



Faith and Work

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The Faith and Work Programme was set up under the auspices of the Methodist Diaconal Order's Faith and Work Group. The group came into being in 2003. Since that time, it has been engaged in offering encouragement and resources to deacons as enablers and educators of lay people for their ministry and mission in the world of work.

The worksheets presented here are one part of an ongoing Faith and Work Programme. Their purpose is to offer a range of reflections, ideas, skills and resources not only to deacons, but to all within Methodism and other Churches, lay and ordained, engaged in this key aspect of ministry and mission.

This first pack consists of 20 worksheets. Over each of the next two years further worksheets will be produced. They will address and fill out the topics identified under the index headings set out on the other side of this sheet. Their publication has been made possible by a generous grant from the Luton Fund.

This set of worksheets focuses largely on what deacons, presbyters, lay church employees, local preachers and worship leaders might do to raise the awareness of and support "the people of God in the world" (as the seminal report to the Methodist Conference of 1990 described them) in their ministry at work, be that paid or voluntary. The reason for this focus is that, hitherto, the recognition of lay people as the 'pioneers' of mission in the world, and the Church's responsibility for equipping them for this ministry, has been much neglected. It is believed by the diaconal Faith and Work Group that unless the Church addresses this leadership deficit the laity could well remain 'God's frozen people', as Mark Gibbs and Ralph Morton once put it. In future years, the worksheets will focus more specifically on the nature and expression of lay ministry and mission within the workplace.

This set of worksheets has been written mainly by Methodists, many of them deacons. The worksheets represent each author's personal views and not those of any association or group to which they may belong.

These worksheets are being sent to every circuit within Methodism in the spring of 2009. It is hoped that circuits will take the opportunity to reproduce further copies themselves, or download them from the contact address given on each worksheet, and use them to stimulate discussion and promote new initiatives related to this vital field of ministry and mission. No copyright is being exercised with regard to the worksheets but acknowledgement of their source is requested. In future years, the worksheets will be mainly available in electronic form, though hard copies will be produced as and when required.

Contact addresses:

For electronic copies of the worksheets download from: www.methodist.org.uk/businessworksheets

For comments on the worksheets and suggestions for future topics: Deacon Dr. David Clark (Convenor of the Diaconal Faith and Work Group) at: david@clark58.eclipse.co.uk



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'The two cultures'

Sharing the value and richness of Christian insights with those in the world of work is not a problem of intellectual credibility, but of cultural dissonance. In the post-industrial society an increasing proportion of those economically active are 'knowledge workers', handling information, data and words rather than materials and products, who are often stimulated by new ideas and ideals. They might be quite open-minded, or even in favour of a Christian viewpoint if this did not immediately present them with a cultural chasm separating them from their working world. Anyone with the courage to straddle or jump this chasm deserves our support and encouragement.

Worlds apart?

- At work we are called upon to be innovative, creative and participative; at church to be passive, conforming and controlled.
- At work we are required to identify our strengths and seek recognition; at church to confess our weaknesses and claim forgiveness.
- At work there is often conflict, if not always of an aggressive kind; at church conflict is denied or suppressed.
- At work the role of the professional is being severely questioned; at church professionals are imbued with almost mystical powers.
- Work demands intense periods of intellectual and/or physical activity; church places emphasis on being rather than doing, on silence, contemplation and reflection.
- Work puts a value on logical thought convincingly articulated; the spiritual life has a point at which logic must cease and words are shown to be the dangerous things they are.
- Work demands 'performance measures' and is concerned with 'outcomes'; church puts emphasis on doing one's best and leaving the outcome to God.

Of course there are jobs which require quiet reflection, some bureaucratic work environments, and some enterprising churches. But my main point is that the culture of church and the culture of working life are so different as to create a barrier which few are motivated to remove.

Consequences of 'the two cultures'

For the ordained ministry

- Clergy have failed to capture the moral high ground in the workplace because of the Church's mediocre record as an employer.
- They tend to see the world of work in terms of atomised skills and tasks, skills which they consider should be freely available for the service of the local church. For example, they perceive a bank manager as someone who will 'do the books' and a teacher as someone to take a Sunday School class, overlooking the interpersonal, planning and decision-making skills such people possess.
- They cling to a model of the work situation which depicts it as stressful, monotonous and unfulfilling.
- They offer to give but do not expect to get. They could learn from management how to harness the skills and abilities of knowledge workers to fulfil given objectives, but they do not ask. When they claim to want management skills they usually mean administrative techniques, like budgeting, not realising that a manager's task is not to run things but to change things.

- They are often forced by their congregations into becoming instruments of control, conformity and continuity. There are intricate hierarchies both in the professional structure of The Church of England; and in the committee structures of nonconformity: terms such as 'steward', 'elder', 'pastor', 'class leader', 'superintendent', all emphasise a control model.
- At the time of a rapidly changing, disparate and mobile labour force, they still tend to equate working life with those employed in large-scale organisations. Even clergy who have made successful contacts with knowledge workers have difficulty in relating to other sectors of the economy. Some growth areas within the economy at present are residential care, fast food franchising and security. Can the church be any more relevant to these workers than it was to the miners, dockers and steelworkers of previous eras?

For the laity

- Lay people often need the church to be a point of continuity in a changing life, and thus stifle innovation through a desire to escape.
- They compartmentalise, keeping church and working life apart on the grounds that they want to be accepted for what they are, rather than what they do. Alternatively they assume that having achieved prominence in one sphere, they can legitimately dominate that of church affairs.
- They like to promote their own image as men and women of the world by portraying the clergy as rather naïve. They often underrate the managerial abilities clergy possess, and do not use them intelligently, demanding about 50% of the latter's intellectual ability and 200% of their time.
- They invest too much emotional capital in their dealing with the clergy so that rigorous discussion is replaced by dependency or aggression.
- Those Christian groups which do exist within secular organisations and professions largely resemble special interest cliques rather than radical change agents. The vast majority of lay people have acquiesced in the secularisation of public debate so that the Christian viewpoint is left to such extremists.

Bridge-building

The way through these problems may be very difficult to find but it has to do with enabling and empowering. It means the ordained ministry enabling the laity to articulate their concerns, to make open choices and to use the resources particular to themselves. It means lay people developing for themselves an appropriate and holistic role in the public arena and requesting the clergy to help equip them for it. The solution is not for each to take a circuitous route to the other's camp, but to build bridges between the two cultures. Once bridges are built, there will be the opportunity of frequent and fruitful traffic across them and the common search for the meaning and purpose of being human can begin.

Lois Green

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[This paper was originally written for the Christians in Public Life Programme.]

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What can the circuit, local church or church member do to invest ethically?

Anyone who holds a bank account, has a pension fund in their name or has any investments is, whether they like it or not, engaged in the capitalist system, for good or evil. When money is invested in a company, the person or organisation making that investment does so hoping for a return. The question of the size of the return is usually that which most concerns those making such an investment. For those of us who are Christians, the question must also arise: 'How is that return to be achieved?'

Companies receiving investments have policies and practices which govern the way in which they operate. Many outline their policies on their websites. However, the practices of some companies can depart considerably from what they state as their intention. Other companies, though usually not admitting this, appear to make a deliberate decision to distance their commercial activity from ethical issues.

It is sometimes the case that when a circuit, church or church member decides to invest in a company, the question of whether the interest gained (ie the proceeds of the investment) has been achieved in an ethical way has not been asked. However, it seems right to argue that Christians should do their best to ensure that the income they are receiving from investments has not come about as a result of practices with which, as Christians, they would be unhappy.

Ethically doubtful practices pursued by some companies

o Marketing practices

There are occasions when products can be inappropriately marketed. For example, many would feel that baby milk powder is perfectly acceptable if fed to babies over the age of six months and in places where water supplies are safe. However, the same product marketed in places where water quality is poor, as in parts of Africa, can kill. This was an issue for Nestlé. Today, as a result of pressure from investors, there is a set of guidelines for the marketing of baby milk drawn up by the World Health Organisation.

o Environmental practices

Many large companies have a considerable impact upon the environment. This might be through the 'carbon footprint' which they create or it might be through other pollutants put into the atmosphere. Other companies are causing damage to the natural environment through mineral extraction or the destruction of tropical rain forests.

o Employment practices

Certain companies have unethical employment practices such as resisting union involvement or, in some third world countries, expecting workers to live in hostels a very long distance away from their families.

o Discriminatory practices

There are companies with practices that impinge detrimentally on indigenous groups. For example, some British companies are 'outsourcing' work to India and, through discriminatory practices against the Dalit Community, profiting massively.

o Financial practices

Remuneration packages for senior executives are now a significant ethical issue. Many companies pay bonuses to their directors, as well as very large salaries. The problem is that bonuses seldom appear to relate in any direct way to the success or otherwise of the person rewarded.

A Methodist approach to ethical investment

Many Methodists have been involved in boycotts of companies with an ethically questionable track record, such as Barclays Bank in South Africa during the apartheid years. As a Church, however, we often seek to use our influence as shareholders to effect ethical action, seeing this as a far more positive and creative way of bringing about change. (However, investing in certain companies and even certain sectors has never been acceptable to the Methodist Church.)

The Methodist Church's Joint Advisory Committee on the Ethics of Investment (JACEI) has for some time been developing a strategy of engaging with companies to ensure that their commercial activities reflect a Christian stance. Our advice to the Central Finance Board (CFB) of the Church helps it to use the Church's investments to influence companies in ways compatible to Methodist understandings. It is far more difficult for individuals or small charitable funds, such as local churches and circuits, to do this if acting by themselves. By placing their funds with the CFB, churches can on occasions influence the commercial activity of even the largest companies. Working together as a Church we can make a difference. There are similar groups for other denominations.

Ethical funds have been established in which individuals can invest. The most ethically committed bank is that run by the Co-op, though increasingly other banks are developing ethical accounts for those who wish to make use of them. Individuals investing in these ways are normally provided with information indicating the sphere of ethics with which the fund is particularly concerned. Nevertheless, there remain differing perceptions of what makes ethics Christian (even amongst Christians!). It is worth noting here, that simply because a fund calls itself 'ethical', it does not mean that it necessarily exemplifies what many would call a Christian ethic.

