

The Rt Revd Dr Christopher Cocksworth and Dr Eeva John were each granted the Lambeth Doctorate of Divinity.

Archbishop Justin Welby has conferred Lambeth doctorates on two people who played a central role in the Church of England's landmark Living in Love and Faith project.

The Rt Revd Dr Christopher Cocksworth, Bishop of Coventry, and Dr Eeva John were each granted the Lambeth Doctorate of Divinity, in recognition of the "outstanding theological quality and intellectual rigour" of their work.

The doctorates were conferred during a service in the Chapel at Lambeth Palace on Friday 15 October, in front of Bishop Christopher's and Dr John's family and friends.

The Living in Love and Faith project was launched in 2017 to help the Church engage in learning together about questions of identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage.

It resulted in a set of resources designed to help Church of England churches participate in a process of learning, listening and prayer together as part of discerning a way forward in relation to matters of identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage.

Bishop Christopher was invited by the House of Bishops to lead the project from its launch, working alongside a coordinating group and more than 40 scholars in biblical studies, the sciences, history, theology and ethics.

In his doctoral citation, Bishop Christopher was recognised for his theological leadership of the project, and for steering the work of the team and building relationships across different perspectives.

"The way in which Bishop Christopher has led this process reflects the breadth of disciplines necessary to provide a genuine and deep understanding of the pluriform influences that affect life and that direct the experience of faith and relationship with God and indeed of the understanding of the triune creator God," said the citation.

Dr Eeva John was appointed in 2017 to the role of Enabling Officer for Living in Love and Faith and the Pastoral Advisory Group, Archbishop's Council.

Using her "keen and creative understanding of practical theology, attention to method, theological depth and extraordinary people skills", her citation said, Dr John played a central role in coordinating the wide-ranging participation needed to ensure the project reflected a variety of voices and experiences.

It is only the second time in his ministry that the Archbishop has chosen to exercise his legal right to award such degrees.

The Archbishop said conferring the doctorates on Bishop Christopher and Dr John enabled him to give "a tangible and lasting expression" of his gratitude for their work and for the contribution of the dedicated team alongside them.

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