

Read a transcript of the message:

“Eid Mubarak. As you come to the last day of Ramadan and celebrate the completion of your time of fasting and prayer, I want to assure you of our prayers and our affection for you.

“In the last few days I was at the regular gathering of the Church of England which we call General Synod, and one of the speeches there commented on the Islamic discipline of fasting. It’s a Christian tradition as well, and one that I practise, but during this particularly demanding Ramadan with long days and hot weather, you have been greatly on my mind because I know what a pressure it is on you. And yet it’s also such a gift to spend time in prayer; to be reminded by hunger of our call to stay close to God.

“One of the highlights for me in the last few months has been the visit of the Grand Imam of Al-Alzhar. He came and stayed here at Lambeth Palace for three days, and we spent much time in conversation. The importance of those sorts of relationships cannot be overestimated. In spending time together we were able to discuss our differences, as communities and as individuals. We need to recognise that we differ on crucial points of faith, but that we are united in understanding the importance of faith, and in our commitment to the common good.

“During this last few weeks as well you have been on my prayers as news has put pressure on the Muslim community. I never forget how much you need support and encouragement when you’re under pressure, as we do as well.

“I hope and pray that the relationships I have with Muslim leaders, which are frank and open, honest about disagreement but committed to one another as human beings, are relationships that can be echoed in every corner of our country. That is how we will face the challenge of all the different circumstances that affect our communities, and how together we can be a blessing and a strength for this country.

“Once again, Eid Mubarak.”

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