overturning the money changers tables in the temple and speaking truth to those in positions of power and authority. He led them to expect opposition but not to be cowed by it.



13 Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. ² The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper ³ Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, ⁴ got up from the table,^[a] took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. ⁵ Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. ⁶ He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" ⁷ Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." ⁸ Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." ⁹ Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" ¹⁰ Jesus said to him, "One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet,^[b] but is entirely clean. And you^[c] are clean, though not all of you." ¹¹ For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean."

¹² After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you?" ¹³ You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. ¹⁴ So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. ¹⁶ Very truly, I tell you, servants^[d] are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. ¹⁷ If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. ¹⁸ I am not speaking of all of you; I know whom I have chosen. But it is to fulfill the scripture, 'The one who ate my bread^[e] has lifted his heel against me.' ¹⁹ I tell you this now, before it occurs, so that when it does occur, you may believe that I am he.^[f] ²⁰ Very truly, I tell you, whoever receives one whom I send receives me; and whoever receives me receives him who sent me."

He prepared them to take on his work after he'd gone. He told

them that he had high expectations of them. He sent them out on mission to gain experience and build their confidence. He promised them that they'd achieve greater things than him and reassured them that they'd receive help from the Holy Spirit.

Jesus rejects that ruthless, self-serving, manipulative leadership that people often feel they have to subscribe to in order to get to the top of an organisation. As Robert K. Greenleaf, the former management research director for AT&T, once said, "to be a lone chief atop a pyramid is abnormal and corrupting... that person no longer has colleagues, only subordinates." Jesus' style of leadership is different – it doesn't rely on earthly power structures but on the quality of relationships he has with his followers. He adopts the attitude of a servant. To help us understand what this means, we turn to the familiar passage from John 13.1-20 (NRSV) when Jesus washes his disciples' feet

Servant leadership

The idea of 'service' and 'servanthood' is deeply embedded in our culture – we talk about public service, civil servants, and service industries. The problem is that leaders in these spheres of life don't often display the kind of humility that Jesus exemplifies here. In today's world, where slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour are regarded as scourges on society, the language of 'servant leadership' doesn't always sit comfortably.

Jesus shows that leadership is borne out of a deep concern for people and true generosity of spirit. While others might see washing dirty, smelly feet as a menial and degrading task, he regards being able to serve those he loves as an honour and privilege. He doesn't feel threatened by them because his relationship with them doesn't depend on keeping them down and making sure they know their place. They don't follow him because he wields power and authority over them but because he inspires them and wants the best for

them. Rather than trying to lord it over them, he shows that he would do anything for them.

When Peter questions him, he quickly takes the steam out of Peter's challenge and explains that this is how things had to be. He expected them to follow his example and willingly take the humbler part because then they too won't feel the need to assert themselves or feel that their position is being undermined

The difference with Jesus' teaching, and what makes it so powerful, is that he takes the towel and basin not because he has to but because he wants to. It's a voluntary act of love, of service freely offered to those he cares deeply for, with no strings attached.

Following his selfless leadership enhances both ministry and management. Maybe it shouldn't be a choice between being a good minister and being a good manager?

Key Discussion Points

Ministry is about the way we express our faith. It's a way of being and of relating to the world around you. It's hard to separate how much of this is intentional and how much is just part of who we are.

Managing volunteers is more difficult than managing paid staff. Getting a group of volunteers to all pull in the same direction is more about leading through influence rather than authority.

So-called 'management activities and administrative tasks' are also an opportunity for mission and service. Insightful analysis and well facilitated meetings can help further the Kingdom of God.

There is more support for those in other professions to develop skills in leadership, people management, time management and project planning but these disciplines, useful though they undoubtedly are, shouldn't dominate in the church. Individual character and personality are vitally important and must not be lost.

As someone once said, we don't want the church to be like 'the bland leading the bland.'

This is why ministerial formation is important in the Anglican Church. In the Methodist Church, Ministerial Development Review is a process that supports ministers both to grow in their ministry and to contribute to circuits and districts in their mission. It focuses on ministry in context and applies to all ministers (deacons and presbyters) in a circuit appointment or district appointment, and to all district chairs.

