

# Faith in Research 2019

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> June

Time	Session	
9.30	Registration and refreshments	
10.15	Bishop David Walker: Welcome, introduction and prayer	
10.25	<b>Dr Bev Botting:</b> Research & Statistics Unit Research highlights	
10.45	<b>Professor Christopher Southgate:</b> How can Congregations be helped in times of tragedy?	
11.25	Refreshments and change over	
11.45	<p><b>Session 1a – Clergy wellbeing</b></p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Sam Nunney</p> <p><b>Bishop David Walker</b> How are you, vicar? scripture, psychology and clergy wellbeing</p> <p><b>Professor David Denney</b> Anglican clergy and routinised abuse</p> <p><b>Dr Lorraine Turner</b> Formulating a response to bullying experienced and interpreted by Church of England clergy within one diocese</p>	<p><b>Session 1b – Social action</b></p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Dr Ken Eames</p> <p><b>Dr Stephanie Denning</b> The Impact of Volunteering upon Volunteers' Faith: Responding to Holiday Hunger</p> <p><b>Jessamin Birdsall &amp; Deborah Quilgars</b> A relational approach to reducing homelessness: Emerging findings from Positive Pathways'</p> <p><b>Hannah Rich</b> At the breaking of bread: church growth, relationship and social action.</p>
13.00	Lunch	
14.00	<p><b>Session 2a – Church and culture</b></p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Dr Liz Graveling</p> <p><b>Eleanor Wort</b> Faith and culture – Hull 2017</p> <p><b>George Amakor</b> The Church of Nigerian (Anglican Communion): The Clergy and Laity on Premarital Sex, Contraception, Abortion and Unmarried Pregnancy</p> <p><b>David Turnball</b> Clergy and Cultural Intelligence: Context, Formation Pathways and Prospective Outcomes</p>	<p><b>Session 2b – Children and young people</b></p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Dr Bev Botting</p> <p><b>Claire Dalpra</b> Playfully Serious: How Messy Churches create new space for faith</p> <p><b>Céline Benoit</b> Understanding the place of Christianity in primary education</p> <p><b>The Revd Canon Prof. Leslie Francis</b> Sustaining churchgoing young Anglicans in England and Wales: Assessing parental influence</p>
15.15	Refreshments and posters	
15.45	<b>Dr Kathryn Kissell:</b> Boundaries in Ministerial Life?! The Why, Where and How for Longevity in Ministry	
16.25	Bishop David Walker: Reflections and prayer	
16.45	End	

# Speakers

**Dr George Amakor**

## **The Church of Nigerian (Anglican Communion): The Clergy and Laity on Premarital Sex, Contraception, Abortion and Unmarried Pregnancy**

The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) is one of the major church denominations in Nigeria, alongside Catholic and Pentecostal churches. It is an autonomous province and one of the fastest growing provinces worldwide. In Nigeria, the position of the Anglican Church as one of the pioneer and largest church denominations, makes it a major stakeholder on issues of societal morals within and outside faith communities.

On matters of premarital sex and other aspects of sexuality, churches such as the Anglican Church largely hold and share heteronormative views that are not far removed from that of larger traditional local communities. Discourses pertaining to premarital sex, in Christian communities such as those found in various parts of Nigeria are laden with advocacy for abstinence and rigid attitudes towards premarital sex. As with several other church denominations in various societies, the Anglican Church in Nigeria largely frowns at premarital sex, contraception, abortion, unmarried pregnancy and unmarried motherhood in general.

This presentation will look at views and attitudes of members of the Anglican Church, clergy and laity with regards to premarital sex, contraception, abortion and unmarried pregnancy. It will highlight the differences between the views of the Anglican Church clergy and the church's laity. It will argue that members of the Anglican Church in Nigeria hold the most flexible views when compared with those from the Catholic and Pentecostal churches on issues pertaining to premarital sex.

### **Biography**

Dr George Amakor joined Aston University in 2013 as a Sociology PhD Student. His research interests are in unmarried young parents, teenage pregnancy, religion, families, sexualities, gender and feminism. He worked at Aston University as a Seminar Tutor in the department of Sociology. George has also worked as a youth mentor. He is currently a Lecturer at Sandwell College.

