

Ministers-at-Work

*The Journal for Christians in
secular ministry*

Number 142

July 2017

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Editorial

We are an organisation which focusses on ministers – and ministry - in secular employment. We function in a society in which it feels as if paid work has changed considerably over recent decades. The numbers don't necessarily help us to understand.

The Labour Force Survey suggests that over the two quarters to May 2017, the number of people in work in UK increased, the number of unemployed people fell, and the number of people aged from 16-64 not working and not seeking or available to work also fell. The highest unemployment rate in the UK was in the North East, and the lowest in the South East. London had the highest proportion of jobs in the service sector, and the East Midlands the highest proportion in the production sector. The experience of work for people in each category, age group and location is quite different.

Overall the nature of work has changed – with increasing attention to technical skills and knowledge. Financial pressures mean that jobs are less secure, more often, short term or temporary. Even jobs requiring quite a high degree of education and experience can be unsustainable. There has been uproar after an advert which briefly appeared on the Arts Council website sought a full time administrator for a tiny London theatre for a £15-20k salary – less overall than the minimum wage! – and complained about the calibre of previous applicants! Work has become more fragile: easily damaged, broken or harmed. And jobs more often end – for a variety of reasons – leaving people who are still able and

usually willing to work coping with the consequences of not working. Some of our members too are exploring ministry in secular environments for a variety of good reasons – unemployment, redundancy and retirement (voluntary or involuntary) chief among them.

In this edition of the journal, Ian Fitzgerald asks what we as representatives of the church can do to support people in fragile and insecure work. John Pearson muses on Hamlet and the worth of a human being who is retired. Maria Jans-Wenstrup reports (with translation by Phil Aspinall) on the Annual Conference of European Worker Priests in Germany on insecure and precarious work. We have a hymn of praise written by a Muslim after his wife was killed in a terror attack, and a report, this time by Phil himself, on the Old Catholic meeting last autumn. I hope you will find plenty to stimulate thought, and if anything moves you to put pen to paper, or finger to keyboard, I shall be very happy to hear from you. Ideas and contributions always welcome too! The next journal will carry reports and reflections from the recent summer conference on Modern Working; Modern Ministry, exploring the Taylor report and much else. Have a good summer!



Pauline Pearson

Why is there fragile and insecure work in a Christian world? - Dr Ian Fitzgerald

Although I do not have the answer to this question, I would ask each of you to consider what we can do to not only support each other but also those in fragile and insecure work. I have to be clear about what underpins my support for those in that position and indeed my academic work. I come from a trade union family background where all accepted fairness and equality and in particular my mother who was a shop steward. Further having been employed at the worker centred GLC in London it seemed only natural when starting my own business to encourage not only trade unionism but to pay a fair day's wage for a fair day's work.

Over 15 years later in academia (2006) I was shocked to find that temporary work, poor social benefits and little or no retirement support was a part of everyday life for many of those in the construction sector. But worse still was the



treatment of the Polish workers I was investigating for the

TUC in the North East. This bordered on modern slavery and many of these workers had not been paid, were threatened with eviction from employer accommodation and some had even been physically attacked when they dared to complain. At a large meeting of Polish workers we organised, a solicitor noted also that what some workers had been 'tricked' into signing were self-employed contracts and not contracts of employment. This made it more difficult to claim many employment rights. Worse still large numbers of those that were employed were found not to have bank accounts. Therefore the employer paid a lump sum to a particular worker who had a bank account who then paid out wages. However, it was explained that the problem with this was that the worker with the bank account was now legally the employer; a subcontract relationship had been formed. In my work with Polish and migrant workers through the years this type of exploitation has been found to be typical. In fact the worst excesses of this fragility and insecurity led to the creation of the Gangmasters Licencing Authority (GLA) as well as to the Modern Slavery Act in 2015.