For MSEs, being prophetic, i.e. pointing out the reality of the world, is a key part of the role. The fact that MSEs have two sets of allegiances - (1) to God and the church, and (2) to the organisation they work for - gives them a unique perspective which enables them to speak out more. Speaking out in this way can mean distinguishing between management and ministry. The impact of MSEs in a secular work environment is often underestimated. It is a prophetic act just being there.

MSEs' relationship with the Church can vary. Our secular work is our primary calling but maintaining links with the Church is important. It is about what we receive and how we resource our ministry. There's a need for MSEs to reflect back into the life of the Church as well as reflecting the Church into the life of work. For some, being part of a church is essential but they have to be realistic and limit what they do. It is a journey of discovery.

Jesus' leadership style is our example. It is very hard in practice which means we often fall short. In this way we may aspire to it rather than emulate it but he encourages us to make conscious choices about the way we interact with others and how we take them along with us.

International Worker Priest Conference 3-5 September 2021 Contribution from England (translated from the original written in French)



The October edition of *Ministers at Work* included a summary of the International conference held last year in Germany, along with a series of interviews carried out by Hugh Williamson with several of the European participants. The summary referred to the paper we had prepared for the conference (although unfortunately none of the English delegates were able to attend). The following is an English translation of our paper, with contributions by Margaret Trivasse, Little Sister Kasia-Barbara and Phil Aspinall.

The emergence of new social movements in our country in the face of Covid. What consequences in my life ?

I. The Principal Problems

Phil described a small example from the world of work. He visits two hairdressers who work together in a small shop. One has decided that she does not want to be vaccinated against Covid - "to be free". The other (the owner) has very vulnerable health , so it is difficult for them to work together at the same time. Many clients have said that they do not wish to enter the shop when the unvaccinated one is there, so the business risks losing clients and becoming very insecure to continue. What can the owner do ? Currently she allows the other to work 2 days a week- so she loses pay. But must the assistant be sacked in order to encourage more customers ? I think that there are similar questions in other businesses. Who is right ?

I have another little example. A young friend owns a building firm, employing around 15 people. Among them, two have decided they do not want to be vaccinated. Because of the risk to colleagues, to his family, and to the customers when they work in houses, my friend has asked them to leave the business immediately. A difficult decision for them, but very clear - but similar questions remain.



Margaret has spoken of her work. The staff in the mental health care team were initially asked to work from home, with a small number of nurses and social workers permitted in the office at any one time. Many members of staff, particularly those who live alone, found this extremely stressful and prejudicial to their own mental health. For the therapists working from home, it was very difficult to listen to the accounts of trauma of the clients by telephone (or, rarely, by video). Not to be able to see the clients' body language or their actual situation was de-skilling and potentially unethical. The boundary between home and work, and between a therapy session and the house is considered important, and this was often lost. Once back in the office (though not full time) the pastoral support for the stressed and overloaded team members was much appreciated.

2. How goes society

LS Kasia Barbara thought - what can one say about Covid 19 through the eyes of a team of cleaners ? If we filled a swimming pool with all the antiseptics we have used, you could swim in it ! We have had to clean after everyone who came to stay in our hostel - the chairs, the door handles

etc etc. And cleaning toilets - madness - like a roundabout, time and time again. And part of the team did not work - I have sometimes thought that this pandemic has not helped those who do not want to work. We have seen that many foreign workers have returned home.

Now, close to the end of the pandemic (I hope !) every business in our little village has found it difficult to find

workers. During this summer, many people have taken their holidays in England (as they could travel no further) - our little village received a veritable Tsunami of visitors. Sometimes I think - how can we manage this situation ? I can see the difficulty our little restaurant has finding workers. I have heard the same from others - the same in many businesses.

And a final - there are those who think "I have suffered much during this pandemic; many have spoken of the effects on their mental health". Others have reacted: "Now I want to take my rights to have everything I want - immediate service, space, available tables". They do not think of the cost to others. I sense an increasing hostility - something has changed

We have seen the theme on the cover of Courier PO "In the front line" - which shows photos of those who have worked to support the functioning of society. There are, as examples, the workers on public transport and in shops who have been extremely vulnerable, but not as publicly praised as those in health and social care.

At the political level. Although there do not seem to have been loud voices raised in support of workers' rights, there have been protests against vaccinations and against restrictions. Meanwhile the government is looking to increase restrictions on the right to protest.....

