

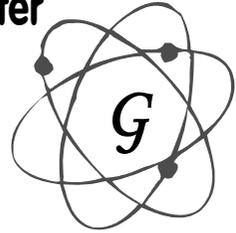
Promoting justice, peace & the integrity of creation

Grapevine

SC^{action}4J Newsletter

Issue No. 59

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LIVING IN DIVIDED WORLDS?

**Economical with the
truth or truthful about
the economy?**

**Facing the big challenges
together**

and much more!



SWINDON
CHURCHES
TOGETHER



Letter from the Editor



Welcome to this latest edition of Grapevine. I am writing this in Holy Week, just 3 days ahead of ‘Good Friday’ when we remember the despair of Jesus on the cross and then glorious Easter Sunday morning when we celebrate the resurrection. Grapevine brings you information about situations that cause many people in our world utter despair but also hopes to encourage you to consider yourself part of an answer to the prayers of those people as we continue to educate ourselves, inform others, campaign for those who cannot speak for themselves, and do what we can to ensure better living conditions for our brothers and sisters here in Swindon, in the UK, and across the globe.

As Grapevine is distributed it will be time to look to May and Flame FM, our Community Radio with a Christian flavour which will be featuring broadcasts of the Lectures on pages 4-9. They are well worth a listen. We shall also have programmes on Christian Aid, Israel and Palestine and our MEP Molly Scott-Cato has her own show too. Look out for the What’s On Guides or log on to www.flamefm.co.uk for details of the schedules!

Barbara

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Bias to the Poor - Coda

A recent review of Karen Armstrong's book, 'St. Paul' (Thirdway: Winter 2016) shows the radical nature of Pauline theology. It is common knowledge that St. Paul says Christians should identify themselves with the lowest strata of society, the offscouring and the refuse. In addition, however, reflection on the nature of Christ's crucifixion suggests even deeper truth. Romans used crucifixion not just as a brutal form of execution but as a very extreme humiliation. Victims were commonly denied the respect of burial. There was nothing more degrading than to have ones body exposed, gradually decaying, and being picked to pieces by crows.

The Gospels do tell how Jesus 'was buried', yet at the same time they tell how God in Christ suffered the extremes of ignominy and degradation but was raised to Messianic authority.

The reviewer (Stephen Tomkins) shows that the defilement of God's Messiah in crucifixion alters for ever the idea of faith as a matter of purity. Distinctions in religion and society are no longer important: slaves and free, king and peasant, law abiding and criminal. Paul's writing in Phlippians 2: 1-11 and in the letter to Philemon shows that he disregarded these distinctions: ranks, status, and hierarchies, as irrelevant in matters of faith and the Christian community.

Although the Gospel tells us the veil of the temple was rent in two and we do not need a priestly caste between us and God's Holy Presence we should still address the influential and traditional distinctions of our present day: rich and poor, the powerful and the powerless, the intelligentsia and the working classes, the monied and the indebted.

In the twenty first century, although we do not have a great powerless peasant class which services the needs of the elite we should still understand that the Father God of Jesus Christ looks with concern and compassion on the present day marginalized: the homeless, the asylum seekers, the 'lost sheep' who follow the loudest voices leading to extremism, fundamentalism and debt fuelled materialism.

Consider how Jesus' bias to the poor worked itself out in practice. He refused the politics of power, escaping from the insistence that he should assume leadership. Instead, what he offered were parables of poverty, stories that anyone could follow and reflect upon.

There are twenty first century stories of the powerless which continue to teach and inspire us: Malala Yousafzai who survived an assassination attempt in 2013, Gordon Wilson the Irish draper who held his dying daughter at Inniskilin in 1987, and Ang San Suu Kyi, under house arrest for a total of 15 years in Burma.

Such stories are of poor people in the sense that they begin as unnoticed, insignificant and powerless.

