



Care where it's needed

Social Responsibility Report



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Foreword

OFTEN OVERLOOKED, but vitally important to the mission and ministry of the church in this diocese is the work done by those in sector ministry, so called I suppose to distinguish this from parish ministry.

In reality there are not hard lines drawn between the two and those in parishes support and engage with sector ministry in many ways, not least by giving of time, helping with pastoral care, with worship and in offering prayers.

Sector ministry in Coventry and Warwickshire means caring for those in particular situations – the patients and staff in hospitals and hospices; the prisoners and staff in custodial institutions of which there are three in our diocese; the employer, employee and those encountering the effect of the credit crunch and recession at first hand; those in rural life; and, those many thousands who are pupils, students or staff in schools, colleges and universities.

Care is provided mainly through chaplains, the unsung heroes and heroines who faithfully come alongside people in a pastoral role, often when help is needed most and words of faith and acts of kindness are required. Jesus calls us to not only worship God but to love and care for our neighbours – sector ministry is a wonderful opportunity we have for serving others. We take the light of Christ with us to transform individuals and communities, wherever they may be – hospitals, hospices, schools, colleges, universities, prisons, farmyard or workplace.

Do read this report carefully, pray for this work, and if possible offer your help.

+ Christopher Cocksworth

Christopher Cocksworth | Bishop of Coventry

Inside...

Spiritual care in a twenty-first century super-hospital	1
A place for contemplation in a busy hospital environment	2
Pastoral care in hospices	3
Agricultural chaplaincy after the year of the floods	4
Workcare takes on the world of work	5
Faith inside: multi-faith chaplaincy at Onley Prison	6
A visible sign: pastoral and spiritual care in Rye Hill Prison	7
Gospel principles underpin school life: Blue Coat School Coventry	8
Bringing Christian faith alive in Warwick School	9
Wolston Primary School lay chaplaincy: first of a kind	10
Expanding chaplaincy in North Warwickshire and Hinckley College	11
Huge changes in University Chaplaincies	12

Published March 2009. © Diocese of Coventry 2009.

This report has been compiled and edited by Rev Dr John Hall, Director for Social Responsibility, Diocese of Coventry.

This publication can be downloaded from the Diocesan website: www.coventry.anglican.org

Printed on recycled paper using vegetable-based inks
Design: Cuthbert Design info@cuthbertdesign.com
Printing: Westpoint Printing Co. Ltd 0121 202 1600



Spiritual care in a twenty-first century super-hospital

COMING INTO HOSPITAL can be an unnerving experience. If you have been a patient or a carer, you will know that you do not forget how you or your family member were treated, what happened and how you felt about your care. These memories can be both powerful and detailed.

Here in Coventry, we have a major new hospital, one of the most up-to-date in Europe and a big step forward from the old. But as the range and complexity of what can be done for us is increased, so the pressure to move people through the process of hospitalisation increases. Hospitals get bigger, busier and better, but the sheer scale of the activity makes it harder to look after each human being as a unique individual. The presence of Chaplains, employed by the NHS alongside its doctors and nurses, is a reminder to the hospital and the general public that people matter here.


There are 9 chaplains and 60 lay visitors working from the Faith Centre in the new University Hospital. We also look after St Cross Hospital in Rugby and the Caludon Mental Health Unit and we can still identify areas where we do not reach. There is massive activity in Outpatients and we would dearly love to be a presence there too. Chaplains also have a role in teaching other professionals about the importance of spirituality, good communications and people's needs at significant points in life.

Over the past 10 years, the Chaplaincy has developed from a vision that patients, carers and staff all deserve good quality spiritual support and care. As a result, we are now The Department of Spiritual Care, catering for people of all faiths and none. Alongside Christian Chaplains we have Shayk Yunus, Pandit Tilak and Gyani Resham in the team to provide for our Muslim, Hindu

and Sikh communities. Our Lay Visitors are drawn from an increasingly diverse range of Faith Communities and they are vital in underpinning the work of the Chaplains.

The Faith Centre in the West Wing of the new hospital is our focal point. People planning new hospitals come here to see what has been achieved. We have facilities for all faiths and a beautiful worship space, which is used in many different ways. An interactive display was installed to encourage users of the Centre to explore their understanding of Spirituality. Recently we had an Intensive Care Service of Remembrance for families who have been bereaved, a Muslim invitation to all to join a Celebration of Eid, Carols and Mince pies just before Christmas, as well as regular services of worship. Also, in December a Prayer Tree in the Entrance Atrium had 600 prayers placed on it. There is evidence of a renewed openness to the spiritual dimension of life and significantly, openness is one of the vital characteristics required of a Chaplain.

