



**The St Mary's Centre Annual Symposium
in
Practical Theology and Religious Education**

19 – 21 October 2016
Noddfa, Penmaenmawr, LL34 6YF

Abstracts

WEDNESDAY 19 OCTOBER 2016

2.30 Collegial Session 1

Room 1:

Steve Aisthorpe (saisthorpe@cofscotland.org.uk)

Investigating the invisible church: reflections on research methodology and learning

For whatever reasons research is undertaken, and regardless of the methodologies employed, the intention is that learning will occur. During the period 2011-2016 the Church of Scotland engaged multiple and diverse techniques in order to develop a greater understanding of the phenomenon sometimes referred to as 'churchless faith': qualitative and quantitative; inductive and deductive; in-depth interviews; online, postal and telephone surveys; corporate reflection (Aisthorpe, 2013, 2014, 2016). In addition, a broad range of opportunities and methods were utilised to engage diverse contingents in processes of learning. Conceptual frameworks such as 'deutero-learning' (Argyris and Schön, 1978, 1996), 'levels of learning' (Bateson, 1973) and the 'triple-loop learning' model contemporaneous with the emergence of the 'learning organisation' theme (Tosey, Visser & Saunders, 2012) provide lenses for investigating how research design and communication strategies impact learning: sometimes facilitating, sometimes limiting, always shaping. Reviewing and reflecting in this way enables 'learning about learning' in ways which offer insights for optimising the impact of future empirical studies.

Room 2:

Kelvin Randall (kelvinjohnrandall@gmail.com)

Are Liberals winning? A longitudinal study of clergy churchmanship

Surveys indicate a growing liberal consensus within British churches as well as in British society. Is this because each succeeding generation is more liberal than the previous one? Or is it that individuals as they grow older become more liberal? In a longitudinal study of churchmanship among Anglican clergy in England and Wales, the results indicate that individual clergy, male and female, older and younger, are becoming less Conservative and more Liberal.

4.15 Collegial Session 2

Room 1:

Christopher Lewis (ca.lewis@glyndwr.ac.uk)

The “Religious Diversity Project” among young people in the Republic of Bashkortostan, Russia: Methodological considerations

Background: The project “The study of social and psychological problems of youth in the multiethnic environment and the development of ways to prevent and overcome ethnic and religious conflicts” comprises of a survey of the attitudes of a large sample of youth in the Republic of Bashkortostan, Russia. This project is located within a distinctive research tradition from the UK, and is specifically aligned to the “Young People’s Attitudes to Religious Diversity Project” survey.

Aim: The present aim was to describe the process of assembling and evaluating the prospective questions for inclusion in the revised version of the “Young People’s Attitudes to Religious Diversity Project” survey suitable for use among youth in the Republic of Bashkortostan, Russia. The development of the revised survey was guided by two overarching principles/premises. Firstly, that the questions should be culturally appropriate for use among Bashkirian youths. Secondly, that the questions should be as comparable as possible with the original survey used in the UK. As such the original survey was used as the initial template for the revised survey.

Methods: The development of the revised survey followed a four stage iterative process. Firstly, each question from the original survey was reviewed for its cultural suitability for use in Bashkortostan. Those questions that were found not to be suitable were revised or removed. Secondly, a number of questions focused on Bashkirian language and culture were added to the revised survey. Thirdly, the revised survey was translated into Russian. Fourthly, the revised survey was piloted tested.

Results: A comparison of the original survey and the revised survey indicated a large degree of similarity. Moreover, preliminary data suggests that the questions included on the revised survey are appropriate and meaningful for the youth in Bashkortostan.

Conclusions: The revised survey is currently being administered to a large sample of youth in Bashkortostan. The inclusion of common questions in the original survey and the revised survey allows for cross-cultural comparison of the data between the UK and Bashkirian youth.

