

# Communications Update – 15 February 2008

20th Feb 2008

**February General Synod** The General Synod met at Church House, Westminster, from Monday February 11 to Thursday February 14.

## Archbishop of Canterbury's Presidential Address

The Archbishop gave the Presidential Address at the Synod, in which he reflected on the reception of his lecture on religious legal codes such as Sharia, on the forthcoming Lambeth Conference and on developments in Zimbabwe. The full address can be read [here](#).

## Key debates

Major debates on detention without charge, mental health issues and casinos were also on the agenda. There was a large programme of legislative business, the most substantial item being the Revision Stage of the Clergy Terms of Service legislation. Synod had further opportunity to debate the Anglican Communion Covenant and Senior Church (Crown) Appointments, following earlier debates in July 2007, and there was also a focus on Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue. Details [here](#).

Information, documents, updates on motions and audio files of debates in the recent General Synod Sessions are available on the Church of England website [here](#).

## Archbishop of Canterbury: UK law needs to find accommodation with religious law codes

In a lecture at the Royal Courts of Justice, Dr Rowan Williams said that UK law needs to continue to find accommodation with religious legal codes such as the Islamic system of Sharia if community cohesion and development are to be achieved. Details [here](#).

To read What did the Archbishop actually say? [click here](#).

## Who is your virtual neighbour? Social networkers

# **given guidance to stop, think and act for change this Lent**

This Lent, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York have called for 'good neighbours' - online and offline - to try out daily suggestions to help create a safer and more pleasant environment in the real world. [Details here.](#)

## **Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book**

The Archbishop has written the Foreword for this year's Lent Book, *Life Conquers Death* by the Very Revd John Arnold, former Dean of Durham. [Details here.](#)

## **Archbishop of York in Kenya**

Dr Sentamu has visited Kenya to offer prayers and solidarity for the people caught up in the current troubles: [details here.](#) His address to the February General Synod, reporting on his visit, may be found [here.](#)

## **Launch of Lambeth Conference 2008**

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, launched the official programme for the Lambeth Conference 2008: *Equipping Bishops for Mission*, at Lambeth Palace. [Details here.](#)

## **Church Commissioners' quarterly update to December 2007**

The First Church Estates Commissioner's newsletter reporting the performance of the Commissioners' fund for the quarter to December 2007 is now available. [Details here.](#)

Latest figures show changing trends in church-going

Figures just released for 2006 show larger congregations at Christmas and Easter, but smaller Sunday congregations. [Details here.](#)

## **Archbishop of Canterbury criticises 'indefensible' treatment of young people in prison**

Dr Williams has called upon the government to look critically at the use of strip-searching and prison segregation units for children in the criminal justice system. [Details here.](#)

## **Archbishop of York presents gifts from Yorkshire to the Pope as part of the Christian Unity Prayer celebrations**

Dr Sentamu spent five days in Rome, celebrating the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. In addition to praying, preaching and presiding with Christian communities from all denominations in Rome, Dr Sentamu met Pope Benedict XVI, Cardinal Walter Kasper, the Vatican's head of inter-church relations, Archbishop Pius Ncube, the former Archbishop of Bulawayo in Zimbabwe, and British Ambassadors to the Vatican and Italy. [Details here.](#)

## **Archbishop of Canterbury: Society should not leave the sacred unprotected**

In the James Callaghan Memorial lecture, Religious Hatred and Religious Offence, Dr Williams outlined the problems with the present blasphemy laws, and also looked at the problems that society could face without any protection from religious offence. [Details here.](#)

## **Passion TV series set for huge national impact**

The Chair of the Churches' Media Council, the Revd Dr Joel Edwards, has written to a hundred national church leaders urging them to prepare for the broadcast of BBC1's series The Passion. He expects the series to make a huge national impact over the Easter season. [Details here.](#)

## **Building Faith in our Future**

The eighth e-bulletin since the publication of Building Faith in our Future has been issued. It sets out developments to date and seeks help as the campaign moves forward. The latest e-bulletin can be seen [here.](#)

## **Archbishop of Canterbury visits Liverpool**

Dr Williams visited Liverpool in January, giving a lecture at the Anglican Cathedral, attending the Holocaust

Memorial Day at the Philharmonic Hall and preaching at Choral Evening Prayer at the Roman Catholic Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King. He was also the guest of the Lord Mayor, Councillor Paul Clark, at a Town Hall Reception, visited the ecumenical community L'Arche, and met with Diocesan staff and volunteers. Details here.

## **Hospital chaplains' chief honoured by appointment as Chaplain to The Queen**

The Revd Edward Lewis, chief executive of the Hospital Chaplaincies Council, has been appointed as a Chaplain to Her Majesty The Queen, Buckingham Palace has announced. Details here.

## **'Two Ticks' symbol says NCIs are positive about abilities of applicants with disabilities**

The Church of England's National Church Institutions (NCIs) have been awarded the Two Ticks disability symbol by Jobcentre Plus in recognition of their commitment to good practice in employing people with disabilities. Details here.

## **Church of England appoints Representative to the EU Institutions**

The Revd Dr Gary Wilton has been appointed to the newly created post of Church of England Representative to the EU Institutions. Details here.

## **Archbishops launch new websites**

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York have launched new websites, designed to offer enhanced news and information services on their work and mission, and making use of new audio and video technology. The sites can be viewed at [www.archbishopofcanterbury.org.uk](http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org.uk) and [www.archbishopofyork.org](http://www.archbishopofyork.org).