

May 2009 Newsletter

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Giving Added Value



“Added value should lead to increased profits but it can lead to broader and more open minds.”

From time to time I find myself attending Safari Breakfasts or Lunches organised by the Cambridgeshire Chambers of Commerce or Cambridge Business Breakfast Club. The price one pays for an excellent breakfast is to speak for two minutes on your business and why the others on the table will benefit by buying your product. When it comes to my turn, I am usually aware that I have to bridge a culture gap in two minutes and show how Workplace Chaplaincy could give added value to the businessmen and women whom I am addressing.

“Added value” has to be in the top ten of awful jargon! But it is what companies look for when they are considering taking on people or launching new strategies. Added value should lead to increased profits but it can lead to broader and more open minds.

In the history of British Industrial Mission, now renamed as Workplace Ministry, two prominent Twentieth Century Christians stand out as pioneers who not only gave added value to the workplace but really broken through to the hearts and minds of Christians and ordinary workers. Through theirs and subsequent ministries people came to have a new understanding of the church and Christian faith was and is still presented in new and exciting ways.

Ted Whickam was probably the first Christian minister to venture into the workplaces of the large factories in Sheffield in the closing months of the Second World War. Ted, who later became Bishop of

Middleton and wrote the famous “Church and People in Industrial Society”, was sent by Bishop Leslie Hunter who was concerned at the lot of working people in factories. He described them as being “mass produced and mass producing.” The churches he felt were buried in their own world. Ted’s supportive ministry of listening and engaging with the issues in the light of Christian faith inspired many blue and white collar workers who were not used to the church being so upfront. He effectively laid the groundwork for the rise of ecumenical teams of clergy and laity visiting the workplace.

At about the same time, Bill Gowland, a leading and influential figure in British Methodism began exploring radical new ways to make Christianity real in the changing world of the twentieth century. At Luton, where he was an industrial chaplain with Vauxhall Motors, he started a large community centre which became Luton Industrial College, providing training, courses and conferences which dealt not simply with industrial mission but with all aspects of the church’s life in the modern world. He constantly challenged the church, believing that the gospel should be present where people “work and toil and sweat and swear”

Bill’s challenge is as pertinent today as it was seventy years ago. Chaplains in CPW often find themselves with workers at their lowest ebb. Whether this is due to the current recession, particular workplace or personal issues faced by those in companies and organisations, chaplains engage by

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listening and becoming involved whenever that is appropriate. The articles in this current issue of the newsletter show what happens when in faith and desperation people act to change and survive.

the East Anglia District of the Methodist Church Rev Dr Martyn Atkins, General Secretary of the Methodist Conference, described a quality of holiness as being that of engagement.

At a recent Synod meeting of

How's that for added value!

Chris Savage



Looking Ahead

CPW Annual Meeting 2009 at Cambridge Regional College, June 11th

Cambridge Regional College, Science Park Campus Kings Hedges Road, Cambridge CB4 2QT at 6.15pm for 6.30pm

6.30pm Annual Meeting

7.15pm Buffet Supper

7.45pm A seminar on diversity and faith communities in a multicultural society. Speakers: Alison Scott: Equal Opportunities and Diversity Manager, Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service, Rizwan Rahemtulla, Vice Chair Cambridgeshire Association of Muslim Police, Dr Ed Kessler, Director Centre for Abrahamic Faiths
Seminar Chaired by Rev Chris Wilson, Multi Faith Chaplain
Cambridge Regional College

8.35 Questions

9.0pm Finish

Booking, by May 29th latest to: admin@workplacechaplaincy.org.uk

Payment: £10 per head including buffet (concessions for students)
Please make cheques payable to: Chaplaincy to People at Work and send to: CPW Administrator c/o 12 Station Road, Histon Cambridge CB24 9LQ

Breakfast Briefing

Working Breakfast meeting monthly first at Great St Mary's Church Cambridge then Michaelhouse in Trinity Street finished in March after eight meetings.

