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## Introduction

This Reader contains background reading for the Lambeth Conference. A number of the papers have been published in other places and at other times. The papers are collected together and re-published in this volume for the convenience of those who will be attending the Lambeth Conference. All the material is the product of particular Anglican Communion groups or networks, or has been written particularly for this Reader

The material is ordered in three sections:

1. Anglican Identity and Episcopacy
2. Mission & Ministry
3. The Anglican Communion – ordering our life together

The purpose of the reader is to make available to a selection of documents which will provide some material in common as a foundation to the discussion of some of the themes of the Lambeth Conference. These documents are resource material for some of the Indaba Groups at the Lambeth Conference.

The whole conference is brought together with the twin aims of 'enabling the bishops as leaders in God's mission' and 'strengthening Anglican identity. It is hoped these papers will make a contribution to the achieving of those aims.

Section 1            Anglican Identity and Episcopacy

## The Anglican Way: Signposts on a Common Journey

A paper from the work of TEAC [Theological Education for the Anglican Communion]

This document has emerged as part of a four-year process in which church leaders, theologians and educators have come together from around the world to discuss the teaching of Anglican identity, life and practice. They clarified the characteristic ways in which Anglicans understand themselves and their mission in the world. These features, described as the 'Anglican Way', were intended to form the basis for how Anglicanism is taught at all levels of learning involving laity, clergy and bishops. This document is not intended as a comprehensive definition of Anglicanism, but it does set in place signposts which guide Anglicans on their journey of self-understanding and Christian discipleship. The journey is on-going because what it means to be Anglican will be influenced by context and history. Historically a number of different forms of being Anglican have emerged, all of which can be found in the rich diversity of present-day Anglicanism. But Anglicans also have their commonalities, and it is these which hold them together in communion through 'bonds of affection'. The signposts set out below are offered in the hope that they will point the way to a clearer understanding of Anglican identity and ministry, so that all Anglicans can be effectively taught and equipped for their service to God's mission in the world.

The Anglican Way is a particular expression of the Christian Way of being the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ. It is formed by and rooted in Scripture, shaped by its worship of the living God, ordered for communion, and directed in faithfulness to God's mission in the world. In diverse global situations Anglican life and ministry witnesses to the incarnate, crucified and risen Lord, and is empowered by the Holy Spirit. Together with all Christians, Anglicans hope, pray and work for the coming of the reign of God.

### **Formed by Scripture**

1. As Anglicans we discern the voice of the living God in the Holy Scriptures, mediated by tradition and reason. We read the Bible together, corporately and individually, with a grateful and critical sense of the past, a vigorous engagement with the present, and with patient hope for God's future.
2. We cherish the whole of Scripture for every aspect of our lives, and we value the many ways in which it teaches us to follow Christ faithfully in a variety of contexts. We pray and sing the Scriptures through liturgy and hymnody. Lectionaries connect us with the breadth of the Bible, and through preaching we interpret and apply the fullness of Scripture to our shared life in the world.

3. Accepting their authority, we listen to the Scriptures with open hearts and attentive minds. They have shaped our rich inheritance: for example, the ecumenical creeds of the early Church, the Book of Common Prayer, and Anglican formularies such as the Articles of Religion, catechisms and the Lambeth Quadrilateral.
4. In our proclamation and witness to the Word Incarnate we value the tradition of scholarly engagement with the Scriptures from earliest centuries to the present day. We desire to be a true learning community as we live out our faith, looking to one another for wisdom, strength and hope on our journey. We constantly discover that new situations call for fresh expressions of a scripturally informed faith and spiritual life.

### **Shaped through Worship**

5. Our relationship with God is nurtured through our encounter with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in word and sacrament. This experience enriches and shapes our understanding of God and our communion with one another.
6. As Anglicans we offer praise to the Triune Holy God, expressed through corporate worship, combining order with freedom. In penitence and thanksgiving we offer ourselves in service to God in the world.
7. Through our liturgies and forms of worship we seek to integrate the rich traditions of the past with the varied cultures of our diverse communities.
8. As broken and sinful persons and communities, aware of our need of God's mercy, we live by grace through faith and continually strive to offer holy lives to God. Forgiven through Christ and strengthened by word and sacrament, we are sent out into the world in the power of the Spirit.

### **Ordered for Communion**

9. In our episcopally led and synodically governed dioceses and provinces, we rejoice in the diverse callings of all the baptized. As outlined in the ordinals, the threefold servant ministries of bishops, priests and deacons assist in the affirmation, coordination and development of these callings as discerned and exercised by the whole people of God.
10. As worldwide Anglicans we value our relationships with one another. We look to the Archbishop of Canterbury as a focus of unity and gather in communion with the See of Canterbury. In addition we are sustained through three formal instruments of communion: The Lambeth Conference, The Anglican Consultative Council and The Primates' Meeting. The Archbishop of Canterbury and these three instruments offer cohesion to global Anglicanism, yet limit the centralisation of authority. They rely on bonds of affection for effective functioning.

11. We recognise the contribution of the mission agencies and other international bodies such as the Mothers' Union. Our common life in the Body of Christ is also strengthened by commissions, task groups, networks of fellowship, regional activities, theological institutions and companion links.

### **Directed by God's Mission**

12. As Anglicans we are called to participate in God's mission in the world, by embracing respectful evangelism, loving service and prophetic witness. As we do so in all our varied contexts, we bear witness to and follow Jesus Christ, the crucified and risen Saviour. We celebrate God's reconciling and life-giving mission through the creative, costly and faithful witness and ministry of men, women and children, past and present, across our Communion.
13. Nevertheless, as Anglicans we are keenly aware that our common life and engagement in God's mission are tainted with shortcomings and failure, such as negative aspects of colonial heritage, self-serving abuse of power and privilege, undervaluing of the contributions of laity and women, inequitable distribution of resources, and blindness to the experience of the poor and oppressed. As a result, we seek to follow the Lord with renewed humility so that we may freely and joyfully spread the good news of salvation in word and deed.
14. Confident in Christ, we join with all people of good will as we work for God's peace, justice and reconciling love. We recognise the immense challenges posed by secularisation, poverty, unbridled greed, violence, religious persecution, environmental degradation, and HIV/Aids. In response, we engage in prophetic critique of destructive political and religious ideologies, and we build on a heritage of care for human welfare expressed through education, health care and reconciliation.
15. In our relationships and dialogue with other faith communities we combine witness to the Lordship of Jesus Christ with a desire for peace, and mutual respect and understanding.
16. As Anglicans, baptized into Christ, we share in the mission of God with all Christians and are deeply committed to building ecumenical relationships. Our reformed catholic tradition has proved to be a gift we are able to bring to ecumenical endeavour. We invest in dialogue with other churches based on trust and a desire that the whole company of God's people may grow into the fullness of unity to which God calls us that the world may believe the gospel.

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# **The Anglican Way: The Significance of the Episcopal Office for the Communion of the Church**

**Inter Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission, October 2007<sup>1</sup>**

## **Preamble:**

At this time in the life of the global Anglican Communion tensions and rifts between Provinces - and bishops - have seriously impaired the fellowship (koinonia) of the baptised. The reasons for these difficulties are complex and no one would imagine that it is an easy matter to restore fellowship across the churches of the Communion. In such circumstances we can forget that our life together is a gracious gift bestowed by the Lord. It is a gift that serves the mission of God in the world and has a direct effect on the integrity and power of our witness to the gospel.

How can we proclaim one Lord, one faith and one baptism when the gift of koinonia seems to be so easily set aside for a supposedly greater goal? What can be more fundamental to our life on earth than our essential interconnectedness with others and the world.<sup>2</sup> What can be more at the heart of Christian life than the sacrament of communion in Christ's body broken for us and blood poured out for the world? This koinonia is given by God in creation and renewed in Christ and the Spirit. It is a gift which subsists in the whole body of Christ prior to its embodiment in an 'instrument of unity' or particular ecclesial office. Furthermore, like all gifts of God, it can only be a blessing as it is faithfully received and shared by all. It is critical for this truth to be grasped by an often anxious and fearful Church that is often tempted to seek heroes or managers to heal its inner life.

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<sup>1</sup> The original draft of this document was completed at the October 2006 IATDC meeting in Kenya. This was then revised following consultation with other Communion bodies, and completed at the October 2007 IATDC meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

<sup>2</sup> The terms 'koinonia' and 'communion' can become so much a part of the discourse of a fractured and divided church that they lose their force and significance. Koinonia has to do with a fundamental connectivity between God, the world, and all living things, including of course human life. The African word 'ubuntu' captures something of this primary oneness. In the Genesis story human beings are called 'earthlings' or 'groundlings' (Genesis 2). This underscores the fact that we are 'of the earth' and are intrinsically related to other living things, the whole created environment and God. Such koinonia is encoded into the very being of creation. The story of redemption is a story of Christ rejoining people, races and the rest of creation. This is the good news which overcomes sin and broken bonds. There is no other community on the earth with a mandate to bear witness to the remarkable miracle of our oneness in the triune God. What is even more remarkable is that God invites the body of Christ to become the new experiment in the communion of the Holy Spirit. Bishops serve this koinonia which is nothing less than the way of creation, salvation and the life of the world to come.

All ministries are charisms of the Spirit for the building up of the body. This is not just a *role* but charism of the ministry. As eucharistic president and teacher of the faith the bishop lives and ministers as sign and servant of ecclesial communion and communion with the Triune God. Bishops therefore bear a particular responsibility for the maintenance and nurture of communion as God's gift to all.

The ordinal is clear that bishops of the Church have a great and grave responsibility to the Lord of the Church for the fellowship of all the baptised. Their actions have consequence for the whole body of the faithful for we are all 'members one of another' (Romans 12:5). Accordingly we offer these ten theses on the role and responsibilities of bishops for the well-being of the communion of the whole church. In the theses that follow it should be abundantly clear that the nurture of koinonia is not an optional extra or luxury for the episcopate. Rather, it is of the essence of the sacramental charism of episcopal ordination and serves the baptised who have been called by God to bear witness to the glorious gospel of Christ in a broken and violent world hungry for peace, freedom and healing.

The following theses identify the bishop's ministry in relation to the gifts and responsibilities that nurture and grow communion. We were asked to write a contribution that would be helpful to the programme of the Lambeth Conference 2008. It is not therefore a comprehensive theological treatment of episcopacy.

Thesis One sets the episcopate within the life of the whole church. Theses two to seven identify aspects of the office of bishop. Theses eight to ten focus on the place of the episcopate in the life of the Church. Our overall concern is the significance of the episcopate for the maintenance of communion in global Anglicanism. However, we also deal with local, diocesan concerns, recognizing that the way a bishop fosters communion at the micro level has implications for the way a bishop contributes to the fellowship of the baptised at the macro level. It will be clear from the theses that follow that the deeper issue concerns not only what a bishop does but who a bishop is for Christ and the people. The significance of the episcopate for the renewal of koinonia and mission is directly related to how a bishop bears witness in life and service to the holy and triune God.

**Thesis One: The Bishop serves the koinonia of the gospel into which the baptised are incorporated by God the Holy Spirit**

God calls all people into a covenantal relationship of love, mercy and justice. By baptism the people of God become participants in the visible body of Jesus Christ. The bishop is called to

serve this communion principally as president within the eucharistic community and by ordering those ministries which build up the body. The eucharistic role endows the bishop with responsibilities of representation, as through this ministry parts of the body are brought into sacramental relationship with each other. The bishop is the focal person who links parishes within a diocese not only to one another but also the diocese to the wider church within the Communion and ecumenically. This fundamental theological truth challenges all parochial conceptions of the episcopate that fail to transcend ethnic, social, and cultural realities in which the episcopate is, by nature, necessarily embedded.

Bishops of the Anglican Communion have primary responsibility for Anglicans. However, the nature of the episcopal office means that bishops are called to lead the Church towards a deeper koinonia amongst all God's people, and in so doing represent the wider Christian community to the diocese. This universal and ecumenical ministry belongs to the bishop's role as a symbol of unity. Yet this symbol is ambiguous because the Church is divided and torn. In this context the bishop is a sign of a broken Church looking to its Lord for healing and hope through the power of the Spirit.

**Thesis Two: The bishop's evangelical office of proclamation and witness is a fundamental means by which those who hear the call of God become one in Christ**

Bishops in the Anglican Communion are called to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ and provide oversight for the witness and the mission of the Church in all its aspects. This evangelical office of the bishop is founded upon the good news (*evangelion*). The bishop encourages all God's people to be bearers of the good news of Jesus and to practice personal evangelism through words and actions. This evangelical office includes a prophetic element through which the bishop gives voice to the concerns of a world that seeks justice and a creation that needs care and renewal.

The bishop is called to cherish and nurture the evangelical office always bearing in mind 'how beautiful are the feet of the one who brings good news' (Romans 10:15, Isaiah 52:7). At the heart of this witness is a threefold injunction: to know Christ; to know the power of his resurrection; and to enter into the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings (Philippians 3:10). This dimension of the office gives a fundamental unity to all mission. It is enacted in the eucharist where the bishop gathers and sends the people to be witnesses to the ends of the earth. Through this office the kingdom of God expands and people discover their oneness in Christ the Lord and Saviour. Given its centrality for the establishment of communion for all

peoples it is clear that the nature and character of the bishop's evangelical office will occupy a significant part of the collegial life of the episcopate.

**Thesis Three: The bishop is a teacher and defender of the apostolic faith that binds believers into one body**

Bishops vow to guard the apostolic faith. The historic succession in the episcopate is a sign of communion with the apostolic Church through time and space. As witnesses to the 'faith once delivered to the saints', bishops are expected to be more than guardians intent on preserving orthodoxy; they are looked upon to be teachers who are able to bring the Scriptures and the creeds of the Church to life in the present day. Their effectiveness as teachers will depend upon the strength of their own educational formation and upon their openness to the questions and concerns of their contemporaries. Very often it is when the Christian tradition interacts with new ways of thinking that previously forgotten or unexplored aspects of Christian truth are disclosed. Growth in theological understanding thus requires a lively memory of the Christian inheritance and capacity to use this to interpret new facts and fresh experiences. In this interaction new insights arise for faith. A bishop's vocation as a teacher is intertwined in a life of prayer and spiritual discipline. This is the crucible in which wisdom is formed and courage found to apply it to everyday life.

Bishops have a special responsibility to encourage attempts to translate the historic faith into the language, ideas and stories of the people. The aim of this is to foster a genuine inculturation that produces both worship and theology that are accessible to the people. Unless this happens the gospel is not understood, the Church does not put down deep roots, and communion is weakened as apostolic teaching is misunderstood and distorted. When it does happen, the flourishing of true faith fosters genuine communion across cultures.

In licensing clergy and lay workers, bishops signify that those whom they license are faithful ministers of the Word that gathers and sends the people of God. This means that they must be well equipped theologically for this ministry and mission. The bishop must ensure appropriate theological education and ministerial formation for the diocese. Bishops do well to raise up and support the work of theologians within their dioceses, and to make continuing theological education a high priority for their clergy and lay leaders. A scripture-formed people needs teachers and theologians to help build up the faith of the community and provide resources for the discernment of the Spirit in times of confusion and spiritual hunger.

#### **Thesis Four: The Bishop has oversight (episcopate) of the household of God for the good order of the Church**

Bishops are commissioned and sent to be stewards or overseers of God's household within their jurisdiction. They call the people of God into the full expression of the diverse gifts and ministries given by the Holy Spirit. They oversee processes of discernment and selection of candidates for holy orders, ensuring they are well prepared for their ministries, supporting them pastorally and practically, and providing for the good order of ministry in the diocese.

Oversight includes sharing of responsibilities among clergy and lay people. This involves mutual accountability, good communication and willingness to learn from one another. This reciprocity between bishop and people is reflected in the decision making processes of synodical life. This pattern of working together is empowering for all and is a gift to be nurtured at all levels of the life of the Church.

The bishop has to ensure the well-being (e.g., spiritual, social, economic) of the diocese in service of its mission. Harnessing resources, fund-raising and financial management of diocesan affairs involves complexities of oversight requiring specialized ministries. Providing episcopate in this area highlights the administrative and managerial character of the work of a bishop, somewhat akin to a CEO (Chief Executive Officer) of a large organisation. Bishops ought not to underestimate the distorting effects on their oversight of management models associated with the global market economy. This can lead to a management ethos focussed on strategic plans, goal setting, tasks, competition and successful outcomes. This is appealing because it seems to offer clarity and control but the price is often loss of the personal and relational dimension of ecclesial life. The bishop who manages well is one who is aware of the danger of management becoming the basic lens through which episcopate is practised. This issue raises a question of how bishops handle matters across diocesan and provincial boundaries. At these levels even *koinonia* may become a thing to be 'managed' at a distance (i.e., avoiding face-to-face relations) rather than resolutely pursued together with patience.

#### **Thesis Five: The bishop is called to coordinate the gifts of the people of God for the building up of the faithful for the furtherance of God's mission**

The bishop has the duty of coordinating and encouraging the gifts and talents of all the baptised. The Spirit gives varieties of gifts to all God's people to build up the church for mission. In the secular context of many cultures, success in life is mostly determined against

a background of ruthless competition and individualism. In the church 'we are all members one of another' (Romans 12:5), and gifts are not the property of any one person but reside in the whole body for the purpose of strengthening the Church to serve God's mission.

Sometimes bishops – like all people -- are threatened by the gifts of their brothers and sisters in Christ. They can become jealous, guarding all power and responsibility to themselves, and thereby thwarting the work of the Holy Spirit. Personal prayer and discernment of one's own gifts, however, turns one to the nurture of the gifts of others. When a bishop's life is marked by joy in the ministry of others that bishop will be able to share in ministry with other bishops in a non-competitive and generous manner. This is a key to the building of koinonia beyond the local diocese. Specialized training in team building and collaborative leadership is critical.

**Thesis Six: The bishop serves the koinonia of the gospel through care, encouragement and discipline of the pastors of the Church**

To facilitate care of the people of God is fundamental to the episcopal office. To do this the bishop has to know and be known by all. Face-to-face relationships of generosity and graciousness are vital for this is where trust is nurtured. Communion in Christ involves sharing in holy friendship, in counsel, prayer and guidance as well as visitation of parishes on special occasions, such as confirmation.

It is clearly not feasible for a bishop to be able to get to know everyone. However, the bishop has a special responsibility to care for the pastors who share in the bishop's episcopate. Caring for the pastors includes attention to their welfare including practicalities of life as well as their spiritual and vocational health, ensuring continuing ministerial and theological education and ongoing formation. One of the most important ways in which the bishop cares for the pastors is by being an example in the development of habits of self-care and attention to the spiritual disciplines. Such a witness draws people together and raises their sights to new possibilities for freedom in the Spirit.

A bishop's responsibility for the encouragement and discipline of clergy is built upon an exchange of trusts that only comes through patient companionship with others. This is the context in which the bishop can offer guidance and admonition, and call the pastors to honesty, care and mutual accountability. What is true in diocesan life is true at the level of the Communion. Mutual accountability at the international level is the result of a genuinely shared episcopate, exchange of trusts and mutual accountability at the diocesan level.

**Thesis Seven: The bishop serves the koinonia of the gospel through a ministry of mediation to recall the broken and conflicted body of Christ to its reconciled life in him**

Dealing with conflict is a significant feature of a bishop's work. Most obviously the Church is made up of frail and foolish people. The upward call of Christ presumes we are sinners in need of God's grace, forgiveness and mercy. In this context, koinonia is necessarily a partial and vulnerable reality. A bishop's vocation involves tending this koinonia through the wise handling of conflict. A ministry of mediation and reconciliation in situations of conflict is relevant at local and wider levels of the church's life. The challenge for bishops is how to harness conflicts so that through this process a deeper koinonia in the gospel emerges. Learning to be a reconciler is a life-long task and bishops may benefit greatly from special training in mediation.

**Thesis Eight: The catholicity of the episcopal office connects the baptised across boundaries of culture, class, gender, race and lands and enables the church to realise its oneness in Christ**

Catholicity means that the apostolic faith is expressed in the diverse contexts of the world. The gift of God in Christ is for all people, and the Trinitarian faith expressed in the doctrine and worship of a particular church is to be that of the whole church. The bishop embodies this catholic character of the gospel and through the communion of bishops with each other the communion of the whole people is made possible and real. This also means that a bishop has particular responsibility to strive for a reality in which the eucharist in a diocese is one celebrated by and for the whole church. It is ironic and a cause of sorrow that the sacrament of unity is an occasion of division.