George is currently working on two publications, both of which his abstracts and manuscripts have been accepted. They are: Amakor, G. (2019). Gendered Discourses and Attitudes of Churches towards Young Unmarried Mothers and their Parents in South-Eastern Nigeria. In S. Page and K. Pilcher (Eds.), *Embodying Religion, Gender and Sexualities*: UK: Routledge.

Amakor, G. (2019). Contraceptive use by Young Unmarried Mothers in South-Eastern Nigeria: An Intersectional Analysis. In A. Yip and S. Page (Eds.), *Intersecting Religion and Sexuality*. UK: Brill.

## **Céline Benoit**

### **Understanding the place of Christianity in primary education**

In this paper, I address the question of religion in both Christian faith-based schools and non-religious community schools and academies. I argue that while debates pertaining to the question of religion in education traditionally tend to be directed towards faith-based schooling, such discussions often fail to address the broader question about the place of Christianity in education.

Controversies around admission policies have resulted in Christian-based schools being represented as divisive and elitist. However, in the case of the Church of England (CofE), the vast majority of their primary schools are voluntary-controlled (rather than voluntary-aided), which means that they follow the same admissions criteria as non-faith-based schools, as well as the same locally agreed syllabus for Religious Education. Consequently, what tends to differentiate faith-based CofE schools from non-denominational schools is their explicitly Christian ethos. Yet, community schools are themselves not religiously neutral, and tend to have a "vaguely Christian ethos."

As I present data collected in 18 primary schools across the West Midlands, I demonstrate that in some cases, Christianity can be more predominant in community schools, than in CofE schools. I also argue that community schools reproduce liberal Christian discourses, and that therefore Christianity is not solely confined to faith-based education. I conclude that in order to have coherent conversations about the place and role of religion in schools, discussions should include non-denominational schools and should not exclusively revolve around faith-based schools.

## **Biography**

Céline Benoit is a PhD Researcher in Sociology at Aston University. She recently submitted her PhD thesis, entitled *Representing Religions in Schools: Locating the Self and the 'Other'* in which she explores the construction of religion(s) and the representation of religious communities in primary education.

Further information: <https://www2.aston.ac.uk/lss/staff-directory/celine-benoit>

## Jessamin Birdsall and Deborah Quilgars

### **A relational approach to reducing homelessness: Emerging findings from Positive Pathways'**

What does it mean to take a 'relational approach' to addressing homelessness? What, if anything, is distinctive about a faith-based approach to relational working? What are the impacts and challenges on the ground of adopting a relational approach? This study has been conducted by the University of York's Centre for Housing Policy and commissioned by Church Urban Fund (CUF) as part of Positive Pathways, a 5-year homelessness reduction programme in Yorkshire. Drawing on a literature review, interviews with practitioners and clients, and preliminary programme evaluation data, this talk will explore the meanings, practices, and impacts of relational working in the homelessness sector.

### **Biography**

**Jessamin Birdsall** is Research and Evaluation Manager at Church Urban Fund and a PhD Candidate in Sociology and Social Policy at Princeton University, specialising in religion, race and ethnicity, and inequality. Jessamin has conducted quantitative and qualitative academic research in social integration, social capital, political attitudes, and ethnic and religious identity formation. At CUF, Jessamin oversees programme evaluation across CUF's Together Network, Near Neighbours, and Just Finance Foundation.

**Deborah Quilgars** is a Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Housing Policy at the University of York. She has 25 years housing research experience, with particular expertise in homelessness and housing and support services for vulnerable groups. Deborah has undertaken extensive research on homelessness and housing related support for vulnerable and marginalised people. Deborah has directed a number of evaluations of pilot projects designed to prevent or address homelessness, including services for homeless families, families with alleged anti-social behaviour, ex-offenders and teenage parents. Deborah represents the UK in the European Observatory on Homelessness.