So what do we have on our wish list? A person to co-ordinate our office and the Lay Visitors would be a pearl beyond price. We can also do better at identifying patients who would appreciate our presence and input. That requires improvements in our work in multi-disciplinary teams. But most of all, if only everyone knew that we are here for them. Let it be known: we are here to support you; you do not have to have a faith to qualify for our help; we will respect your privacy, dignity and confidentiality; we do not judge; and we will not impose our beliefs on you. We simply aim to respond to your need.

You can contact Hugh Priestner on 24 7696 7511 or email: hugh.priestner@uhcw.nhs.uk 



A place for contemplation in a busy hospital environment

THE PAST YEAR has seen the George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust, in Nuneaton, respond to a lot of changes in the National Health Service as it prepares to meet the challenging standards required to attain Foundation Trust status.

2

This has seen over 8,000 people support their local hospital by signing up to become members of the Trust. The Chaplaincy facilitated local Christians gathering to hear the arguments to support this important initiative to keep our services provided locally and responding to local health needs.

It has also seen the Trust exploring new ways to be involved not only in Acute Care but also in Primary Care in the community. NHS Warwickshire recently named the Trust as the recommended bidder for an exciting new community based service in the Camp Hill area of Nuneaton. The contract, which is still subject to final approval, would see the Trust provide a GP-led health centre in Camp Hill.

Community Chaplaincy work

Rev Jay Chauhan, Community Development Chaplain, has worked closely with the Camp Hill Health Centre Team. This has involved the proposed development of a 'Health Exchange Hub'. This would focus on health promotion and disease prevention through the ongoing development of community health, fitness and lifestyle initiatives.

An all faiths prayer room

Jay has also been involved in liaising with faith leaders locally in the development of an All Faiths Prayer Room


at the George Eliot Hospital. This is meeting a very real need to develop new understandings of spiritual assessment within the health care setting. To develop places where people can contemplate in a quiet setting in a busy place is more important than ever before.

Public recognition

Edward Pogmore and the Hospital Imam, Abbas Khalifa, received Community Awards at the National Muslim Awards Ceremony at the House of Lords.

The future

The Chaplaincy Team are exploring ways to use the Hospital Chapel for relaxation and meditation for people who are facing particularly challenging situations.

To contact Canon Edward Pogmore, Chaplaincy Co-ordinator, call 024 7686 5046 or email: pogmore@geh.nhs.uk 

There is also a chaplaincy team at Warwickshire Primary Care NHS Trust & Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust (South Region), including St.

Michaels Hospital Warwick, Leamington Spa Rehabilitation Hospital, Alcester Hospital and Ellen Badger Hospital Shipston – contact: Rev Julie Cartwright on 01926 406776 (hospital) or email: Julie.Cartwright@covwarkpt.nhs.uk



Pastoral care in hospices

THE MYTON HOSPICES in Coventry, Warwick and Rugby seek to provide a particular standard of care for their patients and make use of chaplains and volunteers in support of their work.

Working in a hospice one is never really sure what may happen next or what one might be asked to do that comes under the heading of spiritual support. Pastoral support might include a trip to the pub or a football match, perusing three generations of photograph albums, or sitting quietly at someone's bedside.

Liturgical support will include the recognition of a whole variety of milestone events for an individual or a family, blessings and thanksgivings for a wide range of relationships, objects, or occasions. Religious support might include locating a representative of a particular faith or sect for a patient, and assisting them to fulfil the patient's religious needs, assisting a multi-faith family to synthesise a service which fulfils the wishes and hopes of all involved, or designing a sacred space for use by people of all faiths and none.


During 2008 the Pastoral Care Team has been called upon for all of the above and more. Especially interesting has been the formation of a specialist team, informally referred to as the CORE group, with Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Pagan, and Spiritualist representatives to particularly look at the development and use of the Sacred Space for the Coventry Myton Hospice which will open in 2009.

Occasional visitors to their meetings have consistently remarked on the wonderful sense of peace and

harmony which they encountered there. The members of the Pastoral Care Team not only show great commitment to the patients and the hospice but to their own personal development too. Team members are recruited from within our cadre of hospice volunteers rather than from faith groups. This means they already have an understanding of hospice values and principles, and through their induction training and encountering members of the Team have felt moved to join the team themselves. Full members of the team are required to undergo intensive initial training, and then maintain their standards by attending at least six training sessions per year but most attend many more.

Though not all members of the Team are Christian or belong to a Christian church, every member accepts the servant model of care as found in Luke 17. It is our role to accept, comfort and support the person in our care in the way that they request, and not in the way that we choose. It is no coincidence that Luke concludes the parable of servant and master with the story of the ten lepers.