The catholicity of the office means the bishop is an agent of the fullness of the one faith expressed through myriad local forms. Inculturation that is authentic plumbs the heart of the Christian faith. This requires active engagement with the local cultures so that any stumbling blocks to the hearing, receiving and enacting of the Gospel be removed. When this occurs the gifts of the people are harnessed for authentic mission in that time and place. A bishop must truly know the local cultures and values of the people that the bishop has been called to serve and lead. This can be a real challenge, for the bishop is chief pastor within and across particular ethnic, racial, and cultural contexts. Yet in this role the bishop has to ensure that the one catholic faith finds expression through these particular identities without becoming

subsumed by them. The catholicity of the office requires a way of life that is constantly in dialogue with others (especially including other bishops) across many boundaries.

Catholicity also means that the decisions that come from any local place are not simply 'local' decisions, but affect all. Bishops have a particular responsibility to bring the church catholic into local processes of discerning the apostolic faith. They also have a responsibility to represent their diocese to the rest of the church, to interpret to the Communion the realities of their local place. This means explaining not simply the end results of decisions reached, but being able to give theological explanation of the discernment of the Gospel in the culture, and of the catholicity of such decisions. Bishops need the courage and wisdom to be able to hear the voice of others whether within or outside their contexts.

**Thesis Nine: The bishop serves the collegial life of the Church through the nurture of strong bonds with bishops of the Anglican Communion and those who share episcopate in other Christian churches**

The episcopate is by nature and calling collegial. Each Anglican bishop shares in the episcopate of the whole not as though each were a piece of the whole, but as a particular expression of the whole, and as one that cannot exist without the whole. In the first instance this occurs between the bishops in a diocese (i.e., diocesan bishop, assistant and suffragan bishops). Therefore all are called into open relationship with each other in the Communion and with those called to exercise episcopate in the wider church. Collegiality means more than working with those with whom one has an affinity. Rather it involves seeing one's ministry not as one's own but as shared with others. At a Provincial level, collegiality involves many practical aspects of cooperative work, study and prayer, and shared responsibility with Synods in Provincial governance. It has particular importance in contexts where the Christian church is in a minority or in a multi-faith context. The patterns of local collegiality-in-communion are a gift to the wider Anglican Communion.

As bishops seek counsel, journey with each other, and pray with and for each other, real relationships grow. But such solidarity is a costly gift. Real relationships are fragile and tainted by sin. If relationships amongst some bishops within a Province are fraught with tensions, refusals of dialogue or other patterns of manipulation undermine collegiality. It is no surprise that these weaknesses show up at the international level. Yet it is of the essence of the episcopate that bishops give themselves over to collegial mutuality in the service of communion. Given the present state of the Anglican Communion it is the special collegial responsibility of the bishop to be at prayer for and with fellow colleagues. This is particularly



relevant for those bishops who are in conflict with one another. Their failure to attend fervently to this ordinal vow weakens the body of Christ for which they have responsibility. This in turn weakens the bonds all the baptised share with one another.

**Thesis Ten: A diocesan bishop is given responsibility for episcopate in the particular place where the bishop is principal Pastor**

It is important for the coherence of the mission of the Church that in one place there should be only one principal or chief Pastor. Within particular and complex circumstances (for example, where indigenous people have been subjugated), it may be necessary, with the consent of the chief Pastor, to provide a specific pastoral ministry of support to a section of a population. However, sight should never be lost of the desirability that a Christian church in a particular place should be a single assembly of people of all kinds.

There are occasions when a church falls out of sympathy with its bishop on a matter of doctrine or conduct. It must not be the case that the mere fact of ease of modern communication and travel becomes the excuse for choosing a leader in another territory to be one's chief Pastor. In the case of serious and extensive conflict, it becomes the duty of a diocesan bishop to provide pastoral support in particular congregations. When a diocesan bishop fails to undertake this duty the matter becomes a provincial responsibility.

**Conclusion**

The theses outlined above cover a broad range of episcopal responsibilities. There will undoubtedly be matters that have not been dealt with that are significant for bishops in the exercise of their daily office. The intention throughout has been to reflect on the nature of the episcopate in relation to the issue of communion. This focus has been explored at the diocesan level and in relation to the Communion. We are convinced that how a bishop handles the complex and delicate issues surrounding the koinonia of the Church at the local level of the diocese will influence the way a bishop nurtures communion beyond the diocese.

We have tried to offer a brief outline for a theology of the episcopate that is grounded in the received wisdom from scripture and tradition and also alive to the realities that bishops face as they serve the Church's koinonia in the gospel. The theses are incomplete and are currently being developed more intentionally in relation to the scripture tradition and the ordinal. Where relevant we have also tried to indicate areas that might become subject of

training and professional development for bishops. More detailed work is currently being conducted in this area by other bodies in the Communion.

We offer this present document as a work in progress. We hope that we have provided a small resource to promote discussion and learning concerning the character of the episcopate. Throughout the diversity of episcopal practices, attitudes and ways of leadership we wonder if there might be room for reflection on the idea of an 'episcopal character' along similar lines to what has been referred to as the 'baptismal character'? We hope and pray that the bishops of the Anglican Communion may find it useful in their difficult but sacred calling to serve the Lord of the Church who desires that all may be one in Jesus Christ.

## *The Ministry of Bishops in Ecumenical Perspective*

A Paper from IASCER [The International Anglican Standing Committee on Ecumenical Relations]

**Anglican bishops to day, like bishops of other churches, exercise their ministry in an ecumenical context. The Anglican theology and practice of episcopal ministry is grounded in scripture, finds its classic expression in the patristic period, its traditional expression in Anglican formularies of ordination, and its contemporary expression in Anglican ecumenical agreements. Our ecumenical agreements with other churches have an important contribution to make to the theology and practice of episcopal ministry.**

### ***Episcope and episcopoi in the New Testament***

Behind the development of the episcopal office lies the concept of *episcope*, usually translated “oversight.” In the New Testament this ministry of pastoral leadership takes a variety of forms. In the later parts of the New Testament, *episcope* begins to be seen as a particular personal ministry as well as a function. This ministry finds its model in the ministry of Jesus himself, the Good Shepherd: “Now as an elder myself and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as one who shares in the glory to be revealed, I exhort the elders among you to tend the flock of God that is in your charge, exercising the oversight, not under compulsion but willingly, as God would have you do it - not for sordid gain but willingly. Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock. And when the chief shepherd appears, you will win the crown of glory that never fades away.” (1 Peter 5:1-4) Jesus teaches that this ministry is to be one of humble service: “You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.” (Mark 10:42-45) All ministries in the church, including the ministry of oversight, are gifts (*charisms*) of the Spirit for the building up of the body of Christ (Romans 12: 4-8; 1 Corinthians 12: 4-11).

This helps us understand the scriptural roots and authority of all subsequent developments, and provides us with criteria by which to evaluate them. What is it that gives unity and coherence to the bishop’s ministry? What is its centre? The bishop’s ministry is a *charism* of

the Spirit, a gift of pastoral oversight. It is a calling and service to the whole community. This ministry of pastoral oversight includes the ministry of preaching, teaching, and sacramental leadership. A sacramental understanding of episcopal ministry is central both in the patristic tradition and in our ecumenical agreements. As president of the eucharist (which includes both word and sacrament) the bishop is the sign of communion within the church and of the church's communion with God. This stresses both the horizontal (historical) and vertical (transcendent and eschatological) dimensions of the bishop's ministry. The bishop is a symbolic or sacramental person in the midst of God's people. The bishop is both a sign of the communion of the churches with one another in time and space as well as a sign of the eschatological fulfilment of communion with the Triune God, a foretaste of which we already share in the eucharist. It is this picture of the bishop as a visible sign of ecclesial communion and communion with God the Holy Trinity that underlies and informs the various evangelical and pastoral functions of episcopal ministry.

This ministry of the bishop as a visible sign of *koinonia* is in the service of the church's apostolic mission. "As the Father has sent me, so I send you" (John 20:21). The bishop's ministry is to lead the community's participation in the mission of the Triune God in the world. "The Church is sent by Jesus to *be* for the world, to participate in his mission and therefore in the mission of the One who sent Jesus, to participate in the mission of the Father and the Son through the dynamic of the Holy Spirit."<sup>3</sup> This missional context of the ministry of bishops is central in our ecumenical agreements.

### **Bishops in the Early Church**

In the early patristic period the ministry of oversight (*episcopo*) found its focus in the office of the bishop. There are three principal images or models of the office of a bishop in the patristic period, which find expression in the writings of Ignatius of Antioch, Irenaeus, and Cyprian.<sup>4</sup> For Ignatius, the bishop is primarily the one who presides at the eucharist. This is central for Ignatius because of his understanding of the nature of the church. "The church, in Ignatius' view, is essentially eucharistic by nature: there is an organic relation between the Body of Christ understood as community, and the Body of Christ understood as sacrament. For Ignatius, then, the bishop is . . . the one who presides at . . . the eucharistic liturgy."<sup>5</sup> The

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<sup>3</sup> The Niagara Report: Report of the Anglican-Lutheran Consultation on Episcopate 1987, 21.

<sup>4</sup> See Kallistos Ware, "Patterns of Episcopacy in the Early Church and Today: An Orthodox View," in Peter Moore (ed.), *Bishops But What Kind?* (London: SPCK, 1982), 1-24; J. Robert Wright, "The Origins of the Episcopate and Episcopal Ministry in the Early Church," in J. Robert Wright (ed.), *On Being a Bishop* (New York: The Church Hymnal Corporation, 1993), 10-32.

<sup>5</sup> Wright, 19.

theme of unity and the interdependent relationship between one bishop, one eucharistic body, and one church is common in his writings.

Irenaeus, on the other hand, while echoing the eucharistic teaching of Ignatius, places primary emphasis on the bishop's role as teacher of the faith. The context here is the conflict with Gnosticism. For Irenaeus, the bishop is above all the one who preserves the continuity of apostolic teaching in unbroken succession from the apostles. It is through the bishop's faithful proclamation of the Gospel in each local church that the unity of the church and the continuity of the church in the apostolic tradition is preserved.

For Cyprian, the bishop serves as the bond of unity between the local church and the universal church. The bishop is one member of a worldwide 'college' of bishops who are together responsible for maintaining the unity of the churches. Cyprian's primary emphasis, therefore, is upon the bishop as the bond of unity between the local church and the church universal. In his treatise *De Unitate Ecclesiae* "he stresses the conciliar or collegial character of the worldwide episcopate . . . . Each bishop shares in the one episcopate, not as having part of the whole but as being an expression of the whole; just as there are many local churches but one universal church, so there are many individual bishops but only one worldwide episcopate."<sup>6</sup>

With various emphases, in each of these models the bishop is the sign of unity between the local and the universal church, through the maintenance of eucharistic communion, continuity in apostolic teaching, and common oversight of the churches. It is also important to note the importance for the early church of the role of bishops as confessors and martyrs, which was a particularly significant theme for Ignatius and Cyprian. Bishops in some parts of the world are called to make this radical witness today.

### **The Ministry of Bishops in Ecumenical Agreements**

This sacramental vision of episcopal ministry is also reflected in contemporary ecumenical agreements. The Faith and Order document *Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry*<sup>7</sup> reflects a sacramental understanding of ordained ministry, including the episcopal office: "Ordination denotes an action by God and the community" which through long tradition takes place "in the context of worship and especially of the eucharist. . . . The act of ordination by the laying on of hands of those appointed to do so is at one and the same time invocation of the Holy Spirit (*epiklesis*); sacramental sign; acknowledgement of gifts and commitment. Ordination is

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 28-29.

an invocation to God that the new minister be given the power of the Holy Spirit in the new relation which is established between this minister and the local Christian community and, by intention, the Church universal.” (*BEM, Ministry*, 40-42)

“The chief responsibility of the ordained ministry is to assemble and build up the body of Christ by proclaiming and teaching the Word of God, by celebrating the sacraments, and by guiding the life of the community in its worship, its mission and its caring ministry. It is especially in the eucharistic celebration that the ordained ministry is the visible focus of the deep and all-embracing communion between Christ and the members of his body. In the celebration of the eucharist, Christ gathers, teaches and nourishes the Church. It is Christ who invites to the meal and who presides at it. In most churches this presidency is signified and represented by an ordained minister.” (*BEM, Ministry*, 13-14) In the Anglican tradition it is primarily the bishop as eucharistic president who is the sign of communion.

While in the New Testament priestly language is used only of Jesus Christ and of the church understood as a “royal priesthood” (1 Peter 2:9); nevertheless “St. Paul could call his ministry ‘a priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable by the Holy Spirit’ (Romans 15:16)” (*BEM, Ministry*, 17, Commentary) Both in the early church and in our ecumenical agreements the ministry of bishops and presbyters is understood as a priestly ministry “because they fulfil a particular priestly service by strengthening and building up the royal and prophetic priesthood of the faithful through word and sacraments, through their prayers of intercession, and through their pastoral guidance of the community.” (*BEM, Ministry*, 17)

A further guiding principle articulated by *BEM* and repeated in numerous ecumenical agreements is that “the ordained ministry should be exercised in a personal, collegial, and communal way. It should be *personal* because the presence of Christ among his people can most effectively be pointed to by the person ordained to proclaim the Gospel and to call the community to serve the Lord in unity of life and witness. It should also be *collegial*, for there is need for a college of ordained ministers sharing in the common task of representing the concerns of the community. Finally, the intimate relationship between the ordained ministry and the community should find expression in a *communal* dimension where the exercise of the ordained ministry is rooted in the life of the community and requires the community’s effective participation in the discovery of God’s will and the guidance of the Spirit.” (*BEM, Ministry*, 26)

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<sup>7</sup> Faith and Order Paper No. 111 (Geneva: World Council of Churches), 1982.

This sacramental understanding of episcopal ministry is also found in the documents of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC).<sup>8</sup> Ordination is described as a “sacramental act” in which “the gift of God is bestowed upon the ministers, with the promise of divine grace for their work and for their sanctification.” (*Ministry and Ordination*, 15) The 1979 *Elucidation* says that “both traditions agree that a sacramental rite is a visible sign through which the grace of God is given by the Holy Spirit in the Church. The rite of ordination is one of these sacramental rites. Those who are ordained by prayer and the laying on of hands receive their ministry from Christ through those designated in the Church to hand it on; together with the office they are given the grace needed for its fulfilment (cf. para. 14). Since New Testament times the Church has required such recognition and authorization for those who are to exercise the principal functions of *episcopus* in the name of Christ. This is what both traditions mean by the sacramental rite of ordination.” (*Elucidation 1979*, 3) Moreover, “particularly in presiding at the eucharist” bishops and presbyters serve “the whole Church in the fulfilment of its priestly vocation of self-offering to God as a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1).” (*Ministry and Ordination*, 13)

The various Anglican-Lutheran ecumenical agreements likewise highlight the bishop’s *charism* of pastoral oversight and the role of the bishop as a sign or symbolic person.<sup>9</sup> *The Niagara Report* of the Anglican-Lutheran Consultation on *Episcopus* provided a benchmark for the understanding of episcopal ministry in the regional agreements between Anglican and Lutheran churches. *The Niagara Report* and the regional agreements place the ministry of the bishop in the context of the apostolic mission of the church. The apostolic mission of the church is understood to be rooted in the Trinitarian action of God towards the world and the sending of the apostles by Christ in the power of the Spirit. The continuing mission of the church requires apostolic continuity. While apostolic succession is characteristic of the church as a whole, pastoral oversight (*episcopus*) is an essential strand in this apostolic witness. In the patristic period the bishop came to be seen as the symbolic person in whom the identity of the community was focused and represented. *The Niagara Report* sees the office of bishop in the early church as symbolizing the *koinonia* or communion of the local churches with the universal church both in time and in space.

The sign character of the bishop’s ministry is expressed in episcopal ordination or consecration: “In the consecration of a bishop the sign is effective in four ways: first it

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<sup>8</sup> Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission, *The Final Report*, Windsor, 1981.

witnesses to the Church's trust in God's faithfulness to his people and in the promised presence of Christ with his Church, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to the end of time; secondly, it expresses the Church's intention to be faithful to God's initiative and gift, by living in the continuity of the apostolic faith and tradition; thirdly, the participation of a group of bishops in the laying on of hands signifies their and their churches' acceptance of a new bishop and so of the catholicity of the churches; fourthly, it transmits ministerial office and its authority in accordance with God's will and institution." (*Porvoo*, 48)

In the Anglican-Lutheran ecumenical agreements it is the "oversight or presiding ministry which constitutes the heart of the episcopal office." (*Niagara*, 54) "Oversight of the Church and its mission is the particular responsibility of the bishop. The bishop's office is one of service and communication within the community of believers and, together with the whole community, to the world. Bishops preach the word, preside at the sacraments, and administer discipline in such a way as to be representative pastoral ministers of oversight, continuity and unity in the Church. They have pastoral oversight of the area to which they are called. They serve the apostolicity, catholicity and unity of the Church's teaching, worship and sacramental life. They have responsibility for leadership in the Church's mission." (*Porvoo*, 43)

The bishop's role as president of the eucharist and its eschatological dimension is given particular emphasis in the recent Cyprus Agreed Statement of the Anglican - Orthodox Theological Dialogue.<sup>10</sup> The Cyprus agreement, in line with other Anglican ecumenical agreements, acknowledges that in the New Testament the local churches never appear without *episcopus*, or oversight, but this took various forms. At the beginning of the second century the Ignatian epistles provide the first unequivocal evidence of the threefold ministries of bishop, presbyter and deacon in a recognizably modern form. The picture is one of gradual development into a pattern of one bishop in each local church, but always set within the harmony of diverse ministries and charisms.

The Cyprus agreement views the development of *episcopus* by the post-apostolic church as prompted by the need to find a way of preserving the apostolic witness to Christ. This witness to the apostolic tradition involved the closest link between the bishop and the

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<sup>9</sup> The various Anglican-Lutheran ecumenical agreements are conveniently collected in Sven Oppegaard and Gregory Cameron, ed. Anglican-Lutheran Agreements: Regional and International Agreements 1972-2002 (Geneva: Lutheran World Federation, 2004).

<sup>10</sup> The Church of the Triune God: The Cyprus Agreed Statement of the International Commission for Anglican - Orthodox Theological Dialogue - 2006. Behind this report lies the important work of Henri de Lubac and John Zizioulas.



eucharist. In the early patristic period the local church understood itself as eschatological in character, gathered around Christ in the Spirit, with the eucharist as a crucial moment in its ecclesial life. When the local church celebrated the eucharist the eschatological community was understood to be present in its fullness. "Eucharist" in this context included pastoral oversight and proclamation of the gospel. The Cyprus agreement makes the case that this eschatological understanding of the local church gave rise to the one bishop in Ignatius.

A significant change took place in the fourth century owing to the changed relationship between church and state. As dioceses grew in size, presbyters in addition to bishops became the normal eucharistic ministers. In due course, the bishop's eucharistic role became overshadowed by administrative and judicial functions. Even his ministry as the teacher of the church came to be separated from his preaching ministry. This weakened the bishop's primary role as president of the eucharist. There was thus a fading of the earlier local, eschatological, and eucharistic self-understanding of the church. What is important in this vision for Anglicans is not that the bishop always presides at the eucharist in the local parish, but that theologically the bishop is understood to be the chief pastor, teacher, preacher, and president of the eucharist for the diocese. It is primarily in this way that the bishop is the sign of *koinonia* at all levels of the church's life.

The Anglican tradition accepts *episcopate*, exercised personally by a bishop, not only as a development which serves the needs of the church, but also as a mark of catholicity, apostolicity, and unity, together with the holy scriptures, the creeds and the sacraments, as witnessed by the Lambeth Quadrilateral. Both Anglicans and Orthodox understand the bishop in an eschatological and iconic sense as representing Christ. "The priestly president of the eucharistic assembly exercises an iconic ministry. As the Dublin Agreed Statement made plain, 'In the Eucharist the eternal priesthood of Christ is constantly manifested in time. The celebrant, in the liturgical action, has a twofold ministry: as an icon of Christ, acting in the name of Christ towards the community and also as a representative of the community expressing the priesthood of the faithful.' (DAS p.56)"

This emphasis on the role of the bishop as sign both of apostolic continuity and of eschatological promise means that the church in history stands under both judgement and grace. In this perspective it is the servant role of the bishop that comes to the fore rather than episcopacy as an expression of worldly power: "If the eschatological presence of Christ in the

Eucharist is indeed the centre of local church life, then eschatological judgement, as well as grace, must be allowed to challenge both the community and its *episcopate*.<sup>11</sup>

This eschatological perspective reminds us again that the bishop's ministry must always be seen in the context of the church's apostolic mission. The mission context of the ministry of bishops is highlighted in the recent agreed statement by the International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission: "As a foretaste of the Kingdom, the Church exists to announce the fullness of the Kingdom."<sup>12</sup> "The Church itself is essentially sent on mission into the world. Its mission is rooted in the saving mission of the Son and the Spirit and is, indeed, a sacramental form of that divine mission. The Church, therefore, is a communion in mission."<sup>13</sup> "The fullness of the ministry of oversight is entrusted to the episcopate, which has the responsibility of maintaining and expressing the unity of the Church and leading it in mission. . . . In their dioceses, when they come together regionally, and at a world-level, bishops have a special role in keeping the Church true to apostolic teaching and mission in conformity to the mind of Christ."<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Church of the Triune God, V, 16.

