



Flourishing

School Leaders' Gathering

With senior clergy in attendance and keynote speakers, including David Wells

Wednesday 18th March 2026

Tiverton Hotel Lounge & Venue

Blundells Road, Tiverton

Devon EX16 4DB

Early Bird Price:

**£100 if booked before
the 30th November 2025
(usual price £125)**



Programme

09:00 Registration and Refreshments

09:20 Welcome from the Director of Education, Sue Lockwood, and the Archdeacon of Totnes and Chair of Diocesan Board of Education Committee, the Venerable Douglas Dettmer

09:35 Opening Worship with a Bishop

10:00 **David Wells: "Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks."**

How's that going?

When parents are complaining, inspection criteria is changing, your best staff are telling you that they are pregnant, your data is waning, covid is back, the boiler is broken and a child has just swallowed green face paint because a friend told him it was a smoothie. How are we supposed to Rejoice Always? In this short session we will enjoy some Biblical reflections on Leadership. The Scriptures offer tremendous wisdom about the nature of leadership and what it means to lead effectively. This session includes antidotes to cynicism, indifference and resentment that you might like to offer to your staff, especially the mood hoovers and finger pointers!

11:15 Coffee Break

11:40 **Margaret James: content TBC**

12:40 Lunch



Programme

13:40 Lorraine Prince: Leadership for Belonging

This session will enable participants to reflect on how navigating difference with empathy and courage can strengthen relationships and create the psychological safety needed for honest, transformative conversations. Together, we'll explore how a deep sense of belonging enables communities to pursue justice not as an abstract ideal but as a lived practice—expressed through our actions, language, and partnerships that honour the dignity and inclusion of all.

14:40 Bishop James: Holy Heroes or Flawed Leaders?

If I'm honest I can find the heroes of the Bible leaving me feeling more guilty than inspired. For example David stands up to a giant and I'm intimidated by the 4 foot 6 granny at the school gate. Yet the Bible is actually full of leaders God seems to call in spite of their failures rather than because of their immense faith. My hope is that this time we see that the Bible is full of leaders just like you and me, and the children and young people we are called to serve.

15:40 Closing Reflection and sending

15:50 Departure





Speakers

David Wells, Education Adviser



David Wells began his teaching career with disillusioned teenagers. Since then he has worked primarily as an Education Adviser speaking at teacher conferences around the world. He has guest lectured in many Universities and worked with charities, volunteers, prisoners, young people and clergy. He is the author of four books and has

contributed to many national working parties. He is married to Alison and has three grown up children and a badly behaved dog. He lives in Exmouth, Devon. To find out more look at David's website: www.davidwellslive.com

Lorraine Prince, Head of Networks, National Society for Education



Lorraine Prince is the Head of Networks at the National Society for Education, where she plays a pivotal role in facilitating professional development and fostering connections across various educational networks. Her expertise centres on Equity, Diversity,

Inclusion, and Justice (EDIJ), focusing on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), Trauma, and Justice and Courageous Advocacy. In addition to her leadership within the NSE, Lorraine actively supports the Archbishop of Canterbury's Reconciliation Network on Difference, helping to promote peacebuilding and reconciliation in schools. She co-leads the Difference Course, which aims to equip young people with the skills to bridge divides and engage in meaningful dialogue and peacemaking





Speakers

Dr Margaret James, National Director of SIAMS



Margaret is the first National Director of SIAMS and she has been in the role since March 2021. For the five years before that, she was the Director of Education for the Diocese of Worcester. She is an experienced leader within Church of England education and has worked in school, local authority, diocesan, and national educational leadership roles for approximately twenty years.

Margaret has spent almost two decades involved in SIAMS leadership. She is dedicated to ensuring that inspection has a deeply rooted cohesion and integrity, thereby enabling it to make a significant and positive contribution to the development of high-quality Church school education.



The Bishop of Plymouth, the Rt. Rev'd James Grier

James has been the Bishop of Plymouth for over 3 years. It's the greatest privilege a Plymouth lad could have! James has been ordained for 27 years and wherever he has been he has always prioritised work with young people. In 2007 he returned to Devon to start a church in Exeter reaching young people who had little or no experience of Christian faith or church. Alongside spending many many hours providing hot chocolate in their church café, whether in afternoons or the middle of the night, he spent a lot of time in secondary schools. He's also been a Youth Advisor for the Diocese and a governor of a village primary school and a school for 5-18 year olds. James is married to Liz, who is also ordained and helps train the clergy of the future. They have two sons, who they are relieved have made it through school and out the other side. They also have two cats, who are beyond educating!