

Who are we?

The Mission Theological Advisory Group is a group of people from different Christian denominations who come together to think and write on topics which affect the whole Church.

We are interested in the spirituality of people living in our society, whether they are Christian or not, and we are interested in the challenges and opportunities that gives to people like us who are working in and for the Christian faith.

Here's some more information about us.

The Revd Professor John Drane (co-chair of MTAG)



Here's what John says about himself:

A kid of the 1960s: we'd never heard of post-modernity, but we were a part of making it happen, and I've lived between the old world and the new paradigm ever since.

*** A spiritual person, and a Christian. Ever since I read the story of Jesus as a teenager, his teaching and example have been my personal inspiration and role model.**

*** A student of all things spiritual: for my doctorate, I studied Gnosticism – which equipped me better than I ever imagined for understanding the spiritual search of today's culture.**

*** A thinker: for much of my life I've made a living by teaching spiritual subjects in the Universities of Stirling and Aberdeen (both in Scotland), though I now work freelance with anyone who might be interested.**

*** A lover and husband to Olive Fleming Drane. We fell in love as teenagers and have been together ever since. We're both interested in creative spirituality, and work together professionally, as well as having our own individual career paths. Since we share the same life story, you can discover**

a lot of other things about me from Olive's book: *Clowns, Storytellers, Disciples* (published by BRF in the UK, Augsburg in the USA).

* Part of the 'establishment': I've been active on the national church scene in Britain, and internationally, for most of my adult life.

* Adventurous in mission: I mix with lots of top church leaders, but I can also be found meeting with spiritual searchers in psychic fairs and mind, body, spirit festivals – or in emerging churches.

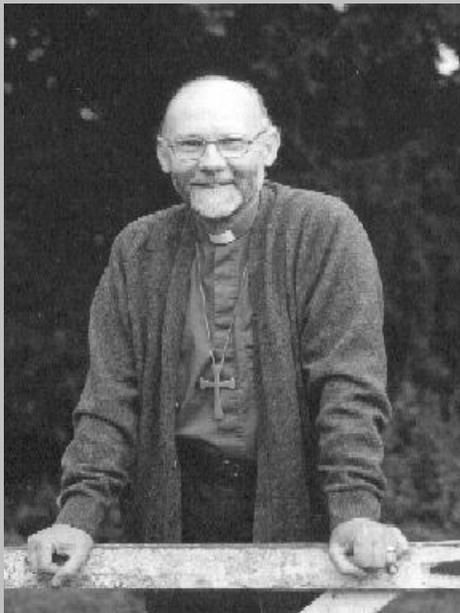
* A traveler: I spend a lot of time speaking at conferences and seminars, meeting people around the world, listening to their stories, looking to see where God is at work in the world. My main regular assignment right now is as an adjunct professor of New Testament and Practical Theology at Fuller Seminary, Pasadena California, which I visit once or twice a year.

* An optimist: I really do believe the world could be better, and that it will be better if we all make a spiritual connection.

* A writer: I've written scores of books for both children and adults, all of them on spiritual and Christian themes. At the last count, they had been translated into more than 40 languages.

You can find out even more about John at www.johndrane.com

The Rt Revd Dr David Atkinson (co-chair of MTAG)



Now retired, I became Suffragan Bishop of Thetford in the Anglican Diocese of Norwich in 2001. Before I entered training for ordination, I taught chemistry and religious studies. I worked in Bolton and Birmingham and then at Latimer House, the theological Research centre in Oxford. I then became chaplain and later Fellow and Lecturer in Theology at Corpus Christi College Oxford where I taught Christian ethics and psychology of religion, for the Theology Faculty of the University, and was also visiting lecturer in pastoral theology at Wycliffe Hall. After this I became Canon Chancellor of Southwark Cathedral and Canon Missioner in the Diocese of Southwark in 1993

Find out more about what I do at <http://www.norwich.anglican.org>

**before being appointed
Archdeacon of Lewisham.**

**In my spare time I enjoy art,
music, walking and holidays with
my wife, Sue, in our VW camper-
van.**

**I have written a number of books
including *Counselling in Context*
(with Francis Bridger); *Jesus,
Lamb of God*; *God So Loved the
World (towards a missionary
theology)* and *Pastoral Ethics***

Dr Nick Adams



**I am Lecturer in Systematic
Theology and Theological Ethics,
New College, Edinburgh University.**

**I am interested in German
philosophy's influence on theology
(esp. Kant, Jacobi, Hamann, Fichte,
Hegel, Schelling, Schleiermacher),
Frankfurt School Critical Theory,
Non-Global Christian Ethics and
theological reflections on music.
My latest book is on Jurgen
Habermas and theology.**

**I am currently working in
Cambridge in the Cambridge Inter-
Faith Programme**

Mr Andrew Brookes

**Connecting with and seeking to understand the spiritual dimension of life
matters to me at all sorts of levels. I was brought up a Christian, in the
Roman Catholic Church, and thus introduced to prayer and spirituality from
my earliest days. The spiritual facet of being human, and the questions of
God and ultimate meaning have stayed with me since then.**



Throughout my life I have had a fascination in and commitment to the person of Jesus. This has been linked to a commitment to Christianity; I have continued to practice as a committed Catholic and also to engage with and be enriched by people from right across the Christian spectrum. My faith commitments have been questioned and challenged in various ways over the years – sometimes painfully – but my Christian faith continues to develop and to be central to my life, giving it meaning, purpose and hope. Prayer in many different forms and involvement in a wide range of Christian activities and ministries as well as ongoing study and reflection are all staple ingredients in my life. So are such things as hill-walking and seeing friends!

