

## A message from our founders

**We founded The Faraday Institute in 2006, located in St Edmund's College Cambridge, to provide a much-needed forum in which matters of science and faith could be intelligently explored between scientists and people of all faiths or none.**

Aware that we were not the only group to be addressing this need, we decided at the outset that ours should be distinctive in being led by internationally distinguished scientists at the top of their field and driven by academically-rigorous research. This would then be disseminated beyond the confines of peer-reviewed papers through online resources, popular books, lectures, training courses, radio, movies, theatre and social media.

Thirteen years later, what have we achieved? Through the generosity of many donors, grant-awarding bodies and many who have freely given of their time and gifts, **we have grown to become a leading professional institute of international standing.** We have made substantial contributions to research and education in the field and you will find an overview of this work in the pages which follow.

With these foundational years now behind us, we are looking to the future and a new chapter in our development. With the help of a generous donor, we have secured a twenty-year lease within a brand new building on the Westminster College campus in Cambridge, giving us the ability to operate as an independent institute, yet still retaining strong academic ties within the University of Cambridge.

While we are delighted that our accommodation is now on a firm footing, we are still pursuing stable, long-term funding for our Core Team of management, administrative, outreach and research leadership staff – the 'engine' that will drive growth in research grant income and outreach activities. To that end, we are actively seeking a significant endowment together with other funding with which to consolidate our base and expand our influence.

**We very much hope you will find our work beneficial and inspiring. We look forward to an exciting future in our new form and invite you to consider partnering with us in our important endeavours.**



Professor Bob White FRS



Dr Denis Alexander



The Faraday Institute derives its name from Michael Faraday, one of the UK's best-known scientists, who saw his faith as integral to his scientific research. Our logo pays homage to Faraday's discoveries.

Michael Faraday by Thomas Phillips, oil on canvas, 1841–1842. 35<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in. x 28 in. (908 mm x 711 mm) Purchased, 1868. Primary Collection NPG 269 © National Portrait Gallery

## Looking back at our history

The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion was founded by Dr Denis Alexander and Prof Bob White FRS in January 2006. Both are Fellows of St Edmund's College, Cambridge, one of the 31 colleges which, taken together with the Schools, Faculties and Departments, make up the confederation which is the University of Cambridge. At the time, Denis was drawing to the end of a 40-year career in biomedical research, latterly as Chair of the Molecular Immunology Programme at The Babraham Institute, Cambridge. Bob was (and remains) Professor of Geophysics in the University of Cambridge where he heads up a research group studying earthquakes and volcanic eruptions of the dynamic Earth.

All Cambridge Colleges are interdisciplinary and therefore represent an excellent environment in which to incubate an Institute tackling a broad field like science and religion. Given the founders' role as part of St Edmund's College's Governing Body, this College therefore became the Institute's natural home from its inception. The Institute was founded by working scientists with the aim of reaching out to the scientific community, at the same time bringing the humanities to the table to enrich the discourse. This is unusual in the field of science and religion – more often it is theologians, philosophers, sociologists and others who invite scientists to the dialogue. With The Faraday Institute it is the reverse.

From the beginning the Institute has also been unusual in having a Christian ethos. The leadership comprises a team of committed Christians and the research focus is on science and the Christian faith.

One of the main reasons for establishing the Institute is to create a public space in which academics and the general public can engage in the science and faith dialogue in an academically well-informed context in which friendship and positive relationships are encouraged. In this way 'alternative narratives' are provided for the interactions between science and faith, which contrast sharply with the 'conflict narratives' propagated by the so-called 'new atheists'. The Institute aims to change the culture of science-faith discussions by encouraging respectful dialogue in place of polarised attitudes.



*The Faraday Institute is at the forefront of challenging lazy thinking about both science and faith. With impressive intellectual energy and rigour, it is making a real contribution to a far richer and more positive conversation around the big questions of our day, especially in its work with school and university students.*

**The Rt Revd and Rt Hon Dr Rowan Williams, Master of Magdalene College Cambridge and former Archbishop of Canterbury**

## Our publications

Research is at the heart of what we do, and changing the culture of the relationship between science and faith starts with the academic community and with academic readers. Since 2006 we have published over 120 book and journal publications. Some of the multi-authored volumes have been generated by writers' workshops and conferences. Our first writers' workshops led to *Creation in Crisis: Christian Perspectives on Sustainability* (Ed. Robert S. White, SPCK, 2009) and *Biology and Ideology – From Descartes to Dawkins* (Eds. Denis R. Alexander and Ronald L. Numbers, Chicago University Press, 2010).

An anniversary conference to celebrate the life and work of Georges Lemaître, the Belgian priest who discovered what we now call the 'Big Bang', led to *Georges Lemaître: Life, Science and Legacy* (Eds. Rodney D. Holder and Simon Mitton, Springer, 2013), while another writers' workshop led to *Living Lightly, Living Faithfully: Religious Faiths and the Future of Sustainability* (Eds. Colin Bell, Jonathan Chaplin & Robert White, The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion, Cambridge, 2013).

Some of our academic books are single-authored, such as Rodney Holder's *The Heavens Declare: Natural Theology and the Legacy of Karl Barth* (Templeton Press, 2015) and the Gifford Lectures of Denis Alexander under the title *Genes, Determinism and God* (Cambridge University Press, 2017).

Other academic outputs are aimed at a more general market, making the latest research accessible to those without a science background, of any faith or none. Some of our bestsellers written by staff members include: *Creation or Evolution – Do We Have to Choose?*, and *Is There Purpose in Biology* by Denis Alexander; *Big Bang Big God – a Universe Designed for Life* by Rodney Holder; *Who is to Blame? Disasters, Nature and Acts of God* by Bob White; *God in the Lab – How Science Enhances Faith* by Ruth Bancewicz.



## Aims of The Faraday Institute

**The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion is an educational charity.**

The Institute's objectives are threefold. Firstly, we seek to advance education in the field of science and religion by carrying out research in all aspects of that subject and publishing the results in academic journals and books. Secondly, we seek to improve public understanding of the issues in the field of science and religion by disseminating research results beyond the academic community through lectures, courses and the publication of other educational resources. Thirdly, we aim to advance such charitable purposes (according to the law of England and Wales) from time to time, as the Trustees see fit, which are connected with the charitable purpose stated above.

The Charity has a Christian ethos and accordingly, in furthering the above objects, the main focus of its research work is on the relationship between science and the Christian faith. It emphasises the education of the Christian community in issues of science and faith but also welcomes and seeks to engage with those of any faith, or none.