It is being succeeded by Breakfast Briefing which we hope will be a quarterly event. Breakfast Briefing will be an event which will begin with breakfast at 7.30am followed by a talk at 8.00am with questions. The meeting will finish no later than 9am. Breakfast Briefing will be aimed at commercial and business people as well as CPW Friends and contacts

The first meeting will be on September 29th at the Doubletree Cambridge hotel in Mill Lane. The speaker will be Robert Hallam, Managing Director of John Lewis Cambridge. His talk will be: "Ethical leadership: Accelerated or suppressed by recession?"

Watch this space for further details.



On the Rails

“Whatever company a railway employee works for I see them as “people” and “people” matter.”

Although I am employed by The Railway Mission and carry out the work of the Mission, that is to provide independent confidential help and support to any rail industry employees and also spread the words of the Gospel, I work within the confines of many Railway Companies. I have eight passenger railway companies within my geographical area as well as the many freight operating companies. All the companies use the national rail network of railway lines, similar to different airlines using an airport.

There are times when a train is running late and misses the departing of another company train at a station. Besides being annoying for the passenger, it is frustrating for the railway staff as they have to bear the anger of the passenger. Normally, trains do connect with each other and the staff work together for the good of the service.

All companies carry a lot of passengers but I see freight as being different. Companies are plying for work, each carrying a different sort of cargo; some coal (yes this is still carried by rail for power stations), steel, cars, ballast, stone and of course the container traffic. Each container means one less lorry on the road.

Senior management and directors too work together although there is strong competition between them, like one would expect. Similarly for me, there is competition from staff when they have other or non-Christian views. I do come across some staff who are totally non-believers, some who are not of the Christian faith. This doesn't bother me at all, as I am there for all staff, irrespective of their beliefs.

Whatever company a railway employee works for I see them as

“people” and “people” matter. I do not see “the uniform”, I see “the person”. Some of them wish to tell of their faith, some their life-story, some of their work and others ask about my work. I met one person recently who was relatively new to the railway, who knew nothing of the railway chaplaincy but was delighted to know that it was there - as a “safety-net”. He was pleased when he knew he could talk to me about anything and said “You must have a lot of life-experience”. I then knew I was getting old!

The railways are run by people, whatever their company or job, whatever grade they are, they are there forming “a link in a chain”. Each person matters to God, just like the sparrows that fly around us. It's that person that I am there to serve, to be there not only when things go wrong but there when things are good so we can praise God together. It is not hard to bring God into our conversation especially when the sun shines and the birds sing. Or even when a person has a problem; it is then that their beliefs are tested.

Being a chaplain on the railway is not much different to being a chaplain elsewhere, its keeping that person “on the rails” - “the right rails”.

Lawrence



Police Chaplaincy

"Please keep me in your prayers as I develop this new opportunity for mission."



I am the new Co-ordinating Chaplain for Cambridgeshire Constabulary. In making this appointment Cambridgeshire Police Authority joins ten others (out for 43) who fund a post for a chaplain. A foundation for this work has been laid by Terry Day and Alan Partridge, who have served as voluntary chaplains.

Cambridgeshire has 1200 police officers, and 1000 other staff, spread over at least 18 locations. The chaplaincy is intended to provide independent pastoral care available to those of all faiths and none. My role will be to recruit, manage and supervise a network of local volunteer chaplains, who will support the police staff in their area.

I was first licensed to minister in the Church of England in 1983 in London. I spent nine years in Glasgow (my birthplace) before coming to live in Cambridge in 1998. I have mostly been in parish work, with some hospital chaplaincy. For the past seven years I have been a minister in secular employment, working as a specialist social worker attached to the older people's mental health team in Cambridge City. I have now resigned this post though I will continue to be active in St Andrew's, Chesterton, my local parish, where I am pastoral co-ordinator. My husband, Simon, works in the Microsoft research lab. We have three teenage children. Simon and I turned 50 in 2008. To celebrate we went on a long, hilly cycle trip in North Vietnam, which left us considerably fitter, and raised £13,500 for the Medical Foundation of Victims of Torture better off.