The churches and indeed all faith groups have done much to support migrant workers and indeed worked in partnership with trade union and community activists, for example the London living wage campaign is a case in point. But it is not just migrant workers who suffer employment fragility and insecurity. To take again the example of construction, UCATT the construction trade union estimates that over 50% of those working in the industry are falsely self-employed and thus do not receive paid sick leave, holiday pay, overtime rates,

redundancy pay and pension contributions. On a wider note the TUC in 2017 undertook work that investigated the fiscal impact of self-employed and insecure work. This not surprisingly found that there was an earnings penalty due to this type of work, as well as, a fiscal deficit for us all. First because those who were self-employed and on temporary work, such as zero-hours contracts, earned less which meant that they paid less tax and national insurance. Many also received tax credits and housing benefits. This does not seem to be just or fair for workers or society as whole. It is also important to note that in 2016 it was estimated that approximately 1.7 million people were low paid self-employed. Further an estimated 730,000 people were undertaking insecure temporary work (agency, casual or seasonal work) and approximately 810,000 people were on zero-hours contracts.

Importantly the TUC noted that since I first began investigating these exploited Polish workers in 2006 there have been significant changes in our labour market. In the ten years 2006-2016 we have seen a rise of all self-employed from 3.8 million to 4.8 million, and a reduction in insecure work from 770,000 workers to its current figure of 730,000. However, there has been a significant rise in zero-hours contracts from 70,000 workers to its current figure of 810,000 workers. This means a large number of workers are in fragile and insecure work. I would also add that that many others have difficult working lives and these have grown worse over the last ten years. Although Parliament and the European Union have supported people, too much is viewed through the narrow lens of the



business community and profit, with the influence of trade unions diminishing in the UK and in Europe.

As we commence Brexit negotiations it is worth reflecting on some of the recent worker based legislation that has originated from Parliament and the European Union (EU). With Parliament it has to be said that in some areas we have always had fair and just employment laws and Brexit should not change that. However, as mentioned the increasing exploitation of migrant workers in agriculture and some parts of food processing led to the establishment of the GLA. Now this has effectively supported workers in these areas through its partnership approach. A recent example is in Newcastle, Houghton-le-Spring and Consett where modern slavery was identified in our midst. The last Conservative government extended the GLA remit to the labour market as whole and we now have a Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority that includes the GLA.

Another piece of UK based legislation is the national minimum wage (NMW), although only covering the employed this has improved the wage of some. Whilst both pieces of legislation

are to be welcomed in a fair and just society both can be called into question. With regard to the GLA labour providers have had licences removed, although prosecutions have led to low penalties. Also it was recently found that only £156,000 of the £3,100,000 that was claimed back from guilty parties actually went to the victims of slavery. Lastly, the extension of this remit to the whole labour market has not included an extension of licencing. Also whilst the GLA was funded approximately £19 per worker covered, the new GLAA approximate funding is only £4.25 per worker. This leads to the question being asked if the number of GLA inspectors will be increased accordingly. With the national minimum wage this at an early stage was found not to be enough for many workers thus leading to a growth in living wage campaigns and a living wage is now paid by many employers.

Turning to the EU the following give some idea of the influence Directives have had on UK Parliamentary laws. For example UK workers do not have a right to a written contract but EU Directive 91/533/EEC, the written statement directive, means that workers must be provided with a written statement. This is being updated, along with other worker rights due to the rise in fragility and insecurity as part of the establishment of a European Pillar of Social Rights. Also important has been the introduction of the Working Time Directive (2003/88/EC), which amongst other things limited working hours to 48. The Directive on Temporary Agency Work (2008/104/EC) defines a general framework applicable to the working conditions of temporary workers and was transposed into UK law through the Agency Workers

Regulations 2010. So for many precarious workers this meant equal treatment for the first time. There are also a number of other employment rights Directives that have been transposed into UK law. As with UK based law on the ground these Directives (UK law) are only as good as enforcement. As noted, though, there is also an argument that the EU as whole has moved away from the outright support of justice and fairness and a social Europe.

Overall then any law is only as good as its enforcement and when considering those in fragile and insecure work much still needs to be done. As such anyone with a social conscience and Christian faith must look to their communities and self and ask what more can I do to support this increasing number of workers. For me this comes from my upbringing and ongoing work and I am sure for many of you this also comes from your values and Christian beliefs. As we grow older and work in professional occupations it perhaps becomes more difficult for us all to continue this work, but continue we must if we are to build a much better inclusive world.