2008 was a year of upheavals, with the sad loss of some team members and some severe challenges to be faced, but we in the Team look forward with all of Myton Hospice to 2009 and serving the people of Coventry and Warwickshire according to their needs and hopes, and to the best of our abilities.

If you would like to help, contact: Rev Stig Graham 01926 492518 or stig.graham@mytonhospice.org. 



Agricultural chaplaincy after the year of the floods!

4

THE 2008 AGRICULTURAL YEAR started well with a good spring, arable crops sprouted well and young lambs had plenty of sun on their backs. Then along came the floods bringing massive problems in many rural; areas. Many acres of crops were totally washed away and fields of silage and hay much needed for winter-feed were totally ruined.

The next major problem was the restriction of animal movements due to Blue Tongue vaccinations being released slowly as the manufacturers struggled to keep up with the demand. These restrictions on animal movement adversely affected the new Farmer owned Livestock Market at the Royal Agricultural Centre at Stoneleigh, which was formally opened by Lord Plumb in June. However, the market is now well established and is gaining more sales week by week. Barbara feels that her presence there each Monday as an agricultural chaplain is being increasingly well received.

Other difficulties during the year were the rapid increase in diesel and fertiliser prices bringing associated knock on financial effects throughout the whole of the agricultural sector.

Her work as an agricultural chaplain has taken her to many parishes throughout the Diocese – leading worship, preaching, and talking to groups about rural issues in addition to conducting funerals and weddings for the farming community.

In May 2008 a Rogation Service was held at Shuckburgh for farmers to show them support and

sympathy during their difficult year, and early last December she led an Advent Carol Service at Monks Kirby in support of the ARC Addington Fund who help farmers during difficult times, attended by over 200 people associated with agriculture.

One of the more important aspects of her work is providing a listening ear and often practical help for farmers in need. To this end a new Warwickshire branch of Farm Crisis Network has been established, formally opened in March 2009.

It has been a roller coaster year with many ups and downs, but thankfully it has ended with most farmers being optimistic about 2009 and the future as livestock and arable prices are fairly firm.

Contact Barbara Clutton on 01788 810372 or at barbaraclutton@gilberthouse.co.uk. 🇬🇧



2009 HAS SEEN MAJOR CHANGE! Mission in the World of Work (MWW) was reborn as Workcare.

People

In 2008 MWW said goodbye to Graham Hardwick, who retired, and welcomed Malcolm Fife and Paul Simmonds. Malcolm is the URC minister at Lutterworth and the development officer for DIRFT (the large warehouse site by the M1) and the distribution industry. Paul is the new half-time, Anglican Development Officer – with special responsibility for faith at work – and temporary team leader. The rest of the time he works for BRF. Helga Cornell will become part-time minister for Nuneaton and Bedworth URC. Churches and the team look forward to her joining, half-time, when she takes up her post as team leader in May 2009. Robert Maloney has continued his project on multi-faith chaplaincy and will be reporting back during this year.

Kay Aldersley's expertise in community development has been put to good use this year in North Warwickshire and North Coventry. Her skills and experience will be needed, especially as Workcare helps churches develop their response to the credit crunch. For more information go to the Workcare website (recently updated by Peter Aldersley): www.workcare.org.

All at Workcare want to put on record the huge thanks due to the two Grahams. Graham Hardwick, having changed the shape of MWW into a groundbreaking organisation: and, Graham Payne, who retired as Chair of the Board, and who has worked extremely hard over very many years to enable Workcare to become the effective team it is. We thank them both and wish them many blessings! Anne-Marie MacTavish, a Roman Catholic, is Workcare's new Chair.

The Chaplaincy Team

The faithful and dedicated team of Chaplains have continued to visit places of work and listen to the concerns of people working in the car industry, commerce and the emergency services. Issues of life including bereavement, family breakdown and stress, lead to many conversations and opportunities to offer pastoral support.

This year Ian Host moved abroad and after doing a very effective job at Jaguar Land Rover and Aston Martin, Rev Jill Tucker took over the Chaplain's part of Ian's role, whilst Malcolm Ward has now taken on the Counsellor and also Assistant Chaplain elements of the role.




Faith, work and the churches

Paul Simmonds and Malcolm Fife have had a busy programme of visiting churches to preach and lead seminars about how churches can become more work-aware. They have launched www.WorkAware.org and begun building a web site where information and resources will be placed.

The credit crunch and recession

During the second half of 2008, the daily developments in the financial situation have had a growing impact on many workplaces and on individuals. This will dominate the scene for 2009. It seems to be entirely timely that we are now called Workcare and we believe part of our calling is to be a resource point for the churches in responding to the challenges of the credit crunch.