As Christians, we are fundamentally concerned with 'kingdom values'. We are about seeking to make the world more like the place that God has always wanted it to be. In a world where commercial decisions can affect the lives of millions of people, ensuring that such decisions are made on an ethical basis is thus a challenge for all those of us who call ourselves Christians.

John Howard

[John Howard is Chair of the Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury District and Chair of JACEI.]



Celebrating education: supporting local schools

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Purpose

The following are some suggestions as to how churches might support their local schools (here focusing mainly on primary schools) and, in the process, help all involved to celebrate the gift of education.

Within the life of the local church

Sunday worship is the most obvious place to affirm and celebrate the life and work of all those engaged in education. Although the annual calendar of many churches includes an 'Education Sunday', celebrating education need not be confined to once each year. There are many other ways to support the work of schools.

- A church could 'adopt' a local school (or schools) and commit itself to supporting it (them) during the year.
- One person could act as a contact with the school(s) to learn about the joys and disappointments faced by it (them) over the year. They could feed back information and ideas to the local church (without breaking confidentiality).
- Prayers of thanksgiving and/or intercession could include pupils and students, school staff and governors of local schools.
- Parents from the congregation could be encouraged to form a group to meet and pray together for the needs of the schools which their children attend.
- A church might host a question-and-answer session about religious education in schools.
- A church might offer its facilities for a public display of school work.

Within the life of the school

Although members of staff try to make the school a comfortable, happy and rewarding environment for their pupils, they are often under pressure to meet the conflicting demands of government targets, hopes of parents, and the needs of pupils. Churches might show their support for schools by offering support in various ways.

- Church members could become school governors, listen to children read, help on school visits or simply 'be around' to talk with and support the young people.
- Churches might offer the services of a 'school chaplain'. This could be a suitably trained lay person and not necessarily an ordained minister.
- Churches might offer to lead occasional school assemblies (see below).

Some points to note

- Where staff members are under pressure, we can best work to support them by listening to them and empathising with them.
- Any personal information we learn about staff and/or pupils should be kept confidential.
- Work with schools should be approached as 'service' rather than 'evangelism'.
- When talking about our faith, we should adopt a non-judgemental approach: not 'You should believe ...' but 'I believe ...' or 'most Christians believe ...'
- We should try to keep our language familiar and simple, avoid 'church-speak' and be prepared to explain what we mean.
- Building links with schools is a slow process and may involve formal checking procedures.

Worship in schools

When leading school worship, it is important to choose tunes that are familiar to children and, where possible, modern words (see below). Children or parents should be involved whenever possible. For example, with the prayer below, children might read each of the 'For's, with a leader reading the opening and closing sentences. Children might also provide a musical accompaniment for the hymns.

Hymn for Education Sunday

(Can be sung to the tune 'Morning has broken')

God of creation, from the beginning
You have declared the universe good,
And you have given into our keeping
Knowledge to learn and use as we should.

Knowledge brings power, knowledge brings
freedom;
Knowledge to use, and knowledge to share.
We can control and we can bring changes,
But we must learn to do things with care.

Through work and study, prayer and example,
We can learn how to best use our skill;
Sharing the Good News; serving our
neighbours,
Building your kingdom; doing your will.

Our education – teaching and learning,
Growing and changing, all that we do,
All that we are and all that we will be,
In humble praise we offer to you.

A. Martin 1998

Thanksgiving Prayer

Almighty God, we come to thank you for the good things that you have given us:

For the ability to investigate the past and discover new things today;

For the gift of memory – that allows us to store up information from the day we are born;

For the privilege of inquiry – that allows us to ask questions and form our own opinions;

For the gifts of teaching and training – that allow us to change the world around us, and change and improve our own lives;

For the capacity to pass on knowledge from one generation to another – so that we might constantly learn from the past;

For the gift of imagination and vision – that enables us to change the present and to shape the future.

But most of all we thank you for your love and generosity

- in leaving the world in our hands,
- showing us your will for the world – through Jesus,
- and helping us to get it right through your forgiveness and the power of your Holy Spirit.

Thank you Lord.

Amen

A. Martin 2004

[This hymn and prayer can be reproduced for non-commercial purposes, free of charge, if accompanied by acknowledgement of the author.]

Resources

Good sources of prayers, in modern language, can be found in the many books by Nick Fawcett (eg *Prayers for all Seasons*, Stowmarket, Kevin Mayhew, 2001) or Donald Hinton (eg *Called to Praise*, Birmingham, Christian Education, 2005).

See also Trevor Cooling with Mark Greene, *Supporting Christians in Education*, London, LICC, 2008 for some useful ideas.

Further study

Many books, but begin with David Hay and Rebecca Nye, *The Spirit of the Child*, revised edition, London, Jessica Kingsley, 2006

Tony Martin

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Discerning the gifts of the kingdom community at work

Purpose

To enable Christians at work to become aware of, and bear witness to, the gifts of the kingdom community within their working environment.

This worksheet is founded on the conviction that the kingdom of God is 'in our midst' (Luke 17:21). That means at our place of work, as well as elsewhere. What follows is also rooted in the belief that the kingdom is a kingdom *community*, through which God offers us four unique gifts: *life*, *liberation*, *love* and *learning* (the 4L's – see below). As Christians we are called to discern these gifts, exemplify them in our work and, in ways appropriate to that context, seek to make them, and the divine giver, known to others.

Preparation

Our preparation for the tasks of discernment and witnessing to the gifts of the kingdom community in the workplace has two aspects – personal and corporate.

- *Personal* – This aspect of preparation relates to our spiritual development, an essential part of which will be our daily life of prayer, reading and reflection. Such preparation can help us more perceptively discern the gifts of the kingdom community in the here and now of our daily work.
- *Corporate* – This aspect of preparation relates to how we grow in our awareness of the gifts of the kingdom community at work through our membership of the Church – by means of worship and the support and encouragement we offer one another. It involves sharing with others in a journey of spiritual discovery.

Process

Over a set period of time – day, week or month – commit yourself to being alert to gifts of the kingdom community (the 4L's) within your work and workplace – through the environment, the daily experiences of work, relationships with fellow workers and in contacts with the general public. During a work break (if appropriate), or at the end of the day, jot down in diary form where you believe the life-giving, liberating and loving activity of God has been evident in your surroundings, conversations, incidents, events, encounters and meetings. Also note down those things that make you feel that you have been engaged in a journey of spiritual discovery (learning). Reflect on where at work you have been able to discern these gifts and give expression to them in ways that have helped others to glimpse their presence and the nature of the giver.

Try and share your experiences with other Christians (who, if possible, have been keeping a diary of a similar kind). Reflect on what you have learnt and, in particular, how you might better exemplify and witness to these gifts in your work situation. Use these reflections to enrich your personal prayer life, worship and encounters with Christians and/or others in groups and gatherings seeking to relate faith to the world of work.

Content

Look at *Breaking the Mould of Christendom* (see Resources K1) to get in touch with the idea of the four gifts of the kingdom community (the 4L's). A few questions to help in our discernment of these gifts at work are suggested below.

- **Life** – Does the workplace offer experiences of visual or audible beauty – through buildings and how they are decorated, through workplace surroundings, through music? Do people find work enjoyable, exhilarating and exciting? Are gifts of imagination and creativity in evidence? Do people feel secure, content and 'at home'?
- **Liberation** – Can people give full expression to their knowledge, skills, talents and wisdom? Do the norms and ethos of the workplace allow for flair, initiative or risk taking? Do people experience a strong sense of significance? Are people freed from stress, anxiety or a sense of failure by the support, forgiveness and generosity of others?
- **Love** – Do management and fellow employees offer signs of genuinely caring for one another – especially in small yet significant ways? Does the workplace provide a 'human face', a 'human touch' and does it honour the 'human scale'? Are people affirmed, cared for and supported when a personal crisis occurs – at work, at home or elsewhere? Do people experience a strong sense of solidarity? Is respect and courtesy shown to the general public through services rendered or goods supplied?
- **Learning** – Does work enable people to grow as persons, as well as in work experience and skills? Are people involved in innovative endeavours? Are new experiences and fresh ideas welcomed? Is imagination encouraged? Can people share their visions? Is there a sense of work being an ongoing journey of discovery shared by and with all?

Points to note

Another way of focusing on the gifts of the kingdom community is to reflect on where these are *not* in evidence; that is, where these gifts are being denied, negated or ignored. Along with the more positive questions suggested above, it is also important to ask: 'where and why in our workplace are people failing to experience the gifts of life, liberation, love and learning?' What can we do to challenge, expose or remove that which prevents these gifts being recognised, experienced and used to build the workplace which manifests the gifts of the kingdom community?

Resources

Clark, David, *Breaking the Mould of Christendom: Kingdom Community, Diaconal Church and the Liberation of the Laity*, Peterborough, Epworth, 2005 (pp. 21-27, 37-40)

Clark, David, *The Diaconal Church: Beyond the Mould of Christendom*, Peterborough, Epworth, 2008 (pp. 177-182, 202-205, 207-211)

David Clark

[David Clark is a member of the Methodist Diaconal Order.]



Handling difficult conversations at work

E2

Purpose

When we are at work we are often involved in conversations that are difficult to handle. The purpose of this paper is to suggest ways in which we can handle such conversations so that it benefits the participants and the organisations for which they work.

Difficult conversations and their consequences

A difficult conversation is one that, for a variety of reasons, we find hard to handle. It is characterised by negative feelings such as anxiety, anger, guilt or resentment. Such negative feelings can be very stressful for those involved. Cumulatively, they can also create a work culture of mistrust, blame and resentment which limits organisational effectiveness.

