



## “What’s the Point of an Anglican University?” *The Inaugural Dr Rowan Williams Annual CUAC Lecture*



*Women gather at Women’s Christian College in Chennai, India to watch Archbishop Rowan Williams.*



***By Riddling Waller, Principal, Women’s Christian College, Chennai, India***

We are delighted to inform you that the inaugural Dr Rowan Williams lecture delivered on 28<sup>th</sup> September, by Dr Rowan Williams himself, at the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of Canterbury Christ Church University, entitled *What’s the Point of Anglican Higher Education?* was viewed by a cross-section of the college community on 8<sup>th</sup> October followed by an interactive session where both faculty and students expressed their views on the relevance of the questions and observations put forward by Dr. Rowan Williams.

Women’s Christian College which stands 97 years tall in the field of women’s empowerment in the heart of the city of Chennai maintains at its core its commitment to inspire and nurture spiritual, moral, and civic values in our students as evinced in our mission statement: ***The College aims to provide a complete, meaningful and relevant education to women so that they are intellectually well-trained, morally upright, socially aware, and spiritually inspired.***

With a Chapel located in the geographic center of the campus, the college acknowledges its allegiance to Christ. This 89-year-old cornerstone evokes God’s presence in all activities of the institution.

The lecture provided an appropriate platform for introspection and as a college community we took the opportunity to voice concerns and review our framework and operation. While we take pride in cultivating our zeal in providing practical knowledge, we continue to ensure that the entire climate of the college is conducive to both informing and infusing knowledge with love so that we reflect the image of God. However, the Doctrines of Intelligence and Love should form the underpinnings of all curricula offered by the college in a more comprehensive manner. In addition to the provision of an effective knowledge base, critical thinking skills, discernment, and public discourse are areas which truly need to be strengthened. *(cont. page 3)*

# HORIZONS



The Rev. Canon James G. Callaway, DD  
General Secretary

*If intelligence is part of the divine image, intelligence is always related to love....And if love is about how connections are built and maintained between what is different or strange, intelligence is inseparable from that activity. It is about making connections: it is about drawing fragments into some sort of wholeness. +Rowan Williams*

The greatest joy of my work as General Secretary is visiting CUAC campuses globally. When I visit an Anglican-related college or university, as I did recently in the UK and soon will in Asia, I meet with Vice chancellors, faculty and students. As the visit unfolds I keep asking myself the question, “What is distinctive here, what sets it apart?” Initially I am bombarded with each institution’s uniqueness: its culture, traditions, context, and offerings. But with the luxury of a little more time similarities with other CUAC schools start to emerge as well. Such visits enable us to make connections within CUAC and beyond.

I see CUAC’s mission as helping every Anglican college and university to flourish and be productive. But are Anglican roots sometimes an awkward particularity best to be overcome or at least managed discretely or can they form a foundation that strengthens the entire enterprise? Can Anglican rootedness become a competitive advantage in today’s volatile secular culture?

To assess the relevance of Anglican identity requires a framework and language to recognize what it is. It is precisely just this kind of critical thinking that makes the ***Dr Rowan Williams Annual CUAC Lecture*** so pivotal to our mission. In the inaugural lecture, Rowan Williams laid out just such definitions. Starting with “the point of a university” he went to “the point of a Christian university” and finally to “the point of an Anglican university.” This issue of ***Compass Points*** reports on some initial responses to the archbishop’s presentation from members in India, the UK, and the US. It is a process that is only beginning, for the answers will be as diverse as our membership. I opened with a brief quotation to whet your appetite for the delicious thought that awaits you.

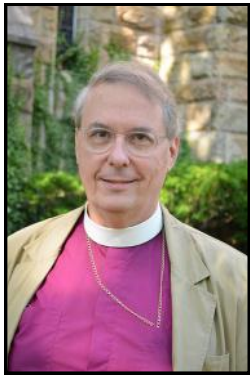
So my challenge to our member institutions is to see for yourselves and make your own unique responses. The video of the lecture is available on our website at [www.cuac.org](http://www.cuac.org), thanks to Canterbury Christ Church University. As Woman’s Christian College in Chennai did, arrange screenings on your campus, followed by your own panel of respondents, perhaps from administration, faculty, and students, to address the implications in your context, then open the session to questions and discussion. Finally, send a summary to us at CUAC so we can accumulate the responses and can all learn from them, as well as help plan next year’s lecture.