3. How have Social Movements responded

Racism has continued to increase during the pandemic and anti-racist groups have striven to point to ethnic minorities who have been affected disproportionately by Covid,

particularly in the death rates. We could speak further of the Euro 2021 football

Margaret is concerned that some agencies (statutory as well as voluntary, are planning to retain a proportion of work from home, thus reducing the personnel on the front line. She fears that this will affect drop-in centres, excluding those who do not have the credit for telephone appointments.

Many small social movements in towns and cities of England have become more and more important during the pandemic.



Dependent on volunteers, they have supported many people forgotten by, or outside, the official agencies. Food banks and soup kitchens have become more and more needed - and in addition, furniture banks to help women and families who have escaped domestic violence. Phil tells a story of Christmas when, two days before, he saw the long queue of those who relied on a food bank - "it was an image which disturbed and angered me".

4. What has your Worker Priest group done

Our group CHRISM convened a meeting in July on the themes of the emergence of our society out of the pandemic under the title "To make Better". We spoke of the effects on our society and how organisations, for example businesses and municipal offices, have to change after the pandemic. We were guided by one of the authors of the report "The challenges of the Covid decade".

We held this, and other meetings, online. And so we found that more people were able to join with CHRISM during this past year. Many new people arrived, and several times those from overseas who would not normally be able to travel to join us.

5. How have the churches done ?

When we look at churches, for the most part we observe that parishes, and parish priests, have focused on the means to continue holding services online during the times of lockdown. And in this time of opening anew, to create practical systems to protect the people who want to participate in person. (Many people have preferred to still remain at home !)

But in a more positive sense, many have spoken in ethical terms of the need to think of our responsibilities to others, to protect and encourage - and especially those who found themselves completely isolated. And many parishes have participated in and supported the social movements described above.

Because the churches wanted to protect the most vulnerable they have not tended to challenge the controls imposed by the government - they acquiesced. But there are others (many outside the churches) who have asked why church leaders have not defended freedoms.

Margaret thought - although many churches made good efforts to maintain networks with their members who were in difficulty, she fears for the future. The church is more concerned with its own survival, rather than for the transformation of society.

CHRISM Theology Discussion Group - Future Meetings

This Discussion Group, which is open to all CHRISM members, provides an online forum where we can reflect on and discuss the theological aspects of our work. We meet monthly by Zoom for an hour and a half. Recent topics have included: *The Importance of our Work to God and Us*, *The Idea of Rest*, *What is Work?*, *Justice at Work*, *The Kingdom at Work Project*, *Eternal Life*, *Christian Perspectives on Conflict in the Workplace*, *Organisational values - Help or hindrance to ministry in the workplace?*, *Is it OK to be ambitious?*, *Who is Jesus?*, and *Neighbourliness at Work*.

Our next meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, 16 February 2022**, I am pleased to advise that Deacon Dr. David Clark will be leading what promises to be a very interesting session on "*The prophetic vocation*."

If you are interested in joining the Theology Discussion Group, please email me at rev.julian.e.blakemore@gmail.com and I will add you to the invitation list so that you receive Zoom links for these and future meetings.

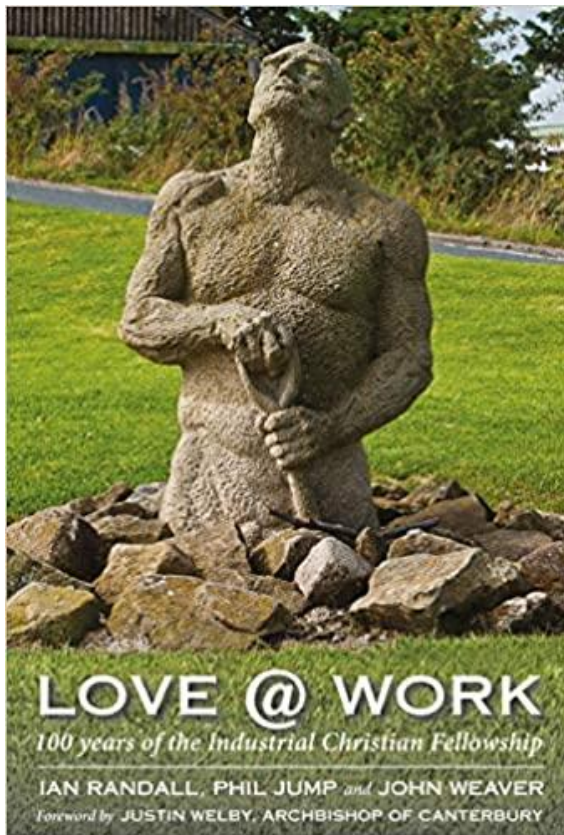
We look forward to welcoming you.