I have always been interested in how other people find meaning in life and what makes them 'tick spiritually'. This includes other Christians but also people from other faiths and those who would describe themselves as having none. It is very easy for Christians to restrict themselves to an insulated and cosy Christian clique so I think it is important to have links and conversations with a broad range of people and situations.

I have degrees in Science, philosophy and theology. I taught RE for five years in some socially challenging areas of Dundee. Alongside this I was doing a variety of projects linked with my local parish and broader church work. All this really got me really thinking about where people are at – and not at – in terms of spirituality, faith, Christian commitment and church involvement. I was increasingly challenged by the gap between most people and the shrinking church culture / groups and, have spent the last six years (since 2000), operating 'freelance', committed to exploring, developing and promoting ways to better bridge it.

I joined the Dominican religious order in September 2009

The Rt Revd Dr Brian Castle



I am suffragan bishop of Tonbridge in the Anglican diocese of Rochester. I have worked in many different areas, including London, the West Country, Geneva, Lesotho, South Africa, and Zambia as well as Cuddesdon theological college.

I am also the Archbishops' adviser on alternative spiritualities and new religious movements. I have a particular interest in hymns and music. I am the author of *Unofficial God? Voices from Beyond the Walls* SPCK 2004

Find out more about what I am involved in at <http://www.rochester.anglican.org>

The Rt Revd Dr Graham Kings



Since 2009 I have been bishop of Sherborne in the Anglican diocese of Salisbury. When this site was created I was Vicar of [St Mary Islington](#), London. Previously I was the founding Director of the [Henry Martyn Centre for the study of mission and world Christianity](#) in the Cambridge Theological Federation and affiliated lecturer in the Faculty of Divinity, University of Cambridge, Vice-Principal of St Andrew's Theological College, Kabare, Kenya, and a curate in Harlesden, London. I am a founding trustee and theological editor of [Fulcrum](#), a member of the Liturgical Commission, a vice-president of CMS and have written books on [theology of mission](#), on [contextual liturgies](#) and have published various [articles](#) and [poems](#). Further details may be seen [here](#)

Canon Janice Price

Since 2009 I have been World Mission Adviser for the Church of England. When this site was created I was head of the Global Mission Network (formerly Churches' Commission on Mission) of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland. Before that I was Director of Development for the Anglican Diocese of Worcester. I have also worked for the Church of England as National Mission and Evangelism Adviser. I am the author of *Telling Your Faith Story*.



The Revd Dr David Spriggs



missional. I am an ordained Baptist minister and have served in three full-time pastorates, the last in the City Centre Church in Coventry. I am the author of *God at the end of the Century, Developing the Spirituality of Your Church* and *Connected Christianity* (BRF 2005).

I am the Bible Society's Head of Church and Mission_Group. My role involves engaging churches on national and local levels with the opportunities which Bible Society's campaigning initiatives provide. I am also involved in many national groups, which are concerned with helping churches become more

The Revd Dr Andrew Wood

I am Superintendent of the Eastleigh Methodist Circuit and minister of Chandler's Ford Methodist Church. I was previously minister in Epsom and Surbiton Hill. I was also the Convenor of Interface – a Connexional group charged with exploring the 'interface' between faith and culture. Have a look at <http://www.theinterface.org.uk/>

The Revd Canon Jo Penberthy

I am a parish priest responsible for a number of village churches in the St David's diocese of the Church in Wales. I have also served on the Council for Mission and Ministry for the Church in Wales and been involved in a number

of the Churches' Commission on Mission's projects and interests. I am also Warden of Readers for the Diocese.

Mr Simon Barrow (to 2005)



I am Co-Director of the Christian think-tank *Ekklesia*, and work as a freelance writer and consultant on religion and public life. I was formerly Commission Secretary for the Churches' Commission on Mission at Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, preceding Janice.

For lots more about Simon, see <http://www.simonbarrow.net>

Dr Anne Richards



I am National Adviser: mission theology, alternative spiritualities and new religious movements in the Mission and Public Affairs Division of the Archbishops' Council of the Church of England. I have been secretary of MTAG since 1992, overseeing other MTAG publications such as *The Search for Faith and the Witness of the Church, Presence and Prophecy and Transparencies*

The Revd Dr Israel Selvanayagam



I am a minister of the Church of South India and currently Principal of the United Theological College in Bangalore. After many years teaching religions, mission and inter faith dialogue at Tamil Nadu Theological Seminar, Madurai, I was appointed World Church Tutor at Wesley College, Bristol and then at Queen's College, Birmingham where I was when this site was created. I was Principal of The United College of the Ascension.