Closed and open-to-learning approaches to difficult conversations

There are two starkly contrasting ways of handling difficult conversations. We call them the 'closed-to-learning' approach and the 'open-to-learning' approach. Our own work has shown that only an open-to-learning approach enables us to deal with difficult conversations in a way that has beneficial outcomes, maintains good working relationships and, in the process, enhances learning (Clark and Myers, 2007). The problem is that in response to the negative feelings aroused by difficult conversations, we typically adopt strategies that protect our own view of the world and keep us closed-to-learning.

If we are to handle difficult conversations effectively, therefore, we must become aware of what distinguishes a closed-to-learning approach from an open-to learning approach. The contrasting features of these two approaches to handling difficult conversations can be summarised as follows:

1. The way we deal with our assumptions

CLOSED In closed-to-learning mode, we do not question our assumptions. These unquestioned assumptions then restrict the way we handle the conversation. In particular they prevent us taking on board anything that differs from our way of seeing things [*She disagrees ... but she doesn't know what she's talking about.*].

OPEN In open-to-learning mode we regard our own assumptions as provisional. This prevents us from being restricted by our own point of view and helps us to be open-to-learning as the conversation progresses [*She may be inexperienced but I need to consider what she is saying on its merits.*].

2. The extent to which we make the conversation a partnership

CLOSED We do not give others the opportunity to influence us. For example:

- We manage the conversation unilaterally in order to achieve our own agenda [*I need to steer the conversation towards getting her agreement.*].
- We avoid finding out what the other person really thinks or wants [*I won't ask her opinion in case she disagrees with me.*].
- We adopt strategic tactics to get our own way [*If I get her to admit that she is now free on Wednesday she will find it difficult to refuse my request.*].

OPEN We think of the conversation as both of 'us' exploring the situation and the issues together. For example:

- We try to involve the other person in deciding how the conversation might be conducted [*I'll see if she has any ideas about how we might tackle this disagreement.*].
- We inquire into the other person's views and reactions to what we say [*I'll ask her whether or not she agrees with me.*].

- We offer others an informed choice. [*I'll explain what I would like him to do on Wednesday and then ask him if he is in a position to help.*].

3. The way we handle the exchange of information

CLOSED We only promote the exchange of information that suits our own purposes. For example:

- We see no need to expose the thinking behind our views [*I'm the decision maker ... he must just accept what I say.*].
- We avoid exploring the thinking behind the other person's views [*What a silly suggestion!*].
- We disclose information on the basis of expediency [*Better not tell him that ... it might undermine my position.*].

OPEN We aim to share all the information that is relevant to the difficulty. This will include:

- information that we may be reluctant to disclose [*I need to come clean about my position.*];
- information that explains the thinking behind our views [*I should explain why I think Mrs. X is unreliable so that he can make his own mind up.*];
- information that explains why we are asking a question [*I'll let her know why I need to know her availability.*].

The open-to-learning approach in practice

Adopting an open-to-learning approach to handling difficult conversations at work may sound simple. The problem is, however, that the closed-to-learning approach we adopt when under pressure is unconscious. We are, therefore, unable to change this approach, even if we recognise its inadequacy. In practice, acquiring the skills to be open-to-learning takes considerable time and effort. However, the following exercises might be of help.

- Next time you become worried about a forthcoming conversation write down any assumptions you are making that, unless questioned, will restrict your approach to it. Try to put these assumptions on one side so that you can be free to handle the conversation in an open way.
- Notice when you make decisions that affect another person without consulting them. Try involving them in decision-making.
- Notice when you are tempted to withhold information that you know is relevant to the conversation. Try putting it 'on the table' in the context of a shared discussion.

A Christian perspective

Adopting an open-to-learning approach to handling difficult conversations at work is not just 'another managerial technique'. It is of the essence in helping to build what elsewhere has been described as 'the kingdom community' in the workplace [worksheet E1]. It is also an approach that lies at the heart of mission as dialogue.

Resources

Clark, Sue and Myers, Mel, *Managing Difficult Conversations at Work*, Cirencester; Management Books 2000 Ltd, 2000 (This is the key book relating to this worksheet.)

Sue Clark

[Sue Clark is a chartered psychologist and a Methodist.]



Addressing stress at work: a group work approach

E3

Introduction

It often seems like a given for society today that life is stressful, and that the greatest source of stress is 'work'. As many of us are working long hours, facing insecurity and increased pressure to perform, the results can be devastating for individuals and families. The material presented here seeks to open up a discussion about the causes and consequences of stress and how we cope with them. What is offered is only a first step. It is designed to be used primarily in a group in which people feel confident to share their concerns together.

Guidance for group leaders

Group leaders must be *sensitive to issues of confidentiality*. They need to be aware that some group members may feel that suffering from stress is a sign of failure. Committed Christians are particularly prone to denying the burden of stress, feeling their 'faith' should see them through. Group members should be reassured that suffering from the effects of stress does not imply a lack of faith or any character weakness.

You may be asked to recommend sources of information to those who realise they need to seek help. A quick search of the internet will turn up hundreds of pages of 'advice'. Some of this is helpful, some is not. A couple of reliable places to start are:

www.hse.gov.uk/stress

www.nhs.uk/conditions/Stress

What is stress?

Wikipedia defines stress as follows:

"Stress is a biological term which refers to the consequences of the failure of a human or animal body to respond appropriately to emotional or physical threats to the organism, whether actual or imagined. It includes a state of alarm and adrenaline production, short-term resistance as a coping mechanism, and exhaustion. It refers to the inability of a human or animal body to respond. Common stress symptoms include irritability, muscular tension, inability to concentrate and a variety of physical reactions, such as headaches and accelerated heart rate."

[[www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/stress_\(medicine\)](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/stress_(medicine)) (21 January 2009)]

An outline for group work

Biblical resources:

Matthew 11:28-30 and Ecclesiastes 3:1-15

Study outline:

1. Read and consider the medical definition of stress given above.
 - What symptoms of stress do we recognise in our daily life?
Do we experience any other stress symptoms?
 - When do we experience these symptoms and what triggers them?
 - What strategies do we have for coping with the symptoms?

2. Read Matthew 11:28-30 and think about the implications of this passage.
Jesus promised his followers that he would 'give rest' to those with heavy burdens.
 - How might we find that sense of rest when we are experiencing stressful times?Jesus follows up his promise by suggesting that by seeking to learn from his example and take on the 'yoke' of discipleship, life will become easier. However for some Christians the demands put on them to take an active part in local church life, on top of work and family life, are the source of even more stress.
 - Is this what Jesus intended?
 - How can church leaders and fellow Christians help to ensure that does not happen?
3. Stress often results from feeling that we must juggle lots of different tasks and responsibilities. Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-15 and consider:
 - What are the conflicting demands that we try to balance and find a time for?
 - Re-read the passage but substitute 'a' in each of the verses 1-8 with 'there is ...'
To what extent is this change in emphasis helpful?
4. We often feel stressed because some aspects of our lives present immediate demands that must be fulfilled ('The boss wants me to work late...'), when we would rather be doing something else ('I want to be at home sharing a meal with the family...'). Resolving these dilemmas is usually presented as finding a 'work-life balance'. However, Jesus and the wise sage of Ecclesiastes point to something even more important than this. They are encouraging us to seek a rich, varied and, therefore, fulfilled life.

This kind of fulfilment will not be achieved by considering just one day, week or month at a time. It requires reflection over a much longer period. Sometimes fulfilment will be found at work. That is right and good. At other times we will find that time with the family, in study and learning, sport or at church will be what we need. The key is remembering that we need a variety of experiences to make life fulfilling, but not seek to undertake everything at the same time.

- What activities do we have to do? What things do we want to do? Are our answers to these questions ever the same?
- Is being too busy, the same as being stressed? Why?
- How might our faith, and being part of a Christian community, help us to discover the meaning of a rich and fulfilling life?

Andrew Letby

[Andrew Letby is a Methodist presbyter with considerable experience in workplace chaplaincy.]



Engaging the circuit with the world of work

FI

Purpose

This worksheet explores ways in which Methodist circuits might engage more fully with the world of work. Many of the suggestions made could be applied to similar ecclesiastical groupings within other denominations (such as an Anglican deanery).

Preparation

Methodism has recently reaffirmed the circuit as 'the primary unit of mission' (Deeks, 2006; *The Missional Nature of the Circuit*, 2008). A vital aspect of the missional nature of the circuit is to engage with the world of work. At the same time, through the *Mapping the Future* process, numerous circuits are being re-aligned. Here again, high on the agenda for such 'new' circuits should be engaging in mission in relation to the world of work. [For this to be effective, it is important that the area covered by any 'new' circuit approximates as closely as possible to a *zone humaine*; that is a region, city, town or rural area with clearly identifiable economic, as well as social and administrative 'boundaries'.]

For 'new' and existing circuits to engage effectively with the world of work there needs to be:

- a clear understanding of the nature of mission in this context;
- new initiatives undertaken to make this form of mission a reality;
- leaders designated and equipped to further this aspect of mission.

Process

The nature of mission in the world of work

Every circuit needs to develop its own theology of mission in relation to the world of work. This will determine its priorities for and approach to engaging with the working life of its area. Many of the worksheets produced here will be of help in this discernment process, but those on 'Literary resources' [KI] and 'Discerning the gifts of the kingdom community at work' [EI] are likely to be of particular value.

Two key foci for the circuit's mission in the world of work are:

1. *direct* engagement with the world of work *within* the geographical area on which the circuit is based;
2. equipping lay people for ministry and mission *within and beyond* the area covered by the circuit.

1. Engagement with the world of work within the circuit's geographical area

- The circuit needs to be well acquainted with issues relating to the world of work which concern its area – within such spheres as business and economics, education, health and welfare, law and order, leisure and governance. This means assimilating information concerning the area's current situation and plans for future development published by relevant bodies and agencies.
- As part of this 'auditing' process, the circuit needs to identify and enter into dialogue with those bodies and agencies which, from its own missional perspective, might be useful partners. [It goes without saying that in relation to mission in the world of work ecumenical partnerships are vital, though a good deal of effort is sometimes required to make them operate effectively.]