Could you be a listening ear for people in a place of work – shops, offices, factories or warehouses? If you'd like to support Workcare through prayer and other ways? Contact Paul Simmonds on 024 7652 1338 or email: paul@workcare.org. 



Faith inside: multi-faith chaplaincy at Onley Prison

HMP YOI ONLEY is an adult category 'C' prison and a Young Offenders Institution, located between Rugby and Daventry which houses 700 prisoners in 2009. Onley operates a multi-faith chaplaincy team inside the prison, meeting the faith and pastoral needs of prisoners and staff. Multi-faith means that the team works with those of the main religions and respect and work closely with those of other minority faiths celebrating our common ground and our diversity.

The chaplaincy team's job is to encourage faith and the practice of religion as a means of change and so to reduce re-offending and crime. Standard tasks are to:

- ❖ Organise services and prayers for each faith group.
- ❖ Visit all new prisoner receptions within 24 hours of their arrival at Onley.
- ❖ Visit all prisoners in the Segregation Unit each day.
- ❖ Visit those prisoners in crisis, if part of their care plan.
- ❖ Arrange compassionate family visits and phone calls for those in crisis.
- ❖ Provide support with bereavements, family illness, funeral visits, compassionate leave and pastoral care.

The team consists of the Rev Jonathan Fox (Church of England and Co-ordinating Chaplain) and 12 other chaplains from various denominations and faiths: the Rev Diane Bussey (Church of England) is Deputy Co-ordinating Chaplain; Abdulmannan Bhikha is full-time Muslim chaplain; Charlie Sweeney is lay Roman Catholic Chaplain. The Team also has Pentecostal, Methodist and Salvation Army chaplains. All of the other chaplains are sessional and include Jewish, Sikh, Quaker, Hindu, Buddhist, Mormon, Jehovah's Witness and Pagan.

The Sycamore Tree course on restorative justice and victim awareness

Often crime on TV focuses on the criminal and/or the Justice System, the team attempts to help prisoners


to see crime from the victims point of view. Eight OCN accredited courses per year are run – called Sycamore Tree – based on the story of Zac climbing a tree to see Jesus and how Zac showed remorse. Working with Prison Fellowship this six week course covers sessions on Taking responsibility for personal actions, Restorative justice principles, Victim awareness and Saying sorry. 120 men took the course last year, giving them tools to help make changes in their lives. New volunteers are always needed to help with this course, if you would like to help please contact Jonathan Fox on 01788 523529.

After release – the Community Chaplaincy Programme

Peter Ireson, Pentecostal Church lay chaplain, runs this programme whose aim is to aid the resettlement of prisoners on release through making links with the faith communities on the outside. Many prisoners turn to Christ while in prison and need support on release. Volunteers are needed to help, it could mean you! Again, this is a chance to get involved to help reduce crime in your area and reduce re-offending. To find out more or to offer help, please contact Jonathan on 01788 523529.

The high point of 2008

The transformative Christian action initiative, HOPE08 came to prison in 2008. A team from British Youth for Christ (BYFC) were brought into Onley to run a week long project for 24 prisoners including song writing, drama, film making on the theme of hope. The final Rap DVD is excellent and can be viewed on You Tube – try searching 'lockdown' 'HMP Onley'.

Please pray for the Chaplaincy Team, asks Jonathan Fox Co-ordinating Chaplain. Tel. 01788 523529 e-mail jonathan.fox@hmpr.gsi.gov.uk 



A visible sign: pastoral and spiritual care at Rye Hill Prison

7

THE CHAPLAINCY TEAM AT HMP RYE HILL is a dynamic and vibrant Chaplaincy providing a wide range of pastoral and spiritual care for the prison community. Chaplains provide a service for the whole prison community (staff and offenders), of whichever faith or no faith.


The role and duties of the Chaplaincy team are varied and diverse. The daily statutory requirements include visiting all offenders in Health Care, Care & Separation Unit, and initial Reception interviews of newly arrived offenders.

Alongside these daily requirements are:

- ❖ Faith group studies
- ❖ Social awareness groups
- ❖ Victim awareness programme
- ❖ One-to-one interviews
- ❖ Faith specific services
- ❖ Facilitating civil marriages
- ❖ Notifying offenders of a death or the serious illness of relatives and friends
- ❖ At time of family funeral, prayers offered in the chapel
- ❖ General pastoral care to offenders and staff
- ❖ Arranging an outreach programme

- ❖ Help with resettlement issues; i.e. liaising with different agencies
- ❖ Link with volunteers and faith communities
- ❖ Working with the Race Relations team to provide events for ethnic minorities.