What does church rootedness mean in your context and what it might mean? Because it is a partnership, don’t neglect what support you need from the church as well. When the goal is clear the next steps forward won’t be that hard to find.

(cont. from page 1) While Women's Christian College emphasizes service to the underprivileged both formally and informally, the focus needs to be on seeking to "heal what was broken, what is fragmented."

With a wide repertoire of indigenous knowledge that we have documented and accumulated over the years, the college has opened up newer avenues where partnerships with overseas universities enhance a wider approach to education as a whole and to Christian Education in particular.

As an institution that employs a variety of strategies to ameliorate the condition of women we have been immensely motivated and inspired by the lecture. The task, though uphill in a world that lures people with materialism, has enabled women students who pass through the portals of the institution to grapple with issues of societal concern with equanimity and emerge as formidable forces that contribute to India's knowledge bank thereby building intelligent citizens who are able to positively impact the neighborhood and the community.



“TRUTH AND LOVE: HIGHER EDUCATION WITH A MISSION”

THE RT REV'D HENRY PARSLEY

In the first Annual CUAC Lecture, Archbishop Williams laid a brilliant foundation for this new lecture series. He spoke cogently of the purpose of universities, the unique gifts of Christian colleges and universities, and the character of Anglican institutions of higher learning. The address was imaginative, lively, and thought-provoking, as we have come to expect of Dr. Williams. I was particularly struck by several points the Archbishop made in his three-part presentation.

The purpose of a university is forming intelligent citizens. It is not for individual ends alone, but for enabling persons to participate thoughtfully in public life and contribute to the common good. This means the ability to think critically, to help avoid the toxic conflicts that damage human society, and to appreciate the many different ways of understanding that are part of life. Intelligence is not “totally free-flowing,” he suggested. We all have to “bang our heads on the world” and find that it is not just what I want it to be.

Universities enable such breadth and maturity.

Christian institutions of higher learning are unique because we are given a doctrine of human intelligence. It is a special human capacity, one which gives us a freedom and longer reach in understanding beyond the immediate contexts of experience. It is of utmost significance that in Christian thought, intelligence cannot be separated from love. The deepest purpose of intelligence is the work of love, to labor for human flourishing, liberation, and the healing of fragmentation. Faithful universities must “make space for diversity and cross-boundary dialogue,” always keeping questions open and maintaining a climate of freedom, thus enriching a self-critical and healthy society.

Anglican universities in particular embody our tradition's suspicion of too much centralized authority and our embrace of conversation and questioning. Within our shared faith and open pursuit of truth we are ever free to “question each others' questions.” We are patient with diversity, even as we recognize one another as partners.

What makes us recognizable as Anglican institutions is the public acknowledgement that “Christian faith is a living resource” for the pursuit of truth and wisdom. This is represented in faculty and symbols and worship.

Also, we are recognizable in our commitment to sustaining dialogue with our churches and our commitment to engaging with both the front lines of local culture and wider, global connections. This is a demonstration of our distinctive commitment to the Christian vision and our view of intelligence being given us for the good of society and human flourishing.

There is much in the Archbishop's lecture to make us think imaginatively about our life as Anglican colleges and universities. It raises great questions. My greatest hope is that it will stimulate conversation amongst faculty and students across our institutions in the days and years to come.



# THE INAUGURAL DR ROWAN WILLIAMS ANNUAL CUAC LECTURE “A TRANSFORMING PRESENCE...AROUND THE WORLD”



**Above:** Click on the Vimeo link to watch the lecture!

**Left:** Dr. Rowan Williams, CUAC Gen. Secretary, Jamie Callaway with Vice-Chancellor Robin Baker. Audience at the lecture.

On September 28, 2012, Dr Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury, launched a new annual international lecture series by asking, “What is the point of an Anglican university?”

Not something you’ve been pondering? Perhaps not; but when and where he asked it, the question was particularly salient: speaking to the academic and theological community of Canterbury Christ Church University, where he serves as Chancellor, during the University’s Golden Jubilee celebrations—and opening a lecture series sponsored by the Colleges and Universities of the Anglican Communion (CUAC). In the hour that followed, the Archbishop described a specific and unique ideal of higher education, and a methodology that embodies it, that is shaped not only by a broad “Christian” perspective, but more precisely by the specific historical and cultural characteristics of worldwide Anglicanism. By the time he finished speaking, not only was it clear what Anglican universities are, but also why they matter and how they contribute to the intellectual development of the societies in which they stand.