The greatest story of all, that God in Christ accepted the utter rejection and disgrace of crucifixion should show us how foolish is the pursuit of celebrity and how important is God's Bias to the Poor

Brian Eyles

In February and March this year we were delighted to welcome 3 superb guest speakers to talk at the Swindon Churches Together 'Eye of the Needle' Lectures. Rev'd Tony Barnes has kindly provided a synopsis for each one - with apologies for any distortions or errors in representing the speakers words! All of these Lectures, together with the question and answer sessions will be broadcast on Flame FM during May so do keep a look out and have a listen! www.flamefm.co.uk

Living in Divided Worlds?

Faith and Politics - Lecture given by Rev'd Dr Leslie Griffiths

When asked how as a Christian I became involved in politics, my response is that this usual sequence is, in my case, reversed. As a child being brought up in impoverished circumstances in south Wales in post-war Britain, my father having deserted the family, I was assured by my mother that the Labour government now in power would ensure through the new welfare provisions that we would not be dependent on soup kitchens as millions were in the nineteen-thirties. Our Labour MP, Jim Griffiths, steered much of the relevant legislation through Parliament and was a local hero to whom I wrote as I grew up, asking how to become a Member of Parliament. He replied in long-hand from his council house.

My mother used to send my brother Jim (named after the above parliamentarian) and me to the Methodist chapel around the corner for afternoon Sunday School

where I learned the stories of Jesus from a group of doughty women who, after I passed the eleven plus made sure that my mother was able to afford the expense of sending me to grammar school. So whilst Jim left Sunday School in his early teens, I stayed and became a Sunday School teacher. The down to earth Christian example of those women laid the foundation for the decision I made for Christ in my undergraduate days, not for a legalistic, moralising, doctrinaire religion, but for the embodiment of God's love in Christ and in those Sunday School teachers as the true way of life.

So politics shaped and formed me, and on becoming a Christian I in no way intended to deny, or put this behind me.

Politics has a vocation, which is to work out the best solutions for the enhancement of life for all people.

After lecturing at Lampeter College in the University of Wales and training for the Methodist Ministry at Cambridge, I served the Methodist Church in Haiti during the seventies when Liberation Theology was informing the practice of young, Roman Catholic priests there, listening to ordinary people rather than imposing theological solutions from the top. Peasants helped to shape my theology, and I preached Christ who is the Good News for the body as for the inner, spiritual life. When folk enquire why I am a Methodist, my response used to be that my mother sent me to the nearby chapel. Now I cite Methodism's emphasis on inward, personal religion and the yoking of the energies released by this to transform society through social commitment.

Having sat in the House of Lords since two thousand and four, I have come to acknowledge the value of this institution, albeit recognising the need for reform. 'Lord' should be a working title with a phasing out of hereditaries. There should be a retirement age for all members and half of the current complement of approximately eight hundred with appointments made by an independent commission. The Lords is not an undemocratic body. The Commons have the final say on any legislation, but a recent move to introduce 'skeletal' bills, for instance on Trades Union and Welfare and our system of representative democracy has regrettably led to much less opportunity for scrutiny.

As a Christian in the Lords I seek to speak not from a patent position of special pleading, but out of my experience, for instance, as a pastor on such issues as, for example, the assisted dying.

I cannot separate my vocation in politics from my calling as a Christian. God sent his Son not just to redeem religious people, but the whole world.

Economical with the truth or truthful about the economy?

God and Money – Lecture given by the Right Rev'd Michael Doe

Where is the Kingdom of God present or being denied in modern economics? *Is the modern economy the best way to exercise our stewardship of God's world, achieving as much justice and sustainability as we can hope for, given our human nature? Or are there "principalities and powers" at work in our financial systems which, in God's name, we need to expose and confront?*

If being a Christian is about more than worship and prayer, and Christian discipleship is about more than personal witness and charitable activity, is it possible to be a Christian in our kind of world, without understanding how economic systems work, what they deliver, and the impact that has on the whole of society? Jurgen Moltmann: "the neglect of economics is a wound in the side of the church".