- The circuit should take a lead in enabling people to develop a collective vision for the future of their area. The circuit's theology of mission in the world of work should be offered as an important contribution to this visioning process.
[See, for example, the visioning process set up by an association of churches within a rural market town (*Faith in Bakewell*, 2008).]
- As a follow-up to this process, the circuit should seek to identify initiatives (many of which may be small-scale) that exemplify the collective vision (including the circuit's theological vision) for the area and invite those involved to share their stories. Such stories might be published on a circuit's website, in a circuit newsletter or offered to the local press and media, perhaps with reference to the signs of the kingdom which they might be felt to exemplify [see again *Faith in Bakewell*, and worksheet E1].
- The circuit (wherever possible, ecumenically) could organise a celebration and/or display of the working life of the area setting it in the context of God's gifts as creator and sustainer [see worksheet F5].

2. Equipping lay people for ministry and mission within and beyond the area covered by the circuit

Mission in the world of work depends on the circuit empowering and equipping its lay people to fulfil their ministry and mission *wherever* they work, be that in a paid or a voluntary capacity. Many suggestions described in 'Engaging the local church with the world of work' [F2] could be undertaken as circuit initiatives thus enabling all churches to work together in developing this aspect of mission.

Leadership

It is extremely difficult for any circuit to engage effectively with the world of work unless a person with the necessary commitment, skills and time is designated to take a lead role in coordinating such missional endeavour. Currently no denomination has a form of church leadership explicitly identified and trained for this kind of ministry. Amongst those who might make an important contribution to meeting this leadership deficit are:

- members of the Methodist Diaconal Order, who have a particular responsibility to make connections between the Church and world, including the world at work;
- chaplains, who can help circuits keep in touch with and reflect on key issues relating to the world of work [see, for example, worksheet G1];
- worship leaders and local preachers, who could more often address the relationship of faith to the world of work [worksheet F4].

Resources

Deeks, David, *Mapping a Way Forward: Regrouping for Mission*, London, Methodist Church, 2006

Association of Bakewell Christians, *Faith in Bakewell*, 2008 (available from

www.methodistdiaconalorder.org.uk)

Methodist Conference, *The Missional Nature of the Circuit*, London, Methodist Church, 2008



Engaging the local church with the world of work

F2

Purpose

This worksheet offers a range of practical ways in which the local church can encourage, support and equip lay people for their ministry and mission in the world of work. All these initiatives have been taken by members of the Methodist Diaconal Order over recent years. With similar initiatives, they embody a form of ministry which is of special relevance to the role of the deacon. [Where another worksheet describes one of these initiatives more fully, its reference number is given in square brackets.]

Process – engagement within the local church

Awareness raising

- Produce a booklet of the kind of work (paid or voluntary) in which members of a congregation are involved. At the end of the booklet include two or three prayers for the working day. [F3]
- Give an opportunity for people to display items depicting their work (paid or voluntary). Logos, badges, brochures, photos or letter headings could be used for such a display or collage – including school or college emblems. [F3]
- Publish short articles in the church newsletter about how people are trying to link their faith and their work (paid or voluntary). Such articles could be written by lay people or put together from interviews with them.

Worship

- Ask lay people (and prepare them beforehand) to speak during worship about how their faith and work relate. [H1; H2; H3]
- Arrange a service where people are encouraged to talk about what, as a Christian, it means to be unemployed, to be working very long or unsocial hours, or to be retired.
- Use work-related visual aids in worship to remind the congregation that the whole of life belongs to God who is already active community building in the world. [H1; H2; H3]
- Ensure that family or all-age worship takes up themes related to living out one's faith in daily life, including the ministry of children and young people at school and college. [D1]
- Arrange an annual 'commissioning' service to affirm the ministry and mission of the church in the world of work.
- Encourage local preachers and worship leaders to draw on their personal experience of being a Christian in the workplace to inform and enrich their leading of worship and preaching. [F4]

Learning and reflection

- Set up reflection and discussion groups for those who want to meet informally to explore the relation of their faith to their work. [I1; E1; E3]
- Set up more structured courses to explore the theology/ethics of work and/or to explore the spirituality of work.
- Offer young people associated with the church the opportunity to reflect in a faith context on, and talk together about, their life as Christians at school or college.
- For a church away day or retreat, practice the art of communal living Benedictine style – working (indoors and outdoors), eating, studying the Scriptures and praying together.

Pastoral care

- Offer prayers within worship or at other times, for the working concerns of church members. [H2; H3; F3; J1]
- Deacons and presbyters take pro-active interest, and keep a record of the work (paid or voluntary) in which church members are involved.
- Deacons and presbyters exercising counselling and/or mentoring skills support lay people facing difficulties at work. [E2]
- Deacons and presbyters 'work-shadow' lay people to learn more about the nature and challenges of their working lives.

Process – engaging with the *local* world of work

The role of deacon, in particular, is concerned with bridging the divide that often exists between the local church and the local world of work, including schools, health practices, the social and public services, the police, shops, local businesses and so forth. A number of initiatives can help to bridge this gap. These include:

- working with other churches on an ecumenical basis to set up a series of workshops on how Christian faith might relate to and enrich the working life of the neighbourhood (*Faith in Bakewell*, 2008);
- inviting local businesses, shops or services based in the neighbourhood to offer something representing their products, goods or services for a display (on church premises) to celebrate the working life of the area [F5];
- inviting Christians (from any denomination) working in shops and businesses in the vicinity of the church to meet together to get to know one another, to affirm and to support one another's ministries in any way appropriate. If acceptable, the meeting might be held before the working day commences, perhaps on the premises of one of the shops or businesses concerned.

Resources

Clark, David, *Breaking the Mould of Christendom: Kingdom Community, Diaconal Church and the Liberation of the Laity*, Peterborough, Epworth, 2005 (pp. 112-113, 114-120, 284-291)

Association of Bakewell Christians, *Faith in Bakewell*, 2008 (available from www.methodistdiaconalorder.org.uk)



A 'local church at work'

F3

A 'local church at work' booklet

Purpose

The purpose of this booklet is similar to the 'faith at work' display (see below).

Content

- The best size for this sort of booklet is A5.
- The booklet should list the occupations and names (in columns) of the paid or voluntary work in which church members are involved during the week.
- Include an introduction that sets out the purpose of the booklet – for sharing work interests, praying for those at work, etc.
- It is important to include (on an inside cover) two or three prayers to support and inspire people in their daily work.

Preparation

- Ensure that the purpose of the booklet is understood and its production agreed by the Church Council.
- Print out cards (postcard size) on which members can write their paid or voluntary occupation(s) and their name.
- Ensure that the congregation is briefed beforehand (if possible verbally) as to the reasons for the booklet and the use of the cards.
- Make clear that the information provided will be made public in booklet form. (This is necessary to comply with the Data Protection Act.)
- Hand out the cards personally, over two or three Sundays, and ask people to put them, when completed, in a box provided for that purpose. If people are away, they should be mailed a card with a covering letter and reply envelope.

Points to note

- This kind of booklet can be of value to any church. It is amazing, even in small churches, how little some members know of the work that others do during the week.
- Choose a person to head up this project who is a capable organiser and able to collate the responses into a draft booklet.
- Ensure that the booklet is attractively produced. With IT resources this can be done inexpensively.
- Make clear that the booklet will *not* include church offices or responsibilities.
- Do not press people to fill in a card if they do not wish their names included. (Some people do not want to 'go public' for professional or personal reasons.)
- If possible, link the launch of the booklet with a 'faith at work' service and/or display (see below).
- Ensure there is a reference to the booklet on the church web site.
- Revise the booklet as needed, but at least biennially.

Resources

A booklet of this kind has been produced by Bakewell Methodist Church (Peak Circuit in the Sheffield District). Free copies from David Clark, Hill View, Burton Close Drive, Bakewell DE45 1BG. (Please enclose a stamp-addressed A5 envelope.)

A 'local church at work' display

Purpose

The purpose of this display is to enable the members of a local church to:

- become more aware of the paid *and* voluntary work its members are involved in during the week;
- celebrate the gifts that God has given them in order to be able to work for the coming of God's kingdom;
- be encouraged to share experiences and insights about how the gospel can be communicated through their daily work;
- support one another in their working lives, not least through prayer and pastoral care.

Content

The display consists of visual items and 'aids' that represent the daily work in which members of the congregation are involved. Some examples are work logos, business cards, letter headings, badges, T-shirts with logos on them, photographs etc.

[Note: Do not include material related simply to church offices and responsibilities.]

The display can be made more ambitious by including artefacts, products, brochures, etc. that represent the daily work of church members.

Include within or around the display a number of short prayers related to 'faith at work'. Put these prayers onto cards that people can take them away.

Preparation

Ensure that the Church Council has been briefed about, and is supportive of, the display and the reasons for it. Choose a person to coordinate the project who seeks to relate their faith to their work, is able to enthuse church members to participate in such an initiative and can ensure good use of the display in enhancing the life and worship of the church.

The display should be set up by those with the skills to ensure that it makes a strong visual impact.

Give church members at least a month's notice of the display and a person, time and place, to whom contributions for the display should be given.

The impact of the display can be greatly enhanced by being linked to a 'faith at work' service or the launch of a 'faith at work' booklet (see above).

Points to note

It is important that the display is well presented with an appropriate title such as '... Church at Work'.

The display could be in the worship area, a church foyer or anywhere else that is easily accessible.

Ensure that a reference is made to the display on the church website if there is one.

It is helpful if the display can stay up for two or three weeks; but no longer or its impact will be lost.

David Clark

[David Clark is a member of the Methodist Diaconal Order.]



A local preachers' workshop

F4

Local preachers and worship leaders, as part of their commitment to the Church, agree to undertake a programme of continuing development which hones and refreshes their skills. This workshop, set up in conjunction with the circuit local preachers/worship leaders' secretary, can contribute to that process either as part of a local preachers' meeting or on a separate occasion. [See *CPD standing order* 561 (v).]

Purpose

To encourage local preachers/worship leaders to reflect on their own experience of workplace issues. To spur them on to engage with themes relevant to faith and work in the services which they conduct.