Ian Fitzgerald is Reader in Employment Relations and Associate Professor, Newcastle Business School, Northumbria University



‘What a piece of work is man’ – Dr John Pearson

Over the course of the past 4 years a few of us who had taught at the university (some of us Subject Leaders and the like) have been persuaded to take early retirement. Thus, that institution has cast off about 110 years' worth of experience. Forgive this cold mathematical approach, but we were/are all Quantity Surveyors by profession, so we trade foremost in numbers! We were replaced (for about half the cost) by bright young things of 28 or 29 whose passage through life had been 1st degree, Masters, PhD, with hardly a day between them in an office or on a building site. We, the displaced, had loads of both... They, not we, were to be the future of construction



education (and not just because they were cheaper but

because research etc. is seen as the way forward).

I know that the Government is bringing in legislation which will persuade/force future generations to stay in employment for longer. Indeed, most of us are fit enough to do so (although the bureaucracy surrounding the day job makes it ever less satisfying or appealing). However the chief driver in my own world at least seems to be out with the old and in with the new (young, thrusting, dynamic ... as well as cheap), almost for appearance sake? It is not fair or sensible to expect anything too realistic from the younger intake, especially as they pride themselves on being "academics" rather than ("mere") practitioners. But we are not just losing basic trades and professional skills but a once time-honoured understanding of how these should develop and interact with others in the real world out there... the mere practitioner could do that; did it for a living

I guess similar replacements, subtle and not so subtle, are going on in other fields but we are not talking just cold mathematical facts and figures (or should not be) but Human Beings; wonderful creations who have acquired, processed and practiced a wealth of knowledge and experience and with it so much anecdotal evidence - the icing on the cake. Hamlet goes on to specifically praise human qualities and what these can achieve. In saying how much man (or woman) can do are we, on suddenly dismissing them, saying there is suddenly so much they cannot? Most who come to the end of their official working life must contain a seam where all their knowledge and experience lies. We should seek to honour this at least in

some way, even if we are not in a position to continue to mine it?

I myself have been fortunate you could say, for my experiences and skills, professional and teaching have been called upon by the university again. They have asked myself and others to go back (on something rather vague, akin to a zero hours contract) to teach again some of the things which it seems, ironically, the bright young things are less able to deliver!

John Pearson is a retired(?) practitioner of quantity surveying, as well as an author and activist



Annual Conference of European Worker Priests Pentecost, 2nd-6th June 2017 in Essen-Werden

Condemned to Insecurity?

This summary is taken from the report prepared by Maria Jans-Wenstrup in German, and translated by Phil Aspinall

The participants came together by stages in the Cardinal Hengsbach-Haus (the former seminary) of the Diocese of Essen, in the beautiful district of Werden, on the southern outskirts of Essen on the banks of the Ruhr. 34 people from Catalonia, Spain, England, Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Germany attended the whole meeting, along with seven others who participated for shorter periods. Unfortunately no one from Italy could come this time for



health reasons.

After a good dinner, we met for the first time in the auditorium, clarified organisational questions, and introduced ourselves in a plenary session. Here, and in all the plenaries, at least understanding in French-German was ensured, thanks to the relentless translation work especially by Ruth, but also by Albert and Daniela and many others. In addition, English and Spanish were translated wherever necessary.

On Saturday, the Belgian group opened with a morning prayer, centring on the text of Mohamed El Bachiri contained in their country report. Part of his text was used very movingly as the Gloria in the mass for Pentecost, and we have included this below. After breakfast, we started out from our country reports. The group from each country had sent, in advance, their responses to the theme, under the following questions:

Condemned to insecurity ?

1. Our experiences of work and life in the current situation of our countries

2a. Where do the fears and feelings of fundamental insecurity come from – for us and the people around us ?

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

2. What helps us in this situation to create together a path of stability, security and confidence?

[If you would like to read the detailed papers, please contact Phil Aspinall. We shall publish the English paper in the October Journal.]

We were then each invited to write down one sentence from all that we had read which had particularly moved us. In turn, we then presented our sentences and explained why we had chosen them. Thus, a broad mosaic of approaches to our theme arose, which formed the basis for the next morning's group work.

In the afternoon, we went off in four groups, to get to know some aspects of life in the Ruhr area in concrete encounters and explorations:

A group went to Düsseldorf to get to know the workplace of Johanna, the "Altstadt-Armeküche", in the heart of the tourist area. It is sponsored by an Association and provides between 80 and 140 meals daily. Although there is only room for less than 20 people at the same time, no one is sent away without a meal and there is a high commitment among the volunteers.

