

# WM

WORKPLACE MINISTRY  
In HERTFORDSHIRE AND BEDFORDSHIRE  
AN ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP



NEWSLETTER No 2

WINTER 2009

## NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the second edition of the **WM Newsletter** which is also available on the web site.

[www.workplaceministry.org.uk](http://www.workplaceministry.org.uk)

**IN 2009 Workplace Ministry** is increasingly developing a new role as collaborator, facilitator, encourager and initiator of chaplaincy as interest in *fresh expressions* of ministry flourish.

## A SNAP SHOT FROM THE FRONT LINE



**Major Brian Griffin. Senior Chaplain.**

## BEDFORDSHIRE POLICE

This has been a busy year due to the increased collaboration between Bedfordshire Police and Hertfordshire Constabulary with the formation of a joint Major Crime Unit located at Herts HQ. Possible future collaboration between four other sections or departments is being considered with responsibilities to be located between the two counties on a case by case basis.

Regular visits and contact is kept with the Helicopter Support Unit, Combined Professional Standards Dept., and the Armed Response Unit.

The Chaplain attends the training programme for all new police officers and staff as well as making regular visits to police stations throughout Bedfordshire.

Recruitment and training of additional chaplains in Bedfordshire is a priority in 2010.

## GENERAL MOTORS (VAUXHALL)

This has been a very difficult year for all concerned, management, staff and the trade unions as protracted negotiations have resulted in numerous reports in the national press and TV about the future GM in Europe and in particular car and van production in Elsmere Port and Luton, respectively.



In October, shortly after his inauguration the Rt Reverend Alan Smith, Bishop of St Albans visited IBC and the Vauxhall HQ to hear first hand about what the future might hold and how negotiations were affecting its thousands of employees.

**WM** learnt in June that Captain Brian Griffin had been promoted to Major. This news came just prior to his retirement as a full time officer with the Salvation Army. WM is also delighted that Brian is to continue in his role as a Senior Chaplain with WM, on a voluntary basis.

**Reverend Michael Banfield. Senior Chaplain  
LONDON LUTON AIRPORT**



The Airport like the majority of Bedfordshire's economy has felt the effects of the economic downturn. Despite this, a new link road was completed and a number of carriers have launched new services including EL AL and Easyjet competing with regular flights from Luton direct to Tel Aviv.

The Chaplaincy has also recently appointed its first Jewish Associate Chaplain, Rabbi Alan Plancey and, in addition, has a new voluntary Team member, Jay Andolini. There is also two new expressions of interest in chaplaincy from two individuals both of whom are about to start their induction and training. When completed this will enable the team to improve workplace visiting across the Airport site as a whole i.e. more in-depth visits, and more opportunities to work more closely with companies such as TUI/Thomson who have over 1500 staff in their Luton HQ.

LTN Travelcare a scheme to assist needy travellers is being prepared and will hopefully be launched next year.

LLA will be one of the first airports to boast an Airside Prayer Room on its completion and when the refurbishment of a small room with washing facilities adjacent to the Executive Lounge is complete..

**Reverend Barbara Johnson, Senior Chaplain  
BEDFORDSHIRE AND LUTON FIRE  
AND RESCUE  
SERVICES**



This Chaplaincy is combined with the role of Assistant Curate at St. Mary's Goldington and has resulted in a number of joint activities between Church and Chaplaincy including a Fun Fire Day at St Mary's Goldington, which was supported enthusiastically by the Fire and Rescue Service and proved to be a great success and the Church Raiders young people's group have twice visited the Kempston HQ of the Fire and Rescue Service to learn more about the service and its role in the Community.

In addition, talks have been given on Chaplaincy to the Women's Fellowship, the Readers Meeting at Sandy, Royston Methodist Church, St Andrew's Biggleswade Anglican Guild and Biggleswade Synod.

The chaplaincy role in the Fire Service continues to increase, particularly walking beside those fire fighters in need of pastoral support. Sadly, Revd Dick Roby, Chaplain at Ampthill for many years has decided through ill health to retire. We wish Dick well although he continues, as he is able, to visit the station until a replacement is found. Revd Sue Chapman a URC Minister visits Luton Fire Station and the SAO on a regular basis. Revd Gill Smith, the Vicar of Potton has agreed to keep in touch with the Potton Station and to visit when time allows.

Regular visits are made to Kempston HQ and Mile Road offices on a weekly basis and to Bedford Fire Station, the Northern Area Office and Stopsley Fire Station as time allows. In August a Memorial Garden was dedicated at Sandy Fire Station in memory of a retained fire-fighter from the Station and in April words of encouragement were given to new recruits from Bedfordshire and Luton and Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Services as they completed their initial recruitment training at the Fire Service College at Moreton-in-the Marsh.

In September the Chaplain had the privilege of preaching at the UK Fire-fighters Memorial Service held in St Bartholomew the Great in London. The church was packed to capacity and many of the fire-fighters had to remain outside for the service.

In October, the Chaplain was presented with her Degree in Theology and Ministry Certificate at the Fire Service's annual Award's Ceremony held in the Addison Centre, Kempston.