Content

1) *Introduction* Right from the early days of Methodism, local preachers have been important. As John Wesley began to travel widely and the movement began to spread, it became clear that the work could not continue to expand if it were entrusted only to ordained clergymen. There were many lay people among Wesley's helpers. Methodism has a great tradition in which the insights of the ordinary working man and woman are valued.

In their working lives, local preachers are on the 'front line'. They should well understand the everyday concerns and pressures which people face. Thus, they are ideally placed to reflect theologically on their experience and to develop themes related to daily life of immediate relevance to the lives of the congregation.

Sometimes when preparing services, it is easy to fall victim to tunnel vision which only engages with the biblical exposition of lectionary passages. However, local preachers have both the opportunity and responsibility to relate worship to experience, especially the working lives of the congregation. [It is important to note that whenever 'work' is mentioned in this paper, it refers to paid or voluntary work.]

2) *A short clip from the 'Christian Life and Work' course DVD/video could be shown.*

3) *Ask one or two local preachers to reflect for a few minutes about issues which have been raised for them in the context of their daily work.*

4) *Divide the meeting into buzz groups of no more than four people and discuss some of the following matters.*

- What are the issues, in the context of daily work, which are of most importance to you?
- What does Christian faith have to say that is of relevance to such issues?
Make a list of possible worship themes to help the congregation reflect on how Christian faith and work can inform and enrich each other.
- What Bible passages throw light on these themes?
- What experiences from your work or workplace might be used develop such themes?

5) *Report back at the end of the discussion.* In reporting back *first* offer a list of work related themes. Then suggest bible passages which illustrate them. Only if there is time, address the other questions.

- 6) *Close with prayers which relate faith and work.* Prayers from the Celtic tradition can be particularly helpful here.
- 7) *Circulate the themes.* Collect up the themes and Bible passages suggested at the meeting and circulate them, with any minutes of the meeting, so that all local preachers and worship leaders may be inspired and encouraged.
- 8) *For 'homework'* Develop one of the themes and use it in a service during the next quarter. Make notes as to what helped or hindered the conduct of the service and how it was received.
- 9) *A follow-up meeting* This could include people sharing ideas they had tried, and small groups could work on prayers for the world of work.

Preparation for the meeting

- o Interview a couple of fellow local preachers or worship leaders to discover how they think their Christian faith relates to their working situation.
- o Design a worship focus on the theme of work and display it at the meeting. For example, bring a coloured piece of fabric on which you can set out and reflect on items which relate to different jobs and activities [eg a laptop, a diary, tools of various kinds, a cookery book, cleaning equipment, paper and pens]. Or prepare some power point slides and handouts to circulate on the theme of faith and work.

Points to note

- o Remember to include and affirm those who are retired, home-makers, students or unemployed. Their experiences of and encounters in daily life are just as important as those of others.
- o The issue of unemployment is a painful one for many people. In our culture great stress is placed on productivity, achievement and success. We tend to value people for what they *do* rather than who they *are*. Christians have a tremendous message of hope in that we are all valued by a God who created us and delights in us. In the Methodist Covenant Prayer we say, "Let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you".

Resources

(DVD) *Christian Life and Work*, London, London Bible College Productions and Scripture Union, 2000 (available from www.licc.org.uk/bookshop) (A video version is also available on request.)
The Northumbria Community, *Celtic Daily Prayer*, London, Collins, 2005 (See in particular the Canticle in Midday Prayer and the Expressions of Faith in Evening Prayer)

Viv Gray

[Viv Gray is a member of the Methodist Diaconal Order.]



A 'community at work' celebration

F5

Purpose

To celebrate the working life of the area of which the church is an integral part.

Content

The celebration consists of two equally important parts:

- a display, open to the public, of products, artefacts and/or printed literature representing the working life of the area, set up in the church sanctuary and/or other appropriate places on church premises;
- a service of celebration and dedication.

The celebration can be held at any time, or linked to an annual occasion of celebration such as harvest festival.

The display should last at least two or three days (including the Sunday), including, if possible, when people are coming onto church premises for a range of reasons and can visit the display at the same time.

Preparation

The display

- Planning needs to start at least four months before the event.
- Set up a steering group to plan the event with, if possible, contacts in the local working community and with the necessary expertise.
- The celebration should be focused on one church, but should be undertaken either as an ecumenical endeavour or with the support of other churches in the area.
- If possible work with the local Chamber of Commerce, Rotary and Probus clubs, etc but ensure that the church retains overall control.
- Check that the church is insured and, when not attended, secure for a display of this kind as some items offered for display might be valuable.
- Obtain a list of the names and addresses of all businesses, shops, hospitality agencies, health centres, schools and other services in the area. If the number is too large to handle, a decision may have to be made as to which agencies to omit (for example, charity shops or residential homes).
- It is important to be upfront about whether or not to invite places that sell alcohol or are involved in gambling to contribute to the display. (Methodist Conference regulations do not appear to rule this out, and it could be a means of building bridges with an important body within the area.)

Invitations, visiting and advertising

- Prepare a letter from the minister and/or deacon, on church-headed notepaper; inviting businesses and shops etc. to offer an item, product, artefact or literature for display and indicate when these should be sent or brought to the church. In the same letter invite them to the service of celebration. State in the letter that the items or products offered should not be too large. Indicate a day immediately after the event when they can collect their items from the church. State that items not collected afterwards will be used for charitable purposes. Include a reply slip asking those contacted whether or not they will be (a) contributing to the display and/or (b) coming to the service of celebration.

- Prepare cards and posters advertising the event and distribute widely (including to other churches). Advertise the event in the local press and on radio and on the church web site.
- Three weeks before the celebration, organise a group to deliver the invitations. Retired people can play a major part here. No person should be expected to deliver more than 15 invitations.
- Early in the morning is often the best time to visit, but this will depend on local circumstances. Brief the group fully and have a prayer before people leave.
- Visitors should seek to give the invitation to the manager or proprietor of the agency concerned.

Near to the event

- A week beforehand put up notices around the area advertising the event.
- Three or four days before the items are due, arrange for limited follow-up visits to remind those who have responded positively that their contribution needs to be sent very soon – this reminder is very important. If necessary some reminder letters could go out before that by post.

Organising and supervising the display

- Arrange for people to be at the church to receive and set up the items for display. (This is a demanding task and will require those with display skills.)
- Produce a leaflet to be handed out to visitors saying what the display is about alongside something about the church and what it stands for.
- Have a visitor's book in which people can offer comments.
- Arrange for people to welcome visitors and supervise the display.

The service of celebration

The service of celebration should involve people from the local working agencies. Use photos of the area in the intercessions. Invite everyone to coffee afterwards.

Points to note

- A key factor in the success of such an initiative is to appoint a person with the ability to coordinate and give impetus to the celebration.
- It is essential that the Church Council catches the vision behind the celebration and gives its full backing. Keep church members well informed.
- Take photos of the display as a future reminder of the event.
- After the event, send letters of thanks to those who have provided things for the display.
- The event will require some financial support. However, *do not* allow the celebration to be turned into a fundraising campaign!

Resources

An event of this kind was organised by Bakewell Methodist Church in the Peak Circuit (Sheffield District) in 2007. Further details from David Clark, Hill View, Burton Close Drive, Bakewell DE45 1BG. Tel: 01629 81017.

David Clark

[David Clark is a member of the Methodist Diaconal Order.]



City centre chaplaincy

The texts set out below are offered as an opportunity for reflection on the everyday life of the city in the context of chaplaincy.

The city that is to come

"For here we have no lasting city, but we are looking for the city that is to come."

(Hebrews 13:14) (NRSV)

- The Bible begins in a garden and ends in a city.
- The city, traditionally walled and gated, is intended to be a place of security.
- The city is a place of justice – unresolved disputes were taken to the city for resolution.
- The city is a meeting place and a place of trade.
- The city is a place of learning.
- The city can be defined through its architecture, its people, its activities and its relationships.

The chaplain engages with all these aspects of what it means to be a city.

The ministry of the chaplain

"Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare." (Jeremiah 29:7) (NRSV)

- The church is present in the city:
 - *through its diasporas* – 'ordinary' Christians engaged in 'ordinary' city life
 - *in the life of its eclectic churches* – Christians gathering for regular worship; civic and 'special' services which draw people together before God
 - *through its buildings* – which hold precious space, ideally without agenda, for God and all people.
- The chaplain has a place in:
 - *supporting the diasporas* where they are
 - *reflecting, in the church*, the celebrations and concerns of the city
 - *reflecting, in the city*, the love and concerns of the church
 - *creating a dialogue* across divides experienced in the city.
- The chaplain seeks to engage with:
 - *the development agenda* of the city. What kind of city do we seek to create? Who owns the city?
 - *the safety and security* of everyone in the city: the more invisible people are, the more they need the voice of the church to speak for and with them.
 - *issues of justice*: Fairtrade, poverty action, asylum, employee rights, human rights.
 - *the meeting places of people*: engaging with the public bodies as they shape the city agenda; engaging with private firms as they generate wealth, provide employment and, hopefully, engage with the community; offering hospitality, to enable those who less naturally meet to be drawn together and to hear each other's voices.
 - *the learning processes* of the city, through impartial reflection offered without judgement.
 - *offering a unique perspective* which can be gained from being present in the boardrooms, the council chambers, the staff room, the shop floor, the union office and alongside the cleaner.

“Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; You shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.” (Isaiah 58:12) (NRSV)

- *The chaplain offers the ministry of reconciliation.* Their work will frequently involve listening to *the individual* troubled by conflict or breakdown in relationships. Sometimes, indeed often, to listen is enough; sometimes it is appropriate to support the individual in taking action; often it is appropriate to refer the individual to someone with particular expertise who can help them further. The importance of this ‘bridging’ role, enabling the individual to take a step which they might struggle to take on their own, should never be underestimated.
- There may be opportunities to engage in more formal leadership initiatives aimed at *corporate reconciliation*, within or between organisations. The chaplain often has an overview which enables them to help organisations, departments or teams in conflict to see when they are pursuing common or related aims and to help bring them together.
- This ministry of reconciliation can be enhanced by the chaplain providing the opportunity for quality conversations that offer an understanding of change (coming to terms with grief), of how to overcome differences (offering forgiveness) and of the meaning and purpose of life (vocation, as the unique call of each individual to be and become the person God means them to be).