Dr Williams came to the See of Canterbury from the rich academic community in Wales; and as his decade-long tenure as Archbishop draws to a close, he will return again to the academe, as Master of Magdalen College. That the intellectual enterprise is dear to his heart should surprise no one, nor should the fact that he has served as CUAC’s Patron. It was in recognition of Dr Williams’ belief that higher education within the context of an Anglican identity provides benefits that are both universal and particular to the local context that CUAC instituted the Dr Rowan Williams Annual CUAC Lecture and invited the Archbishop to deliver the first in the series. In subsequent years, the lecture will be hosted by regional chapters. The Rev’d Canon James Callaway, CUAC’s General Secretary, noted, “By rotating among the regions of the CUAC chapters, this will be a global voice seeking the commonalities of Anglican higher education that take shape in such diverse cultures. Because of the Gospel, we all have common roots.”

As Dr Williams noted, “we also have a great deal to celebrate in the legacy of a Christian and Anglican theological understanding of higher education which is already, I believe, and can be even more so, a transforming presence in churches and societies around the world. I hope and pray that that future will be fully and richly realized by all the institutions of the Colleges and Universities of the Anglican Communion network.”



## THE REV'D. DR. JEREMY LAW

The very notion of an Anglican University might seem like a contradiction in terms, requiring an uncomfortable coupling of faith and reason. For how can faith, the apparent human ability to swallow assumptions whole, be successfully combined with reason, the faculty by which we sift and critically examine our assumptions? It is thus one of the major achievements of Archbishop Rowan Williams' lecture not merely to overcome this seeming incongruity between (Anglican) faith and (intellectual) reason, but to demonstrate their required, creative—and timely—compatibility.

The point of any university (including an Anglican one), he suggests, reaches beyond the pursuit of learning and the quest for new understanding (research) to embrace the cultivation of 'intelligent citizenship.' Universities exist to promote honest and intellectually rigorous public debate that aims to serve the common good. Accordingly, their conception of what intelligence is, what Williams calls their 'doctrine of the intellect,' must avoid two seductive errors: intelligence can neither be reduced to pragmatic problem-solving; nor can it be expanded to a creative, unconstrained affirmation in which 'anything goes.' Rather the exercise of the intellect both opens up ever new horizons, yet is constrained by the reality of the world against which, in various ways, it has to test itself. A university, then, should be shaped by multiple and diverse forms of questions—provided by its different intellectual disciplines—yet form a community in which it is possible for these questions to interact with each other: to relativize, test, provoke, and encourage each other. Though Williams does not make this explicit, we are not far here from the implications that might flow from thinking seriously about God as Trinity. He does, however, go on to introduce an explicit, and vital, theological addition to his argument. In so doing, he unfolds what a 'doctrine of the intellect' might look like in an Anglican (Christian) university.

Christian tradition has long understood human intellectual capacities to flow from our creation in the 'image of God.' And if our reason really does reflect something of the nature of God, then our thinking cannot be separated from the exercise of love. Love and reason come together when we conceive of the intellect as reaching out to make connections, as uniting what is fragmentary into a comprehensive whole. The functioning of the intellect is thus inherently related to what serves the flourishing of life; this is the full meaning of 'intelligent citizenship.'

Writing from a contemporary British context, what are we to make of all this? In this time when economics seems to be the measure of all things, what often determines the shape and character of a university is not a 'doctrine of the intellect' but rather what sells. The range of disciplines housed in a University is fashioned according to what is popular. And within these disciplines, it is the sexy, easily digestible morsels that are selected in order to keep the customers (students) happy and content. I exaggerate, of course, for rhetorical effect, but not, I am sad to say, to the point of hopeless caricature. Anglican universities are not immune from these economic realities, and so Williams offers us a timely and challenging reminder to interrogate ourselves about which grand narrative it is that has the upper hand in our institutions: neo-liberal capitalism or the claims of Christ.

Williams reminds us, if we needed reminding, of the extraordinary richness of the Christian tradition when it comes to the matter of education. The notion that the intellect cannot be separated from the demands of love is of urgent relevance in a world marred by the violent pursuit of self-interest. The Christian, and more specifically the Anglican tradition (with its suspicion of all forms of centralisation) has much to contribute to any debate about the nature and purpose of Higher Education. But the question remains, how in our diverse institutions can this voice command attention without resorting to imposition? In other words, in an Anglican institution, who precisely is the 'we' that speaks for this tradition? Unless a clear consensus in response to this question can be formed, the Christian tradition, however profound and timely its contribution, may remain a peripheral voice even in institutions who formally celebrate their Anglican inheritance.