Do we accept that the economy is intended to make some rich and others just the recipients of what may 'trickle down'?

Michael Sandell in 'What Money Can't Buy: The Moral Limits of Markets', asks whether we want a society where everything is up for sale, or are there certain moral and civic goods that markets do not honour and money cannot buy?

Pope Francis states: *"We have created new idols.....The worship of the golden calf of old has found a new and heartless image in the cult of money and the dictatorship of an economy which is faceless and lacking any truly humane goal". The growing inequality in society is caused by "ideologies which uphold the absolute autonomy of the markets and financial speculation, and thus deny the right of control to States, which are themselves charged with providing for the common good". "A new, invisible, and at times virtual tyranny is established, one which unilaterally and irredeemably imposes its own laws and rules."*

Here are six areas of current concern.

Personal Behaviour

The dependance of younger people on debt, and the cashing in by retired people of high value pensions and property values which will be denied to future generations, are symptomatic of a move away from "virtue ethics" – shared understandings of what is right and for what and whom we are responsible –

into a much greater sense of individual autonomy. Profit and bonuses are now the bottom line, and in their name people may do things to friends and associates they would not otherwise dream of doing. Anonymity in the conduct of the economy gives *leave to sin*.

Legality

Fistly, even if an action is legal, it may not be moral – e.g. tax avoidance.

Secondly, you are more likely to be punished if you are poor.

Those who defraud the benefit system are put in prison. With one or possibly two exceptions, no top bankers have been gaoled for the corrupt practices that led to the 2008 crash in the banking system.

Money

Bishop Peter Selby in “An idol Unmasked” states: ‘Money is no longer an enabling instrument but an overwhelming and all-encompassing power, an idol, which like the Old Testament idols seek to replace God and demand that its followers live by its own values, and make the sacrifices which it requires. “You cannot serve God and Mammon” ‘.

Debt

Debt is endemic. At an individual or family level examples are student loans, online gaming advertisements, and the encouragement to borrow to bet more which has about it the whiff of Satan.

In national life we hear much of the ‘Deficit’, of which we may query whether this in fact is in the end our money anyway, borrowed from banks which in fact we paid from state funds to bail out, and money created by the Bank of England via ‘quantative easing’ intended to be released creatively into the economy. But this remains a puzzle if you do not have a grasp of the mysteries of monetarism. Private Finance Initiatives (PFI) have left national institutions (eg National Health Trusts) with vast, ongoing debts the final sum of which in individual cases, were perhaps difficult to discern in the first place.

What the Bible says about debt is all about forgiving it, in order that the indebted do not suffer unduly.

Investment

We need to question *where* we invest, whether our investments are ethical, and the morality of the system itself where the aim is to make money out of money when investment should be about creating material wealth for all – not gambling on money itself. The bible censures usury.

Inequality

“There must come a point at which the scale of the gap between the very wealthy and those at the bottom of the range of income begins to undermine

the common good. This is the point at which society starts for be run for the benefit of the rich, not for all its members.” (Catholic Bishops)

Two deeper theological Questions:

(i) Can Society sin? Yes. The “Principalities and powers....” (St Paul) of this world must be challenged.

(ii) Are individuals good or bad? It may be that ‘soft capitalism’, the use of capital for good, creative, wealth sharing aims is the best that we can hope for. Some may desire something more, the kind of world that God intends, but to do that we must take economics seriously.

Organisations to be consulted may include SHARE ACTION, and the Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility (ECCR).

The one time Member of Parliament for Swindon South, Julia Drown, said that letters from Christians were distinctive in being about issues that affected others, the greater good, rather than just themselves.

Facing the big challenges together

**The Mission of the Church in Contemporary Society. Lecture given by
Revd Dr Michael Lloyd, Principal, Wycliffe Hall, Oxford**

It can be that pluralism in society, the *fact* that there are lots of different world-views and religions, can lead to the *assumption* of relativism, that if it’s true for you then it’s true, as an absolute. This doesn’t actually follow. It is irrational.