<sup>12</sup> Growing Together in Unity and Mission: Building on 40 Years of Anglican - Roman Catholic Dialogue (London: SPCK, 2007), 18.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 16, 17.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

***Reflections offered to the Primates of the Anglican Communion  
by the Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission  
at the Invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury***

A paper from the Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission

The Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission, which has been charged to consider the ways in which communion may be protected and nourished, submits the following theological reflections to the Primates in response to the exceptional circumstances with which the Anglican Communion is now confronted, as part of the fruit of our ongoing studies.

1. 'In Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us' (II Cor. 5.19). Everything in the life of the Church depends upon this unique gift. It is the good news of grace to which the Church has been sent to bear witness.
2. The Scriptures are the unique source for this Gospel, and the Church lives in the light of and in dependence upon that testimony.
3. In all its words and deeds the Church is called to give a two-fold account of itself: to speak the words of life to the world, giving an account of the faith by which it lives, and at the same time each part of the Church is called to submit an account of its stewardship of the Gospel to other Christians.
4. Christian history reveals a plurality and diversity of accounts of the faith, though there is but one Gospel. Divergences of interpretation give rise to different traditions. Moreover, because human words are used and specific human situations are addressed, these accounts of the faith reflect the differing contexts of the proclamation.
5. Furthermore, because of human sin, ignorance and frailty, it is to be anticipated that omissions, mistakes or distortions may occur in any account given of the faith.
6. As a result it becomes vital that the account each part of the Church gives to other Christians of its stewardship of the Gospel contains the possibility of openness to correction. Communion in the Church requires this mutual accountability. By it,

faithfulness in the truth is encouraged, partial understandings are enriched, errors are challenged and unity (which is the priceless gift of the Spirit) is enhanced.

7. In this document, we concentrate on one aspect of mutual accountability, namely *paraklesis* – a New Testament word with a range of meanings from “comfort” and “encourage” to “appeal” to “admonition” and “direction”. Paul charged members of the Church to “admonish one another” in Christ (I Thess 4.18, 5.11). It is evident from the letters of Paul that he was often obliged to offer a critical assessment of the faithfulness of one of his congregations (see, for example, Gal 1:6) himself. Moreover he exercised this form of over-sight in relation to congregations which he had not personally founded (Romans 12.1ff) and in relation to those congregations in which some no longer recognised his apostleship (II Corinthians).
8. In II Corinthians, Paul hammered out a fresh statement of his apostolic authority, in great personal pain, under the imminent threat of a total breakdown of relations with the Church in Corinth. He saw this authority as grounded in the dying and rising of Jesus Christ, and thus as characterised by the power which is perfected in weakness.
9. Living life worthy of the calling with which we have been called involves humility, gentleness, patience, speaking the truth in love, putting away bitterness, wrath and anger, and being kind, tender-hearted and forgiving one another (Ephesians 4). We are in this way to ‘make every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace’ (Ephesians 3). Mutual admonitions may involve discernment and the exercise of judgment; but encouragement in faith and thus building up the body in love, is the primary motivation. The virtues involved go beyond mere civility.
10. Bishops are as open to admonition in respect of their conduct as other Christians. Gregory the Great regarded it as a compliment to a leader’s humility, if those over whom he ruled felt able to rebuke him (Pastoral Rule II, 8). This has implications for the life of bishops, as the Pastoral Epistles (which were a major source for the 16<sup>th</sup> century revision of the Anglican Ordinal) make clear. ‘Timothy’ is instructed to ‘set believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity’ (1 Tim 4:12). If, for example, a bishop’s lifestyle becomes a stumbling block that bishop should hardly be immune from or expect to avoid constant challenge. This constant challenge is bound to affect adversely that bishop’s *episcopate*.

11. The cost of genuine dialogue between Christians of different convictions is considerable, even given the kindness of speech and conduct mentioned above. If conservative voices are not to be driven out, it must be possible for an admonition about recent issues to do with homosexuality to be delivered, clearly argued from biblical sources. Not all such arguments are well expressed or would be supported by scholarly writing; but it is a mistake to dismiss all of them, as if their sole basis were literalism or naïve fundamentalism.
12. On the other hand, if progressive voices are not to be ignored, new knowledge has honestly to be confronted. Though there is still much uncertainty, it is evident that the existence in some people of homosexual inclinations has to be understood in a way not available to biblical writers. It has to be recognised as a cost of the engagement of the Gospel with the world, that Christians remain open to changing ideas with their attendant uncertainties and controversies.
13. Not all features of the life of the Church are equally close to the “truth of the Gospel”. Although what the Church is, speaks and does ought never to contradict the Gospel, aspects of its life may be relatively immaterial to the substance of the Gospel. Thus, W R Huntingdon assures his fellow Americans that ‘a flutter of surplices’ would not be thought to belong to the unity of the Church (see *The Church Idea*); A M Ramsey, on the other hand, argues that episcopacy is related to the content of the Gospel (*The Gospel and the Catholic Church*)
14. It would be convenient if there existed a permanently valid and unchallengeable list of fundamentals of the faith, and a corresponding list of secondary questions or *adiaphora*. But the continuing fact of controversies between and within the denominations shows at least that there is no universal agreement among Christians. Frequently moreover, though there is agreement at a general level on some doctrine or practice (for example Holy Communion), interpretations in detail tend to be diverse or even contradictory. It was the considered judgment of the nineteenth century Anglican theologian William Palmer, for example, that the doctrine of fundamentals was not an infallible guide when it came to the resolution of controversial questions.
15. Yet it is equally true that the Church, for good reasons, consistently renews its understanding of the substance of the faith, by which it lives and prays for the coming kingdom. As it does this, it has to wrestle with the fact that not all features of the life of

the Church are of equal importance; some lie closer to the heart of the Gospel than others.

16. The questions which now confront the Anglican Communion concern the blessing of same-sex unions, the ordination of non-abstinent homosexual persons to the diaconate and priesthood, the appointment of such a person to the office of Bishop and related issues of Church order. How is the Church to make right judgments in relation to such matters? What weight ought to be given to such innovations? How significant for Christian faith and practice is ECUSA's decision to appoint a non-abstinent homosexual person to the office of Bishop within the Anglican Communion?
17. In the present situation the Primates are called to determine first what weight should be given to the above decisions. How central to Christian faith and practice, for example, is the decision of ECUSA? Finding an answer to this question is not easy, though in the light of the controversy surrounding the Episcopal appointment and the decision of the diocese of New Westminster, Canada, there is a strong indication that the matter is neither light nor a matter indifferent (*adiaphoron*).
18. In making such judgments the usual distinctions between matters of faith and morals begin to collapse, in much the same way as distinctions between doctrine and ethics, while useful, often give way to an appreciation of the interwovenness of matters of faith and life. This reality is at odds with the mistaken view that 'core doctrine' does not involve deep connection with Christian teachings about moral behaviour (as apparently the Righter Judgement [1996]<sup>15</sup> holds).
19. If the Primates decide that the matter is of great weight with respect to the nature of Christian faith and its practice then it would seem that an innovation of such significance requires the broadest consideration and endorsement by the rest of the Anglican Communion.
20. Some matters are judged not to touch or significantly impact upon Christian faith and practice. They are judged either non-fundamental or *adiaphora* – neither commanded nor forbidden. If the Primates decided that the matter before them belonged at this end

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<sup>15</sup> The judgement of the Court for the Trial of a Bishop in ECUSA in the case of Stanton (Bishop of Dallas) and Others v. Righter (1996), was explicitly based on an understanding of the "core doctrine" of ECUSA limiting it to "the story of God's relationship to God's people". The court found that "there was no Core Doctrine prohibiting the ordination of a non-celibate homosexual person living in a faithful and committed sexual relationship with a person of the same sex."

of the spectrum, this suggests that responsibility and freedom for determining the matter would occur at an appropriate 'lower' level of decision making in the Anglican Communion (e.g. a province or national church). However, it should also be noted that in Anglicanism if a proposed change is considered amongst the *adiaphora* and is also known to be a matter of significant dispute, there has been a reluctance to proceed. This compares with the Pauline principle (1 Cor 8-10; Rom 14) about not proceeding with actions, even if *adiaphora*, if they cause another to stumble.

21. A problem arises over innovations about which there are different views in the Church concerning the relative weight or significance to be accorded to a matter. Such are the matters in question. How ought the Church to proceed in such situations? A principle here might be that if the dispute is:

**intense** (eg. generates high degree of sustained and unresolved debate that threatens the unity of the Anglican Communion; or that requires urgent attention)

**extensive** (eg. not confined to one section or region of the Church; has significant implications for mission and ecumenical relations; has a wider social impact) and

**substantial** (concerning an actual issue, and not for example, simply being generated by the media)

then the matter cannot remain simply for the local Church (e.g. the diocese) to handle.

22. A word of caution here. It is not envisaged that the first 'port of call' for disputed matters in the Communion would necessarily be the Primates. Rather, historically Anglicans have dealt with their conflicts in consonance with the principle of subsidiarity<sup>16</sup>. Indeed, Anglicanism has a natural inbuilt reticence to 'stealing' from lower levels the decision making responsibilities that are properly theirs. So it is not the case that strong action from above in a particular case would become the Anglican norm for settling disputes. But if a matter arises of crucial importance to faith and life, or if a matter generates such dispute that it threatens the bonds of the Anglican Communion, the Communion as a whole, through its highest levels of authority, has a responsibility to be properly involved in the handling of the dispute. A process which involves mutual accountability and receives wisdom from the whole of the Communion commends itself in such circumstances.

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<sup>16</sup> "Subsidiarity" is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as "the principle that a central authority should have a subsidiary function, performing only those tasks which cannot be performed effectively at a more immediate or local level."

23. While the processes and structures for dispute settlement in our Church may yet require further development this ought not override the very great moral authority and responsibility of those charged by the church to exercise a 'care for all the churches' in the Anglican Communion (cf. II Cor 11.28). In 1989, for example, Primates endorsed the guidelines set out in the Report of the Eames Commission, and adopted them for the life of the Communion.
24. At this exceptional juncture in our history many are looking to the Primates to hear the call of the churches for the leadership (*paraklesis*) that befits those who hold such a high office. We pray with the Primates that, as they listen for the voice of the Spirit, and are nourished by the Word, they may be emboldened to find new and fresh ways to exercise the charism of their office (*episcopo*) for the common good and peace of the churches.

### Three questions for reflection

**1. How crucial to Christian faith and communion are the blessing of same-sex unions, the ordination of non-abstinent homosexual persons to the diaconate and priesthood and the appointment of such a person to the office of Bishop?**

If these matters are deemed of crucial import to the communion of the churches then they ought to be dealt with beyond the local level of the Communion's dispute settling processes by those who have responsibility for the 'care of the churches' of the Communion.

If the matters are deemed not essential a second question arises:

**2. How significant is the nature of the disputes regarding these matters?**

If the Primates decide that the dispute is not that significant in respect to its intensity, extent and substance then the matter has to be handled differently under the operation of the principle of subsidiarity, and decided at the appropriate lower level.

If the Primates decide that the nature of the dispute is of such significance - with reference to its intensity, extent and substance - that it makes for the disunity of the Church then the matter needs to be addressed at the higher levels of the Communion.



If the Primates decide that the matters ought to be responsibly dealt with as part of their calling and authority as leaders of the Communion then the question arises:

### **3. What processes of accountability, admonition and healing are appropriate in the Communion?**

It needs to be recognised that in making a judgment as to whether the matter under consideration is of such significance that it is of crucial import for the communion of the churches, or not, the primates, whatever they decide, are already exercising an apostolic authority on behalf of the whole Communion. The making explicit of such an authority may indeed be a significant development in the life of the Communion, but it is evident from the history of the Church that new developments in the exercise of wider authority take place at times of crisis and challenge.

The Commission have for two years been engaged on a study of communion in a fruitful dialogue with members of the Anglican Communion throughout the world, and is continuing to seek to understand more deeply what are the appropriate processes of accountability, admonition and healing in a rapidly changing situation. The urgent need for effective ways to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace so that the Gospel may be preached and God be worshipped in spirit and in truth has at this time given a sharp focus to the wider reflection of the Commission on Communion. In response to the Archbishop of Canterbury's invitation, we offer our theological reflections in a spirit of dialogue under the *paraklesis* of the Spirit, hoping that they will aid the Primates in making their judgement on the demands of communion in Christ at the present time.

## THE MINISTRY OF BISHOPS

Report of the Lambeth Conference 1988      Extract from the Section Report *Mission and Ministry*

151 Within the wider context of the mission and Church, the diocese is often seen as basic to the life Church. This unity is personified and symbolised in the office of the bishop. Under God, the bishop leads the local church in its mission to the world.

Among other things, the bishop is:

- (a) a symbol of the Unity of the Church in its mission;
- (b) a teacher and defender of the faith;
- (c) a pastor of the pastors and of the laity;
- (d) an enabler in the preaching of the Word, and in the administration of the Sacraments;
- (e) a leader in mission and an initiator of outreach to the world surrounding the community of the faithful;
- (f) a shepherd who nurtures and cares for the flock of God;
- (g) a physician to whom are brought the wounds of society
- (h) a voice of conscience within the society in which the local Church is placed;
- (i) a prophet who proclaims the justice of God in the context of the Gospel of loving redemption;
- (j) a head of the family in its wholeness, its misery and its joys. The bishop is the family's centre of life and love.

### COLLEGIALITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

152 The Church by biblical definition is a body and within it all its members are mutually inter-dependent, accountable to God and to one another. The holder of the office of bishop needs to work corporately within the total Church in a number of ways:

- with the laity, deacons, priests and other bishops (if applicable) of the diocese;
- with the bishops of other dioceses with whom the bishop is 'in communion';
- with other Christian Churches with whom some degree of communion exists;

153 An important element within the Church, as the Anglican Communion understands it, is the diocese, in which all kinds of ministry exist - lay, diaconal, presbyteral and episcopal. Within the diocese the bishop is called to work in full collaboration with the clergy and the laity. This can be expressed through consultation or through a synodical form of church government.

154 To express the principle of accountability, there are varieties of canonical and semi-official structures within the dioceses and Provinces of the Anglican Communion, such as Standing Committees, Boards, Councils and Synods the mutual accountability of bishops, clergy and laity. The method of electing or appointing bishops varies considerably from Province to Province. All systems, however, now seem to include the involvement of clergy and laity at some level in the process. Other bishops in the Province also tend to have a place in the process.

155. Through its bishop each diocese expresses its relationship with other dioceses. Within a Province, bishops act corporately as a 'House of Bishops' to express their collegiality.

(1) We note the need for the bishop and the diocese to be encouraged to as mutually accountable to each other for their ministries as well as to the Provinces to which they belong.

(2) We recommend that, to emphasise the Communion-wide relationship and the catholicity of the Church, whenever possible, a bishop from another Province or from a Church in communion be included at each Episcopal ordination.

(3) We recommend that the Primates be asked to exchange with each other (and they with the bishops of their Provinces) the lists of those they ordain to the episcopate, along with the names of dioceses.

(4) We recommend that, whenever possible, isolated dioceses be related to other nearby and/or culturally compatible dioceses in order to share in the collegiality which such relationships afford.

156. Along with other Churches, the Anglican Communion has allowed the ordination of bishops who will not be bishops of dioceses. These are called assistant or suffragan bishops. Their method of election and their place in decision-making is sometimes different from that of diocesan bishops.

157. We believe that all bishops by virtue of their ordination share in the fullness of episcopacy.

Accordingly, we recommend that each Province re-examines

- (a) the position and work of all bishops active in full-time diocesan work, including those known in the various Provinces as suffragans, assistants, assisting, area or regional bishops to ensure that all bishops have a true *episcopate* of jurisdiction and pastoral care and are seen as belonging fully to the local college of bishops.
- (b) the principle that all bishops active in full-time diocesan work be made

full members, with seat, voice and vote, of all provincial, national and international gatherings of Anglican bishops (Resolutions 46 and 46A)<sup>17</sup>

## FUNDING OF THE EPISCOPATE

158 The method by which a bishopric is funded may have consequences for the bishop as he seeks to make decisions in the diocese and to contribute to the *collegium* on a wider basis.

The effect of the method of funding on accountability was considered particularly where:

the diocese is short of funds and has to contribute bishops out of current income, which may be very small

the diocese is dependent on external grants to support the bishop the diocese is about to be divided into two or more dioceses

the diocese lacks proper provision for the retirement of the bishops, particularly in the areas of housing and pensions;

the diocese lacks proper provision for widows and dependents of deceased bishops.

159 Having listened to a Province, and recognising the experience of lack of funds and other pastoral concerns, the Conference recommends to the Anglican Consultative Council that

(a) in the planning of the Partners-in-Mission Consultation with the dioceses of the Francophone Province of Burundi, Rwanda and Zaire, to be held in 1989, adequate time be given to a consideration of Primatial appointment, matters of financial and manpower needs, provision of theological and teacher training staff, development and leadership structures and programmes.

(b) the procedure recommended for the Francophone Province be a model followed in *such other province* where the need exists (See Resolution 49.)

## INITIAL PREPARATION AND CONTINUING SUPPORT FOR THE EPISCOPATE

160 The Lambeth Conference in 1968 and more fully in 1978 highlighted the need for training and support for the bishops of the Anglican Communion. The 1978 Report requested :

*That written guidelines be prepared for episcopal training ...*

*(and) that member churches prepare their own versions of these guidelines in order to cover the training requirements of bishops functioning in their particular circumstances.*

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<sup>17</sup> This and the other Resolutions referred to in the text, were resolutions which endorsed the suggestions in this text. Therefore I have not reproduced them here.

161 In 1985 a small group met with the Secretary for the 1988 Lambeth Conference to survey the progress on this request, and they subsequently circulated a report to each of the Primates in 1986 entitled *Reflections on the Theology of, and the Practice of the Episcopate*. This report went beyond the question of initial training for bishops, to deal with the theology and practice of the episcopate and the particular ways in which to give bishops training. As a result, a number of Provinces have joined who had acted earlier in establishing schemes for initial training and continuing support for bishops, and also in many cases their spouses.

162 The diverse contexts in which bishops exercise their episcopate makes a standard pattern of training impossible, but the need for help and training at the point of entry into the episcopate is now well established. It is accepted in Canada, USA, England, the Council of the Churches of East Asia, New Zealand, Australia and many of the Provinces in Africa. Other Provinces have the matter under review.

163 We recommend such programmes as are outlined below, and ask each Province to implement programmes relevant to the particular needs of the Province, the bishop, the bishop's spouse and the bishop's family where appropriate. Such programmes should encompass the significant change in understanding and role that occurs during the transition from being a parish priest, or the holder of some other office, to being a bishop. They should also include such practical issues as financial and management skills required for the organization and funding of a diocese. All such training needs, ideally, to be in the culture of the bishop concerned.

#### *Initial Preparation*

164 The change from one ministry to another should always be an opportunity for establishing priorities, taking stock and setting new directions. Because the bishop's office has a high public profile, this change of ministry should be marked by ample time for preparation. One month should be the minimum period *after* the completion of the bishop's previous work. Each Province should be ready to provide suitable programmes and location for the pre-ordination preparation. The receiving diocese should see that the costs are adequately funded, either from its own funds or from other sources as appropriate.

165 Each Province of Area Council should set out clearly the known tasks and functions of a bishop, both in mission as well as in administration and corporate duties, and have these available for study by the bishop-elect.

166 Time should also be allowed for spiritual refreshment and family preparation.

### *In-Service Support*

167 The work of a bishop is draining both in terms of energy and in terms of spiritual resources. In-service support is therefore essential if the Church is to gain most benefit from its bishops. This should take the form of programmes of mutual support for bishops of a Province and also more personal support at a diocesan level.

168 It should be possible for the Primate or Dean of each Province to arrange for all bishops to have group meetings on a regular basis throughout the year.

169 Spiritual refreshment should be part of the pattern of life of every bishop. We encourage all bishops to seek the support and guidance of a spiritual director/counsellor.

170 It is very clear that the office and work of a bishop can create personal, physical and mental stress resulting in ill-health. For this reason we recommend that all bishops should present themselves for medical examination at least once a year.

### *Study/Refreshment/Sabbatical Leave*

171 The need for such leave for clergy has been established in many parts of the Anglican Communion. In the past, such leave was rare for bishops except perhaps in relation to major church gatherings such as the Lambeth Conference or a World Assembly of the WCC.