A second group went to the north of Duisburg, where the Marxloh district is a "no-go-area". Wolfgang and Markus, from the Little Brothers of Jesus, live there and showed us, with great passion, their colourful district, which is characterised by many cultures - especially the Turkish - and contains one of the largest mosques in Germany.

The third group went in the opposite direction and met in Dortmund-Dorstfeld with three young activists against the New Right. Dorstfeld is considered by neo-Nazis, who are



active in various degrees, as "our district", where no one else has the right to be. Our hosts, on the other hand, made it clear that Dorstfeld was able to stand against this New Right scene.

The final group remained in the house for a conversation with Christoph Holbein, the spiritual director of the German organisation of Catholic Young Workers (CAJ). The CAJ agents from other countries, e.g. Pepe from Catalonia, were impressed with how the principle of "observe-evaluate-act" was stamped on the work of the local CAJ. The discussion was very fruitful for all.

These different experiences of the afternoon were lively talking points for the festive evening which rounded off the day. Many of us had brought specialties from our own countries for eating and drinking and the kitchen of the house supported us excellently, to offer it all in a buffet. So we enjoyed such good things as Swiss cheese, Westphalian potato

salad, Belgian beer, Dutch tomatoes, Scottish whiskey and much more. Anna from the Ruhr region stunned us with the sounds of her singing saw and we sang songs from different countries. Franz-Josef Overbeck, the bishop of Essen, also spent part of the evening with us.

On Sunday, we celebrated the Feast of the Pentecost with a simple, special liturgy that included and was shaped by the interplay of many voices, whether in the multilingual Pentecost reading from Acts, or in singing together in tones and harmonies without words, or in the Lord's prayer, said each in our own tongues.

The remaining time of the day was mainly devoted to discussion in small groups on the themes that had crystallised from the contributions of the previous day:

1. Humanity first ! Humanism in response to all forms of fundamentalism (philosophical, political, religious)
2. Do we want security at all costs? Why / what for? Where and how do we see new solidarity emerging to counteract the insecurity?
3. How do we understand the fears? What kind of analysis do we have about the real threats and the fears that are being deliberately fuelled?
4. In view of the lack of participation (subservience, imprisonment in insecurity, the electors / society who turn away): What desire and what striving for change can we perceive?

5. God looks at us. He is interested in us – or not ? How can we pass on the gospel as good news today? - Jesus' insecurity: the cross.

In gathering the results of the discussions, it was particularly exciting that each group focused on the importance of personal relationships and small initiatives on the ground for social change. The old saying of the connection: “Think global; Act local” still seems to be more relevant than ever.

Finally, the group discussions continued to work on a draft resolution, hoped for from our meeting. Christian and Jean-Louis had already submitted a draft in German and French. With the support of Ruth they worked into the evening using the ideas that had been introduced from further small group work. The consensus grew in favour of an Open Letter, rather than an official resolution.

The Monday of Pentecost began with morning prayer, at the



centre of which the Catalan group had placed the text Tobit 2: 1-8, which left a strong impression with us.

In the morning, the drafting group presented the "open letter", which was unanimously approved after a short discussion. Its main focus is the question: "How can we counteract the increasing insecurity of a large part of the European population?" The text is in French and in German and we are working on a translation into English. It is intended to be sent, on the one hand, to the bishops and to the press, and on the other hand to be taken everywhere where it seems to us to be useful in our respective environments.

*[It has been published on the German website
<arbeitsgeschwister.wordpress.com> and the French
<www.pretres.ouvriers.fr> and we shall upload it to
CHRISM.org.uk]*



Gloria from the Pentecost Eucharist at the Worker Priest Conference, Essen 2017

This is the text of the Gloria that we used in our Eucharist for Pentecost. It was written by, Mohamed El Bachiri, a Belgian-Moroccan Muslim living in Molenbeek in Brussels, and was included in the paper from the Belgian delegates. His wife, Loubna, was killed in the attack in Brussels on 22nd March 2016. This was written shortly after her death and is his response to those who killed her. It is a call to “the Jihad of Love”.

