

Anglican Communion Lusophone Network: Report to ACC17

Anglican Episcopal Church of Brazil
Mozambican Anglican Dioceses (Anglican Church of Southern Africa)
Angolan Anglican Diocese (Anglican Church of Southern Africa)
Lusitanian Church – Portugal (Extra-provincial Diocese)

The Third Meeting of the Anglican Communion Lusophone Network

“Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another.” Romans 12:15-16a.

The Third Meeting of the Lusophone Network took place in Portugal 22- 27 November 2017. It was the responsibility of the Lusitanian Church (Portugal) to organize and host the event that took place in the city of Oporto and brought together 35 delegates and guests from Portuguese-speaking Anglican Churches (Portugal, Brazil, Angola and Mozambique) and Anglican missionary agencies.

This meeting was an important moment for celebration, sharing and meditation, with devotional and Eucharistic moments, plenary sessions, group sharing, Bible studies, a visit to the social work developed by the Lusitanian Church, and a Sunday celebration with local Lusitanian parishes and communities. It should be noted that each Church and Diocese in this meeting, was responsible for the presentation of a Bible study and the orientation of a devotional moment.

The following guests were present:

Bishop Anthony Poggo – Advisor to the Archbishop of Canterbury on Anglican Communion
Reverend Rachel Marsh – Green Anglicans
Adrian Butcher – Director for Communications, Anglican Communion
Reverend Carla Prior –MANNA
Paulo Ueti – Anglican Alliance
Reverend Rachel Carnegie – Anglican Alliance
Reverend John Hawkins – ALMA
Reverend Richard Bartlett - USPG

Joint Mission Areas

This meeting defined the following Joint Mission Areas:

1 Diaconate and care for Creation

- The Churches renewed their commitment to the care and integrity of Creation and Environment and each Church appointed a representative to be part of the Green Anglicans Lusophone working group.
- Each Church agreed to appoint a person responsible for the diaconal work area and social development to share the existing projects and future exchanges of collaboration. There was a welcome for the possible participation of young people from the Churches in the development of ongoing social projects, particularly in Africa;

2 Christian Education and Theological Formation

- Collaboration of JUNET (National Board of Theological Education Brazil - IEAB) for the preparation of the theological education plan for the future seminar of the dioceses of Libombos and Niassa, (Mozambique) and the sharing with the other Churches of the "Introduction to Anglicanism" which is an e-learning course.
- On-line sharing of theological training and Christian education resources already available in Portuguese, namely at the Sunday School level, youth preparation and adult catechumenate;

3. Young people and women

Exchange of experiences and volunteers in the area of evangelization and intentional discipleship among women and young people;

4. Communication

- The designing of a page in Portuguese for the Lusophone Network on the official site of the Anglican Communion (www.anglicancommunion.org) and a Facebook of the Lusophone Network.
- Institution on the Feast of Christ the King (last Sunday of the Liturgical Calendar) of the Lusophone Network Day of the Anglican Communion.

5 - Coordination of the Lusophone Network

This coordination group was set up:

- Bishop Jorge Pina Cabral (Portugal) bispopinacabral@igreja-lusitana.org
- Reverend Garcia Kazailawoko (Angola) garkazai23@gmail.com
- Reverend António Nhaca (Diocese of the Libombos, Mozambique) nhaca.antonio@gmail.com
- Bishop Vicente Msosa (Diocese of Niassa, Mozambique) vicente.dioceseniasa@gmail.com
- Reverend Magda Guedes Pereira (Brazil) magda_cgp@yahoo.com.br

Current challenges and opportunities of the Lusophone Churches

Narrowing the networking between the parts implies the natural knowledge of the realities that characterizes each one of the churches and Lusophones Dioceses. In this sense, the programme of the Third Meeting of the Lusophone Network took a time for each Church to share with the others the current challenges and opportunities of mission that are placed upon it. This happened in a session called "Signs of Time."

Portugal

The Bishop Jorge Pina Cabral, said that the Church in Portugal faces the difficulties and demands that a secularized society and often indifferent to the religious question, places on the work of mission and evangelization of the Churches. In this social and cultural context, the weaknesses of a small Church such as the lack of vocations to the ordained ministry or scarce financial resources, as they worsen and sometimes inhibit the work of evangelization that is required. In this hard and demanding context the Bishop recalled that in its last diocesan Synod, the Lusitanian Church started to deepen the meaning of the Mission in the light of a greater intentional discipleship from the part of its members. In this sense, the formation of the Christian faith of the members of the Church through the Pilgrim's Course currently taking place in the diocese is seen as a sign of hope and future, as well as the effort made in the management and greater use of human, material and spiritual resources which the Lusitanian Church possesses. He also underlined the important work of social commitment that the Church continues to develop at various levels.

Angola

Bishop André Soares said that the Church in Angola is predominantly young and that there is a feeling of optimism and hope in the future. He said there are 100,000 children waiting for baptism. However, the financial difficulties put pressure on the support of the clergy of the Church, with the need for the ministers to resort to other jobs. He gave the example of a Church minister who, with difficulties, has under his own responsibility 20 churches. The Bishop thanked external agencies such as MANNA, ALMA and USPG that helped the Church in Angola to develop its social work and he highlighted the strong commitment of the Church in the fight against malaria in Angola.

Mozambique

The three Bishops of Mozambique, D. Carlos Matsinhe, D. Vicente Msosa and D. Ernesto Manuel, representing the dioceses of Libombos and Niassa referred the significant numerical growth of the Anglican Church in this country despite the scarcity human and material resources. The future sustainability of the Church presents itself as a major challenge. In a process that is well meditated and planned, it is hoped in the future to create more Anglican dioceses in Mozambique to better serve the mission needs of the Church. A vital project for the formation and theological support of the Church's work is the construction of new facilities for the S. Cristovão Theological Seminary which, for 40 years, has needed to expand its area to accommodate a greater number of seminarians. Also in this aspect the Church seeks to redefine the content of the theological studies itself.

Both Mozambique and Angola highlighted the important role and contribution of women through the Mothers' Union which has a strong tradition and presence in Africa and around the world.

Brazil

D. Alves Naudal, Bishop of the diocese of Curitiba of the Anglican Episcopal Church of Brazil, presented the current situation, underlining the particular social and political context that this our brother country is undergoing now. In a context of increasing political repression and the curtailment of human rights and freedoms, the Church has sought through various pronouncements to be a prophetic voice in denouncing situations that threaten freedom and democracy. It reaffirmed the Church's commitment to the fight against gender violence and the commitment to Creation safeguarding and environmental issues. The current process of theological formation at a distance and through the internet that the Brazilian Church has been developing is seen as a good resource to share with the other Lusophone Churches.

*Bishop Jorge Pina Cabral, Diocesan Bishop,
The Lusitanian Church, Portugal*