Tolerance on the one hand is demanded by the need to respect, but *relativism* asserts that all belief systems are equally valid and none are absolute.

Relativism has become dominant through fear of the imposition of an ideological world view being imposed on people, and the resultant atrocities and suffering that can be the consequence for millions – e.g. the Holocaust. This is understandable, but.....

Relativism is.....

Incoherent

It makes absolute claims for itself that it denies to any other position. It thus fails its own test.

Inconsistent

It is not possible to live consistently with Relativism. Everyone has a cut-off point. ‘We should challenge the relativism that tells us there is no right and wrong, when every instinct of our mind tells us it is not so’ (*Jonathan Sacks*)

Intolerant

Relativism cannot be fair to other positions because it has to excise all truth claims.

Injurious to human flourishing

If relativism is right that there is no overarching purpose which is true for each one of us, then we are left to make up our own purposes for our relationships and for our sexual encounters – and our track record suggests that the purposes we make up for ourselves will often be selfish, exploitative purposes. That way leads to the emptiness of the Samaritan woman whom Jesus encountered (*Gospel of St John, chapter 4*).

Idolatrous

To say, ‘There is no *overarching* truth: merely what is true for you and for me and for each one of us’ is a way of saying ‘There is no *infinite* God: merely a series of finite gods.’ And if our gods are finite, then our meaning is finite, our purpose is finite, our lovedness is finite, our existence is finite, and our hope is finite.

Isolating

As Roger Scruton says, when Relativism sets in, ‘people cease to share any conception that they are joined in a common enterprise.’

Inimical to Science

Science has as much at stake in opposing relativism as does Religion.

What does this mean for Christian mission today?

We need to.....

1 Hold our nerve ontologically. In a polytheistic world, we are making monotheistic claims.

2 Hold our nerve morally. Christian morality is liberating, not oppressive.

3 Build community. People are crying out for it. And the reason they are crying out for it is because our polytheistic society is a fragmented society.

4 Demonstrate that tolerance is better grounded in the person and example of Jesus than in a relativistic rejection of truth. In the story of the Samaritan women, (*John 4*), Jesus breaks down the barriers of race and gender without any concession to relativism.

Money for nothing?

Dire Straits ‘Money for Nothing’ (look it up on the web if don’t have the faintest idea what this is) is about a delivery man complaining that rock bands get paid without working for it, but could that be also true of our banks?

Here is a definition of Money from the Oxford Dictionary: A current medium of exchange in the form of coins and banknotes; coins and banknotes collectively, and/or: The assets, property, and resources owned by someone or something; wealth.

For the purposes of this article we use something called the M3 definition of money supply or how much ‘money’ is in circulation. There are 5 definitions of money (M0 to M4). Each higher numbered definition builds on the lower ones so M3 includes the definitions for M0, M1 and M2. M3 is a broad definition which includes cash and ‘money equivalents’ easily convertible to cash (M0 and M1), short-term time deposits in banks and 24-hour money market funds (M2), and longer term deposits and money market funds. M4 apparently mops up the rest, whatever that is. I hope this hasn’t engendered a glazed look (it certainly did for me), and don’t worry you won’t be tested on it but, since I’ll be using M3 as a broad definition of money I needed to at least make an attempt at a definition.

So here comes the key point. 97% of all money as defined by M3 is ‘created’ by private banks out of thin air, and not as you might think by the Bank of England. They create what are technically called ‘electronic demand deposits’, issue them as loans, and destroy the original loan amounts (the principal) when paid back. Interest generated then forms the ‘income’ of the banks and remains in circulation.

It’s worth repeating. **Commercial banks create 97% of the ‘money’ in circulation out of thin air.** Maybe that raises a whole host of questions in your mind. It did in mine!

