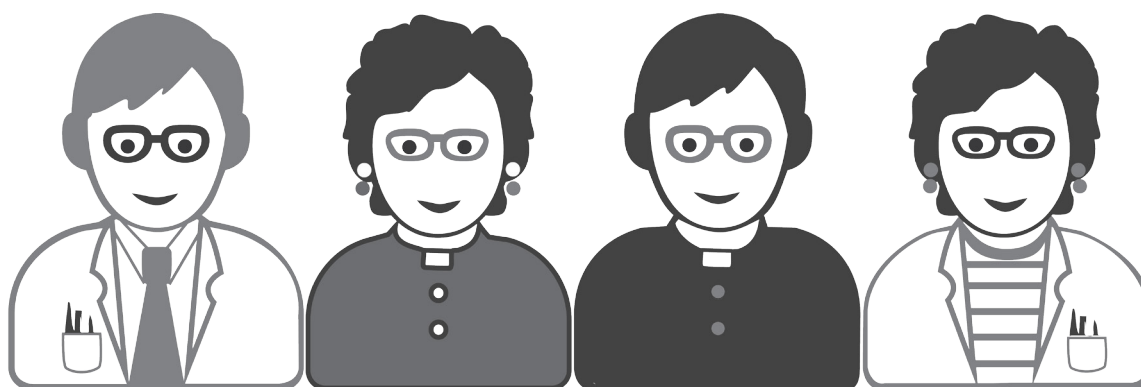


Scientists: take your Vicar to the lab Vicars: return the favour



Take your Vicar to the Lab! Scientists in Congregations

A new project, in St Albans Diocese: 'Take your Vicar to the Lab,' aims to promote healthier co-existence between religion and science and to deepen peoples' appreciation of both.

Although not all scientific endeavour is in a lab and the work of clergy takes place outside a church too, the project will seek invitations for clergy to go to science labs and for scientists to visit churches, promoting a two-way discussion about the mutual impact of science and faith.

These reciprocal events will promote better understanding of the research process among clergy and signal to scientists the relevance and value of the Christian faith in addressing moral, ethical and spiritual dimensions of scientific research.

The programme will air some perennial questions: Does science demolish faith or deepen it? How can a serious scientist be a committed Christian? How should we understand the Big Bang, evolution, miracles, God and ourselves? The encounters in the lab and in church will allow these questions to be answered, from theological, scientific, historical and philosophical perspectives.

Revd Canon Dr Tim Bull, who is one of the two project directors said:

"The aim is that these encounters should be transformative rather than just informative. We want clergy to learn about how the greater familiarity with science these days among the general population can help them in presenting the claims of the Christian faith.

"Clergy and in fact all Christians can fail to engage with science, even though there many Christians who are also scientists. This is an omission as so much of our lives is shaped by science - from the smartphone to the latest medical advances.

"Scientists, too, can fail to engage with faith. This is also an omission as our lives are given purpose, meaning and significance by Christian faith."

In the last few years, public awareness of scientific endeavours and achievements have increased considerably, largely as a result of communication in jargon-free terms in widely accessible formats.

The hope is that 'Vicars in Labs' will allow clergy to communicate the timeless truths of the Christian faith in a way that makes them more accessible to a scientifically literate generation as well as helping scientists to appreciate the contribution that a faith-based worldview can make to their work.

Vicars in Labs is being made possible through a grant from the 'Scientists in Congregations,' programme, funded by the Templeton World Charity Foundation.

If you have a scientist in your congregation who might be willing to invite your Vicar to work or if you know a scientist in your community who might be willing to take part, please contact:

vicarsinlabs@stalbans.anglican.org