“As he came near and saw the city, he wept over it, saying, ‘If you, even you, had only recognised on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.’”

(Luke 19: 41-42) (NRSV)

- *The chaplain engages in praying for the city*, both publically and privately. Such prayer is for the nature, direction and shaping of the city and for the concerns raised by its people. Walk the city with nothing on your mind, see who is thriving and who is struggling, give thanks for those who care, be alongside those who suffer and seek the things that make for peace.

“See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes.’ (Revelation 21:3-4) (NRSV)

- The chaplain never takes God anywhere. Their privileged task is to affirm God’s presence, care, involvement and, occasionally, to name God for those who are unused to acknowledging the divine presence.

Alison Maddocks

[Alison Maddocks is Nottingham Workplace Chaplain and associate priest on the staff of the Anglican city centre parish there.]



Worship outlines

'All of life belongs to God'

Purpose

To show that there should be no separation between 'God-time' and 'work-time'.

Bible passages

Isaiah 45:1-7, 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10, Matthew 22:15-22 (from Year A, 29th Sunday in Ordinary Time)

Preparation

Have some coins ready as a visual aid. Make sure they have figureheads on them.

Content

Read Matthew 22:15-22.

Talk Talk about the coins. Do they have figureheads on them? Does this mean that the coins belong to that person? Discuss the fact that many Jewish people would not even handle Roman coins because they bore the image of Caesar and thus fell foul of Jewish law which banned all images. What did Jesus mean when he said, "Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's" (verse 21)? Any Jew would have known that there is no separation between the secular and the sacred, between work and worship, and that all of life belongs to God.

Prayers Before the prayers of intercession, ask people what they will be doing this time tomorrow. Offer these activities and situations to God. After the prayer, remind everyone that God will be with them this time tomorrow – at work, in the home, in the neighbourhood, in their leisure activities – just as God is with us in worship. Indeed, even if we are too busy to notice, God is always there.

Sermon Discuss why we separate the secular and sacred when God does not. Cyrus was neither a Jew nor a God-fearer, but he was used by God and came to be thought of by the Jews as a 'messiah'. Are there modern day equivalents to Cyrus? Does God work through people who would not call themselves Christians, like Bob Geldorf or Bono ?

Everything is potentially sacramental because God is universally present. Gerald Manley Hopkins in his poem 'God's Grandeur' writes: "The world is charged with the grandeur of God/ It will flame out, like shining from shook foil..." We should remember the words of the hymn 'Fill thou my life': 'So shall no part of day or night from sacredness be free...' Our faith is enriched by and expressed through every single moment of our lives. How might such awareness affect the way in which we view our work and our workplace?

Hymns

Fill thou my life (H&P, MPC, SoF); *Jesus calls us o'er the tumult* (H&P, MPC); *The kingdom of God* (H&P, MPC); *To God be the glory* (H&P, MPC, SoF); *What shall I do my God to love* (H&P)

'Spiritual armour'

Purpose

To show how a modern work situation can help us to understand our spiritual needs.

Bible passages

I Kings 8:22-30,41-43, Psalm 84, Ephesians 6:10-20, John 6:56-69 (from Year B, 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time)

Preparation

During worship ask a Christian police officer, firefighter or someone who wears protective clothing at work, to describe how their clothing protects them. Prepare them beforehand to discuss what stresses their job contains and to relate what protects them physically to what protects them spiritually.

Content

In Ephesians 6:10-20, Paul talks about the nature of the spiritual armour we need in order to protect ourselves when engaged in our ministry in the world. In a service on this theme, a serving police officer, who was a church member, attended worship in her full uniform. She described the way in which this uniform was designed to protect her. She removed the protective items which were then placed on the communion table as a symbol of thanksgiving to God for the protection they offered to her and for her role as a police officer. There followed a short question and answer session about her job, the stresses it involved and how her faith helped her undertake it.

The sermon related all this to the spiritual tools we need to be a Christian in today's world. What opposition to our faith do we face in the workplace? How can we counter negativity? How can we build ourselves up in the faith? How can we support one another in the workplace, not least by listening to those under stress? How can prayer help us in our working life? Could Bible study, fellowship groups, or a group exploring how we can be faithful in our workplace offer the spiritual support/armour we need? (The congregation found this act of worship highly relevant to their own experience and the police officer felt valued and supported in her working life.)

Resources

Be thou my vision (H&P, MPC, SoF); *Have faith in God my heart* (H&P); *Take my life and let it be* (H&P, MPC, SoF); *This, this is the God we adore* (H&P)

If children are to be present, look at Thatcher, David and Baker, Arthur, *Instant Art for Bible Worksheets Book 1*, Stowmarket, Kevin Mayhew, 1988 and Burt, David, *Fifty Dramatised Bible Readings*, Eastbourne, Kingsway, 2003

Janet Jenkins

[Janet Jenkins is a member of the Methodist Diaconal Order.]



Worship outlines

H2

'Our Christian calling'

Purpose:

To explore how we can witness to our faith in the workplace.

Bible passages

Isaiah 6:1-8, Psalm 138; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11, Luke 5:1-11 (from Year C, 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time)

Preparation

Gather together visual prompts for a number of occupations [eg scissors and comb (hairdresser); calculator (accountant); toy taxi; school books (teacher); thermometer (nurse)].

Content

Read the Luke passage and talk about what the disciples did for a living – they were called to follow Christ and, in their case, to change their occupations in order to do so. However, our calling may be to witness to our faith where we work.

Look at the prompts (see above). If children are present get them to guess the occupations concerned from the items you show to the congregation.

Talk about how we are called to witness to our faith through whatever kind of work we do – in the workplace, through voluntary work, in the home or at school. In our work, as Christians, we are called to be honest, to care, to listen attentively to others and to be people of integrity.

People in the congregation can then be invited to speak briefly about how they witness to their faith at work. (If possible 'prime' a few people involved in some of the occupations already discussed to speak briefly about how they witness to their faith at work through what they say and, perhaps more importantly, through what they do and how they do it.)

Sermon

If there is time, use other readings to explore what our Christian calling is all about.

Do we have to leave our jobs when we feel we are called? (Note that Paul continued to be a tent maker)? Do we have to be 'special' to be called? Does 'vocation' only apply to being called to the ordained ministry or the so-called 'caring professions'? What might help us to express our calling more effectively through our work? How can we further the coming of the kingdom of God in the workplace? Is calling a once-and-for-all happening, or might its focus and nature change over time?

Hymns

Behold the servant of the Lord (H&P, SoF); *Forth in thy name, O Lord I go* (H&P, MPC); *Give me the faith what can remove* (H&P, MPC); *Teach me, my God and King* (H&P); *Will you come and follow me* (Iona, SoF)

'God as midwife'

Purpose

To examine a different and seminal image of God.

To affirm those who work in the National Health Service.

(This theme can be linked to the service in Advent when we hear the story of Mary and her conception, or to a Christmas day service when we celebrate the birth of Jesus.)

Bible passages

Isaiah 66:9-13; Psalm 139:1-18; Romans 8:18-25; Luke 1:39-58 or 2:1-7

Content

Invite a midwife (or alternatively a nurse who works on a neo-natal ward) to come to the service and talk about their role in delivering a baby. Discuss the joy, and sometimes the sorrow, involved in this task. Discuss the fact that the pain involved is usually soon overtaken by the joy of a new life come into the world. Interview the midwife about their role. What are the stresses and strains of the job? Are they ever left feeling helpless about a situation? How do they feel about being a part of this creative process? And, if they are Christians, how does their faith and work come together in this situation?

Prayers Pray for all those who work in the health service, often experiencing stresses and strains, and sometimes feeling helpless. Give thanks for their joy in working with God to help bring new life, health and wholeness.

Sermon (1 – Luke 1:39-58) We are used to male images of God. Are we comfortable with one that is usually associated with women? Does the image of God as midwife mean that the process of creation brings God similar emotions to those associated with that role? Does God sometimes feel helpless when faced with the way we misuse the gift of free will? What does Paul mean when he talks about creation groaning in labour pains until now? What does this say about suffering and hope? How can we sing the *Magnificat* (Luke 1:46-55) when these promises are not fulfilled – or are they?
(2 – Luke 2:1-7) How did Mary feel giving birth in a stable? Who helped her and how might they have felt? What is the significance of there being pain at the beginning *and* end of her son's life? Reflect on the fact that it is often in the workplace where we share the process of creation with God. Is this why work often brings with it a wide range of emotions? How can knowing that God shares these feelings enrich our daily lives?

Hymns

Almighty Father, by whom all change is wrought (H&P); *Almighty Father, who dost give* (H&P); *Christ is the world's true light* (H&P); *Praise to the Lord* (H&P, MPC, SoF); *The angel Gabriel* (H&P); *Who fathoms the eternal thought* (H&P)

Janet Jenkins

[Janet Jenkins is a member of the Methodist Diaconal Order.]



Worship outlines

H3

'A day in the life of...'

Purpose

To look at a day in the life of Jesus and explore what light that throws on a typical day in our lives. To show that every day, and not just Sunday, matters to God.