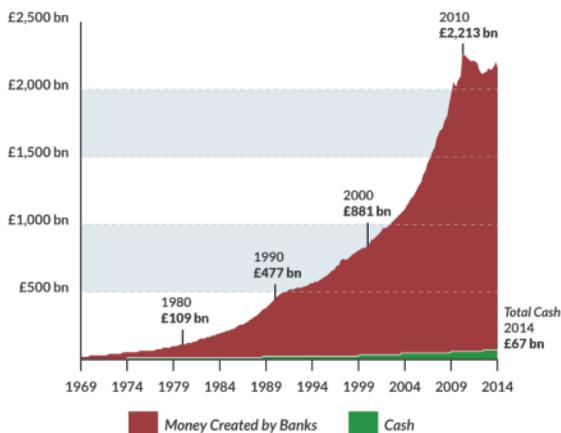
Before diving in, I’ll introduce a group or movement called Positive Money (<http://positivemoney.org/>), which argues that the current system is bad, and puts forward proposals to mitigate what it sees as its bad effects. Indeed, the claim is that this system is at the root of today’s big problems. And they are taken seriously by politicians and indeed the Bank of England.

So what are these bad aspects? Let’s look at a few areas, whilst referring you to Positive Money’s website for both a wider and a deeper analysis.

The first point to make is about debt. With such a large amount of the money supply being used for loans, nearly all the money in the economy is actually debt! This loan money sloshing about is spent giving the impression that the economy is doing well (creating demand for goods and services, with people employed and earning money to create them). More money in the economy equates to more debt, almost exactly. The current solution to recession appears to be to create more money and hence more debt. But if the 2007/8 financial crisis was caused by people getting too far into debt (not able to repay), how can the solution be to create more debt (aka creating more money)? Conversely if people are able to pay off their debts, then in this system the money simply disappears. If lots of people pay off their debts at the same time, lots of money disappears from the economy, and without new loans, spending slows down. So with this system, it's virtually impossible to reduce debt without causing a recession! Sounds like utter madness.

The classic reason for high house prices is said to be an excess of demand over supply. This is partly true but Positive Money argues that the monetary system does its bit as well. During the ten year period leading up to the financial crisis, house prices tripled. During the same period the amount of mortgage lending by banks quadrupled, and of course the money lent out was created out of thin air as explained earlier. It is contended that this increase in house prices is driven by the explosion in lending as well as demand. With house prices rising faster than wages, people (particularly young people) find it impossible to get on to the property owning ladder, and the percentage of income used to service repayments spiral upwards.

Positive Money contend that that the root cause of the financial crisis was banks creating too much money out of thin air. The following, from Positive Money's website depicts the increase in money created as debt over time, compared with total cash.



Very little of this created-out-of-thin-air money was used outside of the financial sector. 31% went on residential property, 20% on commercial property, 32% went to the financial sector (to do what?), and 8% on credit cards and personal loans, and only the remaining 8% went to businesses working to generate 'real new' goods and services by employing people. With debt rising more quickly than incomes, people are eventually unable to make repayments. With lower income, banks eventually run into trouble. And this isn't only Positive Money's view. The chairman of the Financial Services Authority said in 2013 "The financial crisis of 2007 to 2008 occurred because we failed to constrain the financial system's creation of private credit and money." After the crisis, banks limited their new lending. The slowdown in lending caused prices to drop, and this means those that have borrowed too much to speculate on rising prices had to sell their assets in order to repay their loans. House prices dropped and the bubble burst. As a result, banks panicked and cut lending even further. A downward spiral thus began and the economy tipped into recession.

Furthermore Positive Money contend that this system causes artificial booms fueled by spending derived from borrowing rather than derived from earned income. Since all this 'out of thin air' money has to be repaid (unlike earned income), increasing debt means an increasing percentage of income goes on debt servicing, leaving less to be spent in the economy buying goods and services. Hence booms are followed by bust (the boom caused by loans being spent, the bust due to less spending in the real economy due to debt servicing). It's difficult to run stable businesses when the banks cause booms and busts every few years! So the system is bad for business and bad for jobs.