### **Claire Dapra**

#### **Playfully Serious: How Messy Churches create new space for faith**

The take-up of Messy Church as a model for mission at local parish level is almost unprecedented. Yet no one is quite sure of the wider and longer-term impact. This two-year research project examined deeper effects of Messy Churches within the Church of England regarding ecclesial maturity and discipleship. We also gathered data on lifespan and those who leave. We asked leaders of 240 Messy Churches to contribute quantitative data on these four areas, taking care to represent both fresh expressions of Church and outreach initiatives. At the same time, we gathered qualitative data from leaders through regional focus groups and follow-up telephone work and designed innovative research to gather data on the perspectives of both adult and child attenders regarding discipleship in Messy Church.

## **Biography**

Claire has worked as a fresh expressions of Church researcher, writer and editor since 1999 - alongside George Lings before his retirement in 2017. Her previous areas of focus in this field include families with under 5s, adults with learning disabilities, and the sustainability of spare-time leadership. Claire was one of three main data collectors for the 2016 report *The Day of Small Things – an analysis of fresh expressions of Church in 21 dioceses*. Alongside her recent Messy Church research sponsored by the Church Commissioners, she is also a training tutor at the Wilson Carlile Centre and reviewer of Church Army's frontline ministry projects. Over the years, Claire has written for *Encounters on the Edge*, *Messy Church Theology* and Scripture Union's *Encounter with God* daily Bible readings. Claire lives on the edge of the Manor estate in Sheffield with her husband and teenage daughter.

## **Professor David Denney**

### **Survey conducted to discover the safety and security of Anglican clergy**

A survey funded by National Churchwatch and undertaken by academics at Royal Holloway, University of London discovered that many Anglican Clergy found work more challenging now than two years ago and that male clergy were more likely to be threatened undertaking pastoral work, whilst women were more likely to be threatened by an active church member or parishioner. The main findings of the survey were that less than 10% of respondents *strongly agree/agree* that they are experiencing more hate crime today than two years ago. Some 50% of respondents responded *strongly agree/agree* to work being more challenging now than two years ago, yet, it is not clear which aspects of work have become more challenging. Older respondents seem to *agree* that there is less respect for clergy now than two years ago. Men are more likely to disagree with the statement that work has become more challenging in the last two years. It was found that 85% of respondents said that they used social media for clerical matters, whilst 90% said that they used social media for personal matter. Facebook is the most used social media platform. Some 68% of those who took part in the survey had experienced verbal abuse, whilst 19% and 10% have experienced threatening or violent behaviour respectively. The main reasons for verbal abuse included: mental illness; declined requests for money; alcohol/drugs; anti-Christian sentiments; and other reasons (youths, female clergy, sexual abuse scandals, people not getting their own way, problems with graveyards/funerals).

## **Biography**

The study was conducted by Jonathan Gabe, Professor of Sociology and David Denney, Professor of Social and Public Policy both in the School of Law at Royal Holloway. The survey comprised of more than 540 participants across the UK. Jonathan Gabe is a leading figure in the Sociology of Health and Illness whilst Professor Denney has written and researched extensively on risk and security.

## **Dr Stephanie Denning**

### **The Impact of Volunteering upon Volunteers' Faith: Responding to Holiday Hunger**

This presentation questions the impact of volunteering upon people's religious faith. The research took place at a Church of England inner city church in an area where deprivation is in the top 5% of the UK. Using participatory methods, as a Christian and researcher, over 20 months I established and ran a project ('Lunch') at the church to respond to children's holiday hunger before handing Lunch over to others at the church. Lunch served primary school aged children in the local community and relied upon volunteers to run. Lunch had a Christian faith ethos, and many of the volunteers were Christian, but there was no religious content for the children attending. Based upon Lunch volunteers' diaries and interviews, their faith was affected by volunteering in two ways: there was encouragement and challenge for faith from volunteering at a faith-based project without explicit faith content, and faith was challenged in aspiring to give an unconditional welcome at Lunch.

## **Biography**

Dr Stephanie Denning is a Research Fellow at the Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations at Coventry University. She is currently working on a three-year research project (2018-2021) 'Life on the Breadline: Christianity, Poverty and Politics in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century City'. This examines Christian responses to UK poverty in the context of the last decade of austerity. Stephanie completed her PhD in Human Geography at the University of Bristol in 2018 on faith, volunteering, and holiday hunger. Stephanie has also undertaken freelance consultancy work for the Church Urban Fund and Christian Aid.