Revd Julian Blakemore



Mentors

Do you feel on your own in your situation / job / diocese? Do you think you might benefit from connecting with a mentor? Or have your experiences as an MSE given you a wealth of insights which might support someone else newer to the role? If you fit either of these and would be interested to look at opportunities for informal mentoring, please get in touch with a committee member, and we will get you connected!



Book Review

Love@Work: 100 years of the Industrial Christian Fellowship, Ian Randall, Phil Jump, John Weaver, DLT, 2020: ISBN: 9781913657017 £14.99

Review by Phil Aspinall

At the age of 100, ICF clearly seems to be a survivor, but this fascinating history chronicles the many twists and turns in achieving this century. A recurring theme throughout the book however, also reflected in the foreword by Archbishop Justin Welby, is that despite changes in structure and organisation, aims and strategy, the work of ICF has been rooted in the belief that the world of work is part of the loving purposes of God, and that Christians are called to live out this belief.

Many of you might already be familiar with the story which begins in the last quarter of the 19th Century with the two precursor organisations of ICF. The Navy Mission Society set out to provide support – physical, social, educational, spiritual – to the itinerant population of the navvies, and their families, who moved around in camps, detached from (and sometimes feared by) the society around them as the work on the construction of the canal system (navigations) and other infrastructure progressed. The other root was the Christian Social Union which was more a place for academics and church people working together to understand the underlying causes of social conditions, and to campaign to make the Church of England aware of its social responsibility. These two came together in 1920 under the new name “Industrial Christian Fellowship”

No book about ICF (nor, indeed, any review of such a book) would be complete without referring to the contribution of Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy in forming the culture of ICF. As an army chaplain during WWI, he earned the nickname “Woodbine Willie” through his ability to be closely alongside the troops, supporting them and handing out New Testaments and Woodbine cigarettes. His reputation for communicating with large outside audiences carried into his work with ICF as “Special Messenger” of the Fellowship from 1920 until his early death in 1929.

He was widely published: books both of theological reflections expounding the Christian hope for a new society, and poems “to communicate in everyday language to the ordinary person”. His was a prophetic voice calling for social righteousness and arguing against unjust social and economic structures, and the divisions between rich and poor in society – to the extent that he generated a negative reaction to ICF from some clergy. His vision set the direction of ICF, engaging with the realities of working people and “articulating the cause of the oppressed to those with power to bring change”. The authors note that “to this day, ICF is imbued with the values and vision he so vehemently advocated”.

In the aftermath of WWI society changed dramatically as industry and manufacturing were developing – there were new social needs, requiring a new understanding of society. The book describes the development of ICF to address these needs. Its many Anglican presidents and council members embedded it in the hierarchy of the Church of England and, indeed, in many ways ICF functioned as the CofE industrial mission, despite at times being criticized for supporting the

Labour Party and indeed of being “socialist” – possibly the price of engaging in the real world of work. We might, perhaps, draw some parallels here with the engagements of the European Worker Priests and the challenges their political thinking presented to the Church. But to quote Archbishop Welby again “it seems clear that ICF’s early advocacy of decent housing, education, sanitary and health provision for the underprivileged – [and] its early espousal of environmental concerns – can be seen in the creation of the NHS, universal pension provision and other aspects of modern British society, such as ecological awareness”.

The history works its way through the many different personalities involved in the years which followed. There were several significant events, described in some detail: The Malvern Conference of 1941 which had the object “to consider the fundamental facts which are directly relevant to the ordering of the new society...., and how Christian thought can be shaped to play a leading part..”; the consultations leading to the Marlow Declaration of ’63 and the Cambridge Conference of ’71 under the title “Human Values and Technical Change”. All these underline the way ICF continued to be placed to bring together those in the Churches and Industry (owners, management and Unions) able to influence change.