My first week in post was spent acquiring various essential bits of kit, such as a reflective jacket, an email address, a base at Huntingdon HQ, some maps, and a list of all the acronyms used by the police. In the second week I visited two of the

three divisions; central which covers Huntingdon and Fenland, and southern, which is based in Cambridgeshire. I have yet to reach Peterborough and the north. In each case it was an opportunity to meet some key people; with whom in future I will be able to discuss the best shape of chaplaincy in that area, and who will be the point of contact for the local chaplains.

This week I will attend a course run in Suffolk by the National Association for Police Chaplains, for 12 volunteers. This course is delivered by Revd Peter McConnell, who is a pioneer police chaplain from Newcastle, and the Revd Inspector Andy Earl, who is a serving police officer as well as a non-stipendiary priest in Yorkshire. I look forward to reaching the point in Cambridgeshire where we can invite Peter and Andy to lead a course for our own team of chaplains.

Please keep me in your prayers as I develop this new opportunity for mission. By the way, May 21st is designated as the National Day of Prayer for the Police – is there something your workplace or congregation could do to observe this?

Dorothy Peyton Jones



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"try to avoid negotiating in the middle of a worldwide recession!"

The Human Cost of a Merger

Four years ago the company, of which I was a partner, began a corporate review in order to shape the exit strategy of two colleagues. We met with an M&A consultant who cheered us all up by announcing that as we shaped the business for a merger/sale and went through the negotiating process, it would be the most stressful time of our business lives.

Now four years later and having finally seen through changes that included selling half of the company and merging the remaining financial services business with a larger entity I can say from experience that the consultant spoke words of truth; if anything he was guilty of understatement!

For us the evolution took far longer than anticipated, involved negotiations with both longstanding colleagues and potential merger partners, but it also offered opportunities to acquire new business and inter-personal skills. If you step outside of the area where you feel comfort then one of two things tend to happen; you sink or swim.

Once our staff were made aware that a review was under way Pandora's Box was open. Corporate reviews, whatever the outcome, are usually very unsettling times for staff. Typically they are not involved in the detail of the negotiations and even if kept informed of general progress there remains the uncertainty of not knowing if their job is safe and with it security for their families and financial commitments. It is particularly challenging when the expected 'announcement' is delayed, which can happen for a number of reasons; maintaining focus and morale can be very difficult in these circumstances.

Even when confirmation is given that jobs are safe, the TUPE letter issued, further hurdles remain. By its very nature due diligence tends to focus on the financials, compliance and legal issues. It's a wise company that

draws into this process a detailed consideration of the human cost, especially the challenges posed by bringing together two different cultures let alone IT systems. Encouragement brought on by a successful deal can quickly dissipate as computers continually crash and staff struggle to build relationships with new work colleagues especially if they are located in another part of the country.

We set a high priority on trying to avoid any redundancies, but as with most mergers this is often simply not possible due to the duplication of tasks within two organisations. Whilst the most direct impact is naturally on the individual being made redundant the procedure itself creates tension for all those involved in the process.

As a business owner the corporate review meant a much higher workload, the process proving both physically and emotionally draining. Learning to cope with stress will help no end during this period.

And then there are our nearest and dearest who are often left coping with an individual whose mind is continually elsewhere. Try as you do to organise your work, mergers have a life of their own and at times will dictate what must be done and when, even if this means having to cancel a longed for holiday.

So if you are contemplating a merger bear the following in mind:

- As far as you are able keep staff informed and try to put yourself in their shoes along the way.
- Join a gym; it's good for stress relief.
- Find someone with whom you can share the frustrations and successes of the journey you are on.
- And lastly, try to avoid negotiating in the middle of a worldwide recession!