There is a really good team of volunteers who help out with various Chaplaincy run activities. The Chaplaincy plays a supporting role in working with other disciplines within the prison so that we can provide the best possible service for the prison community. Above all, the most important part of the work takes place on the units and places of work where the Chaplaincy is always a visible sign.

Rev Edmond Fowowe can be reached on 01788 523300 or at edmond.fowowe@gslglobal.com. 

Rainsbrook Secure Training Centre

There is also a chaplaincy team at Rainsbrook Secure Training Centre.

Contact Sue Hardwick:

Tel: 01788 528800

Email: susan.hardwick@gslglobal.com



Gospel principles underpinning school life: Bluecoat School, Coventry

8

“AS I APPROACH THE MIDWAY POINT of my second year as Chaplain of Coventry Blue Coat Church of England Secondary School and Music College, I am aware of the immense privilege of working with so many enthusiastic young students at different stages of spiritual growth. Chaplaincy within the school can be loosely divided into the spiritual and the pastoral.

“Two major events have dominated the life of the school these past 12 months. The death of a head teacher is never an easy occasion, however the strength of Stephen Timbrell’s character and especially his faith had permeated the whole of school life. The other event was, of course, the School Choir winning the prestigious Songs of Praise Senior School Choir of the year.

“Alongside my parish responsibilities, I lead a team of honorary chaplains who play a full part in the life of the school. We support worship, religious education and pastoral care based on the Christian values which are at the heart of the schools ethos. As school chaplain I’m in school at least two whole days a week and available to meet personally with any member of the school community on any issue, whether faith-related or not. Often all I do is what I call ‘Holy hanging about’!

“School worship is a major part of my role, and is central to our life as a Church of England school. Along with the team of chaplains who lead worship in assemblies along with other staff, I work with the head of RE in planning the five annual post-16 RE conferences. Holy Communion is held in school on a regular basis. End


of term and presentation evening are held with the whole school gathering in the Cathedral.

“In the last 6 months, accompanied by the head boy and girl, I made a visit to our partner Cross of Nails school, Lagan College Belfast. This has led to work on establishing a regular video conference between our two school student councils and chaplaincy.

“We have a partnership project with Rainsbrook Secure Training Centre whereby four of our students are peer-mentoring a group of trainees to help them create a worship band.

“Gospel principles underpin school life. This in no way denies the valuable contribution of those of other faiths. Pupils of all faiths and none should ideally come to the end of their time at Blue Coat School with at least an awareness of their capacity for spiritual growth and the ability to make a reasoned and balanced choice in their response to God. The seeds of faith, one would hope, would at least be sown by an education in a Christian school.

“I look forward to the next year and the continuing role that chaplaincy has to play within the life of the school. Along with the anticipated appointment of a new head teacher; the creation of a chaplaincy room; and, developing partnerships through the Cross of Nails Community, the school can I believe live up to its motto of ‘Christian Education with Care.’”

Contact Paul Messam on 024 7631 8241 or at paul.messam@virgin.net. 



Bringing Christian faith alive in Warwick School:

THE MAJOR CHALLENGE TO A SCHOOL CHAPLAIN is presenting Christianity as a living, relevant and dynamic faith providing intellectually credible answers to all of life's questions.

The chapel is very much at the heart of Warwick School – both in its location on the site and also its place in the life of the school. There are around 1,100 boys in the school, aged 7-18. All the boys attend one chapel service every week divided into age groups where they have the opportunity for quiet reflection, for listening and learning, and for singing together – which the boys do well.

The thriving Sunday family services for the School Community are a unique feature of the spirituality of Warwick School. The Sunday congregations are never below 120 and are often well over 200. The Christmas Day family communion attracts around 220 from all parts of the school community. These family service congregations are made up of boys and their families, Old Boys, staff of all kinds and families of boys who have now left. During the year a substantial number of boys from 7-18 take part in the services along with staff, parents and sisters of the boys.

One of the high points of the year is always the annual confirmation service in School Chapel in which around 15 boys are confirmed. For the more committed Christians in the school there are a couple of midweek communions each term which are entirely voluntary

and usually draw congregations of 25-70 consisting mainly of boys. There is a thriving Christian Union within the school run by the sixth formers.

The Chaplain plays an important role in the general pastoral care within the school primarily with the boys but also being involved in support for all types of staff, parents and Old Boys. The School chapel also sees weddings, baptisms and sadly, occasionally funerals, of members of staff and old boys of the school.

Working with the Christian charities, CORD and SAMS the chapel is very much involved in education about work in developing countries and funding aid projects. CORD provides projects in Africa. Through SAMS there is a link school in poor area of Arequipa in Peru. Warwick School is a vibrant and dynamic community – enormously demanding but also enormously rewarding to work within.

