

***Offering care and  
concern for people  
at work***

## **Faith at Work in Worcestershire**

### **Annual Review 2019**

Faith at Work in Worcestershire (FWW) began the year with three key aims: to continue to support the mission of the church in the economy of the county through workplace chaplaincy; to help people better connect their faith and their work; and to encourage debate on the changing nature of work and the economy, offering a Christian perspective. It has been a busy year in all three areas of our work. This review provides a snapshot of some of the highlights.

The year has seen a slight reduction in the number of volunteer chaplains due to retirement and ill health, and we ended the year with 36 chaplains. Nevertheless the impact of chaplaincy on workplaces continues, with very positive initial results from our Chaplaincy Survey which was begun as the year ended.

Relationships with our Partner Churches have continued to grow; a source of new volunteers and chaplaincy for the future, but also an opportunity to bring each person's experience of work, and issues concerning the workings of our economy, into the centre of church life.

*Dick Johnson, Development Officer*



**Committed to connecting Christian faith and the  
workplaces and economy of Worcestershire.**

## CHAPLAINCY

Chaplaincy is about regular visits to businesses and other workplaces to build relationships of trust with those at work there. The majority of our chaplains work in the retail sector, from market traders to large high street chains. This naturally divides into town or city centres and so a cornerstone of chaplaincy this year has been the local teams. FWW has teams in Redditch, Worcester, Stourport, Kidderminster, Pershore and Alvechurch. There is also a small team visiting the Worcester livestock market.



Local teams meet regularly, for training, reflection and prayer. It is a place to support and encourage one another, and to develop a team approach to chaplaincy. This year some local teams have been under pressure as members have been challenged by ill health. It reminds us that there is always a need to find new volunteers to refresh and develop our work. Training delivered in local teams this year has included health & safety and safeguarding, whilst issues identified for future training include how to identify and respond to a situation of modern slavery.



This year, as in previous years, local teams have made a particular impact at Christmas, the busiest season for the retail sector. In Redditch a 3 day 'stress busting drop-in' was held, with the help of the Kingfisher Shopping Centre, which provided a base where workers could come. Many just didn't have the time so team members, joined by more than a dozen seasonal volunteers, delivered hot drinks and mince pies to wish all a Happy Christmas. Mince pies were also on the menu at Pershore, and other teams circulated seasonal cards.



In October a group of chaplains and trustees visited the premises of several local businesses at the Top Barn Business Centre. They gained a better understanding of the pressures, joys, and strains of running different types of businesses. The passion, pride, hard work and the desire to produce a quality product was abundantly evident, along with positive relationships with

work colleagues. For a few, there had also been great personal expense invested in terms of money, time or less time with family.



The morning included a time of reflection to give thanks to God for the business owners, employees and for the success of their enterprises. Feedback suggests both the hosts and those who came found the experience thought-provoking. Chaplains valued the chance to visit a different sort of business and meet members of other local teams. Hosts all commented how they enjoyed having a chance, in speaking to visitors, to think through for themselves why they were so passionate about their work.

## ANNUAL OPEN MEETING

In April, we welcomed 30 attendees to Droitwich Spa Methodist Church, where we held our annual seminar. This year the topic was "A Christian perspective on Brexit and its impact on the local economy". The keynote speaker was Mr David Hallam, a Methodist lay preacher and former MEP for Herefordshire & Shropshire. He delivered a lively and thought provoking talk speaking from his own wealth of experience.



## GETTING ONLINE

At the beginning of the year we launched the FWW website, as well as establishing a Facebook page and a Twitter feed. All platforms have proved very useful in terms of increasing engagement in local chaplaincy and enabling us to have a voice about relevant economic issues. FWW is now able to contribute in the digital world with news, chaplaincy stories, prayers, joining in with debates, promoting events. At Christmas the prayer, which was posted for those working over the holiday period, was particularly well received and was shared and used by other organisations.

Find us at [www.faithatwork.org.uk](http://www.faithatwork.org.uk) and on social media [@faithatworkworc](https://www.facebook.com/faithatworkworcestershire)

## OFFICE DROP-IN DAY

Friends, partners, Chaplains and trustees joined on a beautiful sunny day in July to our office at Top Barn Business Centre in Holt Heath. The office is very small and the show-around probably took a whole 10 seconds! Refreshments were enjoyed and it was useful to have the opportunity to meet, chat and discuss our work.

## MEETING LOCAL BUSINESSES

We have attended three business expos/ commercial fairs and business training sessions to raise awareness of FWW.

## THANKS TO JIM BROWN

At the Trustees meeting in September, Jim Brown was thanked for his 27 years of service as a Trustee representing the United Reformed Church West Midlands Synod, the last 7 as Chair.

That role has now been taken by Mary Austin, a representative of the Birmingham District of the Methodist Church, and a retired Methodist Superintendent minister. Mary made a presentation to Jim at his last trustees' meeting, thanking him for his leadership over recent years.



### FINANCES

Income for 2019, from grants, churches and individuals was £32,495. The end of the year, therefore, saw a small surplus of £780.

### EXPENDITURE 2019

Staff costs	£22,662
Office	£4,205
Chaplaincy support	£3,386
Other costs	£1,462
<b>Total</b>	<b>£31,715</b>

### We would like to thank the following for their financial support:

Anglican Diocese of Worcester  
Heart of England Baptist Association  
The Methodist Church (Districts & Connexion)  
Kidderminster Industrial Chaplaincy  
Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham  
United Reformed Church  
Partner Churches and individual supporters

**Thanks is due to our chaplains and trustees for their work this year - all volunteers and all passionate about reaching out into the workplaces of our county.**

visit our website

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

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email us at

[enquiries@faithatwork.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@faithatwork.org.uk)

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*All contacts are handled in confidence*



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