ALLAHOAKBAR gentle murmur coming from the heart, that one cannot hear, but so much truer than that which is used to destroy us.

ALLAHOAKBAR for the love I bear for this flat land, this cherished kingdom, which is my home.

ALLAHOAKBAR for beauty, for art, for this piece of work which wakes such strong emotions, which makes the coldest of hearts melt in tears.

ALLAHOAKBAR for all this diversity, these cultures, these



faiths, these people with whom we discuss, we exchange ideas and we accept that, in the end, everyone holds their own truth in a spirit of brotherhood.

ALLAHOAKBAR when one rejects violence and opens oneself for peace and friendship between peoples.

ALLAHOAKBAR when I smile and offer my hand to you, the Jew, the atheist, the Muslim or the Christian.

ALLAHOAKBAR for those who understand that God is love and that the salvation of humanity only comes through this universal force shown to the next person.

ALLAHOAKBAR quiet thought for our loved ones and for all the victims who live forever in our hearts and in our memories.

« ALLAHOAKBAR » doux murmure provenant du cœur, qu'on ne peut entendre, mais tellement plus vrai que celui utilisé pour détruire.

« ALLAHOKABAR » pour l'amour que je porte au plat pays qui est le mien et au royaume chérifien.

« ALLAHOAKBAR » pour la beauté, pour l'art, pour cette œuvre qui dégage une émotion si forte, qu'elle ferait fondre en larmes le plus glacial des cœurs.

« ALLAHOAKBAR » pour toute cette diversité, ces cultures, ces croyances, ces gens avec lesquels on discute, on échange,

et on accepte que finalement, chacun détient sa vérité dans un esprit de fraternité.

« ALLAHOAKBAR » lorsqu'on réproche la violence et qu'on œuvre pour la paix et l'amitié entre les peuples.

« ALLAHOAKBAR » lorsque je souris et je tends la main à toi le juif, l'athée ou le chrétien.

« ALLAHOAKBAR » pour ceux qui ont compris que Dieu est amour et que le salut de l'homme ne viendra qu'à travers cette force universelle exprimée pour son prochain.

« ALLAHOAKBAR » douce pensée et prière pour toi Loubna mon amour, et pour toutes les victimes qui vivront à jamais dans nos cœurs et nos mémoires.

Allahoakbar – sanftes Murmeln, das von Herzen kommt. Man hört es nicht, aber es ist so viel wahrer als das andere, (laute), das zur Zerstörung aufruft.

Allahoakbar – denn ich liebe dieses Königreich, dieses platte Land, - es ist meine Heimat

Allahoakbar – für die Schönheit, für die Kunst, dieses Werk, welches so starke Gefühle weckt, dass es selbst ein Herz, zu Eis erstarbt, in Tränen zerfließen lassen kann.

Allahoakbar – für all diese Vielfalt, die Kulturen, den verschiedenen Glauben, für die Menschen, mit denen wir diskutieren, uns austauschen und schließlich in einem Geist der

Geschwisterlichkeit akzeptieren, dass jedeR eine eigene Wahrheit hat.

Allahoakbar – wenn wir uns der Gewalt widersetzen und für den Frieden und die Freundschaft zwischen den Völkern zu Werke gehen

Allahoakbar – wenn ich dir zulächle und die Hand zu dir ausstrecke, egal ob Jude, Atheist oder Christ

Allahoakbar – für diejenigen, die verstanden haben, dass Gott die Liebe ist und dass das Wohl der Menschen nicht anders zu erreichen ist als wenn wir diese umfassende Kraft unseren Nächsten entgegenbringen

Allahoakbar – liebevoller Gedanke und Gebet für dich, Loubna, meine Liebe, und für alle Opfer, die für immer in unseren Herzen und unserer Erinnerung leben werden.



SSMs of Old Catholic Church of Germany Frankfurt - 28th – 30th Oct 2016 - Phil Aspinall

As noted last year, the MSEs (Geistliche in Zivil Beruf) of the Old Catholic Church of Germany (AKD) are now known as SSMs (Ehrenamptliche). I joined them for their 2016 annual conference. There were 28 participants, including and the usual mix of Priests and Deacons: only three women; the majority in paid work; some of the “regulars” were not present – but there were several new participants. People talked a little about their work situations, and the changes taking place, in the initial open forum on Friday evening.

