



2017 Annual Conference

GOD: None, One, Three or Many?



10th July (arrive from midday, lunch 1.00pm) **to 12th July** (ends with tea at 3.45pm)

at High Leigh Conference Centre, Hoddesdon, Herts: cct.org.uk

Conference Chairs: Professor Linda Woodhead

Revd Dr Jane Shaw

Conference Chaplain: Revd Dr Lorraine Cavanagh

Monday 10th July - Day 1

Visions of God

Arrival & registration from midday

Access to rooms from 2pm

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| 1.00pm | Lunch |
| 2.00pm | Welcome and Chairs' introduction |
| 2.30pm | <i>Why the Trinity Matters</i>
Adrian Thatcher |
| 3.30pm | Tea |
| 4.00pm | <i>Three Old Gods, & a New One for Atheists</i>
Hugh Rock |
| 5.00pm | Linda Woodhead chairs discussion on
different visions of God |
| 6.30pm | Dinner |
| 7.45pm | <i>Divine Harmony as a basis for ethics</i>
Jonathan Clatworthy |
| 9.00pm | Compline (<i>in the Mulberry Room</i>) |

Tuesday 11th July - Day 2

Living God

- 7.30am Morning Prayer (in the Mulberry Room)
- 8.15am Breakfast
- 9.00am *Imagination, Liturgy and God*
David Stancliffe
- 10.00am *Feminist perspectives on Liturgy, Prayer and God*
Nicola Slee
- 11.00am Coffee
- 11.30am **Jane Shaw** chairs discussion on the papers so far
- 1.00pm Lunch
- 2.15pm Modern Church AGM
(followed by brief Council meeting)
- 3.30pm Tea
- 4.00pm *To Serve a Living and True God*
Rachel Muers
- 5.00pm Book launches & reception *The Naked God* by **Vincent Strudwick & Jane Shaw**, and *Waiting on the Word* by **Lorraine Cavanagh**
- 6.30pm Dinner
- 7.45pm *An Inward Music: Christianity and the Modern Self*
Dominic Erdozain

9.00pm Compline (in the Mulberry Room)
Wednesday 12th July - Day 3

Knowing God

8.15am Breakfast
9.00am Conference Eucharist
10.05am *Unknowing God*
Linda Woodhead
11.00am Coffee
11.30am Discussion groups
1.00pm Lunch
2.15pm Chaired discussion and conclusions
3.00pm Tea and close

Speaker biographies:

Linda Woodhead is Professor in the Department of Politics, Philosophy & Religion and Director of the Institute for Social Futures at the University of Lancaster, co-chair of the Westminster Faith debates, and, not least, President of Modern Church. She is an influential spokesperson for a positive assessment of the continued role of religion in society and the need for an understanding of the nature and role of the Church in that society which values tradition but is also based on a liberal theology. Her publications, media appearances and contributions to Modern Church are too numerous to mention.

Jane Shaw is Dean for Religious Life and Professor of Religious Studies at Stanford University. Before Stanford, she was Dean of Grace Cathedral, San Francisco and Reader in Church History at Oxford University, and Dean of Divinity and Fellow of New College, Oxford. She is the author of *Miracles in Enlightenment England* (Yale 2006); *Octavia, Daughter of God: the Story of a Female Messiah and her Followers* (Jonathan Cape, 2011) and *A Practical Christianity* (SPCK 2012). Her 2017 Sarum Lectures will be published this autumn by DLT, as *Pioneers of*

Modern Spirituality: The Neglected Anglican Innovators of a 'Spiritual but not Religious' Age.

Adrian Thatcher is currently Honorary Professor in the Department of Theology and Religion at the University of Exeter, UK. Prior to that he was Professor of Applied Theology at Exeter (2004-2011), and at the University of St Mark and John, Plymouth (1995-2004). His most recent books are *Redeeming Gender* (Oxford University Press, 2016), *The Oxford Handbook of Theology, Sexuality and Gender* (editor, Oxford University Press, 2015), *Thinking about Sex* (Fortress, 2015), *God, Sex and Gender* (Wiley Blackwell, 2011), and *The Savage Text – The Uses and Abuses of the Bible* (Wiley Blackwell, 2008). He is an Anglican, a former editor of *Modern Believing* and a trustee of Modern Church.

Hugh Rock is an independent researcher into the meaning of religion. His special areas of interest are twentieth century liberal theology, Quaker theology, and sociological ideas about religion.