Contact Rev Andrew Gough on 01926 400533 or at awg@warwickschool.org.






10

Wolston Primary School lay chaplaincy: first of a kind!

WOLSTON ST MARGARET'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND, Voluntary Controlled Primary School has just appointed Dawn O'Connell to be their school chaplain. The Chaplain, as a distinctive Christian presence, provides pastoral and spiritual support for all members of the school community (all staff, pupils, parents, members of the Governing Body).

She began work mid-February 2009, and the direction of her work has in part been steered by the pupils themselves who helped shape the following key principles behind what she does:

- ❖ The school chaplain will watch over us and help to look after everyone who is connected to the school – children, parents, staff, volunteer, governors.
- ❖ The school chaplain will help to join the school and the local community.
- ❖ The school chaplain will be busy and active with lots of ideas of how to build strong links between the school and local area.
- ❖ The school chaplain will help us to learn about different religions and beliefs and will help us to learn about how to make the right decisions and choices.
- ❖ The school chaplain will make sure that people know about God and Jesus and can make choices about what they believe.
- ❖ The school chaplain will plan and lead assemblies and services, some at school and some at church.

Contact Dawn O'Connell at Wolston Church office on 02476 542722. 

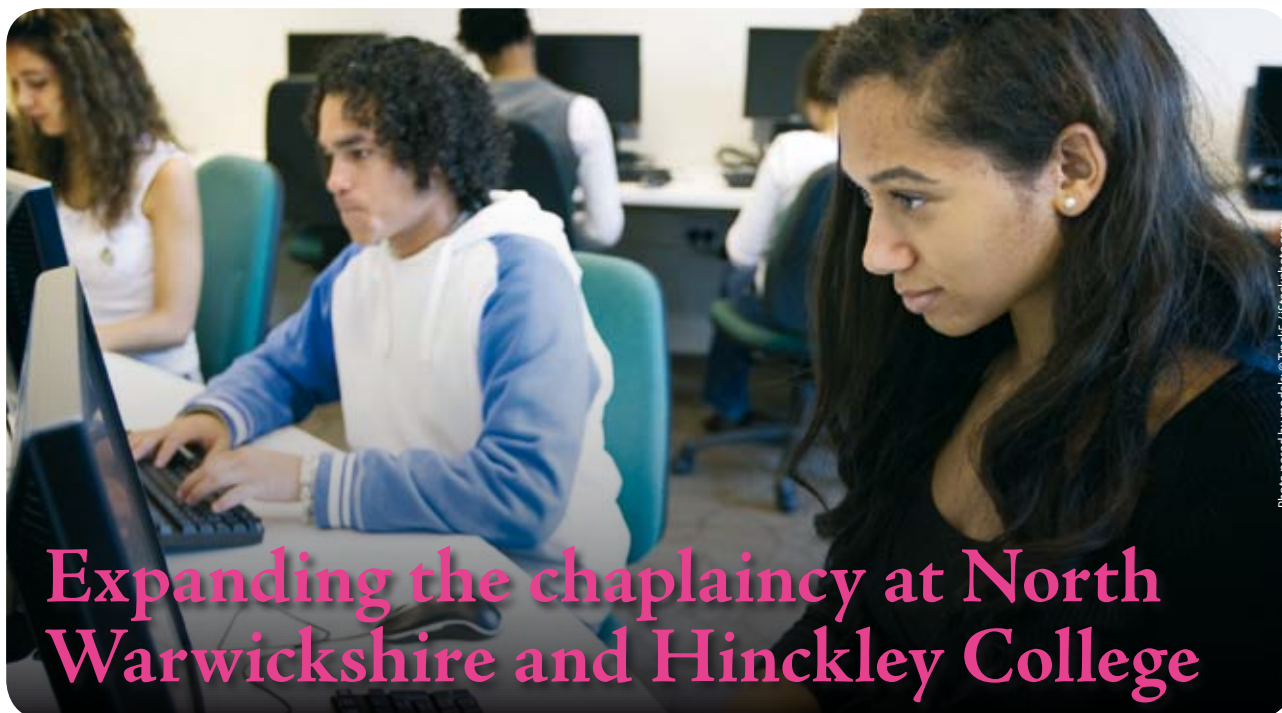


Photo posed by models © Trawls / iStockphoto.com

Expanding the chaplaincy at North Warwickshire and Hinckley College

AT NORTH WARWICKSHIRE AND HINCKLEY COLLEGE, the chaplaincy exists to support students and staff of all faiths and none during their time at college. The college has around 25,000 students.