## **The Revd Canon Professor Leslie J. Francis**

### **Sustaining churchgoing young Anglicans in England and Wales: Assessing influence of the home**

Responding to the problem facing the Church of England identified by the Church Growth Research Programme regarding sustaining churchgoing young Anglicans, and also responding to the Renewal and Reform agenda to address this problem, the present study discusses the roles of three agencies in delivering effective Christian education and Christian formation among young people: local churches, local schools, and the home and parents. Building on a fruitful stream of research within Australia and the UK, the present study drew on two samples of young Anglicans: 2,019 9- to 11-year-old students attending church primary schools in Wales who identified as Anglicans, and 2,323 13- to 15-year-old students attending church secondary schools mainly in England who identified as Anglicans. The data demonstrated

that young Anglicans who practised their Anglican identity by attending church did so primarily because their parents were Anglican churchgoers. Moreover, young Anglican churchgoers were most likely to keep going to church if their churchgoing parents (especially mother) engaged with them in conversation about their faith. The implications from these findings, for an Anglican Church strategy for ministry among children and young people, is that alongside resourcing local churches to work effectively with children and young people, and alongside developing deeply Christian schools to promote an understanding of Christianity, it may also be wise to invest in the education and formation of churchgoing Anglican parents to contribute more intentionally to the Christian education and nurture of their children.

## **Biography**

The Revd Canon Professor Leslie J. Francis is Professor of Religions and Education at the University of Warwick. His recent books include *Anglican cathedrals in modern life: The science of cathedral studies* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan).

## **Dr Kathryn Kissell**

### **Boundaries in Ministerial Life?! The Why, Where and How for Longevity in Ministry**

Clergy are an almost unique profession in terms of the level of personal responsibility they have for setting their own social boundaries, both setting limits and establishing priorities within diverse work roles and choosing the interplay between work and personal life. While on one hand this autonomous work structure offers creativity to enact ministerial and congregational calling, the increasing levels of boundary stress reported by clergy indicates that such latitude may be a double-edged sword as clergy struggle to define and set limits amidst the pressure of congregational expectations, leading to exhaustion, stress and burnout.

Two quantitative studies with CofE clergy, tested the hypothesis that the dispositional trait of Differentiation of Self would capture the boundary ambiguity experienced by clergy within their work role and between work and home life. A cross sectional study (n=291) indicated the positive relationship between differentiation of self and work-related psychological health was mediated by boundary spillover. A longitudinal study (n=32) tested the impact of a coaching intervention to enhance individual functioning within organisational relational systems. Results show that, relative to the control group, participants reported a significantly increased level of differentiation and an improved relationship between work and home life. In addition, coaching group participants experienced a decrease in overall work stress and maintained higher levels of work engagement.

Taken together these results show how self-related resources such as the differentiation of self-impact on boundary-related stress and highlight the importance of intentionally establishing boundaries to enhance longevity in ministry.

## **Biography**

Dr Kathryn Kissell is a chartered Counselling Psychologist who engages with the intersection of psychology and ministerial practice.

As an Associate at the Methodist Susanna Wesley Foundation Kathryn is currently involved in a research project termed 'Self In Connexional System'. Drawing on psychological themes from empirical research and therapeutic literature

Kathryn is developing a framework that articulates flourishing in ministerial life through the lens of both individual and systemic functioning. Ultimately the project hopes to offer applicable insights to both enhance the personal well-being of ordained ministers and facilitate flourishing ministerial practise.

As a visiting research fellow at London South Bank University Business School, Kathryn's research focuses on the interaction between individual, group and organisational dynamics and their cumulative impact on work-related psychological health. Kathryn also works in private practise in London at Cognacity (<http://cognacity.co.uk>).

Kathryn originally studied Experimental Psychology at Oxford University and subsequently Theological Studies at Trinity College, Bristol. Her professional doctorate in Counselling Psychology investigated the impact of Bowen group systems coaching on the work-related psychological health of Church of England clergy.

## **Hannah Rich**

### **At the breaking of bread: church growth, relationship and social action**

Drawing on the stories and early findings of the GRA:CE research project, this paper will explore the relational dimension of social action and its implications for church growth, with a particular focus on the role of food in this.

