

# **Christians in Science Northern Conference 2011**

## **'All God's Creatures'**

### **Opening Remarks**

#### **Gavin Merrifield**

On behalf of both Sophie and myself and the Edinburgh group of Christians in Science we'd like to welcome you to today's conference.

It is probably important at the start to consider why we are here. Primarily we are here as an act of worship through the exercising of our minds to seek out and to encounter God, to at least attempt to gain a greater understanding of His will and character.

It is also healthy for us and the wider Church to discuss and consider new ideas emerging out of science. The opportunity for utilising our ever increasing understanding of creation around us to help uncover truth and so shape our theological insights is an amazing gift from God, our Creator.

As science explores new evidences and ideas we must also match that exploration with parallel explorations of our theological understandings, allowing ourselves to be moulded and grown by them. Days like today help us to do just that.

As Christians we are also called not just to sit back and simply enjoy intellectual fruits but to put them into the service of God, His people and the wider creation.

Today's topics are not only cutting edge in terms of scientific understandings, but also speak deeply into those aspects of life that the Bible calls us most strongly to – worship, community, relationship and love for the other, the stranger. Having had a preview of what our speakers have to say over the course of the day I can assure you that these qualities resonate strongly throughout the talks to come.

Some of our topics might seem exotic at first glance and others more perhaps more familiar, but as we shall see they are all very interconnected. Through them we will begin to ground ourselves well in order to speak out and act for Christ in a world, in a universe, that may begin to exceed our past expectations and experiences.

I hope that you will enjoy the talks and would encourage you to make full use of the opportunities throughout the day to engage with both our speakers and one another.