Philip Bowden-Pickstock

Horticulture and spirituality



"Horticulture is thus a satisfying and creative task...a process which brings together different parts of your life."



Recently my own working life has allowed me opportunity to think about what work is. There have been stages in my life where work has been 'that which I do when I'm not at home doing what I really want to'. Inevitably there are periods where this is the case for many of us. However, I also fight against such thinking. Surely my work should be something that engages me and I feel strongly about, something that expresses part of my own identity? Pragmatically I must allow that in an ideal world this is the case, but in reality we are also people with circumstances, and commitments that we must balance with the outworking of ourselves through a job or role.

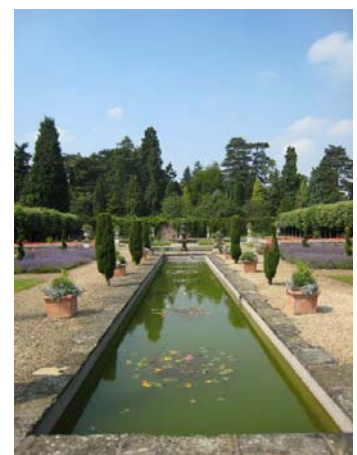
When Jesus was asked to sum up what life was really all about he said: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind and all your strength. And love your neighbour as yourself.' Whatever else that pithy summary is saying, I think it does express that in my position as a created and loved human being made in the image of God, I am to be what I am, and be it wholeheartedly! Some of our inherited thinking is dualist and asks us to separate the material part of our world from the spiritual (that which relates to who we are). I am not at all convinced that Jesus was a dualist. I think everything that our lives consist of – work, leisure, eating, sleeping, relationships, love, hopes and dreams, should be treated as one. None of these are more 'spiritual' or more important than any other part of us and all make us what we are.

My final two years working in radio production for the BBC allowed me to be myself in my work in a greater way than I had previously experienced. I was involved in setting up a project called 'mYth' – Meaning Through Horticulture'. Having a strong feel for nature, the

earth and growing things, and having a deep and committed faith, a colleague and I felt that we ought to be able to make a link between these two in our work lives, and in doing so also make the link between the two for others. We set about making a radio documentary and interviewing people about the spirituality of horticulture. We visited gardens all over Britain and designed gardens including a faith garden for the 2007 Chelsea Flower Show. The whole 'mYth' project is described in a book I've written that is being published this month called: 'Quiet Gardens: the roots of faith?'

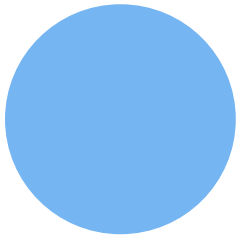
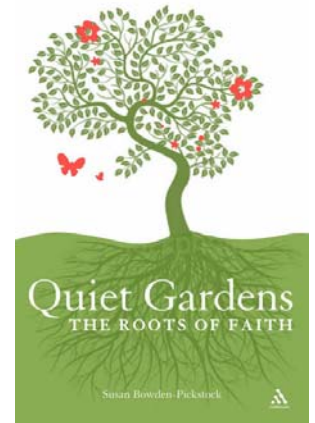
I have learnt that gardening is good for you. It is one of those activities that allows your brain to switch off and reflect on much of the other business that is buzzing amongst your neurones. Horticulture is thus a satisfying and creative task which allows more to go on than planting carrots or weeding a bed. It is a process which brings together different parts of your life. It is also an ideal communal activity which can draw together otherwise disparate people in creating a thing of beauty and productivity. However, horticulture is not the only work process that can instil a sense of well being, reflectiveness, creativity and communal satisfaction. I sense it would bode well if these sort of qualities were established within every sphere of work.

Susan Bowden-Pickstock





Congratulations to Susan Bowden-Pickstock, a member of the CPW Executive Committee who has been selected for training for ordained ministry in the Church of England. Susan, who has contributed elsewhere in this newsletter, starts at Ridley Hall Cambridge in September - Chris



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workplacechlaincy.org.uk

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