## A YEAR OF CELEBRATIONS FOR A LANDMARK ANNIVERSARY



*Jubilee Service of Thanksgiving*

This year Canterbury Christ Church University is celebrating a landmark anniversary as it turns 50.

Established in 1962 as a Primary Teacher Training College on one location, with nine members of staff and 70 students, Christ Church has grown in size and reputation with nearly 20,000 students studying a wide range of subjects in Education, Health and Social Care, Social and Applied Sciences, and Arts and Humanities across a network of campuses in Kent and Medway.

To celebrate 50 years of higher education and innovation, the University has produced an exciting programme of events to mark this momentous year, with music being central to the Jubilee celebrations.

The highlight will be the opening of newly refurbished St Gregory's Centre for Music, in October. This newly renovated iconic and historic venue for music performance will offer world class facilities to be enjoyed by national and international audiences, as well as the local community. It will also enable the University to extend its future public music programme, including a new strand of professional concerts.

In his address to officially launch the Jubilee year, Vice-Chancellor Professor Robin Baker, CMG explained how the University was continuing a tradition for music excellence and learning dating back more than a millennium. He said: "This Canterbury site has been known as a place of learning and musical excellence since the 7<sup>th</sup> century. Under Archbishop Theodore a school was established in Canterbury, the first educational institution in England attracting students from far away and became famous for its quality of music. It is fitting that in our Jubilee year our excellent music provision will be central to the celebrations."

Professor Robin Baker was joined by the Right Reverend Trevor Willmott, Bishop of Dover, and other prominent figures from the local community to officially launch the Golden Jubilee year on Wednesday, 18 January.

Have anything to share? A story idea for the next issue of *Compass Points*?

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Maggy Keet, Editor *Compass Points*



## CUAC WELCOMES TWO NEW MEMBER SCHOOLS

CUAC is pleased to welcome two new institutional members to its network of Anglican-affiliated centers of higher education: the **Faculdade Anglicana de Erechim**, Brazil; and **Codrington College**, Barbados. These two schools will now be able to benefit from, and contribute to, the lively interchange of ideas, programs, and people among some 130 of their sister institutions around the globe.

The **Faculdade Anglicana de Erechim** (“Anglican College of Erechim,” or “FAE”) is operated by the South Western Diocese of the Anglican Episcopal Church of Brazil. FAE seeks to produce trained professionals in business, industry, and education who have an awareness of social responsibility and a commitment to the beneficial development of their communities.

Established in its present form in 2003, FAE traces its heritage nearly to the beginning of the twentieth century with the arrival, in 1916, of the first Anglican missionaries to the town of Erechim; a few years later, with a resident priest in place, a parish church was built, followed by a school in 1928 to educate the children of the parish—the humble predecessor of today’s FAE.

Today FAE provides educational opportunities for all ages, operating three elementary schools; two secondary schools; professional training in electricity, work safety, and accounting; and post-secondary curricula in Business Administration, Industrial Design, Teachers’ Formation, Computer Science, Accounting, and Industrial Electronics.

**Codrington College**, one of the first theological colleges in the Anglican Communion, was founded at the bequest of Christopher Codrington III, the son of a former Governor General of the Leeward Islands. Upon his death in 1710, Codrington left his two plantation estates on the island of Barbados to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Lands, for the establishment of an institution where scholars would study medicine, surgery, and divinity. Legal disputes, economic factors, and even drought all contributed to delays in the constructions of the College’s buildings, which began in 1715, and not completed until 1745, when the College officially opened. That same year The Lodge School (located in the Chaplain’s Lodge) began offering elementary education as well.

While the College never produced any doctors, its lectures in philosophy and divinity helped prepare the sons of local gentry and gifted poor boys for study at Oxford and Cambridge in England. In 1875 it became affiliated with the University of Durham and is today affiliated with the University of the West Indies, which allows Codrington to focus primarily on theological education—not just for potential ordinands, but also the laity, through a lively and vigorous training program.

With new ventures in post-graduate studies and a growing repository of historical archives and records, Codrington College is prepared to continue fulfilling its mission to be a center of excellence in the delivery of theological education into the future.



*FAE students being introduced to a Braille text for the blind*



*Codrington College, Barbados*