The Bank of England do create money in the form of printing and minting cash. It only costs a few pence to create a £10 note, so the government generates some of its income (£18 billion between 2000 and 2009) by exchanging the notes for income bearing securities which generate income (interest) during the circulation period of the cash. If the government had owned the generation of the funds created out of thin air instead of the commercial banks, then the government would have had to pull in less funds from taxes, and reduce the notorious national debt. Instead the commercial banks pocket it. We currently spend more on interest on the national debt than we spend on defence, or on the police, or on the roads. And of course, a recession causes loss of jobs which causes loss of taxation revenue.

Positive Money also say that this system creates inequality because most of the money in the economy is debt which has to be repaid with interest. They contend that the bottom 90% wealth-wise in the UK pay more into the banks than they receive thereby redistributing their income to the most wealthy 10%.

And finally, the right to create money out of thin air gives banks immense power. Because banks create 97% of the money in circulation they decide where in the economy that money goes and thereby shape the economy. They have no accountability for the effects this has on society (some of which are noted above). If they had, then far more bankers would have found themselves in jail after the crash. Today 85% of the UK's money is controlled by 5 banks with a combined total of 78 board members. That's just staggering! 78 people with next to no accountability for their actions.

So who gave the banks the right to create money out of thin air? It's never been a matter of debate in parliament or elsewhere – it's just the way it is!

So is there anything that can be done to improve this? According to Positive Money there is. They are calling for the right of banks to create money to be transferred to a public body, amongst other proposals. There is much more on Positive Money's web page (<http://positivemoney.org/>). If you find this all very worrying, then join the club! And if you want to do something about it, you'll find lots of opportunity at the aforementioned web site.

Steve Aftelak

<p>Lost Generation</p> <p>I am part of a lost generation I refuse to believe that I can change the world I realise this may be a shock but "Happiness comes from within" Is a lie, and "Money will make me happy" So in 30 years I will tell my children They are not the most important thing in my life My employer will know that I have my priorities straight because Work Is more important than Family I tell you this Once upon a time Families stayed together But this will not be true in my era This is a quick fix society Experts tell me</p>	<p>30 years from now I will be celebrating the 10th anniversary of my divorce I do not concede that I will live in a country of my own making In the future Environmental destruction will be the norm No longer can it be said that My peers and I care about this earth It will be evident that My generation is apathetic and lethargic It is foolish to presume that There is hope. And all of this will come true unless we choose to reverse it .</p> <p>Now read the poem from from the bottom upwards</p> <p>Lost Generation is a poem written by Jonathan Reed, originally appearing as an entrant in AARP's U@50 Video Contest.</p>
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Dinner Debate

About 17 members of Swindon Churches Action for Justice and the Executive of Swindon Churches Together met at the Old Town Community Centre at Christchurch on Friday, 18th March 2016 at 7.30 pm for dinner with the MP for South Swindon and Solicitor General for England and Wales, Robert Buckland, the MP for North Swindon and Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Disabled People, Justin Tomlinson, and the Leader of Swindon Borough Council, David Renard.

This annual meal was arranged by the Swindon Churches Action for Justice Group, and, as usual, generously hosted by Steve and Barbara Aftelak with some clearing up help from other members of the groups involved.

Questions to the three political guests and resultant conversation flowed with the delicious food and its consumption, interrupted only by the breaking news of the resignation from the government of Iain Duncan Smith as Work and Pensions Secretary, which demanded the attention to his mobile telephone of the Under Secretary for State for Disabled People.

