



Annual Report 2018-19

The [West Midlands Churches' Further Education Council](#) exists to:

- [Support colleges](#) in the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students and the training and resourcing of staff in matters of faith and spirituality
- [Support churches](#) in valuing further education and lifelong learning as part of their wider involvement in education, and providing resources and training to partner colleges in their work.

The Council is composed of representatives from across different Christian churches represented in the West Midlands region, including individuals with years of experience working within the FE and lifelong learning sectors (see p. 4). Though rooted in the Christian tradition, the Council takes an open and positive approach to working with people of any faith and none.

The Council initiates projects, organises training and networking events, and networks chaplains and other FE staff in the West Midlands region. It can also assist in brokering partnerships between colleges, churches and other faith communities.

West Midlands Churches' FE Council was founded in 1987 and is currently the only regionally-based, ecumenically-owned organisation which supports Christian engagement in the further education sector and offering support to colleges.

The Year in Brief

West Midlands FE Chaplaincy Ambassador



At May 2019 we are at the mid-way point of three years' work by West Midlands FE Chaplaincy Ambassador Phil Metcalf. (This role is the first ecumenically funded appointment of its kind in Britain for some years). In 2018, with Phil's support, 9 new chaplains began work across 9 campuses of 5 colleges. So far in 2019, 2 new chaplains have begun work, in 2 colleges. Several additional conversations about renewing or establishing chaplaincy provision are ongoing. The rate of interest from colleges has exceeded expectations and already there is a full programme of further work which

can be undertaken during the remainder of the project term.

In May 2019 Phil and WMC FEC co-organised a day conference, Going Further, for FE chaplains in the West Midlands region, with guest contributors Revd Garry Neave (national adviser on FE chaplaincy for the Church of England) and Professor Trevor Cooling (Chair of the RE Council), plus contributions from serving chaplains across the region (see picture below).



A key task for 2019-20 will be to develop and embed chaplaincy provision in order to enable it to become sustainable beyond the project term. The three-year part-time role is jointly funded by four local denominational bodies - the Anglican dioceses of Coventry and Lichfield, the Heart of England Baptist Association, and the West Midlands Synod on the United Reformed Church – and by St Peter's Saltley Trust. West Midlands Churches' Further Education Council played a significant role in assisting sponsor denominations in scoping the post, and members of WM Churches' FE Council form part of the advisory

group for Phil's work. West Midlands Churches' FE Council would like to express continued thanks to funders for their commitment to developing chaplaincy in further education through this project.

ROUNDED: SMSC Resources for 16-19s in Further Education

Currently in development, this resource aims to provide quality resources for colleges to encourage the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of their students. Many colleges recognise this as important, but many teaching staff also say they lack the resources and confidence to do this well. ROUNDED aims to be a suite of themed resources around different topics with clear relevance to SMSC, focused around a central, interactive element, with a menu of supporting activities and material. Following trialling of a prototype session in 2016-17 (on 'cultivating identity, inclusion and belonging'), the Council and its project partner Dare2Engage commissioned resource writer Simeon Whiting to develop five further themed sessions of the resource, on the following topics:



Artwork from 'My Morning', an interactive component of the ROUNDED session 'Being Thankful'

develop five further themed sessions of the resource, on the following topics:

- Being Thankful
- Being Merciful and Forgiving
- Caring for Others, Animals and the Environment
- Being Fair and Just
- Being Hopeful and Visionary

Further sessions may be commissioned if the budget allows. A first draft of these sessions was completed by May 2019. The remainder of 2019 will be used to revise, film/record, trial and design the suite of resources, with the intention of publishing late in 2019 or early in 2020.

WMC FEC is grateful to funders of this project for their support: Dare2Engage, the St Christopher's Educational Trust, St Peter's Saltley Trust and the Friends Hall Farm Street Trust.

What is FE Chaplaincy? Video Project

Following WMCFEC's *Hope for FE* consultation in 2017, the Council identified the need to raise the profile of FE Chaplaincy as a sphere of ministry and service within the churches in the region, building on the interest in chaplaincy shown by colleges as a result of the WM Further Education Chaplaincy Ambassador project. To help in this, we identified the need to educate churches about the FE sector and the opportunities for chaplaincy within it. With no recent multimedia resources on this currently in existence, the Council commissioned the production of five short films designed for use with local churches (and, secondarily, colleges). Each 2-3 minutes' long, the films cover:

- Introducing FE Chaplaincy
- What is a Further Education College?
- What is Further Education Chaplaincy?
- What can FE Chaplaincy look like?
- How can I get involved?