WEDNESDAY 19 OCTOBER 2016

4.15 Collegial Session 2 (contd)

Room 2:

Gill Hall and Douglas Hall (mittonhouse@dsl.pipex.com)

The psychological type of individuals attracted to Celtic Christianity compared with the psychological type of Anglican congregations

Celtic Christianity has seen a strong revival of interest over the last 30 or 40 years. Economic and social changes in society, and changes in worship styles and liturgy in the different Christian faith denominations have been suggested as reasons for the resurgence of interest in Celtic Christianity. This study uses the Francis Psychological Type Scales to compare the psychological type of women and men interested in, and who use Celtic Christian resources, with women and men attending conventional Anglican congregations reported by Francis et al (2011). The data provided some support that there are significant differences between psychological type profiles of members of the Church of England congregations and participants in on-line Celtic Christianity.

5.30 Plenary Session 1

Room 1:

Leslie J Francis (leslie.francis@warwick.ac.uk)

Growing a younger Church: A strategic vision

The research evidence documenting the absence of young people from Church of England congregations and activities is unambiguous. In the subtitle of my 1985 book, *Rural Anglicanism. A future for young Christians?*, the question mark was really superfluous. The evidence was clear then. The aim of this paper is to search the empirical evidence for strategic signs of hope. The empirical evidence reviews the contemporary roles of the three major agents of Christian education and formation: Church, School and Home. The evidence points to the crucial role of Home. The challenge facing the Church of England, therefore, is to maintain its work with schools and local churches, but to find new ways of helping Christian parents and homes to play a fuller part in nurturing the religious development of their children and young people. Churches across the vast region are encouraged to find out who is in their neighborhoods with often surprising results. The most startling results were his own when he took a look at the immediate area of his own Synod Office in St. John's and discovered a whole group nobody realized was there who have now been given their own space at the diocesan office for protection and support.

WEDNESDAY 19 OCTOBER 2016

8.00 Public Lecture 1

Room 1:

The Revd Dr Greg Smith (gregsmith31760@tiscali.co.uk)

Training clergy for the 21st Century

For more than a century, clergy in the Church of England and the Church in Wales have been prepared for ordained ministry via a curacy or apprenticeship served alongside an experienced minister. While there has rightly been much investment in the training of these key personnel in the life of the Church, little thought has been given to the question: who trains the trainers? Greg Smith, himself a training minister, under the guidance of Leslie Francis, has spent the last eight years attempting to identify best training practice; the resources available to the training minister and the theological models in play in the training relationship. This presentation will share what has emerged from that research, with particular emphasis on how teachers need to learn.

THURSDAY 20 OCTOBER 2016

9.15 Collegial Session 3

Room 1:

Karamat Iqbal (karamat@forwardpartnership.org.uk)

Pakistani-Birmingham; community, education and religion

Since World War II, Birmingham has been one of the main areas of settlement for the Pakistani community in the UK and is currently home to the largest number of Pakistanis in the world outside Pakistan. In my previous work 'Dear Birmingham' (as well as other autobiographical writing), I have focused on the community, its development and needs and issues which require attention of policy makers. In the city schools, Pakistanis make-up more than a quarter of the school population and will soon become its largest pupil ethnic group. Nationally also they are the largest minority ethnic group. The issue of ethnic minority underachievement in England has been acknowledged. However, much of the focus has been on Black Caribbean children and until recently, there has been relatively little detailed discussion of Pakistani achievement. This continues to be a critical matter in Birmingham where every year, large numbers of Pakistani pupils, especially boys, leave school without the benchmark 5 A*-C grades at GCSE. The city was the site of the recent Trojan Horse controversy. This centred on allegations of a systematic attempt to infiltrate and Islamicise secular schools.

My presentation will cover the development of the Pakistani community generally. It will also draw on my PhD (through Warwick University), which has involved research into city's state secondary schools. Relevant to the symposium, I shall also draw on aspects of 'autobiographical sociology'. Copies of my relevant books will be available for sale, for those who wish to study further in this area.