We met, as last year, at Hoffman’s Höfe, a very well appointed residential conference centre, run by a charity supporting and employing people with disabilities, in Frankfurt and very conveniently placed for access to the airport – and for pleasant autumnal walks along the banks of the river Main.

Most of Saturday was based around a report by the Speaker for the weekend, Andreas Krebs (Assistant Professor in the faculty of Theology, University of Bern), on religiosity in the AKD – essentially an empirical study of how people approached their faith. The report contains a summary in English – I have a copy if you would like to read more. The study was carried out jointly with a Psychologist and Sociologist from the University of Trier, who used established models of social background. One wit reduced this simply to identifying the person’s drink of choice: beer, wine or very dry Riesling !

Particularly interesting was the summary characterisation of the Church, which I thought would be worth developing for the many parallels with being an MSE:

- Requires a decision (seen as eccentric)
- A place of pilgrimage (seeking new ways)
- Inclusive – many different styles of living and work
- Traditional **and** Modern
- Connected to a Community (of our workplace ?)
- Participation – “in the mess” – transparency
- A minority (part of the self-image)
- Aspirational

On Saturday afternoon we explored another strand in the report which developed the contrast between Pilgrims (those who come exploring on their spiritual journey – and then go on their way again) and Converts (those who join the church, perhaps in converting from a different church – mainly Roman). We were asked to consider how a congregation should respond to the need of each type of person. I thought this was a useful distinction – but most people seemed not to get it, and saw everyone as a potential convert !

Saturday evening was filled with the “Bishop’s Report”. This was not the usual annual report (which had been presented recently at the Synod – so he did not repeat this), but gave a much more personal reflection. He did speak about ecumenical relations with other Catholic churches (Orthodox, Anglican, Roman, Swedish Lutherans and the Philippine Church).

Sunday morning covered the business, including elections to their committee who are *ex officio* members of the national church synod and then concluded with a relaxed Eucharist led



by Bp. Matthias. There was also worship each morning using the AKD prayer book.

The next conference of the Ministers in Secular Employment will take place again at Hoffman’s Höfe in Frankfurt from 27th – 29th October 2017. Several themes were suggested, but they seemed to be homing in on – Faith in a Secularised Society; what does this multi-religious, globalised society look like ? I

raised a laugh when I explained that we had explored a similar theme in July 2016! As always, interest was expressed in maintaining the link with CHRISM – and I was given a slot to talk about our events. It would be good to maintain this reciprocal relationship, so do please contact me if you can come to join us this year.

Are you an online shopper? - Rob Fox

If so, read on! CHRISM has benefitted in the last few years from donations received from retailers, who give a small percentage of what a shopper spends online where they are signed up to Easyfundraising.org.uk, or a similar giving website. It is a really good way for charities and voluntary bodies to receive a donation that costs you nothing when you shop online. The cost of what we buy remains the same - the retailer you buy from makes the donation!

In summary:

- Go to easyfundraising.org.uk
- Create an account for yourself.
- Add the 'reminder' cookie – it will flag up whenever you go on the website of a retailer offering charity donations this way, so you don't have to go through the easyfundraising website.
- Select 'CHRISM' as your 'good cause'.
- When you shop on line, go to easyfundraising.org.uk, enter the retailer / business you want to buy from or browse in the 'search' box, and hit 'enter'.

This takes you to the website you've selected and, when you buy through it, the supplier will automatically send CHRISM a donation. (I've seldom found a UK supplier I wanted to buy from that doesn't use easyfundraising).

This is usually a percentage of the purchase price, for example 2.5%. So if you buy an item for £10, CHRISM gets 25p. This may not sound much, but if you spent £500 on line during the year, CHRISM would receive £12.50. And if you book your holiday on line – don't forget to do it this way!

Full details of how it works are at:

<http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/how-it-works/>

Events and Updates

The Kingdom at Work Project Bulletin 11, July 2017

The theme of the latest Kingdom at Work Project Bulletin is 'Ministers in secular employment' – compiled in association with CHRISM. It includes pieces by familiar names such as John Lees, Rob Fox and Margaret Trivasse as well as one on 'The neglect of Ministers in Secular Employment' (neglect by the institutional church) by Hugh Valentine.. Then there is a piece entitled 'When is an MSE not an MSE?' by Wendy White which explores seeking work – and exhorts us to take seriously the challenge of MSU - ministry in secular unemployment! All in all food for thought: downloadable at

<http://www.saltleytrust.org.uk/faith-and-work-in-theological-education-and-training/>

Coming soon!