## RETAIL CHAPLAINCIES

Deacon Christine Greening (Harpenden) and Kristina French (Bedford) faithfully continue their chaplaincies at Sainsbury's in Harpenden and Bedford respectively. Their contribution fits alongside the more extensive chaplaincies to the retail stores in the Harlequin Centre (Watford Town Centre Chaplaincy.)



Unfortunately the John Lewis Distribution Depot at Stevenage closed in September this year and there are now very few staff remaining at this location other than office staff out-stationed from London.

### Revd Tony Ruffell, Senior Chaplain



## HERTFORDSHIRE CONSTABULARY

The shape of Chaplaincy in the Hertfordshire Constabulary is changing. There has been an increased use of chaplaincy this year partly because of the support received from the Diversity Unity under the leadership of Inspector Ian Tyer. This in some respects is due to the tendency of the Constabulary to want to tick the right boxes but largely it has been beneficial.

The Constabulary is keen to ensure that chaplaincy reflects more accurately the cultural make up of the local communities it serves. The total number of Chaplains now stands at 22 including pagan and humanist chaplains.

**WM** remains the focus for Christian Chaplaincy and as Co-ordinating Chaplain, Reverend Tony Ruffell supports a diverse team including arranging quarterly Faith Workstream meetings.

The new listing of Chaplains on the intra net site means that all staff have a direct link to the chaplains as well as links from other sites such as Occupational Health and Welfare. The aim now is to build on the increased visibility of Chaplaincy with more opportunities for chaplains to accompany officers either on the beat or ride along schemes.

As the co-ordinating Chaplain, Tony is now invited to address probationers at Letchworth Police Station where training is conducted. This is a major break through. The Constabulary will hope to be able to fund three or four chaplains for the biennial conference next year,

A training course arranged at Police HQ in March was both well attended and received being both practical and challenging in terms of the ethical dilemmas posed. As a result of requests from Chaplains all now have access to the constabulary intra-net website in their stations including their own e-mail address.

The Archdeacon of St Albans and the Reverend John Williams arranged a meeting of HEMCOG (Hertfordshire Resilience and Emergency Incidents) for deanery representatives in April at County Hall, Hertford. The agenda included advice and guidance re: the Swine Flu Pandemic and major Incident Co-ordination.

Events during the year have included attendance at the Remembrance Day Service when the Rabbi Alan Plancey was the invited preacher at Police HQ

### Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service

**WM** currently provides five chaplains to stations at Stevenage Baldock, Hatfield, Potters Bar, and Watford but coverage elsewhere is patchy.

As a result of a positive meeting with ACO John Mills and Deputy Chief Mr Yates plans are in hand for an Emergency Chaplains Conference in 2010 bringing together as many as possible from the two counties. Further work needs to be done in 2010 on recruitment as five chaplains is insufficient to give proper coverage and meet the needs of the service.

As National Chair, Tony Ruffell is working towards establishing this conference as a full association with the recognition of CACFO.

### **East of England Ambulance and Paramedic Service**

A major breakthrough was achieved in the Autumn with the support of Alan Harpham who provides regular contact with the EEAS HQ in Bedford. WM now provides chaplaincy to Bedford HQ, Stevenage, Letchworth, Welwyn Garden City (Hospital Chaplain, Simon Manley-Cooper) Potters Bar and Watford.



Chaplains of all three services receive a copy of their individual services' dedicated newspaper to ensure that they keep up with the latest issues which cover their chaplaincies. Alan Harpham has also established a presence with the Training Department and now addresses the students and has produced an excellent hand-out to improve communication. Good links are maintained with Gary Sanderson, Media Officer for Eastern Region.

As a URC Minister, Tony also adds Area Convenor to his responsibilities which oversees the work of the thirty four URC churches in Herts and Beds. In addition, he also finds time to provide chaplaincy to RAF Henlow.

### **Reverend Mike Shaw, Director Workplace Ministry**



In September WM was registered by the Charity Commission as a legal entity and independent charity in its own right which will enable it to raise additional funds and undertake income

generating activities from a wider number and variety of sources to support its aspirations and work.

In addition the membership of the Board of WM is changing to reflect its aspirations to help it achieve its aims and objectives and contribute to the mission of the church to the 70% of the population who claim to believe in a God but are not sufficiently engaged to darken the walls of our churches.

Following the approval of the synod motion in June last year Reverend Malcolm Brown, Officer for Mission and Public Affairs of the General Synod, has been working towards bringing together a symposium of theologians and ethicists to draw together some exciting and contemporary thinking about a "Theology of Work." Watch this space.

WM and People@Work, Cambridge are offering a short Training Course for new Chaplains. The first course is being offered on two Saturdays 16<sup>th</sup> January and 6<sup>th</sup> February 2010.

### **New developments**

Reverend J Spouge a Methodist Minister has been appointed to the new post of Chaplain to the Grosvenor Casino in Luton.

Malcolm Ernst (Salvation Army) is to be appointed 'Envoy' to assist with the development of a new initiative to the economy along the inland waterways of Hertfordshire & Bedfordshire starting with the Grand Union Canal.

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