But the authors note “the (perhaps unintended) drift was towards encouraging Christians to think and behave in a Christian way within the workplace”. However, ICF continued developing links with businesses espousing Christian principles in their management and organisation (I recall attending ICF

meetings, for example, at the Scott Bader chemical company and the Peterborough “People at Work” programme).

Local ICF groups continued to flourish well into the 70’s but the original structure of Area Directors progressively disappeared. But the number of ICF members and the resources dwindled and there were several crisis points when there had been talk of amalgamation with the William Temple Foundation or with Industrial Mission (which had developed since the ‘60s), but which ICF survived significantly because of the value placed on its independence.

During the 1990s, under new leadership, ICF entered a phase when it set out again to “influence the influencers” – to engage with those who had the power in businesses and institutions to bring about change. ICF changed its name to Industry Churches Forum to emphasise being a space where such discussion could happen. The book acknowledges the feeling at the time that ICF had overreached its resources.

After this period, ICF reverted to focus more on supporting individual Christians in their work and working environment, rather than engaging at a structural level. Recovering the name “Industrial Christian Fellowship”, it has continued to have significant and influential speakers at its annual meetings. There was further growth in networking with other organisations with a similar or related focus (including CHRISM) and particularly with the Ridley Hall foundation through which it now publishes jointly the Faith in Business Quarterly. This sits alongside many other resources – pamphlets, papers, books, worship materials – produced by ICF itself. (As just one example, the booklet on “Working

from Home” written by John Lovatt many years before the current Covid-induced shift in working practices).

There are many references throughout the book but I found it somewhat frustrating that not all sources were quoted and that there is only a limited bibliography of “selected further reading”. A further frustration is the lack of an index which would have been very helpful when referring back to the many personalities and organisations that appear throughout the story.

This book, while not uncritical of decisions and changes made over the years, offers an impressive image of an organisation which has managed to survive and reinvent itself over the years – and concludes with the challenge of finding a new and relevant direction for the future.

Footnote: As I read, I had the recurring thought of what some future history celebrating 100 years of CHRISM might say – and how it would reflect our continued fidelity to our mission statement and founding principles in a world of increasing secularisation and changes in the nature of work and church.



Forthcoming Events



STOP PRESS! Chrism Reflective Day 12th February 2021

‘Place, Space and the Social Imaginary: The Eucharist in Community’.

Led by Jessica Martin

For COVID related reasons this will no longer be a physical weekend, but Jessica will explore the themes in a Reflective Day on Saturday 12th February. We will explore the eucharistic in domestic space and in virtual space, the connections (and disconnections) the pandemic experience of virtual eucharists has created with the daily lives and work of worshippers, and the longer-term theological implications of

our practice of eucharist during the recent period of social restrictions. Sessions will include some of the following themes

'united in prayer and the breaking of bread'

'the hallowing of place and presence'

'space and the social imaginary'

story and repetition

sacramental stories, sacramental patterns

memory and the body

Jessica Martin grew up in Woking, Surrey with her three brothers, daughter of two sociologists of religion. She read English at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, running it alongside being a single parent.



She worked as an academic in the field of English Literature, thinking particularly about religious writing and religious lives in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the early 2000s she trained as an Anglican priest, pursuing the academic and priestly vocations in parallel as a self-supporting minister. She

left academic life in 2010 to become a parish priest in South Cambridgeshire.

Jessica has been Residentiary Canon for Learning at Ely Cathedral since 2016. Her book *Holiness and Desire*, about the roots of human desire and the consequences of its modern commodification, came out in 2020. In 2021 she gave the Bampton Lectures at the University Church of St Mary the Virgin, Oxford, on the topic '*Four-Dimensional Eucharist*'. It will appear as a book of the same title, exploring the influence of the eucharist on modernity and modernity on the eucharist.

And Finally.....

Just a world.



Just a cockerel
crowing
over his hens.

Just a kiss,
soft, silent,
resting
on a bearded cheek.

Just a garden
dark-shadowed,
concealing
thoughts and fears.

Just soldiers,
doing their duty
sent to arrest
a troublemaker.



Just wood,
a tree cut down,
the rings of its growth
made clear in the mark

of the axe.

Just nails,
their metal bright,
sharp pointed.

Just flesh,
a man
willing to go
where his conscience took him.

Just a world
freed from law
by love.

Dorrie Johnson

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)

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