The NW Regional SSM Conference is taking place Friday evening (from 5.00pm) 22nd September to around 4.00pm on Saturday 23rd at Luther King House in Manchester. Their speaker, on the important subject of 'Engaging with Contemporary Society' will be Pete Ward, Professorial Fellow in Ecclesiology and Ethnography at Durham University. This is an event with plenty of opportunity for networking and discussion.

Enquiries should go to Peter Shepherd (Blackburn Diocese SSM officer)

Coming later!

Save the date!

Reflective Weekend 23rd – 25th February 2018

Holland House, Near Evesham



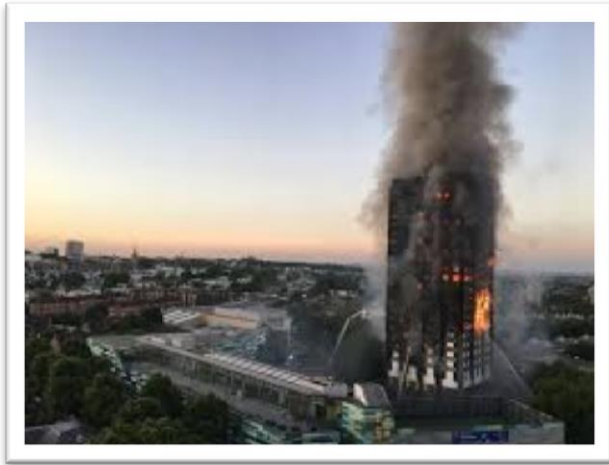
We will be led by Rev Dr Rosalind Selby, Principal of Northern College, Manchester.

TENT-PITCHING GOD TENT-DWELLING PEOPLE

Reflections on Exodus and John's Gospel

If you experience any problems with receiving email copies of the journal, please check your spam box in case your system has put it there

And finally ...



Choices – Grenfell Tower

What shall I wear today?

Where shall we go?

How shall I spend these moments snatched from the day by chance?

We choose to walk or ride,

Brown bread or white,

Latte or cappuccino.

We choose to talk or not,

To act or to stand by.

Everyday choices.

I am haunted by the choice they had

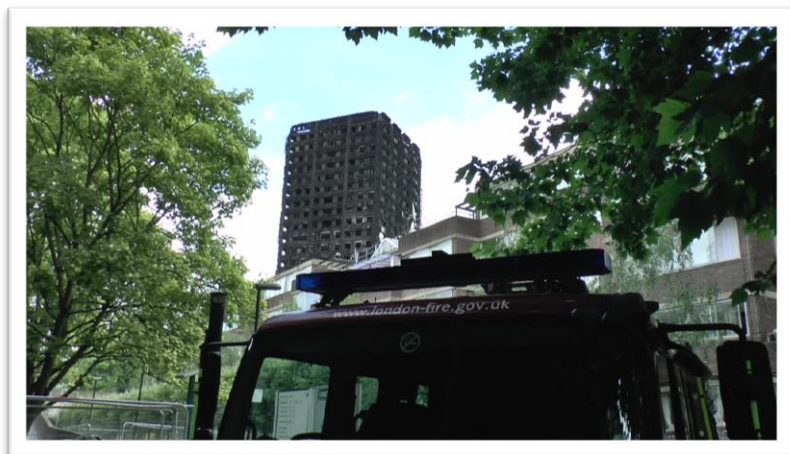
Ordinary families,

Brothers, mothers, sons

Of those who mourn.

Choices of how to die.
To throw a precious bundle into space then wait.
Or run in darkness,
Flames, smoke, chest clutching suffocation
Or fly Icarus-like through the open air
To land hard, a fragile shattered shell.

I lit a flame of mourning, and of hope
For those whose loss is new, and hard to bear,
For those who want more answers,
Those in pain.
For those who fight fire, search and rescue, comfort, care and
heal.
For ordinary people all around, whose love
Has poured out on the streets.



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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