Eating together is a central part of much of what churches do to foster relationship, both within their congregation and with the wider local community. Some of this is through projects which exist explicitly to provide food for those who need it – for example, food banks or soup kitchens. In many cases however, churches host community meals or social eating spaces which help bring people together and reduce social isolation, irrespective of whether or not those who attend have particular material needs. In terms of church growth, we suggest that eating together helps churches create a space of intentional relationship, which can in turn lead to congregational growth – both numerical and spiritual. This paper will also reflect on the biblical importance of shared meals, beginning to consider a theology of relationship and church growth.

## Biography

Hannah Rich is a researcher at Theos Think Tank, currently leading the GRA:CE project in partnership with Church Urban Fund, exploring the relationship between church growth, social action and discipleship. Previously, she worked for a social innovation think tank and a learning disability charity. Hannah studied French and Spanish at Durham University, including a year abroad working with faith-based organisations in Paris and Madrid. She also holds an MSc in Inequalities and Social Science from LSE.

## Professor Christopher Southgate

**How can Congregations be Helped in Time of Tragedy?** (Christopher Southgate, Carla Grosch-Miller, Hilary Ison, Megan Warner)

This presentation will describe a project in practical theology funded by the Templeton World Charities Foundation. The project began with semi-structured interviews with ministers who had accompanied churches facing up to shocking events – either disasters in the wider community, such as the Grenfell Fire or the London Bridge terrorist attack, or shocks internal to congregations, such as the suicide of a young person or the disclosure of ministerial abuse. We combined these insights with work emanating from the US Institute for Congregational Trauma and Growth to generate a package of training suitable for ordinands, curates, or serving ministers. This training uses a range of methodologies to convey the embodied, and overwhelming, character of trauma, and its likely dynamics in the experience of a community. The importance of open churches, and carefully judged rituals, is stressed, along with the power of lament. The implications for clergy preparedness, and after-care and self-care, will be further discussed.

## Biography

Christopher Southgate is Professor of Christian Theodicy at the University of Exeter, and Project Leader of the project 'How can congregations be helped in times of tragedy?'. Originally trained as a biochemist, Chris has since been a lay chaplain in university and mental health settings. He has taught the science-religion debate, and ecotheology, at Exeter since 1993. From 2001-17 he trained ordinands with the South West Ministry Training Course, serving as Principal from 2013-17. Academically he is best known for his work on the problem of suffering in nature (*The Groaning of Creation*, WJK, 2008). More recently he has published *Theology in a Suffering World: Glory and Longing*, CUP, 2018). He is also the author of eight books of poetry, of which the latest is *Rain Falling by the River: New and Selected Poems of the Spirit*, Canterbury Press, 2017).

## David Turnball

## **Clergy and Cultural Intelligence: Context, Formation Pathways and Prospective Outcomes**

Migration is transforming the nature of Christian communities. Culturally intelligent leadership is required to ensure intercultural engagement becomes a priority. A recent South Australian study of clergy reveals a divergent gap between strong support for a multicultural church vision and the actual capacity to provide culturally intelligent leadership to realize this vision. Bridging this gap requires an intentional and holistic formation process, integrating theology, cultural intelligence and intercultural experience. The prospective outcomes for clergy will contribute to developing authentic multicultural faith communities; fostering effective intercultural negotiation and trusting decision making; and ultimately lead to greater job satisfaction.

### **Biography**

David is the Head of Intercultural Studies at Tabor and State Director for Global Interaction SA/NT. He has been teaching in the cross-cultural ministry field for over 20 years in Adelaide. In December 2018, through Flinders University, David submitted his PhD thesis entitled “Clergy and Cultural Intelligence: A Study of the Foundational Capacity of Clergy to Function Effectively as Multicultural Leaders Within the Baptist and Uniting Church Denominations in South Australia.” David is married to Cheryl with one son, Matthew.

### **Lorraine Turner**

#### **Formulating a response to bullying experienced and interpreted by Church of England clergy within one diocese**

Lorraine will present the quantitative aspect of her doctoral thesis, “Formulating a response to bullying as experienced and interpreted by Church of England Clergy within one Diocese.” This was a response to the Church of England’s *Dignity at Work 2008* anti-bullying policy and an exploration of using the Negative Acts Questionnaire, developed in the field of workplace bullying, within the Church of England context. In a time where the union Unite was asserting that the bullying was “Rife” and an official position within the Church of England was that it was “rare”, Lorraine set out to fill the gap by coming to a measure of bullying within the diocese of study.