Mazo Creative Agency, a local media production company experienced in working with churches and charities, were commissioned to produce the films. Filming at three college locations was under way in May 2019, with the aim of producing the finished films by early September. The films will be made available via an online video sharing platform and the Council's website, so that Council members and chaplains can use them with local churches, denominational bodies and colleges. The Council is grateful to St Peter's Saltley Trust for funding for this project.

Plumbing the Depths: A Reflective CPD Resource for FE Chaplains



Plumbing the Depths, is a reflective resource designed to facilitate reflection on experiences of calling and ministry in Further Education, based on themes from the Book of Jonah. For use in large group, small group and one-to-one settings, it has been developed by West Midlands Churches' FE Council, written by former WMCFEC members Sarah Brush and Toni Coulton, with additional material by Chris Polhill and 24 specially-commissioned illustrations by Si Smith. The resource comes in electronic form and includes worksheets, facilitators' guides for large group, small group and one-to-one use, PowerPoint presentations and more. The resource is available for a suggested donation of £9 from info@wmcfec.org.uk. The first copies were sold in 2018; the Council continues to market the resource.

NEW: West Midlands Churches' FE Council E-News Bulletin

From 2018 the Council has begun to step up efforts in marketing and communications. A new e-bulletin was launched in March 2019, to be published 2-3 times per year. Use of MailChimp has also made it easier to compile and update a database of current contacts.

Plans for 2019-20

In 2019-20 the Council will:

- Continue work on ROUNDED (SMSC Resources for 16-19s) in partnership with Dare2Engage, with the intention of having completed six sessions by the end of the year, begun design work, and identified scope within the budget to develop any further sessions.
- Continue to support Phil Metcalf's work as West Midlands FE Chaplaincy Ambassador and begin exploring how new and existing chaplaincies might continue to be supported beyond the project term
- Complete the *What is FE Chaplaincy?* video project and begin to use the videos to raise the profile of FE chaplaincy in the region and beyond
- Continue to publicise the work of the Council – including resources such as *Plumbing the Depths* – through the Council's e-news bulletin and other channels
- Discern future direction for work once ROUNDED and the chaplaincy videos projects are completed. In 2018, student mental health and mentoring were identified as two possible areas for future work
- Involve new people in the work of the Council, filling gaps in denominational representation and inviting more active participation from those working in further education colleges.
- Build good relationships with other organisations working to benefit the further education sector and supporting the churches' work in education.

People

In 2018-19 the following served as members of the Council:

Revd Stephen Blyth	Co-opted, N. Warks. and South Leics. College
Katy Broomfield	Co-opted, Burton and South Derbyshire College
Pete Carrington	Festive (FE and Sixth Form Initiative)
Sue Davis (Treasurer)	Co-opted
Revd Neil Dunlop (*)	Anglican Diocese of Hereford
Rt Revd Clive Gregory, Bishop of Wolverhampton (Chair)	WM Church Leaders
Andy Haynes	W'ton and Shrewsbury Methodist District
Simon Hill	Anglican Diocese of Worcester
Ian Jones (Hon. Sec.)	St Peter's Saltley Trust
Canon Phil Metcalf	Co-opted, WM FE Chaplaincy Ambassador
Jill Saunders	Anglican Diocese of Birmingham
Revd Stuart Scott (+)	West Midlands Synod of the URC
Hilary Topp (^)	Student Christian Movement/CE Quakers
Rob Chivers (+)	Student Christian Movement

(* = finishing; + = beginning; ^ = finished as SCM rep in 2018-19; to be replaced as CE Quaker rep in 2019-20; will continue until then)

At the end of this year there were vacancies for representatives of: the Anglican Dioceses of Coventry and Hereford, the Birmingham Methodist District, Chester and Stoke Methodist District, the Heart of England Baptist Association, Central England Quakers (from 2019-20), the Council of Black-Led Churches, the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham, and up to one further co-opted member.