172 We would recommend that bishops be granted leave after approximately six years in office to attend to theological, pastoral and personal concerns. Without such opportunities, a bishop is unlikely to be able to fulfil the tasks of teaching, of being an example, and of witnessing for mission.

173 We encourage Provinces and dioceses to provide financial assistance so that the bishops can participate in such opportunities. Occasional sabbaticals, study leave or 'in-service' growth opportunities throughout the period of episcopacy are recommended.

### *Family Support*

174 We recommend that where a bishop is married the spouse, and as possible other family members, should also be offered opportunities for support preparation for a changed role and continuing opportunities for fellowship with others in similar positions. (See further Resolution 41)

## **THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION FOR THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION (TEAC)**

TEAC is a Working Party in the Anglican Communion which was established by the Primates Meeting in 2002 and mandated with the task of developing theological education throughout the Anglican Communion. It works as closely as possible with a number of other bodies who also have an interest in the same field.

The Chair of TEAC is Bishop Greg Venables, Presiding Bishop of the Province of the Southern Cone.

The Vice-Chair of TEAC is Bishop Robert Paterson, Bishop of Sodor and Man in the Church of England.

The Secretary of TEAC is Clare Amos, Director of Theological Studies in the Anglican Communion Office.

There are about 35 people who are members of TEAC. Most Anglican Provinces are represented among its membership. TEAC also has three Regional Associates based in Africa, Asia and Latin America who work with the Secretary to take forward the work of the group.

TEAC is concerned about appropriate theological education for *all* Anglican Christians – bishops, clergy, lay ministers and the laity. It also has a specific mandate to develop the teaching and understanding of the Anglican Way in theological education.

The document *The Anglican Way: Signposts on a Common Journey*, which is also included in this mailing, was produced at a residential meeting held by TEAC in Singapore in May 2007. It aims to set out concisely the key elements of the Anglican Way. The document will be used as a background resource at the Lambeth Conference.

A number of the members of TEAC (particularly those who are themselves bishops) will be present at the Lambeth Conference. They will be offering self select groups linked to theological education. It is intended that the work of TEAC should make a constructive contribution to the Conference.

One particular feature of TEAC's work has been the production of a series of grids which set out the competencies that can be expected of those involved in particular forms of ministry. These have already been found very useful by a large number of people in widely different

parts of the Anglican Communion. If you want to find out more about these grids (there is one specifically designed for episcopal ministry) you can visit TEAC's website at

<http://www.anglicancommunion.org/ministry/theological/>

Under TEAC's sponsorship a core text on Anglican Studies (*Something in Common* by Adrian Chatfield) is being translated into French, Spanish, Portuguese and Swahili. Copies of these translations will be available at the Lambeth Conference.



## Introduction to the Grids

The collection of grids (which can be accessed through this page on the website) aims to set out in an accessible way the ‘competencies’ that TEAC believes are essential for people engaged in various forms of ministry and discipleship within the Anglican Communion, at different stages in their formation.

The grids are an example of the increasingly-used ‘Outcomes Based’ model of education. In this model, the primary question is not ‘What does a person know?’ but ‘What competencies does the learner need to gain in order to be able to fulfil this or that task/job/vocation?’. The required competencies can be gained in a variety of ways. One of the features of ‘Outcomes Based’ models, therefore, is that they offer considerable flexibility – which means that they are appropriate models to offer for the varied contexts of the Anglican Communion, where the differing availability of resources means that different methods of training are appropriate in different places. ‘Outcomes Based’ models of education (as here) also seek to value the different dimensions of training: intellectual, practical, emotional, and spiritual. All are important as part of a holistic framework for theological education.

As will be obvious from a look at the grids, they also work on the principle that theological education and training for discipleship is potentially life-long. Learning does not come to a halt at the point of ordination or licensing. Through the grids, we have made it clear that we believe that the education and training of ministers needs to continue in some overt form for at least the first three years in which a person exercises ministry. We also consider that there are certain competencies that need to be gained before a person either takes on a post of particular responsibility, or is involved in the training of others for the ministry concerned.

Five of the grids relate to different forms of ministry and/or discipleship. These are:

- Bishops
- Priests (and transitional deacons)
- Vocational deacons
- Licensed Lay Ministers (this is understood to include lay people holding an episcopal or diocesan licence to exercise a ministry such as that of Catechist, Reader, Lay Reader, Evangelist, Pastoral Assistant, etc)
- Lay people

*See further notes on these grids below.*

Two of the grids relate to the particular dimensions and needs of the 'Anglican Way' in theological education:

- One of these grids sets out what training in the Anglican Way is appropriate and necessary for the different forms of ministry whose training TEAC is exploring (Anglican Way, Part One).
- The other grid makes some suggestions as to the locations and means by which this necessary training may be obtained. (Anglican Way, Part Two).

The nature of these two grids means that they are bound to appear less 'finished' than the other grids, and are, in some respects, work in progress. They contributed significantly to some of the thinking behind the 'Signposts' document.

The members of TEAC, a body drawn from most of the Anglican Communion, have worked together on these grids over a lengthy period. We offer our thanks to a variety of individuals and organisations with whom we have consulted during this process. We now offer these grids as a resource and for comment to the wider Anglican Communion.

*Clare Amos*

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Comments on specific grids

Bishops

This grid, relating to the theological education and training of bishops, is based on the principle that all potential bishops will have already received theological training along the lines suggested in the 'Priests' grid. The Bishops' grid strongly suggests that all bishops should receive appropriately targeted training, particularly during the early years of episcopal ministry.

ways across the Communion. For example, the tasks and responsibilities given to Lay Readers or Catechists vary considerably from place to place. The grid therefore deliberately does not seek to be prescriptive about the precise roles of each of these lay ministries, but offers suggestions in wider terms about the needs of all lay people exercising a licensed ministry in the church.

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION FOR THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION

**BISHOPS TARGET GROUP**

*Note: This Grid assumes that the outcomes in the Priests/Transitional Deacons Grid have largely been met. However, some of the outcomes given in this Grid restate and reinforce those set out in the others.*

|   | <b>At nomination or election as a bishop, the following qualities (or actions) should be apparent.</b>  | <b>With training between election or nomination and consecration, or up to first year as bishop, the following should be evident or should take place.</b>  | <b>During tenure of office for all bishops, evidence of the following qualities should be evident or actions occur.</b>   |
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| <p><b>Vocation and discernment</b></p> <p>A.1</p> | <p>The candidate is open to being called by the Spirit and the Church to episcopal office.</p> <p>The candidate is aware of the needs of the province / national church and the diocese / episcopal area.</p> <p>The candidate has a thorough knowledge and understanding of the apostolic tradition that is to be guarded, passed on and communicated, and an ability to teach it effectively with grace (1 Timothy 3. 1-7; Titus 1; Irenaeus; Tertullian).</p> <p>The candidate has a pastoral heart for others, good self-awareness and is a leader in mission, with the capacity to look beyond</p> | <p>The new bishop engages in prayerful reflection on what gifts of grace are needed for new tasks, seeking to discern the impact of new and wider responsibilities on self-perceptions. The new bishop reflects on the nature of this new calling.</p> <p>Orientation before consecration includes reading, discussion with the archbishop / presiding bishop or another senior bishop and a time of retreat.</p> <p>The new bishop seeks a deeper appreciation of Anglican understandings of episcopal ministry and authority, and ways in which the bishop shares this collaboratively with others.</p> | <p>The bishop regularly and rigorously reviews the vocation of chief pastor, re-assessing how well clergy and people have been enabled, resourced and empowered, and the role of representative of the diocese in public life, assessing how effective this has been.</p> <p>In later years, the bishop asks when retirement should be considered and what might re-invigorate vision.</p> <p>A.4</p> |

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|  | the merely local.<br>A.2  | A.3   |   |
| <b>Clarity about the nature of ministry</b><br><br>B.1 | The candidate will have an initial, informed understanding of episcopal ministry: the calling to guard, maintain and teach the faith, and to exercise leadership in mission.<br><br>B.2 | See <i>'Guardian of the Faith'</i> below.<br><br>The new bishop has an awareness of the historic role of episcopacy and of new demands on bishops in today's world.<br><br>The new bishop takes into account biblical research on the collaborative role of apostles and co-workers.<br><br>B.3 | The bishop reviews the episcopal ministry in the light of biblical and Anglican theologies of episcopacy and compares these with pressures arising from diocesan and popular expectations.<br><br>In collaboration, if possible, with other bishops the bishop ensures that the diocese is aware of the nature of the bishop's primary duties.<br><br>B.4 |

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| <b>Spirituality and faith</b><br><br>C.1 | The candidate's spirituality is grounded in Anglican liturgy and in devotional classics.<br><br>The candidate has established a personal devotional practice and discipline that involves daily prayer, the reading of Scripture and the study of theology and modern thought, in openness to God's Spirit.<br><br>C.2 | The new bishop's personal devotional practice and discipline as a priest, together with prayer and study, develop or change to match new responsibilities.<br><br>The new bishop becomes an example of holiness of life appropriate to a more sensitive and visible role in the public arena.<br><br>C.3 | The bishop regularly seeks to renew faith and vision.<br><br>The bishop has a lively personal devotional practice and discipline, and a zeal for ministry.<br><br>The bishop's preaching remains lively, biblical and creative.<br><br>The bishop continues to study the Scriptures, the spiritual classics and Anglican devotion.<br><br>C.4 |
| <b>Personality, character and</b>        | The candidate demonstrates holiness  | The new bishop will implement safeguards against temptations to  | The bishop's personal integrity is  |

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| <p><b>integrity</b></p> <p>D.1</p>         | <p>in word and life, love for God's people, humility and lack of self-promotion.</p> <p>The candidate is secure enough to avoid becoming defensive or authoritarian; warm and outgoing to clergy and lay, men and women; and listens to others sensitively.</p> <p>The candidate is in good physical and mental health.</p> <p>D.2</p> | <p>self-aggrandisement, or, conversely undue feelings of inadequacy. (A spiritual director or counsellor may be called to offer support for this.)</p> <p>D.3</p>   | <p>maintained in the face of a multiplicity of expectations or role-performances.</p> <p>Seniority does not bring loss of enthusiasm, sensitivity, or the ability to listen.</p> <p>The bishop remains accessible and approachable.</p> <p>D.4</p>   |
| <p><b>Relationships</b></p> <p>E.1</p>     | <p>The candidate is readily approachable, sensitive to the perceptions of others, able to build and sustain relationships, keeps and protects confidences, and invites and renders reciprocal loyalty.</p> <p>E.2</p>  | <p>The new bishop seeks feed-back about others' perceptions of his/her approachability and warmth towards a wide community of diverse persons – clergy and lay, rich and poor, old and young, men and women. This is reviewed together with relationships with spouse and family (where appropriate).</p> <p>The Primate/Archbishop, or the new bishop himself/herself, ensures adequate support mechanisms. Ideally this support also includes that of other bishops.</p> <p>E.3</p> | <p>The bishop keeps all relationships under regular review, examining how these are nurtured and sustained.</p> <p>The bishop remains outgoing.</p> <p>The bishop reviews possible blind-spots; confidences are still well kept; dealings with others are gracious, courteous, just and fair.</p> <p>E.4</p> |
| <p><b>Leadership and collaboration</b></p> | <p>The candidate can share responsibility and praise or blame with co-workers; has humility to</p>   | <p>The new bishop works out collaborative strategies and specific leadership priorities in the diocese in the light of</p>  | <p>The bishop keeps under review how episcopal ministry is being shared with the whole people of</p>   |

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| <p>F.1</p>                                     | <p>share decisions with others; and also has the confidence to take initiatives and to lead from the front when required.</p> <p>The candidate practises courageous servant-leadership.</p> <p>F.2</p>            | <p>existing diocesan goals, policies and expectations.</p> <p>The new bishop identifies where creative vision is required and where implementation is weak.</p> <p>The new bishop analyses existing roles of senior diocesan staff.</p> <p>F.3</p>   | <p>God and how collaboration with other senior staff functions.</p> <p>Ministerial reviews are regularly held and the bishop ensures that he/she shares the appraisals of his/her own ministry with a senior colleague in order to ensure accountability.</p> <p>The bishop monitors and reviews the implementation of diocesan and episcopal goals and policies.</p> <p>F.4</p> |
| <p><b>The mind of Christ</b></p> <p>G.1</p>    | <p>The candidate willingly accepts servanthood and suffering, and seeks to follow Jesus as teacher, example, intercessor and chief pastor.</p> <p>G.2</p>   | <p>The new bishop reflects on what it means to share the ministry of Christ in word and deed, as an example, servant, teacher, intercessor and chief pastor, being willing to suffer when called to do so.</p> <p>G.3</p>  | <p>The bishop continues to follow and to live out the example of Jesus as pastor, servant, intercessor, friend and example, acting with humility and, when necessary accepting suffering.</p> <p>G.4</p>   |
| <p><b>Guardian of the Faith</b></p> <p>H.1</p> | <p>See 'Vocation', above.</p> <p>The candidate takes active responsibility for maintaining the apostolic faith and ecclesial unity and order, while maintaining a proper balance between unity and diversity.</p> | <p>The new bishop studies and reflects on the meaning of 'apostolicity' in the New Testament and on the development of Patristic, Reformation and particularly Anglican views of the chief roles of bishops.</p> <p>The new bishop reflects on how to hold together unity and order with diversity within acceptable limits. S/he will also critically</p> | <p>The bishop regularly reviews the issues identified in the adjacent column.</p> <p>H.4</p>   |

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|  |  | H.2<br>discern, in collaboration with other colleagues, what these acceptable limits are.  | H.3   |
| <b>Biblical and theological competence</b> | I.1<br>The candidate is well grounded in biblical studies and theology, and has had sufficient experience of presbyteral ministry. | I.2<br>The new bishop inspires the highest standards of biblical exposition, application and theological reflection.<br>The new bishop and staff assess the provision of resources for biblical and theological study in the diocese and ensure these are adequate at all times. This biblical and theological competency includes ability to reflect theologically and critically on issues of the day and to speak and act as necessary. | I.3<br>The bishop continues to deepen his/her biblical and theological understanding in him/herself and to encourage that deepening in all who exercise ministry within the diocese.<br>The bishop helps to facilitate the theological education of all the people of God, including those who are called to take part in church governance and electoral processes.<br>I.4 |

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| <b>Practical competence</b>  | The candidate is alert to ecumenical and inter-faith issues as they may affect the diocese and as these arise in the global context.<br>The candidate expresses his/her thoughts clearly and judiciously, is willing to take advice and to recognise the importance of | The new bishop encourages honest and open ecumenical and inter-faith relationships.<br>The new bishop shares with diocesan deacons and priests in continuing ministerial education.<br>The new bishop learns appropriate ways of presiding at episcopally-led liturgies in a range of contexts.<br>The new bishop receives appropriate media training, particularly in areas which are | The bishop ensures that targeted training is provided for key diocesan personnel.<br>The bishop collaborates with other bishops and provincial / national / regional Anglican churches in providing adequate training for public ministry.<br>The bishop undertakes periodic, honest reviews of his/her practical competences. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Preaching</li> <li>▪ Pastoral care</li> <li>▪ Mission</li> <li>▪ Liturgy</li> <li>▪ Education &amp; training</li> <li>▪ Ecumenical</li> <li>▪ Administration</li> </ul> | J.1  |  |  |

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|                           | effectiveness in public communication.<br><br>J.2   | new to him/her.<br><br>J.3  | The bishop makes sure that provision is made for holidays for himself/herself (and family) and for all diocesan staff.<br><br>The bishop seeks opportunity for study leave / sabbatical for prayer, study and reflection in order to enhance his/her ministry.<br><br>J.4 |
| <b>Mission</b><br><br>K.1 | The candidate is a proven leader in mission and is able to give vision to others for God's mission, with a heart of compassion for the many.<br><br>K.2 | The new bishop undertakes intensive biblical, theological and practical study of the Church's role in God's mission, including evangelism.<br><br>The new bishop initiates a critical appraisal of diocesan resources for mission, including its vision, its record and its personnel.<br><br>K.3 | The bishop ensures that the progress and effectiveness of diocesan mission strategies are monitored and reviewed. Evaluation tools include diocesan statistics.<br><br>K.4  |

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| <b>Management and vision</b> | The candidate shows appropriate responsibility in all matters of church administration, including oversight of a large budget, a diary and personnel.<br><br>The candidate has the judgement to ensure a fair allocation of all resources to implement a vision, and shows sensitivity in the exercise of episcopal | The new bishop is aware of the authority and responsibility he/she has in ordaining those whose vocation has been discerned and accepted by the church and the bishop.<br><br>This should form part of the bishop's vision for future generations.<br><br>The new bishop assesses budgetary resources and priorities in relation to | The bishop regularly reviews and monitors the issues in the adjacent column. |
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| <p style="text-align: center;">L.1</p> | <p>jurisdiction</p> <p>The candidate is willing (personally and collegially) to exercise gifts of inspiration and empowerment, in order to ensure implementation of policies[MJM1].[MJM2]</p> | <p>mission goals, policies and vision of the diocese. This includes a fair distribution of money and staffing in relation to varied contexts in the diocese.</p> <p>The new bishop consults with the diocese on what changes should and should not be delayed.</p> <p>The new bishop prays and reflects on what 'management style' is most compatible with the role of a servant-bishop in the contemporary world.</p> <p>The new bishop reviews administrative structures and secretarial support, and gives attention to lines of accountability and to information technology (computers, internet, e-mail, etc).</p> <p>The new bishop works to keep an appropriate balance between the roles and responsibilities of lay people, deacons, priests and bishops in the life and work of the diocese.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">L.3</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">L.4</p>  |
| <p><b>The Anglican Way</b></p>         | <p>The candidate accepts and respects Scripture, tradition and reason as the basis of Anglican doctrine.</p> <p>The candidate is well informed in Anglican</p>                                | <p>The new bishop studies the role of bishops in Anglican theology, and doctrinal, ethical and liturgical issues in the diocese, Province and</p>   | <p>The bishop has promoted a range of Anglican worship styles, at the same time appreciating what is canonically permitted in the</p> |

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| <p>M.1</p> | <p>doctrine and liturgy, aware of Anglican diversity, and capable of becoming a focus of unity in a diocese and beyond.</p> <p>The candidate welcomes Anglican tolerance and a degree of diversity, within the boundaries of Anglican formularies canons, liturgies, covenants and traditions.</p> <p>M.2</p> | <p>Anglican Communion.</p> <p>The new bishop reflects on how best to become a focus of unity at various levels and how issues of clergy discipline and jurisdiction are approached.</p> <p>M.3</p> | <p>parishes.</p> <p>The bishop's episcopal experience has contributed significantly to the province and the Anglican Communion. All key episcopal roles in Anglican theology and practice have been exercised.</p> <p>The bishop has responsibly and sensitively exercised jurisdiction and discipline.</p> <p>M.4</p> |
|------------|---|--|--|

|   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
| <p><b>Awareness of context</b></p> <p>N.1</p> | <p>The candidate has a heart of compassion, is sensitive to diversities of context (urban, rural, rich, poor, politically delicate, or with known difficulties from the past) and is capable of exercising ministry across the range of diversity.</p> <p>N.2</p> | <p>The new bishop receives detailed briefings, takes time to appreciate varied contexts of the diocese and takes care not to rush in before these are fully understood.</p> <p>The new bishop gives very careful consideration to political, cultural, social, economic, occupational, geographical, linguistic, historical, ecclesial and spiritual differences in the diocese.</p> <p>N.3</p> | <p>The bishop develops a growing awareness of contexts, differences and changes in the life of the diocese and society, increasing the effectiveness of his/her ministry.</p> <p>The bishop and key members of staff keep diocesan policies under review in the light of changing circumstances.</p> <p>The bishop continues to work on the issues in the adjacent column. This also enhances the bishop's role as liturgical president. N.4</p> |
|---|---|---|--|

|   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| <p><b>Spouse and family (where applicable)</b></p> <p>O.1</p> | <p>The spouse is willing to accept the burdens and/or tensions arising from the partner's ministry.</p> <p>The spouse is willing to offer support and hospitality outside the family, as occasion and context may require.</p> <p>The spouse is aware that he/she will be more visible as a witness to Christian truth than many others.</p> <p>O.2</p>                | <p>The spouse (and family, where applicable) receives some induction into the expectations of the new bishop's ministry and can access ongoing training opportunities.</p> <p>The new bishop and spouse prayerfully and jointly work out the spouse's role in relation to the bishop's ministry, the family and the diocese, and reflect on the perceptions and expectations others may have.</p> <p>O.3</p> | <p>The spouse (and family) continues to give and receive appropriate support.</p> <p>O.4</p>   |
| <p><b>Rationale</b></p> <p>P.1</p>                            | <p>The above criteria and outcomes are intended to assist electors or nominators to apply the biblical, theological and practical qualities required for episcopal ministry to persons considered for possible nomination or election.</p> <p>Although no candidate will possess all these qualities, a significant proportion of them should be found.</p> <p>P.2</p> | <p>The above criteria and outcomes are intended to maximise the opportunity for reflection, study and prayer, in becoming the chief pastor and public persona in a diocese and the official representative of the Church at a public level.</p> <p>P.3</p>   | <p>The above criteria and outcomes are intended to maintain energy and momentum; to prevent loss of vision and enthusiasm; to promote habits of holiness and life-long study and learning; to monitor progress and implement goals; to nurture broader horizons for widening ministry; and to monitor relations with clergy and lay and pastoral effectiveness.</p> <p>P.4</p> |

**Section 2    Mission & Ministry**

## **The Five Marks of Mission**

To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom

To teach, baptise and nurture new believers

To respond to human need by loving service

To seek to transform unjust structures of society

To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth

*(Bonds of Affection-1984 ACC-6 p49, Mission in a Broken World-1990 ACC-8 p101)*

## **Holistic Mission**

### **A Profile of Mission and Evangelism in the Anglican Communion**

A report to the bishops at the Lambeth Conference 2008

#### **Foreword**

Prior to her retirement in 2006, Marjorie Murphy, Director of Mission and Evangelism in the Anglican Communion, initiated a consultation among Primates and members of the Standing Commission on Mission and Evangelism (IASCOME) as to the current state and future direction of Mission in the Communion. The clear message we received was that a survey of Mission and Evangelism in the Anglican Communion should be undertaken, and its findings presented to the Bishops at the Lambeth Conference. Part of the discussion there should include ways in which mission should be resourced from this Office. This report is the fruit of that work undertaken by Revd John Kafwanka (Zambia), who was until recently CMS Southern Africa Regional Manager, and his research assistant Stuart Buchanan (England).