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9.15 Collegial Session 3 (contd)

Room 2:

Giuseppe Crea and Aureliano Pacciolla (creagiuse@gmail.com) (aureliano.pacciolla@gmail.com)

Motivational aspects of well-being, through happiness and self-direction: An empirical investigation among priests and nuns, and among young people

In this study we want to examine the motivational aspects of well-being, through the concepts of happiness and self-direction. It then evaluates the connection between well-being, happiness and self-direction, as motivational understandings of human behavior in two different samples. The first study highlights the importance of the motivational roots in the understanding of happiness in a group of Italian priests and nuns. It concerns happiness as a state of balance between (1) the idea that well-being and episodic happiness have the same fundamental determinants, so that a person is well to a particular degree in virtue of the fact that he/she is happy to that degree, and (2) the idea that the motivational understanding of happiness goes beyond what makes the person happy. From this work we can draft a multidimensional understanding of happiness. The second study concerns how a person is able to pursue goals in life and to self-reflect productively can serve as a “proxy” for well-being. In the DSM-5 the self-directedness has an explicit reference to the meaning of life and this can be considered an openness to existential themes. We introduce a pilot research to verify a hypothetical correlation between self-directedness scale and the PIL test. A correlation between these two research tools would confirm the foundation of a motivational well-being based on the capacity of the person to self-direct herself/himself towards existential goals. In case a positive correlation between self-directedness scale and the PIL test we have further evidences that a clear purpose in life is an important dimension of personality functioning and of personality well-being, founded on the motivational search for meaning.

THURSDAY 20 OCTOBER 2016

11.15 Collegial Session 4

Room 1:

Neville Emslie (nemslie@diocant.org)

Emotional Intelligence and the Royal Priesthood, a Peculiar People

Some research has been published in Great Britain relating to Anglican clergy and emotional intelligence (EI), and EI and Newfrontiers' leaders. In the USA EI research has been published relating to senior pastors, clergy conflict management style, clergy leadership effectiveness, and occupational burnout among clergy. The context(s) in which clergy minister are well known as psychologically stressful, emotionally demanding, spiritually draining, sometimes highly conflictual, and tough on family life. This presentation explores the 'royal priesthood' nature of Church of England clergy, and the peculiar contexts in which they serve. Is there correlation between clergy EI and their contexts of service? Do their terms and conditions of service make them even more emotionally peculiar? (1 Peter 2.9, KJV).

Room 1:

Adam Stevenson (adam.stevenson@oxfordmethodists.org.uk)

The elusive Methodist identity: Towards an ordinary theology of Methodist worship.

In beginning to explore the subject of Methodist Worship, it must be placed within the context of the church's crisis of identity, and the discovery of who Methodists are today. The current body of literature evidences the crisis and the ways in which the Church have sought to overcome it, but little has happened to listen to the actual ordinary Methodist people and their own identity. Local Methodism is usually described through its difference rather than its uniqueness, but nationally it most often stresses its similarities to other national churches. Is there room for an ordinary theology of Methodist Worship to enable the Church to hear the voices of the people who are the worshippers rather than the worship leaders?

THURSDAY 20 OCTOBER 2016

11.15 Collegial Session 4 (contd.)

Room 2:

Ian Poulton (ianpoulton@gmail.com)

And yet it moves: an ordinary theological understanding of the persistence of the Church of Ireland in rural communities

The application of a systems theory approach to the Church of Ireland communities suggest the "system" will fail because the hidden and deep values within the local church have become misaligned with the espoused values of the church at denominational level. The misalignment will create a church that becomes dysfunctional and eventually fails. Does this model depend on "top down" assumptions about the nature of the church? Does it assume that "espoused" values are essential to the persistence of the church? Does an "ordinary theology" approach, taking seriously the hidden and deep values provide a better understanding of why the church has persisted? Are the values that the church espouses to have legitimacy in the wider community necessary for the persistence of the local church?"

Room 2:

Sylvia Baker (sylviabaker@gmail.com)

Who are the "nones" and what do they actually believe?

The category "no religion" has been used increasingly in recent years to support the view that religion in the the UK is in terminal decline, although it is clear that not all "nones" are atheists. The overall picture is one of confusion, with differences in the way the question has been framed leading to large differences in outcomes. There is a need for continuing research in this area, so that an issue of great national importance can be clarified further. Data already exist which could be revisited to make a contribution to this body of research.

