

Luke Larner in conversation with Alex Fry

Fr Luke Larner is in his first incumbency and is editor of the volume 'Confounding the Mighty: Stories of Church, Social Class and Solidarity'. His conversation with Alex is in two parts. The first is directly relevant to the wellbeing of working-class clergy and the second explores wider issues of class and church.

Part 2: The Church and social class

In the second part of his conversation, Luke turns to the themes within his book and explores its theological basis, highlighting how social justice is at the heart of discussions about class. He offers a view of social class as something to be eradicated rather than purely as an identity. Class as something that is imposed on groups of people was a theme raised in the research and Luke offers a political perspective alongside the discussions about cultural differences. With reference to union membership, to a collectivist outlook, and to elements of Liberation Theology that highlight God's preference to the poor, Luke challenges and urges us to understand classism as a social justice issue.

Luke Larner's edited volume 'Confounding the Mighty: Stories of Church, Social Class and Solidarity' is published by SCM Press.

<https://scmpress.hymnsam.co.uk/books/9780334063575/confounding-the-mighty>

Questions for reflection and discussion:

- Is there an issue around framing different habits, ways of speaking and types of behaviours 'working-class sins'?
- Should local churches as well as the hierarchy of the Church engage with the politics of class?
- Should teaching about Liberation Theology feature in local churches? If so, what might this look like?
- Should clergy be part of a union? Why might some clergy turn to union support?
- What are the implications of Luke's argument that class should be eradicated, particularly in the Church? What might a classless Church or society look like and how might it be achieved?