A survey questionnaire was prepared, and was first given to all the Primates who attended the Primates' Meeting in Dar e Salaam (Tanzania) in February 2007. The same questionnaire was sent to all the Provincial Secretaries of the Communion, and several interviews were also carried out with bishops and Christians in the Communion. It emphasised the department of Mission & Evangelism's holistic understanding of mission, and called for responses that expressed or reflected how the concerned provinces, dioceses and organisation were living out God's (holistic) mission. The survey has highlighted the holistic nature of the Anglican Communion's understanding of mission as reflected in the Five Marks of Mission. The survey report has creatively analysed the responses in the context of these Five Marks.

The report also shares some of the challenges being faced by the various parts of the Communion and equally shares some of the lessons being learnt as Anglicans live out God's mission in the world.

As you read this report, you will not fail to be impressed by the diverse and wide range of concerns being addressed by the churches of our Communion. I hope you will also recognise the voice of your own province here. Please do give this important work your time and attention, and share it with all who share responsibility for mission in your province and diocese.

*The Revd Canon Kenneth Kearon,  
Secretary General, Anglican Communion*

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  - Response to decline
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  - Christian values
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## **1 The shape of this report**

We cannot pretend that the stories of mission and evangelism presented in the 20,000+ words of replies received in response to the questionnaire give a comprehensive overview of mission and evangelism within the Communion. There is much going on that has not been included within these responses. The responses do, however, give an encouraging overview of holistic mission within the Communion. It is possible to look at these stories in different ways. We have chosen to consider some of the key mission contexts and then consider how the responses relate to the five marks of mission, before going on to consider the lessons and challenges mentioned by the provinces. From this we suggest some specific questions that the reader may wish to consider in response to the survey.

## **2 Ten key mission contexts**

An analysis of the responses highlights several key contexts that are worthy of particular comment.

- **Other Faiths**

Many provinces speak of their mission and evangelism within an 'Other Faith', or 'interfaith', context (Australia, Melanesia, Philippines, Southern Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Tanzania) or, more specifically within the context of 'Muslims' (Egypt and Uganda) or 'Islamisation' (Pakistan) or 'fundamentalism' (Bangladesh and CNI). Among Muslims, "Christianity is perceived as a Western religion creating negative feelings among those who do not like the intrusion of Western values" (Egypt and Pakistan). "Evangelism in this part of the world (Pakistan) is becoming not just difficult but fatal."

In these situations the importance of holistic mission is stressed as being vital. In Nigeria "people are taking the gospel and Church seriously when the church is interested in their holistic wellbeing – spiritually, socially and physically." People need not to just hear words, but see Jesus "going around doing good" (Egypt). "Muslims give respect to the church and church leaders when, and if, they are serious with their faith" (Nuba Mtns, Sudan). The Christian community's response to an earthquake (Diocese of Peshawar, Pakistan), despite ever growing hostilities and hatred towards the Christian community, was the time when "the church decided to come out of its cocoon". In showing "it is possible to cross dividing barriers when the church reaches out with love to service the afflicted/suffering" it has broken down barriers, responded to need and is growing.

After the baptism of 50 Muslims (Tanzania) the bishop was congratulated by a Sheikh and told that “you deserve that because you show love to everyone without showing discrimination that is why Muslims come to join you.” Over 250 people have been trained in Muslim evangelism in Kampala, Kasese, Fort Portal, Mbale and Arua (Uganda) and over 4,000 Muslims have converted to Christianity. Other denominations in Uganda as well as Anglican provinces in the Great Lakes region have sought this training in Uganda.

Addressing the needs of Muslim converts and seekers is an issue (Pakistan and Uganda); rehabilitation centres have been opened to help provide vocational skills for those disowned by their families (Nigeria).

- **Migrants, refugees and displaced people**

The words used may vary: ‘refugees’ (Australia, Southern Africa and Tanzania); ‘immigrants’ (Canada); ‘migrants’ (Japan); ‘asylum seekers’ (Ireland); ‘displaced people’ (Burundi, Sri Lanka and Uganda); ‘returnees’ (Burundi); but although the reasons for being displaced, and the contexts, are different the situations they face have similarities. For all displaced people there are the problems of being uprooted, marginalised and living with uncertainty and anxiety about the future. Internally displaced people are traumatized, starved and dehumanized (Uganda). They need counselling, support and joint advocacy against war and abuse of human dignity (Uganda). The displaced will also include a high proportion of women and children who are particularly vulnerable.

Often there is the need to help educate the receiving church to deal with difference (Ireland – ‘The Hard Gospel’ initiative<sup>18</sup>) and express a genuine welcome.

When migrant families overstay their visas, by remaining illegally in countries, they become particularly vulnerable to exploitation. There are examples of the church (Japan) working closely with such vulnerable groups, challenging government policies and enabling people to remain legally.

- **HIV and AIDS**

Many provinces refer to their mission within the context of HIV and AIDS (Central Africa, Indian Ocean, Melanesia, Myanmar, Southern Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and West Indies). CAPA (Council of the Anglican Provinces of Africa) has a HIV and AIDS programme. This

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<sup>18</sup> The Hard Gospel, in Ireland, has a core aim of helping the whole Church look at itself from a perspective of sectarianism, it then goes on to generally consider attitudes to difference.

programme states that its mission is to respect the dignity of all people by: securing the human rights of those infected by HIV and AIDS, and giving unconditional support; improving the health and prolonging the lives of infected people; accompanying the dying, those who mourn and those who live on; celebrating life; nurturing community, and advocating for justice.

Common themes within their work in the different provinces include: awareness-raising, abstinence workshops; dealing with stigma, shame and denial; testing, treatment and counselling services; care, support and empowerment; vocational training and income generation projects; hope and transformation. HIV and AIDS also result in an increase in the number of widows and orphans (Uganda). Malaria and TB were added to the CAPA HIV and AIDS programme in July 2004.

- **Response to emergencies**

Mission and evangelism has included response to emergency situations. There have been responses to tsunamis including the rebuilding of people's lives and infrastructure (Sri Lanka) and through trauma counselling and helping people to come to terms with loss of life and property (Melanesia). There have been responses to earthquakes (Japan and Pakistan). In response to Hurricane Katrina (USA) an evangelist couple now head up one volunteer camp called "God's Katrina Kitchen" that provides over 1,000 meals daily to both volunteers and locals. In most, if not all, of these responses to emergencies the churches have provided for those effected regardless of religion.

Flooding (Bangladesh) and an extended drought (Australia) have drawn attention to the issue of global warming.

- **Young people**

A particular context for mission and evangelism is young people; both as those reached out to and also as those doing mission. Generally in the West they are being seen as an unchurched generation "Young people are uninterested in the church ... yet interested in spirituality and life-encouraging values" (Canada). Evangelists are being specifically trained for child evangelism (West Africa) and there are initiatives with street children (Central Africa). Mention is made of ministry with young people (Egypt, Southern Africa and Southern Cone) and of investing much time and money into initiatives with children and young people with the appointment of diocesan youth officers in each diocese (Uganda) as well as many exciting activities for young people.

Elsewhere there are examples of young people being encouraged to take on responsibility within church: leading services and being appointed to church positions, choir groups etc. (Tanzania) and of the evangelistic role of youth choirs (Central Africa). Young people, aged 18 to 22, are gaining short experiences of mission through a GAP year programme<sup>19</sup> (Church Army – Australia and England) and there are increases in young people offering for ministry (Church of North India).

- **Reconciliation**

Often mission is going on within a context of reconciliation. There is openness, from some provinces, to the need to deal first with the problems that they are part of before being able to reach out to others; a need to address the wrongs in the way that an incoming group treated the indigenous people in the past. There is the need to tackle indigenous poverty (Australia) and other initiatives with indigenous people (USA and Southern Cone). Anglicans have apologised for their part in past discriminatory government policies in the (Australia). Discriminatory attitudes towards indigenous minorities continue today and “until the sin of racism within our church is fully and completely exposed, all service in God’s mission is deeply flawed” (Canada). In order to address the colonial legacy there is an anti-racism working group and the appointment of an indigenous bishop to foster the inclusion of indigenous peoples and indigenous spirituality in the life and ministry of the Church (Canada).

It can and does take much time to fully address past wrongs and ongoing attitudes; addressing “the legacy of apartheid” (Southern Africa) is still on the agenda. A clergy exchange programme between (Korea and Japan) helps mutual understanding between the two churches, and peoples, in an attempt to heal tensions still evident from Japan’s past occupation of Korea. Sometimes the need for reconciliation is to address the sectarianism caused by denominational differences (Ireland – ‘The Hard Gospel’).

There are also reconciliation initiatives being taken by Christians working with other communities in war and post war contexts. Evangelists were sent to the warring Lendu and Hema tribes (DR Congo) which resulted in reconciliation of the tribes with each other and with God. There are other examples of participation in reconciliation programmes between warring parties and alienated communities (Kenya, Melanesia, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Sudan). There are also initiatives in the ongoing reconciliation in post war situations and mention of the specific role of young people in reconciliation (Burundi).

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<sup>19</sup> these are programmes aimed at young people taking a ‘gap’ before or after college or between jobs

- **Response to decline**

The context and motivation for evangelism make a difference to the approach used. Apart from one (Japan), the provinces that speak of the decline in churchgoing (Australia, Canada, USA and West Indies) are provinces where the majority of the population were once considered Christian. In referring to the 'unchurched' (Wales) reference is being made to a generation that is no longer in touch with church, and without an understanding of Christianity. Some such provinces (England, Australia and Canada) are questioning whether the existing church structures are effective for the kind of evangelism needed and express the need for new mission strategies (Australia and Indian Ocean).

For any evangelism to be effective there is the need to change the mindset of existing congregations (Australia, Canada and England) to realise the importance of new initiatives and to try to both attract people back to existing forms of church and also to create new forms of church. There is the need for sustained preaching from diocesan leaders for such changes to begin to occur (England). 'Back to Church Sunday' (England), through personal invitations, expects to attract 20,000 people back to church who have previously drifted away. The 'Mission 21' initiative (Scotland) has run congregational courses beginning by trying to make congregations more welcoming.

There is the 'Venturing in Mission' initiative (Wales). 'Fresh Expressions' initiatives (Australia, England and Ireland), as the name suggests, are not about bringing people into traditional forms of church, but creating different expressions of worshipping Christian community that are appropriate for the cultural context. They are aimed at attracting both those who are unchurched and those who have previously rejected traditional forms of church. The Church Army has developed a number of 'Local Mission Bases' reaching out through different forms of ministry (Australia, Canada, England and USA) to reach the 'least, last and the lost'. Mention is made of the need to find, grow and develop pioneer leaders within these forms of ministry (Australia and Ireland.)

It is possible for 'Fresh Expressions' and traditional forms of church to co-exist (Ireland). 'Process evangelism'<sup>20</sup> courses have proved to be a helpful tool (Australia and Wales) in bringing new people to faith, or in re-igniting the faith and commitment of those who have returned to church.

- **Growth**

The strategies mentioned above are not just used by the churches facing decline. The Alpha course is used elsewhere (Egypt, Uganda and West Africa) to reach the unchurched and new forms of church exist such as 'church on the streets' (Brazil) and other such urban initiatives (Kenya).

Elsewhere growth comes from the founding of new dioceses (Tanzania) or of specifically missionary dioceses (Nigeria). These missionary dioceses are in the rural unreached areas where the gospel has not yet taken root and are supported for their first three years by individual or church sponsors. There is also non-geographic mission (Nigeria) to the 10 million nomadic Fulani who have not yet been reached by the gospel.

There are many examples of evangelism, some with specific reference to 'church planting' (Brazil, Central Africa, Melanesia, Tanzania and West Africa); 'incarnational evangelism' (Sri Lanka), 'a ministry of presence' (Southern Africa), 'evangelistic crusades' (Central Africa) and through 'healing and deliverance ministries' (Tanzania and Uganda). The key role of women in evangelism is noted (Central Africa and Uganda) and of using the enthusiasm of youth in evangelism (Nuba Mtns, Sudan and Tanzania).

As mentioned in the reference to the 'Other Faith' context, there is a strong emphasis upon holistic mission. "Words and deeds are required" (Egypt). "People always respond lovingly when authentic and generous hearts provide the resources. However a paternalistic missionary model can easily be the norm if one is not careful; sensitivity and building trust and ownership bring about new added worthiness of the people" (Indian Ocean).

There is the underlying assumption that the motivation for evangelism is the 'Great Commission' or, pragmatically in the previous section, as a response to decline. There is also a reference to a shift away from fear of 'hell and condemnation' to a desire to communicate the different facets of the fullness, joy and hope of the gospel (DR Congo).

- **Economic viability**

There are examples of initiatives to attempt to tackle the local problems of poverty, churches working towards self-reliance, through stewardship and income generation, and also income generation to fund mission.

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<sup>20</sup> A term used for courses, such as Alpha, that are designed to bring people to faith and nurture and develop that faith.

Social and community transformation is taking place through schools and rice mills (Indian Ocean). Youth are being trained in sewing, secretarial courses and hair dressing (Pakistan and West Africa). Mention is made of the key role of women in other income generating programmes (Uganda) and economic empowerment (Kenya).

There is socio-economic provision to the community through maize mill projects, fishing boats and fishing nets in the parishes near Lake Malawi (Central Africa) as well as for fundraising to support evangelistic programmes.

Most provinces mention financial challenges; traditionally wealthy provinces, facing decline of numbers, are seeing income reduced. Reference is made to becoming self-sustaining (Myanmar) and parishioners are being trained in stewardship and to become self-sustaining (Central Africa).

- **Christian values**

In many parts of the Communion mission and evangelism includes standing up for Christian values; this includes challenging social and moral decay – drug abuse, family breakdown, loss of respect to elders, corruption and prostitution (Philippines). The Melanesian Brotherhood (Melanesia) is trying to help resolve the current moral breakdown in society in PNG and Vanuata. The church is engaging with moral decadence from modern ideology and mass media (Uganda). Tackling drug abuse is a common theme (Australia, Canada, Myanmar and USA). There is work amongst street children in Lusaka (Central Africa) that are caught up with prostitution and drugs.

Mothers Union and Family Life initiatives (Uganda) have seen men value their women more, leading to an increase in Christian weddings and God-fearing families. There is a centre run for abused and beaten women (Melanesia) and the International Anglican Family Network recently ran a consultation on violence and the family in Korea.

The dispute on human sexuality, resulting from the position adopted by some in North American in 2003, has brought suspicion to many people about the Anglican Church (Tanzania) making its witness doubly difficult and the focus on areas of disagreement, rather than mission, has dissipated energy (USA).

There are challenges, too, at the national level. For Anglicare (Australia) balancing a faith-based charter with a host of employment and contractual obligations is rarely straightforward. There is also “the challenge of secularism, conservatism and cowardice of our elected political leaders, the challenge of enormous far-reaching corporate agendas in public policy” (Canada). A post modern and post Christian world demands new understandings and strategies (USA), new tools are needed for discerning trends in society (Ireland).

The tension of clarifying what are specifically Christian values within rapidly changing cultures, and how mission initiatives should be modified in a changing world, is not just an issue facing the West. There is concern about the separation between the spiritual and the physical (Tanzania) and the separation between theological and scientific studies (Central Africa); “times keep changing, and so must we” (Melanesia). “Time and contexts change but the gospel remains relevant to every age and culture; as time and contexts change, the gospel should adapt to remain relevant” (Kenya). “A paradigm shift in mission requires a new mission strategy” (Uganda).

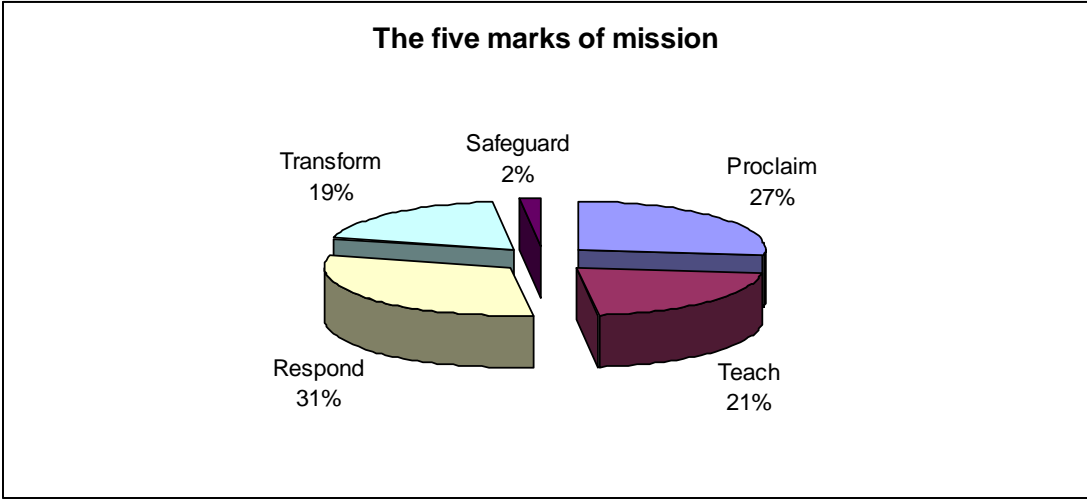
### **3 The Five Marks of Mission**

The Five Marks of Mission were first defined within ‘Bonds of Affection’-1984 ACC-6 p49 and ‘Mission in a Broken World’-1990 ACC-8 p101) as:

- To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
- To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
- To respond to human need by loving service
- To seek to transform unjust structures of society
- To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth

Because there is such a strong emphasis upon holistic mission, most of the stories of mission and evangelism relate to more than one of the marks of mission. Many stories about evangelism will include an element of response to human need or the transformation of unjust structures; as unjust structures lead to human need, the response to these two marks of mission are often inter-linked. As such, it has proved challenging to allocate each story to a particular mark of mission but the pie chart below is an attempt to do so for the 275 stories or examples of mission provided by the survey.

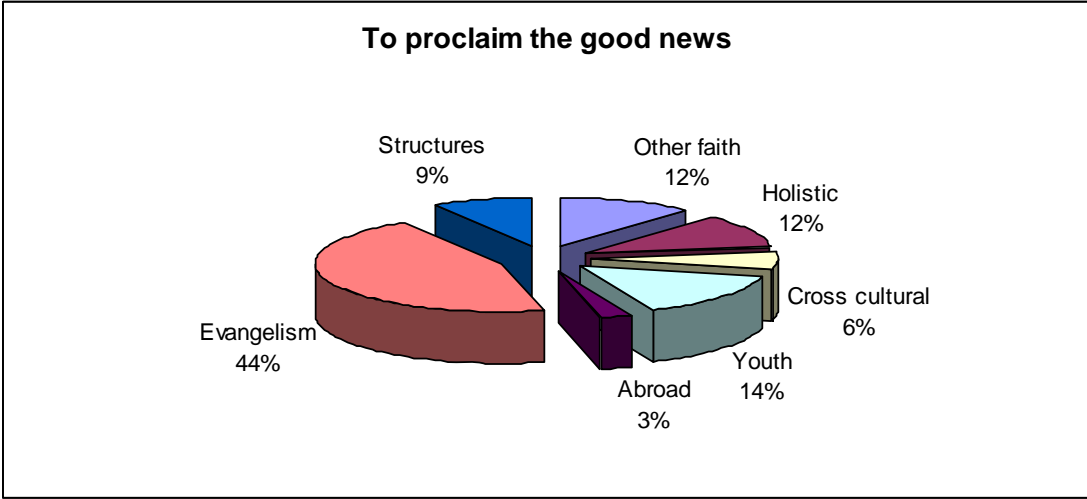




Many of these initiatives have been referred to in the ten key mission contexts mentioned above, so further comment is restricted to types of work not already mentioned.