THURSDAY 20 OCTOBER 2016

2.00 Collegial Session 5

Room 1:

Henry Ratter and Steve Glowinkowski

A pilot workshop, exploring leadership style & behaviour and An update on the Values Surveys Project being run with Essex University (in two parts)

A pilot workshop, exploring leadership style & behaviour – Henry Ratter (ratterh@aol.com)

As a follow-up to the DMin research study in Chester Diocese, a pilot workshop was offered to clergy and lay leaders, to test the value of the GPI & ESI instruments to enable individuals to be more effective in their ministry. A two-day workshop was provided, targeted at clergy who had completed the original research surveys, they were invited to bring along members of their leadership teams so that they could work on ideas to improve effectiveness together. The shape of the workshop will be described along with the feedback from attendees. A number of changes were identified which would be included if the workshop were to be run again. Some new practical guides have been developed to encourage individuals to further develop their Blue 4 Leadership style & behaviours.

An update on the Values Surveys project, being run with Essex University – Steve Glowinkowski (steve.glowinkowski@glowinkowski.com)

This session will revisit the work on organizational values, which is a new tool developed by Glowinkowski International & Essex University. This will include an introduction to the idea of Values Quotient in terms of strength and alignment. It will describe the Values framework and share information from the pilot studies which have been conducted so far, as well as the benefits which have arisen for those organizations that have used the new tool. It is still hoped to be able to run a pilot study this year with Chester Cathedral, aimed at staff, volunteers and congregational members.

THURSDAY 20 OCTOBER 2016

2.00 Collegial Session 5 (contd)

Room 2:

Randolph Ellis (randolphellis@hotmail.co.uk)

Is God an object?

Is God an object? In this exploration of Object-Oriented Philosophy, there is no underlying reality which has more reality than objects themselves. In this world of objects, therefore, is God an object? Can God exist only as an object? If God can exist only as an object, isn't there a strange theology and another religion waiting to be developed here?

3.15 Collegial Session 6

Room 1:

Stella Mills (stella.mills@methodist.org.uk)

Occupational isolation in farming – when disease hits the stock

It is well known that agricultural workers, and farmers in particular, work in isolation but whereas many agricultural workers return to homes in villages after work, farmers remain in isolation in houses where the nearest neighbour is often some distance away. Previous work has identified several categories of isolation which may be applicable to farming families but this presentation identifies two further categories specifically applicable to farmers. Using three small case studies involving mycoplasma bovis and data obtained through (mainly) telephone conversations, the presentation explores what may be called veterinary isolation and medical isolation. Early results suggest that, in some cases, these two types of isolation may result in emotional loneliness and other human ailments.

Room 2:

Claire Maxim (Claire@themaxims.co.uk)

A critique of theological reflection

THURSDAY 19 OCTOBER 2016

4.15 Plenary Session 2

Room 1:

David Lankshear (david.lankshear@msn.com)

The development of a measure to enable Church in Wales Primary Schools to monitor their pupil's views on issues related to School Ethos

Since the publication of the Church in Wales Review of Education (Lankshear, 2009) much work has been undertaken at diocesan and school level to ensure the development of the Christian Ethos of Church in Wales Primary school. The most recent development of this work has been to develop a questionnaire for pupils between the ages of seven and eleven to ascertain their views and perceptions of aspects of their own school's ethos. This questionnaire was trialled in two dioceses during the school year 2013/4 and right across the province in 2014/5. This paper will present the background to this questionnaire, how the reporting is being managed for the schools involved and will present some of the first results from the 2,900 pupils in over fifty schools who completed the questionnaire during the second trial period. It will also report plans for its future use in Church in Wales' schools and for its development in the future.