It is the chaplains' firm belief that open discussion of all faiths and all spiritual matters increases the well being of the students and the college community. The chaplains focus the multi-faith nature of the chaplaincy around what people of faith are celebrating each week rather than focussing on the doctrines or differences which divide.

Expanding the chaplaincy

This year has seen a major shift in how the service has been delivered; since September 2008 the Anglican Chaplain, Rev Naomi Nixon, has been employed by the college to be the chaplain full time for the first time. Additionally a partnership with the Diocese of Coventry has enabled the employment of an Assistant Chaplain, Sister Moyra CSF. The chaplains have also recently moved to new, larger accommodation at the Nuneaton site.

What the chaplaincy provides

The ministry of the chaplaincy is of course as varied as the people it supports, however the following will hopefully give a flavour of what is done:


The academic year begins looking at the 36 weeks of term time ahead and the festivals of all faiths which fall in those weeks. One festival is then chosen each

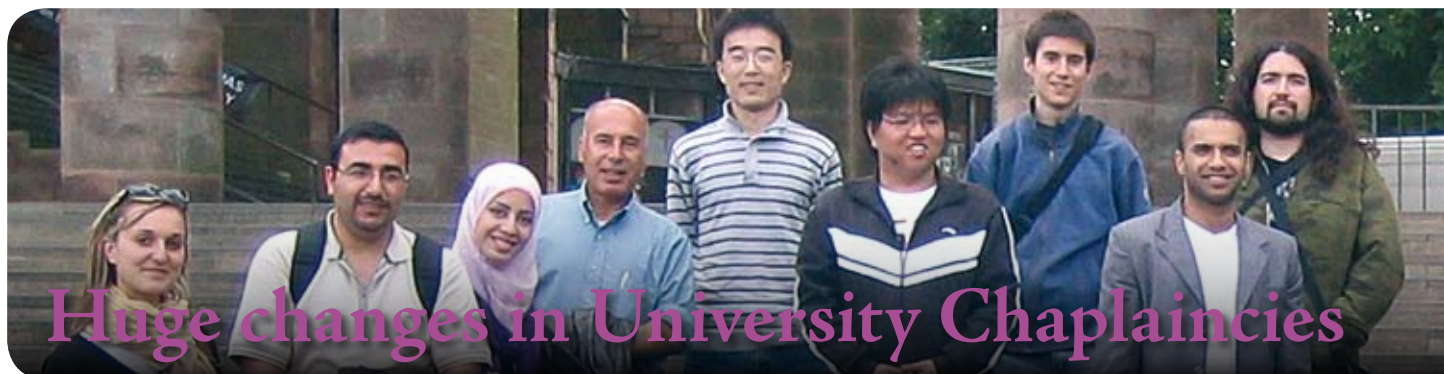
week to focus on, trying to provide a balance between religions, and capture all the major faiths celebrations as well as some less familiar ones. Each week the activity of the chaplaincy centres on that festival.

Activity includes:

- ❖ Sending an email to all staff giving them background information on the week's festivals.
- ❖ Putting up displays about the festivals.
- ❖ Providing 'drop in' hours for students to come into the chaplaincy and participate in an activity such as a craft session linked to the festival.
- ❖ Chaplaincy staff taking 'give-aways' or competitions about the festival to students in social areas.
- ❖ Tutorials delivered by chaplaincy staff booked by tutors.
- ❖ Utilising an event space next to the chaplaincy for a celebration of the major festivals. In the autumn term Diwali, All Souls and Christmas were celebrated with events. Nearly 200 students came to Diwali.

Additionally but very much at the heart of the chaplaincy, the ordinary work of Christian ministry continues, with daily morning prayer, a weekly reflection for Christians at college, a student bible study group and of course pastoral support of students and staff.

Contact Naomi Nixon on 024 7624 3355 or at naomi.nixon@nwhc.ac.uk 



Huge changes in University Chaplaincies

COVENTRY UNIVERSITY is home to about 17,500 students from a variety of backgrounds and faiths. Students from all over the world including China, the USA, Eastern and Western Europe, Israel, Iraq and Palestine made their way to Coventry enrolling as undergraduates and postgraduates. There are also 3,000 staff that work at Coventry University, which represents a low student: staff ratio.

The university is attractive to students due to its specialised and highly acclaimed courses such as peace and reconciliation, disaster management, nursing, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, aeronautic engineering, business management, automotive design and the other more traditional subjects. About one quarter of the student body commute to university from their parental homes in Coventry, Warwickshire, Leicestershire, Oxfordshire and all across the east and west midlands. This means that it is a disparate community which heralds a city centre campus giving easy access to pubs, clubs and other cultural attractions of such a city centre. We have at least 4 churches on our doorstep, including a very famous cathedral, all of which are major attractions for Christian students during term time.