- **To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom**

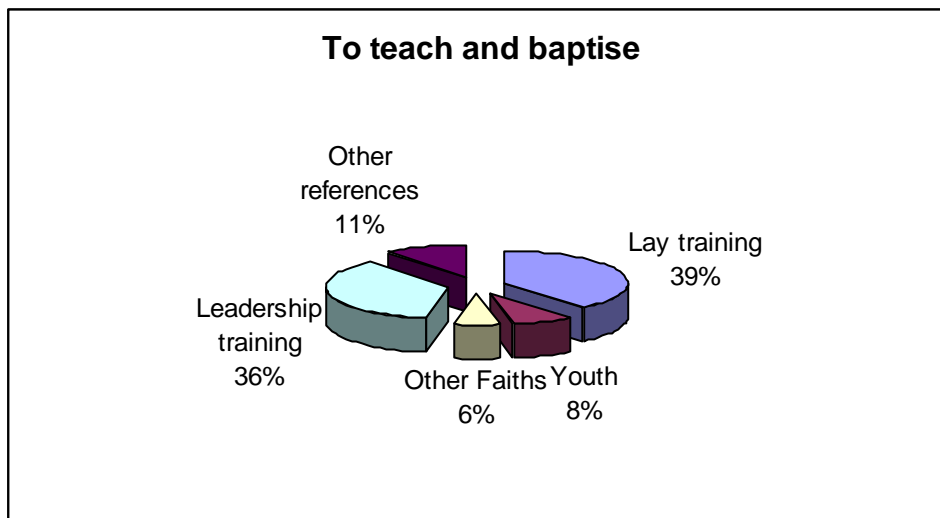
Within this mark of mission the references can be broken down further as shown.



Reference has been made to most of these sub-categories within the ten mission contexts described above. ‘Cross-cultural’ (6%) include cross-cultural mission (Kenya), unchurched generations (Wales) indigenous people (Southern Cone) and forming new congregations reflecting multi-cultural and multi-ethnic mix (USA); ‘Abroad’ (3%) include the sending of people from one province to other countries (Uganda and Melanesia).

- **To teach, baptise and nurture new believers**

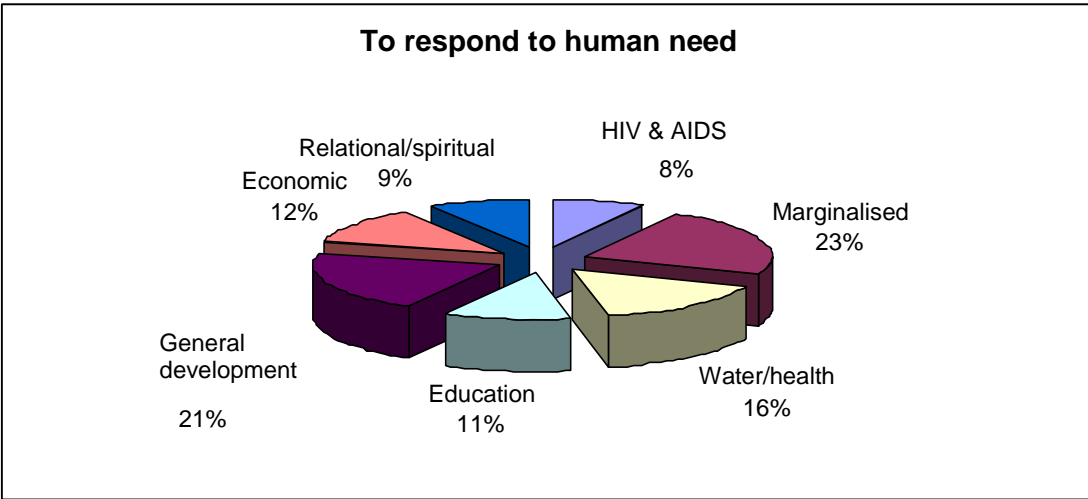
We have broadened this mark of mission so that it includes all references to teaching, training and nurture, rather than those aimed specifically at ‘new believers’; otherwise such references don’t naturally fit into any of the marks of mission. These teaching and nurturing references can be broken down further as shown.



With the exception of ‘process evangelism’ courses and converts from other faiths, little has been mentioned about the teaching and nurturing of new believers. Finding the financial resources for training laity and clergy is a key issue. Another important issue is finding not only the right people, but also the right forms of training for new evangelistic initiatives required by changing mission contexts.

- **To respond to human need by loving service**

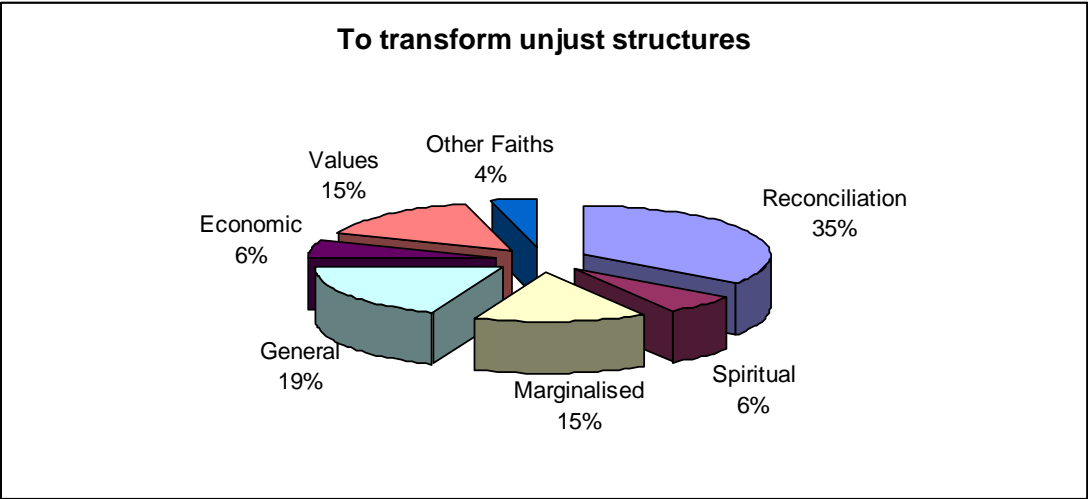
Within this mark of mission the references can be broken down further as shown.



Comment has already been made about initiatives to do with 'HIV and AIDS' (8%) and 'economic viability' (12%); references to the 'marginalised' (23%) include refugees, migrants and displaced people, drug addicts, prostitutes and street children. Many traditional responses to human need continue, with initiatives related to 'water and health' (16%), 'education' (11%) and 'general development' initiatives aimed at transforming lives (21%). There are also references included here to a 'relational and/or spiritual' emphasis (9%).

- **To seek to transform unjust structures of society**

Within this mark of mission the references can be broken down further as shown.



The reference to 'general' (19%), include Millennium Development Goals<sup>21</sup> (Australia and USA) and several references to poverty alleviation (Bangladesh) or poverty eradication (Pakistan) or social transformation (Brazil, DR Congo and Melanesia) or community empowerment (Pakistan). Apart from 'spiritual transformation' (6%) (DR Congo and Sri Lanka), the other categories have been included above.

- **To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth**

The six references to this mark of mission are a possible indication that it doesn't, as yet, feature highly on mission agendas; as such, it doesn't justify a separate pie chart. There are general comments about addressing environmental issues (Brazil), the integrity of creation (Canada) and care of the environment (Burundi) as well as reference to damage caused by the mining and nuclear industries (Australia). Two references to global warming, in response to floods (Bangladesh) and drought (Australia) have been referred to within responses to emergencies. The link between environment, global warming and natural disasters should be clear but it appears that often it is only after disasters have happened that safeguarding the integrity of creation is seen as a mission priority.

#### **4 The Lessons**

These are the specific lessons identified by the respondents; all flow from doing mission and reflecting upon the experience.

A key lesson is the importance of **doing mission together**. This includes comments about working ecumenically (Ireland and Tanzania), being concerned for mission in other countries (Canada, Kenya, Uganda and USA) and relating global mission to local initiatives (Central Africa and Ireland) as well as learning from the initiatives of other churches and contextualising these to their local circumstances (Ireland).

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<sup>21</sup> The eight Millennium Development Goals form a blueprint agreed to by all the world's countries and all the world's leading development institutions. They have galvanized unprecedented efforts to meet the needs of the world's poorest. They are:

i – Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; ii – Achieve universal primary education; iii – Promote gender equality and empower women; iv – Reduce child mortality; v – Improve maternal health; vi – Combat HIV and AIDS, malaria and other diseases; vii – Ensure environmental sustainability; viii – Develop a global partnership for development.

Some churches admit that they are only now **developing a mission mindset** and beginning to successfully overcome the barriers of lack of motivation, or self-belief in what God could achieve through them (Brazil, DR Congo, Melanesia, Aotearoa/New Zealand, Pakistan and West Africa).

Practising **holistic mission** is showing some churches how compassionate deeds lead to the good news of Jesus being taken seriously and that word and deed are, and must be, inter-linked (Central Africa, Egypt, Melanesia, Nigeria, Indian Ocean and Tanzania).

Learning comes from the **challenges of mission**, in particular the challenges of Other Faith contexts (Sudan, Pakistan and Tanzania) but also challenges presented by other worldviews and false teaching (Tanzania and Uganda) paternalistic models (Indian Ocean) and church structures (Canada and Uganda). In response to the financial challenges (Indian Ocean and Uganda) there is the recognition of the need to become self-supporting as well as the observation that resources follow mission (USA); when you get on and do mission, people will give to support it. Although the Anglican Church is very small it's presence in communities is significant; many people would be worse off if the Church did not stand with and by them (Brazil).

Learning happens from the **mission context** as initiatives and strategies are adapted to cope with changing needs in different parts of the Communion (Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda and USA). Although what works in one province may not work in another (Wales), there is the realisation that the mission we share belongs to the whole church (Aotearoa/New Zealand).

There are also some examples of learning from **the recipients of mission**; particularly the enthusiasm and motivation of young people (West Africa), but also in acknowledging the way that certain indigenous people groups have been treated by the Christian majority in the past (Canada).

Learning occurs from the **processes of mission**; the realisation of both the urgency (Nigeria) and the ongoing nature of mission (Central Africa and Nigeria) and the need to strategize processes to find the appropriate starting point in a rapidly changing world (England and USA).

In all this there is learning **about God**; by partnering God in God's mission, new insights are being gained. The importance and power of the Holy Spirit (Nigeria) and of anointing and

healing are being recognised in some parts of the Church that have not traditionally looked to such ministries (West Africa). For others, the Church as a “beacon of light” (Tanzania) or as “a sign of hope” (Sudan) is being recognised as a reality. “The future is bright” (Tanzania), “God is alive and at work in unexpected ways inside and outside the church” (Ireland) “leading us to new ventures and vistas” (USA).

## 5 The Challenges

These are the specific challenges identified by the respondents; they are based around five distinct issues, but four of these issues often overlap with each other.

The most common challenge is **financial resources**. The reason for the financial challenges might be poverty and unemployment, due to various disasters or ongoing circumstances, such as: war; drought; famine; tsunami; refugees: HIV and AIDS and related care for widows and orphans (Bangladesh, Brazil, CNI, Central Africa, DR Congo, Egypt, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Southern Africa, Southern Cone, Uganda, West Africa and West Indies). Even in countries not facing any of these issues, “shrinking and ageing congregations can present financial challenges” (Wales) and “it can be difficult to fund projects aimed at the marginalised” (Canada).

The challenge of shrinking and ageing congregations in the West (Canada, Ireland, USA and Wales) is but one symptom of the challenge to the Church of **adapting to rapidly changing worldviews**, that is being identified elsewhere (Melanesia) as well as in the West. Related to this, the challenge of **living with other worldviews** presents different types of challenges in different areas, including the proliferation of new religions and denominations (Philippines) and the challenge of syncretism (Southern Africa). For some the challenge of another worldview is an opportunity (Tanzania) but for others, particularly in regions where the West is not popular, Christianity is perceived as Western and the challenge might feel quite threatening (Egypt and Pakistan).

Rapidly changing worldviews, in turn, provide challenges to those identifying and implementing the **vision** for mission (CNI, DR Congo, England, Indian Ocean, Ireland, Melanesia, Myanmar Aotearoa/New Zealand and Uganda) and inspiring **motivation** to put new vision into practice (Ireland, Melanesia, Uganda, West Africa and West Indies). Financial resources also impact upon motivation with churches facing difficulties both in attracting and retaining staff for mission in the more challenging areas (Central Africa and Tanzania). Ongoing war is also a barrier to motivation (Sri Lanka).

Financial resources, changing worldviews and their impact upon vision, strategy and motivation all impact upon the challenges of **leadership and leadership training**. Challenges include finding the financial resources and/or the people for clergy and leadership training, (Bangladesh, Brazil, Central Africa, CNI, Egypt, Pakistan, Southern Cone, Sri Lanka, Nuba Mtns Sudan), finding entrepreneurial leaders for new forms of ministry (Australia, Ireland and USA) or equipping the whole people of God for the changing tasks of mission (CNI, DR Congo, Myanmar, Aotearoa/New Zealand, Philippines, Tanzania, Uganda and Wales).

The challenges that don't link with the others in the same way, faced by some provinces, are best described as **provincial issues**. Some provinces struggle with issues related to their size (Central Africa, CNI and West Africa), geography (Melanesia), structures (DR Congo and Southern Cone) and communication (DR Congo, Sudan and Uganda); for others there are issues related to having a common identity in the face of theological (Southern Cone and USA), social (Central Africa) or political (Central Africa and West Africa) diversity.

## **Appendices**

### **A The Questionnaire**

The questionnaire explained the holistic nature of mission and asked:

- How are you taking Mission and Evangelism forward? Share some stories to illustrate what you are doing
- What lessons are you learning?
- What challenges, if any, are you facing in your mission work?

### **B The responses**

Responses were received from the following provinces or dioceses:

Aotearoa/New Zealand & Polynesia; Australia; Bangladesh; Brazil; Burundi; Canada; Central Africa: DR Congo; England; The Indian Ocean; Ireland; Japan; Jerusalem & The Middle East – Diocese of Egypt; Kenya; Melanesia; Myanmar (Burma); Nigeria; The Church of North India; The Church of Pakistan – Peshawar Diocese; The Episcopal Church in the Philippines; Scotland; Southern Africa; Southern Cone; Sri Lanka (Ceylon); Sudan – Diocese of Nuba Mountains; Tanzania; Uganda; The Episcopal Church in the USA; Wales; West Africa; West Indies.

And the following networks and agencies:

Church Army - Australia; Church Army - Canada; Church Army - England; Church Army - Africa; Church Army - USA; Anglican Communion Environmental Network; Anglican Urban Network; International Anglican Family Network; The Melanesian Brotherhood; USPG – Anglicans in World Mission.

### **C The breadth and nature of the responses**

Whilst most responses represented the whole province some were from a single diocese, this has been indicated above.

The questionnaire was general enough to allow responses in very different ways about mission and evangelism involvement. Some responses were several pages in length, providing a very full and comprehensive report, others were just a brief list of bullet points or came through interviews; some responses provided detailed stories and others the rationale behind the work. In some cases the responses were augmented with supporting documents.

### **D The challenges for us**

#### **Section 2 – Ten Key mission contexts**



- Which of the different contexts outlined in section 2 best describe your situation?
- What, if any, aspects are missing that you believe are important?
- Why, in the paragraphs about Other Faiths, do you feel that there is such a focus on Islam rather than other major religions?
- What is your own Other Faith context?
- What is your response to the refugees, migrants and displaced people living in your context, if any?
- How can we involve young people more effectively in mission?
- In what ways are women agents of mission in your church or province?

### **Section 3 – The five marks of mission**

- Looking at the five marks of mission, do your mission activities fit into some better than others? In what ways?
- Do the gaps offer you any important insights into your life and witness?
- Is there any ‘missing’ Mark of Mission you would like to suggest?
- Why do you think that ‘to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth’ is referred to so rarely?
- What are you doing in your ministry to address this Mark of Mission?

### **Section 4 - Lessons**

- Which lessons do you think you have learned best and which do you need to work on?
- Can you say why?

### **Section 5 - Challenges**

- Which challenges are most appropriate to your situation?
- How would you respond to them?

### **All sections**

- What kind of help could other parts of the Communion offer you?
- Looking at issues referred to by different provinces, which parts of the Communion might be able to offer you help? In what ways?
- What sort of support would you or your context offer to others for mission?

***We would be grateful for your response to the above questions. Those replies received before 30 September 2008 will be included within the analysis accompanying the department’s post Lambeth Conference report. Those responses received after***

***this date will still be valued as part of our ongoing engagement with Mission and Evangelism within the Anglican Communion.***

***Please email responses to:***

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*Mission and Evangelism Department*

*March 2008*

## Millennium Development Goals

1. Eradicate extreme hunger and poverty
  - Reduce by half the number of people living on less than a dollar a day
  - Reduce by half the number of people who suffer from hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
  - Ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
  - Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015
4. Reduce child mortality
  - Reduce by two thirds the mortality rate among children under five
5. Improve maternal health
  - Reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio
6. Combat HIV/Aids, malaria and other diseases
  - Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/ Aids
  - Halt and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
  - Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes
  - Reverse loss of environmental resources
  - Reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water
  - Achieve significant improvement in lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020.
8. Develop a global partnership for development
  - Develop further an open trading and financial system that is rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory, includes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction - nationally and internationally

- Address the least developed countries' special needs. This includes tariff and quota-free access for their exports; enhanced debt relief for heavily indebted poor countries; cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous official development assistance for countries committed to poverty reduction
- Address the special needs of landlocked and small island developing states
- Deal comprehensively with developing countries' debt problems through national and international measures to make debt sustainable in the long term
- In cooperation with the developing countries, develop decent and productive work for youth
- In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries
- In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies - especially information and communications technologies

The following is an extract from the report of Boksburg II, the Towards Effective Anglican Mission [TEAM] Conference held in South Africa in 2007. A full account may be found at [http://www.team2007.org/pdfs/team\\_oct\\_2007.pdf](http://www.team2007.org/pdfs/team_oct_2007.pdf)

### ***The Church and the MDGs***

#### *Poverty and hunger eradication: Goal #1*

#### **Poverty and sustainable Development: Goal #1**

In an effort to understand more of the theology behind the Communion's engagement with the MDGs, and sustainable development in general, TEAM was addressed by Dr Steve de Gruchy, a professor of theology and development at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa. Echoing themes heard throughout the day's deliberations, de Gruchy proclaimed that there are enough resources to bring an end to the poverty in which so much of the world is mired. The continued existence of poverty, hunger and deprivation is a judgment upon the Christian community and its failure to act. This judgment speaks of the body's. "failure to give bread and water to Christ who meets us in the poor person on the street, in the refugee camp, the shanty compound, the hospital ward, the remote village". The good news, however, is that with judgment comes opportunity.

As the Church recognises and acknowledges its shortcomings, there is an opportunity to speak the truth about injustice and inequality. The role of the Church, however, varies from that of politicians, economists and developmental experts. Its responsibility is to preach the gospel. Its mandate is derived as a result of relationship with God and the knowledge of His grace. Grace, however, is meant to challenge and compel Christians to action; it spurs believers to preach the good news of hope, opportunity and newness.

To address the challenges of poverty, the question then becomes what resources, what options can the Anglican Communion offer the world? In order to identify the possibilities, de Gruchy believes there must be recognition of a disconcerting reality that the current global economic system does not hold the promise of development or prosperity for the billions living in poverty. Rather, it is the functioning and expansion of the current economic order that has led to inequitable trade practices, environmental degradation and a decline in the standard of living for many of the world's poor.

While it is not yet known what mechanism(s) will bring about a more just economic order, de Gruchy highlighted four perspectives, which if adopted, will assist the Church in developing more effective ministries for the poor.