8.00 Public Lecture 2

Room 1

The Revd Professor Jeff Astley (jeff.astley@durham.ac.uk)

Taming the Spirit? Religious Experience and the Unsettling of Belief

Spiritual and religious experiences have been, and often continue to be, a problem for traditional religious belief and practice – and for the theologies that express and undergird them. The relation between experience and faith is frequently portrayed through metaphors about ‘taming’ an unsettling mystery that ‘disturbs’ the placid waters of human convictions. Although religion is largely founded on experience, it often fears its power to disrupt. In this lecture I will argue that the plural, widespread, gratuitous, and concrete phenomena of spiritual experience have a positive contribution to make in earthing, correcting, and breaking open the limited understandings that so readily take root in official religion and orthodox believing. A relevant theology needs to be open to all experience, and always ready to see the extraordinary in the ordinary.

9.15 Collegial Session 7

Room 1:

Tania ap Siôn (t.ap-sion@warwick.ac.uk)

Creating a place of prayer for the 'other': An experimental study exploring the effects of re-shaping congregational space in a cathedral

Provision of spaces for personal prayer and reflection has become a common phenomenon within historic churches and cathedrals in England and Wales, offering an example of devotional activity that operates largely outside that of traditional gathered congregations, but also in relationship with them. Over the past decade, the apSAFIP (the ap Siôn Analytic Framework for Intercessory Prayer) has been employed to examine the content of personal prayer requests left in various church-related locations, mapping similarities and differences in pray-ers' concerns. Building on this research tradition, the present study examines whether experimental changes to physical environment in a cathedral has an effect on the prayer requests.

Room 2:

Patrick Laycock (pjlaycock@manchester.ac.uk)

Work-related psychological health among Italian Roman Catholic priests: replication and extending the concept of balanced affect

There is an increasing call for replication studies in Psychology and Psychometrics as there has similarly been in Econometrics, another science which relies heavily on human behaviour patterns. This paper will describe the replication and extension of the concept of balanced effect for psychological health. Drawing on the classic model of balanced affect, the Francis Burnout Inventory (FBI) conceptualised good work-related psychological health among religious leaders in terms of negative affect being balanced by positive affect. In the FBI negative affect is assessed by the Scale of Emotional Exhaustion in Ministry (SEEM) and positive affect is assessed by the Satisfaction in Ministry Scale (SIMS). For this paper a random sample of 156 religious leaders (95 men and 61 women) serving with the Roman Catholic Church in Italy completed the Purpose in Life Scale (PILS) as an independent measure of wellbeing as well as the two scales of the Francis Burnout Inventory, SEEM and SIMS. Crucially for confirming the idea of balanced affect, there was a significant interaction between the effects of SEEM and SIMS scores on scores recorded on the Purpose in Life Scale, confirming that the mitigating effects of satisfaction in ministry on purpose increased with increasing levels of negative affect. A graphical presentation will demonstrate the nature of these affects and their clear replication in this and a previous study.

FRIDAY 21 OCTOBER 2016

9.15 Collegial Session 7 (contd)

Room 2:

Alison Morley (alliemorley@aol.com)

Bible study and post-critical belief: a pilot study among ordinary theologians in a Church of England parish

10.45 Collegial Session 8

Room 1:

Christopher Rutledge (Christopher.rutledge@talktalk.net)

The relationship of churchmanship and personality amongst Anglican clergy

The aim of this study is to explore the relationships between churchmanship and personality amongst Anglican clergy. Those clergy influenced by the charismatic movement were likely to be more stable and more outgoing but harder of heart than those clergy not influenced by the 'charismatic' movement. Some support is given for catholic clergy being less outgoing than their evangelical colleagues.

Room 2

Clare Slattery (clare.s.slattery@gmail.com)

Searching for Ordinary Theology among 18-26 year olds in Rural Ireland

This paper describes an Experience of Qualitative Research among members of a Youth Pastoral Council in the Rural Irish Diocese of Killaloe. Jeff Astley's conviction that "serious looking and listening are needed to test the institutions that we all have, about how people believe and feel" is my backdrop for this study. These young people were given fifteen questions and through interview, conversation and written responses, their feedback, their "God talk", their ability to express both beliefs and believing is the subject matter for this presentation. Are they "learning Christ on the road to discover the truth of the Gospel"? This is my question, our conversation and I contend our Ecclesial opportunity.