Bible passage

Mark 1:21-39 (from Year B, 4th and 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time)

Content

Some possible components of the service

- o Listen to Mark 1:21-39 and draw out the different things Jesus did that day using visual aids. For example: Alarm clock – got up early; picture of a teacher – taught in the synagogue; torch – banished demons; tablets/medicine – healed Simon's mother-in-law; chocolate biscuit – meal at Simon's house; pillow – slept; picture of praying hands – prayed; map or rucksack – change of direction.
- o With a roving microphone ask the congregation what they do in a typical day. It might be amusing to compare different times of getting up and going to bed. Some may have to leave home extremely early to travel to work. Others may be on shifts or work nights. This helps the church to be aware of the pressures people are under.
- o Interview people in the congregation. You could ask two or three people to prepare in advance to share a typical day in their life at work. It would be good to include a variety of occupations: for example, a young mother or a retired person who is involved in voluntary work, as well as those in paid employment.
- o Talk about the different activities in which Jesus engaged. He spent time alone and time with others. If Jesus needed a balance of work, rest and prayer; so do we. We, too, need to learn to rest in God and not be hyperactive.
- o Intercessory prayers could be designed around the hymn 'In my life Lord, be glorified', with sections of prayer about our homes, our town, our church, our world – singing a verse to close each section.
- o Children's activity. On a sheet of paper have a circle divided into 24 segments to represent the hours of the day. Ask the children to colour in what they do in a day – different colours for sleep, meals, school, TV, other activities. Do not forget to give them the opportunity to share this in some way later.

Hymns

Forth in thy name, O Lord I go (H&P, MPC); *From the rising of the sun* (MPC, SoF); *In my life Lord, be glorified* (MPC, SoF); *Lord, I am not my own* (SoF); *Lord of all hopefulness* (H&P, MPC, SoF); *Men of faith* (SoF); *Praise him, praise him* (H&P)

'Lord of time'

Purpose

To look at the balance of work and rest in our daily lives.

Content

Some possible components of the service

- Bible readings: Genesis 1:26 – 2:3, God rests on the seventh day; Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, A time for everything; Luke 10:38-42, Jesus visits Martha and Mary.
- An ad-lib sketch of people meeting in a doctor's waiting room or a bus queue, all complaining of how busy and stressed they are.
- 'Lord I have time' from Michel Quoist, *Prayers of Life*, Dublin, Gill & MacMillan Limited, 1965
- The story of Martha and Mary could be told as a monologue by Martha, explaining how she felt about the whole incident – cross at first with her sister, but recognising the wisdom of Jesus' rebuke.
- A mime could be devised to accompany the reading of Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 with pairs showing the contrasts in the use of time.
- Film clip from *Groundhog Day* (1993) in which one man lives the same day over and over again. Or play the Dr Who theme music and talk about time travel.
- Include a time of resting in worship. Play a piece of quiet classical music and let people sit, relax and offer their time to God.
- Ideas for the sermon:
 - Jesus was subject to the limitation of time. He discovered the secret of his Father's timing – *kairos* being the 'right' moment in every sense.
 - There never seems to be enough time and so we get stressed and frustrated. We need to learn how to rest in God.
- A prayer: Offer to God the past: with its regrets, hurts, and failures – ask forgiveness. Offer to God the future: with its worries, anxieties, plans and dreams – ask direction. Offer to God the here and now – commit our lives and our daily work to him.

Hymns

All my days (SoF); *Be still, for the presence of the Lord* (MPC, SoF); *Dear Lord and Father of mankind* (H&P, MPC, SoF); *Faithful one, so unchanging* (SoF); *Father I place into your hands* (MPC, SoF); *King of history* (SoF); *Lord for the years* (MPC, SoF); *Lord of all hopefulness* (H&P, SoF); *The Lord's my shepherd* (various versions in different hymnbooks)

Viv Gray

[Viv Gray is a member of the Methodist Diaconal Order.]



The use of small groups

[This worksheet is based on the course *Christian Life and Work*, London, London Bible College and Scripture Union, 2000.]

Purpose

- To draw together working people in a small group to help build and strengthen relationships
- To create a safe space where members can confidently share their work concerns
- To pray for one another and for the work situations represented
- To realise that work and faith are not two separate compartments of life
- To stimulate reflection on and discussion of faith and work issues concerns

Content

There are six sessions to the course *Christian Life and Work*:

1. Who are we working for?
2. Why on earth are we working?
3. Ministry at work
4. Relating to the boss
5. Handling stress and pressure.
6. Spirituality in the fast lane

Each session has the same pattern:-

- Warm up – introductions and the sharing of news
- DVD Part 1 – introduction of topic
- LIFE TALK – group discussion
- DVD Bible Base – a Bible passage is introduced in an amusing and interesting way
- BIBLE TALK – discussion of the biblical material
- DVD Fusion – further teaching on the subject, including interviews with six working Christians, an industrial chaplain and others
- LIFE TALK – final discussion

Preparation

- Raise the issue of confidentiality. Personal information shared within the group is confidential to that group and should not be passed on.
- The group needs to be seated comfortably and able to see the television screen.
- Leader's notes are provided with the DVD.
- It is advisable for the leader to look at the session on the DVD beforehand to make sure that all the sections are suitable for the group. Sometimes there is too much material for one evening so there is a need to be selective. For example, one group might relish the theological discussion of secularisation in part of Session 1, while others would find it hard going. They might prefer to continue getting to know each other and finding out about each others' work situations.
- Sometimes Bibles would be helpful for the Bible base sections, or to have the appropriate passage printed out. It is worth experimenting with some modern translations such as *The Street Bible* (Rob Lacey, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan, 2002) when looking at Genesis 1 in Session 2.

Point to note

Session 4 offers some interesting discussion material on attitudes to authority. It may be important to give group members permission to disagree with the line taken in the DVD – for example, if anyone has experienced bullying or harassment at work.

Some discussion topics

- How do we feel about work? Why are we here? What are we doing this for?
- What is it about our work that gives us the greatest/least pleasure and why?
- What should motivate us as Christians at work?
- Do we think our particular work might matter to God?
- What does the Bible say about the purpose and nature of work?
- What kinds of pressure do we face in your work?
- What is the main source of stress for us in the working day?
- What ethical dilemmas do we face at work?
- How can we support each other over the next week to face problems at work?
- What specific things could we do to serve and encourage our workmates?
- How does God see our boss? or How could we be a better boss?
- Do/should people in our workplace know that we are Christians?
- How can we encourage an atmosphere of openness in the church that is an example of what an open workplace should be like?

General comments

- The issues raised in these sessions help the group to link faith and work; to begin to understand and to bridge the sacred/secular divide.
- Groups feel affirmed in their work, no matter how mundane. They realise that God is present and interested in what they do in the workplace as well as in the church.
- The group can begin to see their everyday working life as 'ministry' – letting their light shine in the world around.
- The group is able to see that Scripture speaks to their work situation and is a resource for them.
- The group becomes aware of what others in the church do in their working lives, and is ready to share some of the problems and issues they face. The group often develops the confidence to pray for each other.
- Topics for sermons and intercessions are aired which are relevant to peoples' working lives.
- The group can become a place where ideas are shared and which enables the church to be more supportive of those at work.
- The suggestion that each course member starts a journal of what happens at work has proved helpful. It facilitates sharing and deepens thinking around the issues raised.

Viv Gray

[Viv Gray is a member of the Methodist Diaconal Order.]



Prayers for the working day

I arise today
Through a mighty strength:
God's power to guide me,
God's might to uphold me,
God's eyes to watch over me,
God's ear to hear me,
God's word to give me speech,
God's hand to guard me,
God's way to lie before me,
God's shield to shelter me,
God's host to secure me.

[Bridgid of Gael c.451-525]

Lord God, bless the labour of our hands,
whether in the office or in the kitchen;
on the farm or in the garden;
on the hospital ward or with an unwell friend;
in the school or the world of business;
on the phone or on the computer;
when holding our children or our grandchildren.
May all we do this day be done to your glory.
So, Lord, bless the labour of our hands.

[Brian Hudson (adapted)]
Used by permission

God, you have set before us a great hope that your kingdom will come on earth, and have taught us to pray for its coming; make us ever ready to thank you for the signs of its dawning, and to pray and work for the perfect day when your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

[Traditional]

O Christ, the Master Carpenter, who at the last, through wood and nails, purchased our whole salvation, wield well your tools in the workshop of your world, so that we who come rough-hewn to your bench may here be fashioned to a truer beauty of your hand. We ask it for your own name's sake. Amen

[Traditional]

Listen to the exhortation of the dawn:
Look well to this day! For it is life;
The very life of life.
In its brief course lie all the verities
And the realities of your existence;
The bliss of growth
The glory of action
The splendour of beauty:
For yesterday is but a dream,
And tomorrow is just a vision;
But today well lived
Makes every yesterday a dream of happiness,
And every tomorrow a vision of hope.
Look well, therefore, to this day!
Such is the salutation of the dawn.

[From the Sanscrit]

Lord, teach me to find space
even in the hubbub and turmoil of daily life,
to discover moments of tranquillity
in the most unlikely places.
Help me to transform
the frustration of the traffic queue,
standing at the checkout
and waiting for my turn in the doctor's surgery
into an oasis of stillness within
as I allow Christ
to be all things
and in all places
to me. Amen

[David Clowes – from *500 more prayers for Special Occasions* (2008) Kingsway]
Used by permission

A Psalm of work

- 1 I enjoy my work, for you have given it to me:
you are a God who works, and I work with your
blessing.
- 2 You are there when I go to work in the morning:
I meet you in my friends as we greet one another;
- 3 as we prepare for the day, you speak to me
through others: you are in new ideas and the
training we share.
- 4 My concentration reflects your loving care:
your creative power inspires my thoughts and
actions.
- 5 When I help another it is you that I meet;
as I serve a customer, I am serving you;
- 6 when I am called to give account to my superiors:
it is your judgment I face and you will judge in
fairness.
- 7 If others treat me harshly, I am only your servant:
Jesus was also the servant of others;
- 8 his work was to make your love visible:
in my successes I too am completing your work of
creation.
- 9 Long ago monks were told that to work is to pray:
help me see my task today as part of your
purpose.
- 10 My achievements I offer to you;
exhausted I give you my life.

[John Hammersley]

Come, God of the city, into my city
Put up a sign – 'Danger – God at work'
Build places of welcome – places to play – riotous
sound and colour
Build homes for celebration with friend and stranger
Build places of worship – places to pray, spaces to
listen and rest in quietness
Illuminate with your energy
Add your wine to my parties
Bring generosity to my economy
And offer hospitality through my openness

[Janet Corlett]

Used by permission

Creator God, you have called us to do your will in
the world, in the name of Jesus.