The first question focussed on **Housing**, the long term crisis in this area, the sale of council housing and failure to replace the affordable, rented accommodation thus lost, and the rise in evictions in the private sector. Robert Buckland stressed the government's ambitious plans to build 800,000 or up to a million homes, a quarter of them in the social housing sector, by 2020, and his doubts that this ambition could be met in full. We learned from the Council Leader that there are currently 7,000 people on the Swindon Council waiting list for housing, and that whilst the official council requirement is for 30% 'affordable' units to be included as a proportion of any residential development, negotiation with potential developers can lead to this being reduced. The definition of what is 'affordable' was raised. The Council Leader pointed out that this term may refer to levels of rents as well as house prices. Obstacles to house building could include the retention of land by developers. The right of councils to compulsory purchase could be helpful. The German model of regulated, longterm, secure tenancies was raised, prompting both MPs to praise the benefits of home-ownership.

Climate change was the second area for discussion. The removal of various subsidies and tax incentives to encourage generation and use of green energy was detailed, against the increased fossil fuel subsidies at a cost to taxpayers

of £2.7 billion between 2015 and 2020, this being in apparent contravention of the government's acceptance of the Paris accords on climate change.

Robert Buckland stressed the need to save the British oil and gas industry in challenging times, thus ensuring future self-reliance rather than dependence on foreign imports, and pointed to the growing profitability of the 'green' sector. Nevertheless we heard that the speed of subsidy withdrawal had put some firms in jeopardy, punishing their success, and leading to the loss of 1,000 jobs in the solar energy industry. The Swindon South MP also asserted that the 'green deal' subsidy for homes had not enjoyed a high take-up and could be seen as a subsidy for the middle classes, but both MPs agreed to research and pass on figures relating to these statements.

David Renard informed us that the solar windfarm on land above Wroughton, a council project, should in just a few years provide enough energy to supply all residential properties in Swindon.

We were told that whilst the progressive relief on car tax for lower-emission vehicles had been scrapped, high-emission cars were still taxed at a higher level, and that roads had to be paid for.

Attention moved to the subject of **disability benefits**, the phasing out of Disability Living Allowance in favour of Personal Independence Payments and the proposed cuts to the latter, the introduction of Universal Credit and the replacement of Incapacity Benefit with Employment Support Allowance which is also to be reduced. We heard of the insecurity and sense of frustration and fear felt by many claimants being assessed for work capability by people who appeared not to be trained to tailor questioning to individual people, but according to a rigid pro-forma. This was acknowledged by Justin Tomlinson who said that the process had been bad and was under review. He asserted that the transition to the new system would mean that there would be one to one assessment, that data built up and held on claimants needs would not necessitate repeated detailed form filling in the future but only relating to change in circumstances, that no-one would receive less in benefits and that over the years of this parliament spending would increase. There were no details attached to these last two assertions. We heard more of the suffering caused to specific individuals through the inadequacies of the system of assessment

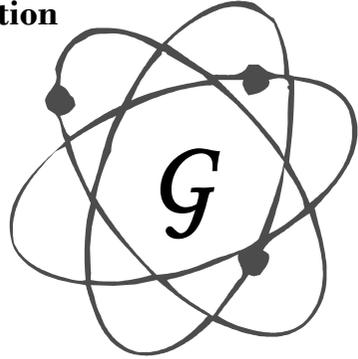
David Renard stated that Swindon Borough Council ran a good advocacy system for claimants.

We are grateful to our guests for their time and participation in this event.

Action for Justice

Published by Swindon Churches Action for Justice because ‘Peace will follow when Justice prevails’.

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50 donations of £5 would cover the cost to produce our next edition. Any donation, however large or small, will be gratefully received and will enable us to continue publishing this magazine. Please send your gift to Barbara Aftelak, 80 Okus Road, Swindon, SN1 4JP.

Cheques should be made payable to ‘Swindon Churches Together’ please and it would help if you could mark your donation “for Grapevine”.

The Editor is always pleased to receive articles for publication in the magazine which has a widespread readership with 1,200 copies being distributed across Swindon, Marlborough, Highworth, Wroughton and various places in between! Plus it is available on our website.

www.swindonchurches.org

Views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily the views held by the majority of the members of SC4J or the Editor.

This is what the Lord requires of you: only this, to act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

Micah 6:8