What we do

The university hosts a whole range of support structures which alongside the chaplaincy includes counselling, mentors and buddy's, mental health practitioners and welfare advisors. The nature of chaplaincy amongst students is changing – students are fee paying individuals, who are essentially consumers but are in great debt and will be for years to come. A chaplain is no longer the sole provider of pastoral care and the chaplain is constantly searching for ways of offering a traditional service but fitted to an individual's faith and cultural needs. The chaplaincy is indeed just one option in the pick and mix culture. However, our distinctiveness still leads us to deal with the deepest of faith and pastoral needs of our staff and students.

Recent changes and huge take up

We have seen three major changes. Since 2008 the chaplaincy has been called the Spirituality and Faith Centre (the team are still called chaplains), but it's a high street bookshop term of reference that seems to fit into today's culture; as there is a lack of understanding of the term 'chaplaincy'. Since the name change, the numbers of students and staff coming through the team's doors, has gone up 100%. The institution requires both qualitative and quantitative evidence of the chaplaincy's work - but that is OK as the University give a very realistic and fair budget. Chaplaincy events have never seen so many numbers, e.g. a BBQ for 100 students, actually fed over 350! The second major change is that Coventry is now one of the few universities in the UK to have a Muslim chaplain and he has been a great asset in demonstrating collaborative working and built up excellent relations with the Islamic student body. He offers guidance re: Muslim holy days and obligations.

The third major introduction is very exciting. Chaplains are being seen as major players in helping to improve student retention, in enhancing the student experience and developing the work of community cohesion. This has seen the launch of Culture Club, a series of university wide events that celebrate faiths and cultures within the university and across the community. 2008 saw a Great British event, an Eid celebration, a Diwali event and a wonderful Christmas celebration.

The team consists of Rev Jennifer Croft (Anglican chaplain and team leader), Rev Stuart Jennings (Free Church Chaplain), Rev Edward Soo (Chinese chaplain), Mohamed Mohamud (Muslim Chaplain), Fr Jimmy Lutwama (Catholic Chaplain) and Sue Hughes (Student Support Advisor).

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THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK'S religious complexion has dramatically changed since its foundation in 1965. Then it was a relatively homogenous gathering of Christians, Jews and people of no formal religious affiliation, drawn from a small student body of under 4,500 students.

The University now has about 17,000 full-time students representing all the major world religions, eight of which are represented as Student Union Societies. The life of the Chaplain has to a degree reflected this process of 'internationalisation', both in the composition of the communities for which each Chaplain has specific responsibility and the broader concerns which each Chaplains by virtue of his role is required to take into account.


A Multi-Faith Team

The Chaplaincy Team is now genuinely multi-religious, comprising three university-appointed Chaplains – one Christian, one Muslim and one Jewish. The whole Chaplaincy Team meets weekly for a two-hour staff meeting, ably assisted by a half-time Chaplaincy Co-ordinator, to discuss issues ranging from 'housekeeping' matters pertaining to the efficient running of a busy Chaplaincy building to how to negotiate relationships between different University groups who disagree strongly about issues such as the Israeli bombardment of Gaza.

Over the last ten years, the Chaplaincy has become one of the thriving hubs of university life raising questions about how to prioritise and manage the large range of activities that take place within it, ensuring that worship and spirituality remains at the heart of its enterprise. The main medium term aim is to consider how to develop Chaplaincy life in keeping with the university's avowed ambition, articulated in its University Strategy, to rank as one of the top fifty universities in the world by 2015.

Recent achievements include:

- ✦ The Chaplaincy appointed its first Muslim Chaplain, Mr Dawud Bone, thus consolidating the recent creation of the Islamic Prayer Hall and the Muslim Chaplaincy.
- ✦ The appointment of a half-time Chaplaincy Coordinator, to help address the managerial and administrative challenges associated with the University's burgeoning religious and cultural life
- ✦ The re-institution of the 'Chaplaincy Lectures' on a formal and regular basis, attracting speakers of international repute to address matters of religion, ethics and public life. Recently, Mr John Cornwell, Director of the Science and Human Dimension Project at Jesus College, Cambridge and author of Darwin's Angel, spoke to a crowded Chaplaincy.
- ✦ According to last year's International Student Barometer (ISB), the University of Warwick Chaplaincy ranked as one of the top Chaplaincy's internationally. The International Student Barometer (ISB) provides education providers with an understanding of the motivations, expectations and experience of students –helping inform change within the institution. The ISB is the largest annual study of international students in the world, with feedback from 350,000 international students since 2005, running in 11 countries across 5 continents.
- ✦ Not to forget of course the important place the Chaplaincy gives to providing support and pastoral care.

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