

TOP THEOLOGIAN JOINS IMPRESSIVE
CONFERENCE

2018

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PROFESSOR DOUGLAS DAVIES CONFIRMED AS SPEAKER

Professor Douglas Davies, Professor of Theology and Religion at Durham University and a regular on BBC Radio 4, will join General Lord Richard Dannatt as part of an increasingly impressive platform of speakers for NAFD Conference 2018.

Professor Davies is both an anthropologist and theologian. After an initial degree in Anthropology at Durham, he engaged in his first research on Mormonism at the Oxford Institute of Social Anthropology, before reading a theology degree at Durham. He lectured at Nottingham University on Religious Studies before joining Durham University in 1997.

Other areas of research have included further work on Mormonism, as well as in Sikhism and Anglicanism, and in death rites. His first doctorate covered the issue of meaning and salvation. In Durham, as Professor in the Study of Religion, he teaches undergraduate modules on the Introduction to the Study of Religion, and Death, Ritual and Belief, and a module for postgraduates on Ritual, Symbolism and Belief in the Anthropology of Religion. Professor Davies also holds the degree of D.Litt. from Oxford as well as an honorary Doctorate in Theology from the University of Uppsala in Sweden. In 2009 he was made an Academician of the Academy of Social



Professor
Douglas
Davies



General
Lord Richard
Dannatt

Sciences and, in 2017, he was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in recognition of his outstanding contribution to research in the humanities and social sciences.

In terms of interests in relation to the funeral profession, Professor Davies has edited the *Encyclopaedia of Cremation*, and also written two books - *A Brief History of Death and Death, Ritual and Belief*. He has undertaken extensive empirical research into the reuse of old graves - a key issue for funeral directors in some parts of the UK. In the media, he is a regular contributor to discussions on death ritual and belief, considering the topics from religious, theological, health & welfare, public policy, historical and social science perspectives.

WHAT DOES CONFERENCE 2018 HOLD IN STORE?

NAFD Conference 2018 will be held in the Auger Suite at the Radisson Blu hotel in the heart of Durham city. The hotel offers modern bedrooms, a state-of-the-art health club and respected restaurant and bar, and will provide a welcoming backdrop to what is sure to be an entertaining and thought provoking few days.

The Conference suite is set to be the venue for vibrant debate and lively discussion on the latest issues facing the profession. However, as always, there are plenty of social events and opportunities for networking to enable colleagues from across the funeral profession to enjoy time together.

Here's a taste of what to expect in Durham.

BEAMISH MUSEUM

For early birds arriving on Thursday 17 May, there's a fabulous evening visit to the world famous Beamish Museum, which brings to life the story of the north east of England during the 1820s, 1900s and 1940s.

Take a trip into the past and explore the 1900s town to see how families lived and worked in the years leading up to the First World War. In the Pit Village you can see what's cooking in the pit cottages, practise your handwriting in the school and visit the chapel. On the 1940s farm, visitors can discover how life was on the Home Front during the Second World War, and no recreation of the history of North East England would be complete without the recreation of a 1900s colliery and the people who worked and lived around it.

The visit will include a drinks reception and food and plenty of chances to catch up with old friends - the perfect way to kick off Conference.



Beamish Museum



Durham Cathedral

EVENSONG AT DURHAM CATHEDRAL

There's a particular treat lined up for Conference attendees on the evening of Friday 18 May, with a private tour of Durham Cathedral and an invitation to attend Choral Evensong and hear the soaring voices of the world-renowned Durham Cathedral Choir.

Founded in the eleventh Century, originally it was the 'monks in quire' who sang the monastic services at the cathedral. Since at least 1416 they were joined for some of the services by singing boys (Choristers), educated at what is now the Chorister School in the building's precincts. At the dissolution of the monasteries during the reign of Henry VIII, Durham became one of the newly-founded cathedrals of the Church of England. The place of the 'monks in quire' was taken by laymen (Lay Clerks; lay, as opposed to ordained; clerks, who could, therefore, read and write).

In the 1960s, the six Lay Clerks were joined by six Choral Scholars – student members of Durham University – and, in 2009, the boy Choristers were joined by a team of girl Choristers, who sing in alternation with the existing team of boy Choristers.

In recent years, the Cathedral Choir has toured France, Scotland, Ireland and Holland, as well as within England, giving concerts and singing services. Previous tours have included Germany, Brazil and the United States. Broadcasts include regular appearances on Radio Three for Choral Evensong, with the Royal School Church Music's annual Celebration Day coming from Durham in 2010 broadcast on BBC1 as *Songs of Praise*. In September 2009, the choir sang at the Service of Thanksgiving for Sir Bobby Robson, which took place at Durham Cathedral and was broadcast worldwide. In the same month, the

senior boy Choristers sang with Sting as he recorded his DVD *A Winter's Night* at Durham Cathedral.

For those interested in the history of the cathedral, a visit to Open Treasure, a new world-class exhibition experience, is worth considering too. Bookable in advance, it offers a journey of discovery through the claustral buildings of the fourteenth-century Monks' Dormitory, with its spectacular oak-beamed ceiling, as well as a new state-of-the-art Collections Gallery and the magnificent Great Kitchen – one of the only two surviving monastic kitchens in the UK.

PROFILE YOUR BUSINESS AT NAFD CONFERENCE

Align your business with NAFD members at the Association's largest and most high profile event of the year. With such a compelling agenda, Conference 2018 is set to be a must-attend event, giving sponsors extensive access to many of the most influential figures in the funeral profession.

Sponsorship packages are available from just a few hundred pounds to our Platinum Package for title sponsorship. All packages offer general profile opportunities to sponsor firms. Full details will be sent to members in February and you can also download them off the NAFD website Conference page.

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!

Why not book your place at Conference early and secure your accommodation, at preferential rates, at the Radisson Blu hotel.

Everything you need to know, and links for booking both accommodation and places at the events taking place at Conference, can be found at our brand new website for Conference 2018: www.nafdconference.co.uk.

If you have any questions in respect of Conference, please contact NAFD Business Manager Kirsti Clifford on **0121 711 1343 ext 1009** or email her at kirsti@nafd.org.uk.