### **Biography**

Lorraine has been ordained for 15 years and currently divides her time between parish ministry, teaching and offering anti-bullying workshops. For four days a week she is vicar of St. Mary the Virgin, Platt. In the remaining time she teaches for St. Augustine’s College of Theology and also within Rochester Diocese programmes for curates and licensed ministers. This reflects a balance throughout her professional life of bringing an academic perspective to practice. An MA during her curacy introduced her to research which has been her key area of interest for over 10 years now. Her doctoral research explored clergy interpretation of experiences of bullying in the course of their ministry. A qualitative

element from this thesis was published in the journal Practical Theology as [Help and Hindrance: clergy talking about bullying](#) (2018). Before ordination Lorraine was a science teacher in West London for 10 years,

## **Bishop David Walker**

### **How are you, vicar? scripture, psychology and clergy wellbeing**

Bringing together both biblical and empirical theology, this study takes key elements of ministry from the scriptures, and particularly from the stories of Jesus and his disciples and combines them with theories from health psychology to explore mechanisms for supporting clergy work-related psychological health. Previous psychological research has drawn attention to ways in which positive affect and support strategies mitigate the consequences of high levels of emotional exhaustion in ministry. The present study, among 101 stipendiary Anglican parochial clergy serving in one Diocese in England, profiles three sources of positive affect: stability, with particular reference to the accommodation of clergy in tied houses; success and support, focusing on positive experiences of ministry, together with sources of affirmation and support; Sabbath, with reference to days off, holidays and sick leave. Both the biblical material and survey data are found to be rich enough to identify key findings and possible interventions for those responsible for clergy health to undertake. Most clergy are found to be thriving, though a small minority feel deeply unsatisfied or unsupported. Work-life balance remains a particular problem for many. Whilst the majority of clergy studied serve in an urban environment, the particular pressures for rural ministry are noted.

### **Biography**

David Walker has been Bishop of Manchester since 2013, having previously served in parish ministry in Sheffield Diocese and as Bishop of Dudley. In January 2017 he took up the position of Deputy (to the Archbishop of Canterbury) Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Church Commissioners for England.

Having trained as a mathematician, he is keen to exploit the potential of quantitative as well as qualitative methods for understanding the beliefs and behaviours of those who identify as Christians. He is the author of many academic papers within the field of Empirical Theology. His first book, *God's Belongers: How people engage with God today and how the church can help* was published in February 2017 by BRF and seeks to set out some of his thinking in a format accessible to the non-specialist.

## **Eleanor Wort**

### **Faith and culture – Hull 2017**

How does God act in and through contemporary culture? Hull was the UK's City of Culture in 2017, and my research looks at church leaders across different denominations in one of the UK's most deprived cities, asking how they saw God working in their city's culture.

My paper will explore what Hull's church leaders understand culture to be, what they see as the relationship between Gospel and culture, and what their theologies of culture are. I will argue that Hull's church leaders expressed a deeply Trinitarian theology of culture emerging through City of Culture, and that they affirmed Hull's culture in 2017 as a way of enacting God's love for this deprived city.

I will argue that theology needs to be contextual and use the methodology of the social sciences to fully understand people's beliefs and practices, and that only by examining these beliefs and practices can we understand the work of God, the *Missio Dei*, in the present day. I will explore my use of visual research methods to enable my participants to reflect theologically, and how visual research methods can 'break the frame' of reference of both researcher and participant, leading to fresh insights behalf of both parties.

### **Biography:**

Eleanor Wort is completing her PhD at Leeds Trinity University, researching theologies of culture in Hull, UK City of Culture 2017. Her research interests include contextual theology in the North of England and visual research methodology. Prior to studying for her PhD, Eleanor was communications officer for the Diocese of York, and completed an MA in Theology, Media and Culture at the University of Chester. Eleanor is also chair of governors at St Lawrence Primary School in York, and a member of the Diocese of York Schools Committee.