Vincent Strudwick is an Honorary Fellow of Kellogg College and Honorary Canon Emeritus of Christ Church Oxford. He is now retired after nearly 60 years teaching historical theology, and pastoring students in higher education institutions; for the last 25 years in the University of Oxford. His latest publication is *The*

Naked God: Wrestling for a Grace-ful Humanity, about which he is in conversation at the Conference. This book, written in association with Jane Shaw, is described by Rowan Williams as 'tremendously engaging and positive... a timely reflection on the uncertain but hopeful future of the community of God's Kingdom'. It is conceived for a wide readership, both for people on the edge or outside the life of religious institutions, and also for those inside, who wish to ask radical questions about how to understand 'God', and the role of such institutions in our rapidly changing world.

Lorraine Cavanagh is the Conference Chaplain and Acting General Secretary of Modern Church. A former University Chaplain and prolific author and blogger, her latest book, *Waiting on the Word* (DLT 2017), addresses the challenge of preaching with integrity in a changing culture.

Jonathan Clatworthy is a retired Church of England priest with a background in parish ministry and university chaplaincy. He has also taught Ethics and Philosophy in the universities of Manchester and Liverpool. An active member of Modern Church for 30 years, he was General Secretary from 2002 to 2013. A blogger and author, his new book, *Why Progressives*

Need God, (Christian Alternative 2017) explores the ethical significance of monotheism.

David Stancliffe is a practising musician, conducting regularly; he works with singers and period instruments, and has conducted most of the Bach Cantatas, the Bach Passions and the Monteverdi Vespers regularly, including in St Mark's, Venice. He chaired the Liturgical Commission in the Church of England during the period that saw the creation of *Common Worship*, and oversaw the completion and re-ordering of Portsmouth Cathedral. As Bishop of Salisbury from 1993 to 2010, he had a major concern for the formation of God's people through their worship, publishing *God's Pattern* (SPCK 2003). His latest publication is a three-volume companion to the readings of the liturgical year to stimulate the reflective imagination of those seeking to deepen their worship called *The Gospels in Art, Music and Literature* (SPCK 2013, 2014 & 2015).

Nicola Slee is Director of Research at the Queen's Foundation for Ecumenical Theological Education, Birmingham, and Professor of Feminist Practical Theology at the Vrije University, Amsterdam. She has long-standing interests in the intersections between feminism, theology, spirituality and poetry, and has published widely in these areas, both at a scholarly and

more popular level. She is currently working on a book on Sabbath as well as several collaborative writing ventures. She is an honorary Vice-President of WATCH (Women And The Church).

Rachel Muers is Senior Lecturer in Christian Studies at the University of Leeds. She is the author of several books on modern Christian theology and ethics, most recently *Testimony: Quakerism and Theological Ethics*. Her current research project is on theology, social class and English identity. She is vice-president of the Society for the Study of Theology and a member of the World Council of Churches Faith & Order Commission.

Dominic Erdozain is a visiting lecturer in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies at King's College London. He served as Lecturer in the History of Christianity from 2006 to 2013, before moving to Atlanta in the USA. His second book, *The Soul of Doubt: the religious roots of unbelief from Luther to Marx* was published by Oxford University Press in 2015.

Recommended reading:

- L Woodhead and R Catto (eds), *Religion and Change in Modern Britain* (Routledge 2015) chapter 5
- L Woodhead 'The Rise of No' britac.ac.uk/sites/default/files/11%Woodhead%201825.pdf
- J Shaw, *A Practical Christianity* (SPCK 2012)
- L Cavanagh, *Waiting on the Word* (DLT 2017)
- A Russell, *Richard Hooker: Beyond Certainty* (Taylor & Francis 2017)
- M Procter-Smith, *Praying with our eyes open* (Abingdon 1995)
- J S Knight, *Feminist Mysticism and images of God* (Chalice 2011)
- B Lanzetta, *Radical Wisdom* (Fortress 2005)
- D Erdozain, *The Soul of Doubt* (OUP1916)
- J Clatworthy, *Why Progressives Need God* (Christian Alternative 2017)
- R Muers, *Testimony, Quakerism and Theological Ethics* (SCM 2015)
- M Higton and R Muers, *The Text in Play: Experiments in Reading Scripture* (Wipf & Stock 2012)
- V Strudwick and J Shaw, *The Naked God* (DLT 2017)
- L Tondstad, *God and Difference* (Routledge 2016)
- H Rock, *God Needs Salvation* (Christian Alternative 2015).