First, the Church must recognise that poverty is not exclusively about finances; rather, poverty is about lack of access, an inability to make viable choices for one and one's family. This principle is reflected in the Millennium Development Goals and the fact that three of the eight targets are directly related to health. Accordingly, public health is an area in which the Church has the potential to contribute substantively to the well being of communities globally. Moreover, faith communities have a model of a ministry which brought spiritual and physical health in the ministry of Jesus.

Alongside identifying the linkages between health and poverty, the Church must be aware of and speak of the relationship between education and poverty. As "people of the Book" Christians throughout the ages have generally held education in high regard and have been successful in establishing institutions of learning globally; yet, to many, education is perceived as a private commodity - not an element that has a direct developmental impact. Education, however, must be viewed as a crucial element in the fight against poverty; as it has the ability to empower members of society with experiences and frames of reference to challenge inequality and the autonomy to shape their future.

Beyond conventional education, however, de Gruchy points to Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, insisting that the Church must advocate for: "education for critical consciousness". That is, education which trains students to think beyond current global systems and towards innovative solutions for some of today's most pressing concerns.

In the same vein, de Gruchy called upon believers to work towards the agency of the poor, to recognise the numerous assets that already exist in marginalised communities, namely: human capital, social capital, financial capital, natural capital, and physical capital. In his analysis of community assets, de Gruchy fundamentally questioned the Church's approach, forcing delegates to consider the manner in which they begin some of their interventions. Does the Church first seek to understand the strengths from which poor communities are operating, which can be augmented through true partnerships? Or are constituents asked to operate out of their weaknesses, by recalling all that they lack? In its work, the Church should seek to empower individuals and communities, assisting them in developing their own strategies for improving their lives. de Gruchy points out that this notion of self-reliance is not at all new, but it is embodied in traditional African philosophies and the thought of more

modern African leaders such as Julius Nyerere, who advocated for *ujamaa*, familyhood and *kujitegemea*, self-reliance.

Finally, de Gruchy called upon the Church to pay special attention to issues of food sovereignty. Globally, enough food is produced to feed 110% - 150% of the world's population; yet nearly 1 out of 6 people go hungry daily. Like all other developmental matters, food security is linked to a myriad of other issues, many environmental in nature. A significant number of disasters caused by climate change, largely the consequences of the north's excesses, occur in the global south, impacting communities' ability to produce food. Not only is food security affected by the environment, it is also linked to the empowerment of girls and women. They are often the first ones to go hungry in a household. As such, the Church must address not only food security, but also food sovereignty, with the awareness that nutrition directly impacts on the physical and mental development of an individual, affecting the development of society at large. Given that much of Christian prayer life revolves around notions of daily bread and provision, the body of Christ must proactively work towards communities modelled on those in Acts, where the sharing of food and resources was for the benefit of all.

Dr de Gruchy's comments were a challenge to all delegates, one in which participants were reminded that there are no easy answers. Asking what it would take to bring about a more just economic order, delegates were confronted with how much of contemporary life is bound to practices that perpetuate injustice, ranging from the produce families purchase to healthcare plans to pensions. In light of this reality, the commitment of TEAM attendees in the wake of this session was not an unrealistic attempt to craft the perfect solution within the week of the conference; but to go beyond short-term interventions to look for root causes in an effort to create lasting solutions.

### **Food security and nutrition: Impact on the most vulnerable**

Alongside Professor Steve de Gruchy's presentation on the first Millennium Development Goal, delegates to the TEAM conference were privileged to hear from Ambassador Shelia Sisulu, Deputy Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP). Ambassador Sisulu, a member of the Anglican Communion, opened her presentation by highlighting the grave need for interventions around food security. Currently, 800 million people worldwide are starving, while 24 000 children die daily. Furthermore:

- Hunger and malnutrition are the number one risk to global health, killing more people than Aids, malaria and TB combined

- Iron deficiency is impairing the mental development of 40 to 60 percent children in developing countries
- Lack of iron affects 4,5 billion people damaging productivity and cutting GDP by two percent in some countries
- HIV and hunger work in tandem: malnutrition accelerates HIV's progression while HIV worsens malnutrition
- Anti-retroviral drugs are not as effective in individuals suffering from malnutrition.

The role of the World Food Programme is to intervene in areas that are affected by famine in order to save lives. WFP coordinates the efforts of NGOs, governments and suppliers to ensure that food gets to those who need it most in time. In addition to addressing active famines, WFP also operates feeding programmes in communities globally. Annually, the programme's efforts ensure that 90 million people in more than 80 countries are fed.

In her remarks, Sisulu pointed out that access to food has much larger implications for development and is fittingly positioned within the first Millennium Development Goal. This is evident in the programme's work with families affected by disease, in the wake of natural disasters, and in its educational interventions.

Sisulu highlighted that among the WFP's interventions, families affected by HIV/ Aids often need considerable amounts of assistance in securing food. In Africa for instance, 70% of food is produced by women while men generally work in cities. When the breadwinner falls ill, on average, a family spends 87% of its income to keep their loved one alive. By the time the second breadwinner passes away, families are typically destitute. When one or more parents fall ill, not only is his/her ability to produce compromised by their personal illness, but also by the requirements of nursing their partner. As a result, children are immediately faced with hunger. Even in scenarios where orphaned children are absorbed into extended families there is often a strain on resources, not to mention inequalities that arise from the stigma of being associated with HIV/Aids .

To serve the needs of vulnerable children such as those affected by HIV/Aids, the WFP has embarked on an extensive school-feeding programme. By supplying students with take-home rations, for which good monthly attendance is a prerequisite, children become an asset and are more readily welcomed into extended family structures. This system also reduces the vulnerability of children to pressure, particularly for girls to enter into high-risk relationships in order to obtain food and other necessities is minimised.



School feeding programmes such as these often contribute to improved academic performance in children; first, by encouraging high rates of attendance and by contributing to the physical and mental development of youth.

Ensuring access to food will also assist the global community as it strives to achieve the MDGs related to maternal health and child mortality. As Sisulu explained, malnutrition is often passed from mother to child. If a young woman is undernourished as a child, the likelihood of giving birth to a child with developmental challenges increases substantially. Furthermore, a mother who is malnourished is more likely to give birth to a child who will die in the first week of life; and in the event that the newborn does survive, he or she will be more likely to suffer from conditions such as diabetes, hypertension and heart disease.

Beyond issues related to health, in communities that have suffered from devastating natural disasters, WFP in conjunction with partners such as Unicef, has found that when schools are established, communities quickly regain normality. Not only do children receive meals at schools, their parents get the opportunity to participate in food or food for training programmes during the times of disasters. This allows them to acquire skills while at the same time receiving rations to help sustain their families.

In all these interventions, however, the WFP is mindful that the root causes of hunger need to be addressed. Central among these causes is climate change. Over the last two decades, the number of food emergencies annually has risen from 15 to over 30%; and poor communities are often the ones most adversely affected. In light of these realities, the World Food Programme works with governments to establish early warning systems and to be able to predict and assess their needs. One such recent example of an improvement in government capacity was in Mozambique. Seven years ago, when there was a flood in Mozambique, the government was unable to cope with the deluge but during the most recent floods, the government was able to warn more communities in a time and to provide relief assistance quickly. While celebrating advances such as this, more works remain to be done.

Beyond sharing the plight of those who lack food security, Ambassador Sisulu also articulated that in all of its endeavors, the WFP views the Anglican Communion as a valuable partner. Given the scope of the Church's ministries, its presence in the most remote areas, and its long history of educational service, the Communion is well positioned to partner with the WFP to ensure that millions of people globally have access to food and proper nutrition. In 2006, Archbishop Williams visited Sudan and a school feeding programme in one of the

nation's most impoverished regions. Since then, the Archbishop, as well as other members of the Communion expressed ongoing interest in the work of the World Food Programme.

In response to Ambassador Sisulu's presentation, conference attendees sought to incorporate schools more centrally into developmental interventions, agreeing that they can in fact serve as nodes of social service delivery. More than that, however, delegates interrogated the role of WFP in communities, emphasizing that where possible goods should be sourced from local areas and that in the wake of disasters, infrastructure should remain even when WFP departs.

In complete agreement and highlighting the work and skills for food programmes as interventions intended to contribute to the long-term viability of communities, Sisulu elucidated the manner in which food relief is often politicised. As often as possible, WFP attempts to source food from local communities or neighbouring regions; however, when resources are donated to WFP from the international community, states often stipulate where the food should originate and where it can be utilised. Moreover, when it becomes evident that a food crisis is imminent, some markets in neighboring regions raise prices in anticipation of incurring additional profit. These issues of restricting resource use and in unethical pricing were depicted as areas in which the Communion can make an impact through advocacy and awareness building.

#### *Education for all: Goal #2*

Repeatedly throughout the conference, one of the themes that arose was the Church's commitment to education globally. As articulated by the World Council of Churches in 1968, "It is a Christian concern for the wholeness of the human being, for the quality of the common life, for the direction in which humanity goes, that turns us towards education now and sets us inside it and will not let us disengage." In 2000, with the signing of the Millennium Declaration, the community of nations also reaffirmed its commitment to the importance of education in making universal primary education a Millennium Development Goal.

In deliberations during the TEAM conference, members of the Anglican Communion also reaffirmed their commitment to ensuring quality education. Beyond that, however, it was agreed that as the body of Christ, the Church's responsibility is to ensure that all people, whether young or old, rich or poor, have access to education as education is a basic human right. Delegates also established that in its advocacy, the Church must work for much more than primary education. Instead, the Communion ought to promote types of training, whether

primary, secondary, vocational or informal, that will empower communities in the manner in which Dr Steve de Gruchy described.

Furthermore, as the Church, a principal responsibility is to look beyond the quantity of education, and to assess the quality of education. While the second MDG focuses on enrollment, the Communion must also assess retention, and develop strategies to assist learners in continuing their education. Additionally, the Church must consider issues such as teacher to pupil ratio while investigating what types of facilities are available to learners and the distances they must travel to reach those facilities. Often, stories are told of learners attending classes under trees without access to adequate materials. The Communion can serve as a partner to these communities by mobilising resources, and by pressing governments to cater for more than the minimum standards. This includes providing for secondary education as well as vocational training and adult literacy.

Churches can also add value by assisting in teacher training and contributing to the development of curriculums that are culturally and socially relevant. The Church can further make a unique contribution by ensuring that ethical and moral issues are included in school curriculums.

Given its mandate to pursue holistic education, the Communion must also recognise many challenges facing learners and the reality that schools are in many ways becoming extended homes. As youth lose parents to HIV/Aids and other diseases, extended families, when present, are often unable to cope with the needs of orphans. In the worst-case scenarios, children are rearing themselves and their siblings. In such circumstances, education, in the face of pressing needs such as food and housing, is no longer a priority. By providing meals and other social services via schools, the Church can help to ensure that the needs of families are met and some level of education attained, creating the possibility of a better future.

#### *Gender issues in the new millennium*

On 8 March 2007, during the course of Boksburg II, the world celebrated International Women's Day. Established in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, this commemoration rightfully acknowledges and celebrates the strides women have made in all spheres of life. However, as Ms G Njoni of South African Women in Dialogue expressed, in the new millennium, girls and women still face daunting challenges as:

- 3/5 of the 1 billion poorest people in the world are women

- 2/3 of the 960 million people who cannot read are women
- Women in the global south and the global north earn less than men for the same work
- 57% of those infected with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa are women
- Rape and violence against women has become endemic in war situations
- Women of all socio-economic, religious and racial backgrounds are victims of domestic violence
- 500 000 women die annually from pregnancy and childbirth; while another 18 million women suffer childbirth related disability and disease

The reality of the plight of women is reflected in the third MDG, which calls for gender empowerment and the elimination of gender disparities by 2015. While gender may appear to be a standalone item in the lineup of Millennium Development Goals, the reality is that without the full participation of women in society, developing nations will never achieve the MDGs, let alone reach their full potential.

Additionally, as the aforementioned statistics indicate, women are disproportionately affected by poverty and disease. By empowering women and girl children, the global community is ensuring that these individuals are equipped with the knowledge and tools to make better decisions for themselves and their families, helping to break cycles of poverty and abuse.

Beyond issues of poverty, the Communion's concern about violence against women was raised. While it has been widely acknowledged that sexual violence and physical abuse of women and girl children is all too often systematically employed as a tool of war, the Church must also recognise that domestic violence is an all too common occurrence, affecting women of all socio-economic strata in both developed and developing nations. An integral part of the Church's mandate is to speak against violence and the marginalisation of women. Delegates agreed that the responsibility for gender empowerment lies equally with men and women. Furthermore, the manner in which the Church socialises its children, and the types of relationships members of the Communion model, will either reinforce gender disparities or serve to create the inclusive community to which God calls humanity.

Delegates pointed out that presently, the Church has numerous strategies to promote gender equality and to facilitate the empowerment of women within its own body. A number of these policies have borne fruit as women have made many advances and achieved leadership positions within the Church and the world at large, yet significant work remains. Accordingly, alongside the policies and programmes to serve the needs of girls and women - which serve

the needs of the entire community - attendees asserted that a change of mindset, in both men and women, about gender and gender roles must occur. Therefore, in dialogues going forward, TEAM delegates committed to using language inclusive of women and non-threatening to men.

Most importantly, delegates were encouraged to examine the *Bible*, the source of the Church's mission, to speak against patriarchy and to advocate for equality. The scripture was highlighted as an essential tool to combat domestic violence and sexual abuse, not only within the body, but also in advocacy at large for an end to violence against women. As members of the same body, delegates concurred that women and men alike must work in full partnership for the achievement of these critical goals.

In affirmation of the conference's work around issues of gender and equality, the Ordained Women at TEAM 2007 issued the following statement:

*"We, women clergy of the TEAM 2007 meeting in Boksburg, South Africa, 7 to 14 March, celebrate the presence and leadership of ordained women from across the Anglican Communion. Our participation reflects the significant contribution women are making in the Church and in the world.*

*Our experience in these days has been of creative and diverse contributions by women. Our work has been blessed by the shared leadership of men and women in our liturgies, our theological reflections and in our strategy for social action.*

*The MDGs urge us to work for gender equity. We have heard many voices argue that families and communities flourish, human health and welfare prosper when women are empowered. The status and effectiveness of women is not merely a strategy for development. It is a biblical mandate for the Church. God's covenant with all humankind and the baptismal promise of redemption speak of the value of all human life both male and female made in the image of God.*

*The witness we give to the claims of gender equity is limited by our own institutional tension around the ordination of women. Some provinces do not yet ordain women. In most provinces, women hold a disproportionately small number of senior positions.*

*We urge provinces of the Communion to join with us in recognising the contribution of those women already ordained, and to redress the undervaluing and disempowering of women within the life of the Church. We commend the Conference for recognising*

*that we must put our own life in order as we call upon the world to work for gender equity.”*

### *Intensifying the struggle toward good health*

During the course of Boksburg II, participants also had the opportunity to engage in a number of dialogues pertaining to health and health related issues. Topics of discourse included HIV/Aids, maternal health and child mortality.

#### **Maternal health and reducing child mortality**

A common thread of TEAM discourse, beyond gender specific issues, was the importance of women and mothers in developmental efforts at large. The contributions of women, in and out of the home, are essential if the world is to make any developmental progress at all. Yet, today, complications from pregnancy and childbirth are a leading cause of death and disability among women of reproductive age in developing countries. The statistics indicate that:

- In Africa, a woman has a 1 in 16 chance of dying in childbirth, whereas a woman in North America's risk is 1 in 3 700
- Approximately 530 000 women die each year from maternal causes
- 18 million women annually suffer from injuries, infections and disabilities in pregnancy and childbirth

Tackling issues of maternal health is not only critical for the survival of mothers, but the well-being of children. As is the case with the seven other Millennium Development Goals, maternal health and child mortality cannot be addressed in isolation. In order to ensure that mothers have healthy pregnancies and children healthy starts in life, gender empowerment and poverty must be addressed. Without access to education, medical attention, and resources to ensure good nutrition, communities will be able to do little to improve maternal health.

As Dr Stephen Dzisi of Episcopal Relief and Development shared during a workshop he facilitated on maternal health and child mortality, the majority of maternal deaths are preventable. Bleeding, unsafe abortions, hypertension, obstructed labor, anemia and infections are the leading causes of maternal deaths. Dr Dzisi also identified three significant delays that contribute to many children and women losing their lives or being injured.

The first delay generally occurs in the home. In Ghana for instance, the majority of women give birth at home with traditional birthing assistants, who are trained to varying degrees. Frequently, a lack of information or inadequate knowledge about danger signs during pregnancy and labor mean that women do not seek the correct medical attention in a timely fashion. Along with lack of knowledge, cultural and traditional practices that restrict women from seeing medical personnel are frequently adhered to, to the detriment of women. Yet all too often, poverty and the inability to pay for treatment keeps women from obtaining medical attention.

Beyond delays in the home, women can experience delays when attempting to access medical facilities. This is particularly true in rural areas where medical attention can be many kilometers away. And accessing health facilities when faced with poor roads and insufficient transportation can take an inordinate length of time.

Unfortunately, once women do reach health facilities, they are not guaranteed prompt or sufficient care. As is the case with much infrastructure in developing nations, medical facilities are often overburdened and under resourced. Skilled staff tend to be too few while equipment, medication and space are often in short supply, if available at all.

Even when women's lives are spared, they too often spend the remainder of their years suffering from severe disabilities and debilitating pain. Most frequently, after dangerous labors, women experience: chronic anemia, fistulae, chronic pelvic pain, emotional depression, and maternal exhaustion.

Despite the dismal statistics surrounding maternal health, Dr Dzisi did share that a number of interventions can be undertaken to improve the health of new mothers and their children. Among the interventions which can serve to significantly reduce maternal deaths is a change in the policy implementation environment. Already, a number of countries are signatories to the Abuja Declaration, which calls for allocating 15% of total national budgets to health care, 20% of district health budgets to health care, and 2% of district assembly budgets. Allocations such as this will serve to improve maternal health directly, by ensuring that hospitals have adequate resources, and also indirectly, by giving women increased access to medical services and information before they even become pregnant.

Secondly, governments can provide obstetric care at the district level, ensuring that adequate facilities exist. Also, by instituting practices that are familiar to local women, service providers can increase the likelihood that would-be mothers make use of the new facilities.

These practices range from intake procedures, to the foods served, to the manner in which women are cared for post-delivery.

Furthermore, access to, not only the existence of, essential obstetric care needs to be improved. By strengthening referral systems, providing ambulance services, and improving communications, communities can ensure that women will be able to reach medical facilities in a timely fashion.

Another critical intervention is in the area of skills training and development. By training traditional birth assistants, as well as providing communities with midwives and doctors trained in obstetric surgery, much needed capacity can be added to local communities.

Additionally, newborn care can be improved by training medical personnel in appropriate techniques and promoting a package of newborn activities, whether the baby is born at home or in a medical facility. Beyond clean deliveries and cord care, immediate and exclusive breastfeeding can also significantly improve neonatal health.

Finally, since 15% of pregnancies in developing countries occur in adolescents, improving adolescent health will contribute to an improvement in maternal health. This can be accomplished by expanding adolescent sexual and reproductive health services and developing livelihood skills programs for youth.

Given that the Church provides significant portions of health care in developing countries, and up to 40% in African nations, the Communion is well positioned to interact with communities over maternal and newborn health. Women's Groups and Mother's Unions are key combatants in this fight, as women are more likely to discuss health concerns with another woman before seeking medical attention, or discussing health matters with a spouse. Equally as essential, however, are Men's groups, as men have the ability to ensure that spouses and family members receive adequate medical care. Youth groups are also critical in this fight as awareness can serve to delay sexual activity and pregnancy.

In addition to challenges surrounding healthcare, delegates also asserted that the Church must acknowledge the role domestic violence plays in damaging the health and well-being of both women and children. This unfortunate reality is true in both the global north, where stories of children dying as a result of injuries at the hands of caretakers and family members abound, as well as in the global south. TEAM delegates agreed that the Communion must actively work toward the eradication of domestic violence in its body and the world at large.



## **HIV/Aids**

Although the Church has been faced with HIV/Aids for nearly 30 years, it is a disease that continues to present the Communion and its members with grave physical and social challenges. According to Dr Peter Okalet, of MAP International, HIV is an exceptional disease for a number of reasons, the first being that there is no plateau in sight. Despite concerted public health campaigns and advances in technology and treatment, globally, the incidence of HIV infections rises annually. Secondly, the impact of the Aids pandemic is extensive. Beyond attacking the most productive sectors of society and damaging the social fabric of communities, confronting HIV/Aids often means challenging cultural norms and speaking openly about topics that are considered taboo.

In the fight against this pandemic, the community of nations has had various levels of success. In nations such as Swaziland, the incidence of HIV infection has steadily risen to its current prevalence of over 40%. In contrast, through a series of public interventions, Uganda has seen a significant decline in its HIV infection rate. There are other cases, such as Senegal's in which the rate of HIV prevalence has never risen above 2%. In its quest to overcome this disease, the Church must endeavor to understand the cultural, religious, social and economic factors that contribute to the success, and failure, of HIV/Aids interventions in various contexts.

