

Annual Review 2022

We began the year still with the shadow of COVID, but with the added factor of war in Ukraine, and its significant impact on the economy, jobs and households as rising fuel costs stoked double digit inflation and industrial action, particularly in the public sector. With the impact of Brexit still being argued about, and the high temperatures of the summer reminding us we urgently need to respond to the climate emergency, how we organise the global economy, and work, remains a critical question. This is not just an economic, political and environmental question, but a theological one.

In times of economic stress there are always those disproportionately impacted - those in the lowest paid, least secure, low skilled jobs. The poor feel the changes more, despite continuing measures from Government to control energy costs. There are questions of justice, as well as care and compassion to be asked, as we bring to the debate the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. How do we heal and reconcile, build community, and encourage resilience in our economic affairs?

We looked at these broad issues in our spring seminar (see page 2), but they are also important in the work of our chaplains, as they faithfully and regularly visit people at work across the county. Inevitably more of our faithful band have stepped back from chaplaincy during the year. But with additions we now support 25 chaplains across Worcestershire, mostly active in the retail sector, in Redditch, Pershore, Kidderminster, Alvechurch, Upton and the Worcester Livestock Market. Never has the need for chaplaincy in the economy been greater.

During the year we took initiatives to encourage more congregations to engage with their local workplaces through chaplaincy. This has been difficult as churches themselves come to terms with significant changes, fewer volunteers and greater financial pressures.

We also continue to seek new opportunities for chaplaincy, but this inevitably depends on chaplains being available. We thank God for continuing to call us to this ministry of service to those at work, and thanks to all who are part of our mission and support it.

Dick Johnson, Development Officer



LAUNCH OF SUPPORTERS OF FWW

April 2022 saw the launch of our new network, the **Supporters of Faith at Work in Worcestershire (SFWW)**, as part of a speaker event, '**Re-engaging with the Economy**'. This was the first face to face event FWW had held for more than two years. It was good to get back together, and discuss some very contemporary aspects of our changed economic context.

The SFWW initiative was begun to seek support through prayer for our work and to encourage giving. We had projected a budget deficit of more than £15,000, but by year end this figure had shrunk to £6,614.



Whilst using the event to address our needs as a charity, we also focused on what was happening in the economy and reminded ourselves why Faith at Work in Worcestershire exists in the first place. We were fortunate to have, as our keynote speaker, Sharon Smith, CEO of Herefordshire and Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce. From surveys of the Chamber's 1300 business members, Sharon was able to summarise the current challenges and opportunities they were facing. Her excellent presentation highlighted the many current challenges in the economy.



Kingfisher Seminar

In September we ran a seminar with the Kingfisher Shopping Centre, Redditch, where FWW has had chaplains for 17 years. Chaplains, trustees and supporters visited three businesses, and Centre Manager Ken Williams shared his insights of current retail issues. It was fascinating hearing of the challenges facing those working in retail, coping with inflation.



FWW at Business Expo

Many conversations were had with visitors and the 100 other exhibitors as FWW joined the Chamber of Commerce Business Expo in October. The event means many more businesses now know about workplace chaplaincy and what it can offer them.



TRUSTEES

Faith at Work in Worcestershire, as a charity, is overseen by a board of trustees, some nominated by their denomination, and others co-opted. Trustees are volunteers and FWW could not operate without their generous service. During 2022 trustees included:

- Anglican Diocese of Worcester (Martin Allen & Anthony Glossop [Treasurer])
- Heart of England Baptist Association (Stuart Sandys)
- Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham (Chris Harvey & Christine Dodd)
- Methodist Districts (Mary Austin [Chair] & Peter Levett)
- West Midland Synod of the United Reformed Church (Andrew Mann-Ray)
- Chaplains (Sarah Leeson & Paul Lawlor)
- Co-opted (Robin Gilbert [Treasurer] - to October - & Roy Walford [Secretary])

FINANCE

Income from grants, churches and individuals was £29,317 and expenditure £35,931, leaving a deficit at year end of £6,614.

2022 was expected to be a difficult year financially but this result was better than anticipated. We rely on grants from denominations and Kidderminster Industrial Chaplaincy, and FWW has successfully increased income from other sources by 14%, mainly through the new Supporters of Faith at Work in Worcestershire, which encourages regular giving.

EXPENDITURE 2022

Staff costs	£28,657
Office	£5,011
Chaplaincy support	£1,699
Other costs	£565
Total	£35,931

A tight rein has been kept on expenditure, but this inevitably increased by 12% on the previous year, due to inflationary costs, and more in person events, which had been impossible during the lockdown of recent years.

We would like to thank the following for their financial support in 2022

Supporters of FWW

The Anglican Diocese of Worcester

The Heart of England Baptist Association

The Birmingham District of the Methodist Church

The Wolverhampton & Shrewsbury District of the Methodist Church

The United Reformed Church, West Midlands Synod

Kidderminster Industrial Chaplaincy/FWW Future Fund

Partner churches and individual supporters

FWW IN 2022



We thank chaplains, supporters, trustees - all volunteers - and our staff, all passionate about reaching out to support those at work in the businesses of our county.

Visit our website

www.faithatwork.org.uk

Facebook

@faithatworkworc

email us at

enquiries@faithatwork.org.uk

or call

01905 621 780 or 07946 655 450

All contacts are handled in confidence

Faith at Work
in Worcestershire

Christian care in the economy

Registered charity, no. 1176881

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