You have called us to be
shop assistants and social workers
truckers and teachers
carpenters and chemists
engineers and evangelists
labourers and lawyers
and much else besides.

We pray with all people in their daily life and work:
enjoying fulfilment in a purposeful job or challenging
vocation,
staring at the uncertainty of redundancy or dismissal,
holding immense responsibility and facing testing
decisions,
feeling exploited by injustice in trade,
caring for others, unpaid and unsung.

And we pray with people for whom time passes
slowly:
seeking employment, frustrated by repeated refusals,
unable to work through illness and incapacity,
retired, now wondering where they are still wanted,
finding their work a drudge, dreading each new day,
still listening for God's call.

Enabling God,
we commit to you the insights of our minds,
the labour of our hands,
and the love of our hearts,
as we share in daily community life
and shape the future of your created world.

Amen

[John Bell]

Used by permission



Literary resources

Brown, Malcolm and Ballard, Paol, *The Church and Economic Life: A documentary study: 1945 to the present*, Peterborough, Epworth, 2006

A valuable compendium of and commentary on 'hard to access' documents and papers related to the Church's engagement with economic life over the past century.

Changing World, Unchanging Church? Agenda for Christians in Public Life, ed David Clark, London, Mowbray, 1997

A wide range of short papers published under the auspices of the Christians in Public Life Programme, many still of considerable relevance to the present day.

Clark, David, *Breaking the Mould of Christendom: Kingdom Community, Diaconal Church and the Liberation of the Laity*, Peterborough, Epworth, 2005

Argues for a new focus for the mission and form of the church, and for its leadership, if it is to engage convincingly with today's world, especially the world of work.

Clark, David, *The Diaconal Church: Beyond the Mould of Christendom*, Peterborough, Epworth, 2008

Thirteen essays examining the theses set out in *Breaking the Mould of Christendom* on 'the faith at work movement' from a New Zealand and a USA perspective.

Clark, Sue and Myers, Mel, *Managing Difficult Conversations at Work*, Cirencester, Management Books 2000 Limited, 2007

A well-researched approach to handling difficult conversations at work whereby tasks get done whilst personal integrity and good relationships are maintained.

Cooling, Trevor with Greene, Mark, *Supporting Christians in Education*, London, London Institute of Contemporary Christianity (LICC) 2008

A practical guide to Christian involvement and mission in the world of education.

Cosden, Darrell, *The Heavenly Good of Earthly Work*. Bletchley, Paternoster Press, 2006

An exploration of the meaning of work in relation to God's 'new creation'.

Costa, Ken, *God at Work: Living Every Day with Purpose*, London, Continuum, 2007

An investment banker writes pertinently about the relevance of faith to the workplace.

Davies, John, *God at Work: Creation Then and Now – A Practical Exploration*, Norwich, Canterbury Press, 2001

An inspired study of the meaning of work in the context of Genesis chapters 1-3.

Ellis, John, *Let Your Light Shine*, London, The Methodist Church, 2003

A strategy for the Methodist Church's engagement with economic life and a useful study guide for local churches on the theme of faith and work.

Greene, Mark, *Thank God it's Monday*, 3rd edition, Bletchley, Scripture Union, 2001

A hands-on approach to how Christians can live out their faith in the workplace.

Greene, Mark, *Supporting Christians at Work*, London, LICC and Administry, 2001

A practical guide for church leaders seeking ways to support lay people at work.

Higginson, Richard, *The Purpose and Values of Business: An Annotated Bibliography*, Henley-on-Thames, NTC Publications Limited, 2000

A useful review of literature (now a bit dated) dealing with business ethics from a Christian perspective.

Howard, Sue and Welbourne, David, *The Spirit at Work Phenomenon*, London, Azure, 2004

An overview of the growth and significance of 'spirituality' in the business world.

Larive, Armand, *After Sunday: a Theology of Work*, London, Continuum, 2004

A well informed theology of work grounded in both natural and Trinitarian theology.

Mackenzie, Alistair and Kirkland, Wayne, *Where's God on Monday?: Integrating Faith and Work Every Day of the Week*, Christchurch, NavPress NZ Ltd, 2002

A valuable study guide for lay people reviewing how to live out their faith at work.

Marsh, Clive, *Christ in Practice: A Christology of Everyday Life*. London, Darton, Longman and Todd, 2006

A christology which urges us to discern and affirm Christ in the thick of daily life.

Methodist Conference (1968 and 1970) *The Commission on the Church's Ministries in the Modern World* (the significance of sector ministries)

Methodist Conference (1990) *The Ministry of the People of God in the World*

Seminal (but neglected) reports on the engagement of Methodism with working life.

Miller, David, *God at Work: The History and Promise of the Faith at Work Movement*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2007

The first book to document and analyse, with models of engagement, the history and meaning of 'the faith at work movement'. Largely about the USA

The Faith and Order Advisory Group of The Church of England, *The Mission and Ministry of the Whole Church*, London, General Synod of The Church of England, 2007

Focuses a good deal on church 'offices'. Struggles with the role of deacon and does little to reinstate the primacy of the ministry of lay people in the world of work.

Pattison, Stephen, *The Faith of the Managers*, London, Cassell, 1997

An insightful critique of management as the new 'high priests' of the business world.

Reindorp, Julian, *Equipping Christians at Work*, London, Industrial Christian Fellowship, 2000

The most recent overview and assessment of industrial mission and its potential.

Temple, William, *Christianity and the Social Order*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1942

A classic study of the relationship of Christianity to society.

Thangaraj, M Thomas, *The Common Task: A Theology of Christian Mission*, Nashville, Abingdon Press, 1999

A valuable section on 'mission and dialogue' (pp. 92-99)

Volf, Miroslav, *Work in the Spirit: Toward a theology of work*. Eugene, Oregon, Wipf and Stock, 1991

Challenges the Protestant idea of work as 'vocation' and seeks to build the Christian's calling at work on of the gifts (*charisma*) of the Holy Spirit.



Faith and work associations and groups

Below are listed some addresses and/or websites of organisations and agencies seeking to bring Christian faith to bear on the world of work.

[The Methodist Church engaging with Business Industry and Commerce \(MIBIC\)](#)

Connexional Secretary for Chaplaincy: Robert Jones

Methodist Church House, 25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR tel: 020 7486 5502

www.mibic.org.uk

[Methodist Ethical Business Network](#)

To express an interest in this network contact Paul Morrison, Policy Adviser; at:

www.methodist.org.uk/business

[Industrial Mission Association \(IMA\)](#)

For chaplains working in the industrial, business, retail and public services sectors

Magazine: *IMAgenda*

www.industrialmission.org.uk

[William Temple Foundation](#)

Centre for research and reflection on faith and society (especially economic issues)

Research Director: Chris Baker

William Temple Foundation, Luther King House, Brighton Grove, Manchester M14 5JP tel: 0161 249 2502

www.wtf.org.uk

[Industrial Christian Fellowship \(ICF\)](#)

A long history of supporting Christians in the workplace and developing resources that help churches relate to the world of work

Secretary: Ann Wright, PO Box 414, Horley RH6 8WL tel: 01293 821322

www.icf-online.org

[Ridley Hall Foundation's Faith in Business project](#)

Conferences, courses, journal: *Faith in Business*

Director: Richard Higginson

Ridley Hall Foundation, Ridley Hall, Cambridge CB3 9HG

www.ridley.cam.ac.uk/fib.html

[CHRISM \(Christians in Secular Ministry\)](#)

Mostly Anglican priests in secular employment, but ecumenical in intent

Journal: *Ministers-at-Work*

www.chrism.org.uk

[MODEM](#)

Christian approaches to leadership and management; journals: *MODEM Matters* and *Spirit in Work*

Office: via CTBI, 3rd Floor, Bastille Court, 2 Paris Garden, London SE1 8ND tel: 020 7654 7245

www.modem-uk.org

[London Institute for Contemporary Christianity](#)

Courses, publications, consultancy.

Executive Director: Mark Greene

St. Peter's, Vere Street, London W1G 0DQ tel: 020 7399 9555

www.licc.org.uk

Christians at Work

To unite individuals and workplace groups who have a vision for workplace ministry and witness in order to facilitate a sense of partnership and fellowship.

National Director: Brian Allenby

148 Railway Terrace, Rugby CV21 3HN tel: 01788 579 738

www.christiansatwork.org.uk

[Note: Christians at Work is one of many sites which link evangelical associations, fellowships and groups, most with a specific occupational focus.]

Alpha in the workplace

An Alpha course to explore the relevance of Christian faith to working life.

Contact: The Alpha Office, Holy Trinity Brompton, Brompton Road, London SW7 1JA tel: 0845 644 7544

www.alpha.org/workplace

After Sunday

After Sunday is a project supported by the diocese of Durham. Its purpose is to encourage Christians to strengthen the connection between their faith and their daily work and life. News, resources, link organisations.

Contact: After Sunday, 7 Houghton Green, Darlington DL1 2DD tel: 01325 361572

www.aftersunday.org.uk

Some overseas contacts

The Coalition for Ministry in Daily Life (USA)

A USA-based umbrella group representing a range of cross-denominational ministries, church and academic organizations concerned with faith in daily life.

Newsletter: *LayNet*

www.dailylifeministry.org

Faith at Work (New Zealand)

A network with a long history and wealth of resources for linking faith and work.

Contact: Alistair Mackenzie

www.faithatwork.org.nz

National Center for the Laity (Illinois, USA)

A major centre working to equip Roman Catholics for their ministry in the world.

Resources, conferences, newsletter: *Initiatives*

www.catholiclabor.org/NCL.htm

InterVarsity Ministry in Daily Life (USA)

A useful all-purpose site for scores of links to groups (international) seeking to link faith and the world of work.

www.ivmdl.org/weblinks.cfm