



**WHO DO YOU
SAY THAT I AM ?**

**Looking Forward To
Our Diocesan Conference**

**High Leigh Conference Centre
24 - 26 September 2018**

Bishop Christopher looks forward to the 2018 Diocesan Conference



The last couple of years has seen the rise of post-truth politics and 'fake news'. Unfavourable reports were denounced as being made up, and experts were perceived as a nuisance. And while that clamour may have subsided a little, we still have to reckon with the legacy. Once suspicion has taken root in a society, what is the future for those who want to speak about truth?



That's the question that we'll be exploring at this year's Diocesan Conference 'Who do you say that I am?', and I'm delighted to welcome such a varied and engaging range of speakers to join us and help us think it through. The conference title reminds us of the question that Jesus asked

his disciples, and it asks us to reflect not just on our answer to the question, but on the remarkable fact that Jesus asked it at all. The Gospels show us that following Peter's insight that Jesus is the Christ, there remains a long journey to uncover what that really means, but it is not a journey that he makes in isolation. Rather, it is a question whose answer unfolds as Peter and the others learn to grow in trusting Jesus, as they put their faith in him.

For us then, that question of truth is closely tied to the matter of trust, and perhaps that's an important part of what we've seen happening. As Rowan Williams observed, in cultures where there is isolation and alienation there will be mistrust as to what people really mean. Or to put it the other way round, the mistrust that characterizes the post-truth age points to a society that is crying out for the renewal of a deep sense of community and togetherness.

For us Christians, all these questions about truth, trust, and community are at the heart of our life and it reminds me that a significant part of the conference is just to be together, to enjoy friendship with one another and to get to know each other more deeply. And, as we wrestle with these big questions, we also come together to worship the one in whom we trust, to recall the New Testament's proclamation of the faithfulness of Jesus amidst the turmoil of the world. So I look forward to seeing you there, as we think together on Jesus' question, 'Who do you say that I am?'

Conference Speakers



Sir David Normington GCB held the dual offices of First Civil Service Commissioner and Commissioner for Public Appointments. He finally retired from Whitehall in 2016.

He will be speaking on his experience of speaking truth unto power in Government, from the perspective of a Christian in the Civil Service.



The Right Reverend James Jones KBE is the former Bishop of Liverpool and chairman of the Hillsborough Independent Panel.

He will be reflecting with us on “Truth and Justice” (Luke 18:1-8) and “Truth and Love” (John 13:1-17).



Revd Canon Professor Loveday Alexander is Emeritus Professor of Biblical Studies at Sheffield University and has served as Canon-Theologian at Chester and Chichester Cathedrals.

She will be our conference theologian; leading our Bible studies and weaving the themes of the conference together for us.



Dr Ruth Valerio is Tearfund’s Global Advocacy and Influencing Director.

She will be speaking on how to tackle poverty and injustice by pushing for change at a governmental and institutional level.



Conference Workshops

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- Group Process - Nicky McGinty
- Restorative Justice - John Swindell
- Media & Truth - Revd Tim Daykin (Radio Solent)
- Generational Theory - Charles Burgess (CPAS)
- Diversity/Unconscious Bias - Revd Lusa Nsenga-Ngoy
- Prayer Space - Portsmouth Deanery Youth Chaplaincy Project

Conference Venue



High Leigh, in Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire, opened as a Conference Centre in 1921 specialising in residential and day conferences for up to 220 delegates. With 40 acres of lawns, parkland and woodland the tranquil surroundings aid both concentration and relaxation for delegates.