In the fight to bring an end to HIV/Aids, Dr. Okalet also identified three essential elements, the first being activism and responsible leadership. Stakeholders must ensure that messages emanating from those in Church, community and political leadership are clear and consistent. Secondly, adequate finances must be allocated to fighting the pandemic; and thirdly, the many policies and recommended practices developed in relationship to HIV/Aids ought to be fully implemented.

Dr. Okalet also shared relatively new concepts in the discourse around HIV/Aids. Instead of the traditional acronym of ABC: Abstinence, Be Faithful, and Condom Use, **SAVED**, a more holistic acronym is being championed in many circles:

- Safer sexual practices
- Access to treatment (ARVs and drugs for OIs)
- Voluntary counseling and testing
- Empowerment – especially of women and youth
- Disease control

Additionally, there has been increased dialogue on male circumcision as a method to minimize the risk of HIV infection. However, there is some concern that advocating for male circumcision may inadvertently communicate that female genital mutilation is an acceptable and healthy practice.

Dr. Okalet also called for the full participation of those infected and affected by HIV in the Church's efforts to combat the disease. Those living with HIV should not be viewed as passive beneficiaries, but as active and equal partners in advocacy and educational efforts. Finally, a concerted effort must be made to educate youth, awareness in this demographic will translate to fewer infections in the future.

During this session, the particular challenges of working within faith-based organisations were also highlighted. Within Churches and other religious structures, there is an inherent tension between theological and moral messages about HIV/Aids and discussions around prevention. In order for these tensions to be abated, the Church should facilitate greater communication between church leadership, members and the community at large.

In addressing issues of HIV/Aids, the Communion must also address larger developmental issues such as that of the brain drain. While the World Health Organization recommends a national doctor to patient ratio of 1 to 5 000, many developing countries fall far short of this standard. In Kenya for instance, only 1 670 doctors and 3 900 nurses remain, while in Zimbabwe there are only 360 physicians. Of the 871 doctors trained in Ghana between 1993 and 2002, 604 have left the country. Mozambique will lose 6 000 lab technicians who work in the area of HIV/Aids by 2010. Unless the dearth of medical professionals is managed, the global community will never be able to turn the tide against HIV, or the many other health challenges facing this generation.

Beyond the clinical and advocacy admonitions to TEAM delegates, attendees were also reminded of the human face of HIV/Aids. Ms. Nomusa Njoko, an HIV-positive member of the Communion and the mother of a positive child, reminded listeners that the pandemic is not only about facts and figures, but the Church needs to develop holistic responses to those affected and infected by the disease. Stating, "I don't need home care, a condom doesn't help my 12-year old son" Njoko encourage the Communion to meet the needs of those who are facing HIV, not only when they are critically ill, or in preventing further transmission; but also in how to live life and to live it more abundantly.

Njoko also spoke of the critical need for women to be empowered, not because this is popular rhetoric, but because women need to have ability to speak out and to have more autonomy in their lives. As women become more economically independent, they will be less likely to tolerate unhealthy relationships. Only then will communities begin to turn the tide on HIV/Aids.

As delegates had previously heard about the dangers of stigmatising those infected with HIV/Aids from a clinical perspective, Njoko also shared her own experiences of being rejected by not only the man who infected her, but also by her Church Community. A devoted member of the choir, once her status was revealed in 1994, Njoko was told she was, “dirty in the eyes of God.” Unfortunately, similar sentiments from the body of Christ are all too common. In recent years, Njoko’s experience with stigma has been less overt. Her perspective is that people have become “diplomatic in public at least; however, barriers still remain to the full integration of those living with HIV/Aids in Church and community life.

Moved by the Njoko’s testimony and the tremendous work that remains in the battle against HIV/Aids, delegates not only recommitted themselves to clinical work and advocacy around the pandemic; but also asserted that the Communion must go beyond tolerating or accepting those infected and affected by HIV/Aids, rather the Church must actively seek out and embrace these members of the body.

## **Malaria**

Despite the fact that malaria is a preventable and curable disease, it remains one of the world’s greatest threats as 50% of the global community lives in malaria endemic areas. Annually, nearly two million people die as a result of malaria. In Africa, it is the number one cause of death, particularly in children, as every 30 seconds a child in sub-Saharan Africa succumbs to the disease. Not only does malaria kill on its own, but also in conjunction with HIV/Aids, the two diseases exacerbate one another, significantly reducing a patient’s chance of survival.

Beyond its high mortality rate, malaria presents a significant economic challenge. It greatly inhibits economic growth, costing sub-Saharan Africa alone an estimated US\$12 billion per year. Yet despite the fact that malaria kills more people than even HIV/Aids, and its wide reaching economic impact, it receives far less attention in the public arena allowing it to remain a silent killer.

A major contribution, however, to a reduction in malaria infections can be made through basic education. Frequently, communities are unaware of the causes of malaria; but once they learn that mosquitoes spread the parasite, and where mosquitoes breed, communities are able to better protect themselves. Communities also need to be educated as to the symptoms of malaria, so when a family member falls sick, appropriate action is taken.

In addition to educating communities about malaria, Nets for Life—a program of the Anglican Communion - seeks to distribute long-lasting insecticide treated nets to communities in need. Given the Church's presence in communities globally, the Communion can contribute significantly to a reduction in malaria deaths by becoming an agent of education.

In redressing malaria, delegates once again singled out the utilisation of schools as nodes of social service delivery. Using existing educational programmes, delegates sought to develop a mechanism whereby learners and parents are educated about malaria and receive bed nets.

#### *Environmental sustainability*

Along with dialogues surrounding poverty, and disease, TEAM delegates also engaged in deliberations around the Church's imperative to develop environmentally friendly practices and to ensure environmental sustainability. As stated in the ACC's 5<sup>th</sup> Mark of Mission, it is the responsibility of the Church to "Strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and to sustain and renew the life of the earth". Stewardship over the earth is in fact central to God's mission and therefore the mission of the Church and must be treated as such.

Furthermore, without preserving the resources of the earth, the community of nations will not achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Many of the systems contributing to the continued economic decline of poor communities are the same contributing to the gross pollution of the planet. This pollution of the earth is a leading factor in the increase in natural disasters such as drought, flooding and hurricanes. Although the majority of pollutants originate in the global north, these phenomena disproportionately impact the global south, further exacerbating existing conditions of poverty and disease.

Delegates also noted with alarm that climate change is bringing about the destruction of God's created order and increasing the suffering of the most poor and vulnerable, not only in the global south; but also in developed nations where large numbers of children born in inner-cities suffer from acute asthma and other ailments. Therefore, a reduction in carbon dioxide emissions and other greenhouse gases, alongside the development of renewable energy supplies, is key to the well-being of humanity.

As an entity endowed with a mandate to speak truth to power, delegates expressed that it is crucial for the Anglican Communion to hold governments and multinational corporations accountable for conducting environmentally sustainable business. Polluting God's creation for the benefit of the few, and to the detriment of the majority, is not a phenomenon that the Church can stand silently by and watch.

### *Strengthening partnerships for empowerment*

The eighth Millennium Development Goal is one, which calls for equitable and mutually beneficial relationships. In the many workshops, seminars, panels and speeches delegates attended, there was a constant call for the Anglican Communion to participate in relationships that bear fruit. More than that, representatives of a wide range of entities from the Millennium Campaign, to the World Food Programme to academic institutions, stressed the importance of partnerships with the faith community; not only the faith community at large, but the Anglican Communion in particular. This body is a sought after and desired partner because of its extensive history in developmental work and its unmatched grassroots network.

Accordingly, delegates were given the opportunity to explore and evaluate the many types of partnerships that the Communion is currently or considering engaging in. Discussions ranged from the need for partnerships with governments and multilateral institutions to establishing relationships with secular non-governmental organisations. Regardless of the type of organisation, it was repeatedly stressed that partnerships need to be entered into with the parameters clearly defined. As the Church, there are particular ideals and values that the Communion brings to each of its interventions. While there may not be organisational agreement in terms of beliefs, all parties must enter into partnership within the context of mutually beneficial outcomes and shared vision. Partnerships must also be entered into on the basis of mutual respect as true partnership is not achieved in instances where one party is viewed as inferior or in need of the other's resources. These principles apply not only to visible and recognized entities such as the United Nations, but are equally as important in relationships with local and under resourced entities.

Prior to entering into partnerships, however, the Church must assess its own internal resources. Frequently, there are individuals with expertise, financial resources and extensive networks within our own congregations. The Communion needs to improve its performance in identifying resources within parishes and across the Communion at large.

In the same vein, an issue that was repeatedly raised is that Churches are often unaware of what work is taking place in provinces other than their own, and at times, are not even fully aware of what neighboring parishes have undertaken. Therefore, the sharing and dissemination of information within the Communion is something that the Church must strive to formalise and continue in the years to come.

In recognition of this need, throughout the conference, delegates established and met in various caucuses. These meetings, from those of young Anglicans, to women, to those wishing to learn more about the work in Sudan, served to establish networks across the Communion, and expose interested parties to relevant work. The hope is that beyond the week of Boksburg II, these networks will continue to flourish and foster dialogue, enhancing the work of the Communion as a whole.

### Beyond the MDGs

Frequently heard during the course of TEAM deliberations was that the MDGs are merely the starting point for the Communion's interventions, both in terms of depth and scope. There are many issues that the Church must pursue beyond the requirements of the targets as well as numerous issues, which the MDGs do not address. The goals are most notably silent on the issue of conflict, which gives rise to a disproportionate number of challenges the MDGs seek to overcome. Additionally, while mentioned within the context of education, gender parity and mortality, there is no mention of the special needs facing children and their unique vulnerabilities. The Anglican Communion believes that these are both issues that must be addressed in greater detail if the Church is to fulfill its mandate of prophetic witness.

### *The role of the Church in peace building*

During Boksburg II, delegates had an opportunity to hear from brothers and sisters who are actively engaged in ministry in regions that are experiencing or have recently emerged from conflict. Among those who helped to give the Communion a sense of what is occurring, and how the body can support communities in these areas, was Bishop Nelson Onweng-Onono of Northern Uganda. The Bishop shared a video, *Rise Up and Walk*, which depicted the many challenges facing Northern Uganda after two decades of war.

Since the war began, 300 000 civilians have died - primarily women, children and the elderly. While camps have been established for displaced persons, overcrowding has led to unhealthy conditions. Currently, 1,200 people die in camps monthly, and the HIV/ Aids prevalence is 12%, double the national rate of infection. Outside of camps, an average of 46 people die violently each day.

In addition to inadequate health care and acts of violence, education remains a serious challenge in war-torn areas. In Northern Uganda, 700 schools are no longer functional, while a quarter of a million youth have never attended school. In this environment, children are particularly vulnerable to the lack of resources and violence. Latest estimates indicate that over 20 000 children have been conscripted into rebel armies while at least 1 000 children have been born to girls, under the age of 14, who were abducted by rebels. Nightly, some 45 000 children sleep in the streets together to avoid abduction.

Given the protracted nature of this conflict, society's ability to function has been seriously damaged; non-governmental organisations are now at the forefront of providing social services.

Considering the grave circumstances confronting members of the Communion in various parts of the world, it is essential that the entirety of the Church be aware of and support work in conflict zones, not only in thought and word, but in deed. Despite the principle that if one member of the body is suffering, all are suffering, many delegates from areas experiencing conflict expressed how alone they feel; and that in many instances, sense the Communion had forgotten them, and not suffered alongside them.

Tangibly, the Church can play a significant role in post-conflict situations by helping communities to reestablish livelihoods. Often, in situations of armed struggle, land, livestock, equipment and other tools of production are destroyed - deliberately or inadvertently. This reality leaves individuals without the tools or resources to produce food or purchase goods. Given its presence in even the most remote places, Churches are uniquely positioned to provide relief in these communities.

Beyond providing immediate needs such as food, Churches can assist by establishing seed banks, where agricultural producers can obtain seeds to grow produce. This has been one of the more successful interventions in Northern Uganda. Bishop Onweng-Onono described how the Church established a market, whereby members of the community were given vouchers to purchase seeds from vendors. The vendors consisted of individuals from surrounding communities who had a surplus of seedlings. This model allowed for a redistribution of resources while ensuring that proceeds from sales remained in local communities, having a multiplier effect.

In light of the very real challenges facing the Church in areas of unrest, delegates reaffirmed their commitment to ensure that none were forgotten; and to work in increased partnership to make sure that the concerns of all are actively addressed. To this end, the conference identified four areas where the Communion could make a contribution to the development of these societies, namely: caring for displaced people, rebuilding livelihoods, education, and reconciliation. Of the necessary interventions, the place in which the church has the potential to fill a particularly unique role is in supporting uprooted persons and facilitating processes of post-conflict reconciliation.

### **Refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons**

In caring for those impacted by armed conflict, the Church must pay special attention to the needs of internally displaced people, refugees and asylum seekers. Currently, the world is experiencing one of the greatest movements of peoples in human history, much of this migration is the result of conflict and the ensuing persecution and loss of livelihood. Despite the general acceptance of the free flow of money, goods and services brought about by globalization, there remains a considerable amount of hostility toward the world's 12 million refugees and 21 million internally displaced persons, the majority of whom are women and children.

The Church must address issues of forced migration, not only because many Anglican dioceses have populations in various stages of migration, but because the Church has a biblical imperative to respond to the needs of displaced people. Throughout the gospels, believers are reminded that the "Son of man has no place to lay his head". The book of Ruth, and in fact the entirety of scripture, speaks to the responsibility borne by those who know God to care for the stranger. The question then becomes how the Anglican Communion lives out this biblical imperative. Delegates acknowledged that in addition to mobilising resources for the displaced in our communities, advocacy could serve as a powerful tool in assisting refugees and asylum seekers.

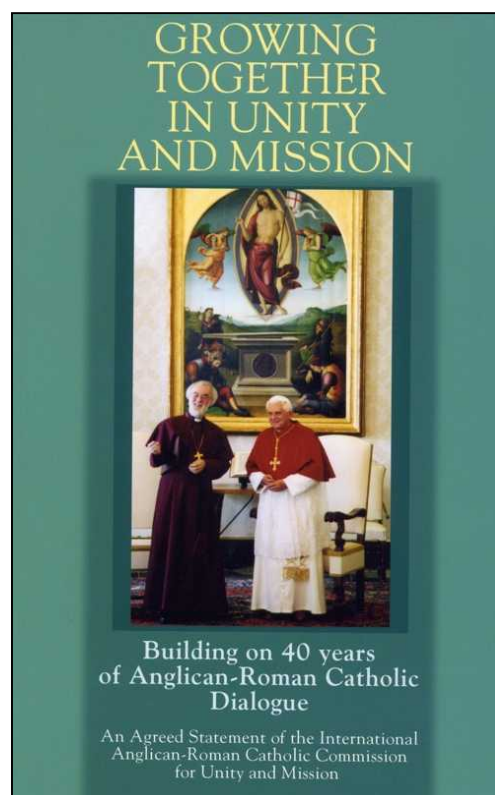


## **An Introduction to**

*Growing Together in Unity and Mission*

*An Agreed Statement of the International Anglican – Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission 2007*

prepared by Dame Mary Tanner and Bishop David Beetge,  
Anglican members of IARCCUM



Dame Mary Tanner, assisted by Bishop David Beetge, has written this short introduction to Anglican – Roman Catholic dialogue, with specific reference to the latest report, *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*. As the Lambeth Conference considers the ministry of a bishop, it is impossible these days to ignore the ecumenical dimensions and implications of the mission we undertake, and how Anglicanism offers a distinctive contribution in witnessing to the Gospel. It is intended that *Growing Together* should be a key text in assisting the bishops of the Communion to explore questions of the ecumenical dimensions of their

ministry – a case study in the way in which we can relate to the wide diversity of all Christian traditions.

### *A Challenge from Bishops to Bishops*

*I Called to be promoters of unity and leaders in mission*

**A bishop is a symbol of the unity of the Church in its mission, a leader in mission and an initiator of outreach to the world surrounding the community of the faithful. (Lambeth 1988)**

As bishops we have a particular responsibility to lead in the search for visible unity...If we as bishops have heard God's call to unity we should be obedient to it in the depths of our being. (Lambeth 1998)

Lambeth Conferences have consistently expressed a commitment to work for the visible unity of the Church and have recognised the particular responsibility that bishops have for promoting unity for God's sake and for the sake of credible mission.

Resolutions of Lambeth Conferences testify to the Anglican commitment to 'all round and all level' ecumenical commitment: deepening relations with those of different denominations on the basis of solid agreements in faith and living out closer relations in shared service and mission, locally, regionally and internationally. Throughout the twentieth century – the ecumenical century – Anglicans have moved into closer fellowship with other Christians and have expressed this in places in formal agreements and in some parts of the world have lived in close ecumenical partnerships locally.

In the 'all round ecumenical' commitment relations with the Roman Catholic Church have a special place because of our Anglican history and heritage. *Growing Together in Unity and Mission* provides Anglicans in every part of the world with concrete proposals for deepening our relations with our Roman Catholic brothers and sisters and encourages us to share in this movement, wherever we can, with other Christians. It insists that bishops have a particular responsibility to take a lead.

- What does it mean to you that the bishop is a symbol of unity in mission?
- How closely do you work with other Christians in your diocese?
- Do you in any sense share oversight of your area with your Roman Catholic counterpart?

## *II The blossoming of Anglican – Roman Catholic relations after Vatican II*

At the end of the historic visit of Archbishop Michael Ramsey to Pope Paul VI in 1966 they issued a Common Declaration. In it they affirmed together:

That all Christians who belong to these two Communion may be animated by the same sentiments of respect, esteem and fraternal love, and in order to help these develop to the full, they intend to inaugurate between the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion a serious dialogue which, founded on the gospels and on the ancient common traditions, may lead to that unity in truth, for which Christ prayed.

The work of a Preparatory Commission sketched out a way for the future. It recommended that certain theological issues should be addressed and that these should be complemented by a series of practical proposals to deepen relations between the two Communion, including common prayer, common witness and co-operation in mission. The Preparatory Commission worked with a model of unity by stages and called for 'an official and explicit affirmation of mutual recognition from the highest authority in each Communion which would give expression to common faith and foundational doctrinal matters'. Theological conversation and practical initiatives were to go hand in hand, the praxis expressing the degree of agreement in faith reached in the theological conversations.

## *III Advance in theological conversations*

The first Anglican – Roman Catholic Commission

The theological conversations of the Anglican – Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) made swift progress. *The Final Report of ARCIC* was published in 1982 and dealt with the subjects of the eucharist, ministry and ordination and authority. Provinces were asked whether the agreed statements were 'consonant in substance with the faith of Anglicans' and, if they were, what were the 'next concrete steps' that might be taken on the basis of the agreements.

The bishops at the 1988 Lambeth Conference, mindful of the provincial responses, recognised the statements on the eucharist, ministry and ordination as indeed ‘consonant in substance with the faith of Anglicans’ and declared the work on authority as providing a firm basis for continuing dialogue on authority. Although the bishops agreed that there was sufficient basis for taking the next steps toward reconciliation, they gave little indication of what they thought those practical steps might be. Theological comment seemed to have overshadowed thought about praxis. Nevertheless, in some places relations between Anglican and Roman Catholics had grown closer.

#### The second Anglican – Roman Catholic Commission

During Pope John Paul’s visit to England in 1982, he and Archbishop Robert Runcie signed a Common Declaration in which they called for a new theological commission for which they gave a new mandate. Over the next 22 years the commission produced significant statements on salvation and the church; the church as communion; morals; authority and the role and place of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

### *III A new millennium and a watershed in Anglican – Roman Catholic relations*

In May 2000 Archbishop George Carey and Cardinal Cassidy, the head of the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity, with the blessing of the Pope, called pairs of Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops from 13 countries to Mississauga in Canada to review relationships between Anglicans and Roman Catholics on the ground, to consider the theological convergence of the ARCIC conversations, and to ask what should be the next steps in Anglican – Roman Catholic relations. This was the first high level joint episcopal meeting that had ever taken place. It was clearly a significant and moving experience for the bishops who gathered at Mississauga. Their message at the end of their time together was determined and urgent. In it they recognised:

- the importance of Christian reconciliation and healing in a broken and divided world;
- the degree of spiritual communion that is already shared in spite of a continuing inability to share the eucharist;
- the impressive degree of agreement in faith that already exists while honestly referring to remaining differences;
- that our communion is no longer to be viewed in minimal terms but is a rich and life-giving, multifaceted communion;

- that the Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church are able to bring shared gifts to their common mission;
- that now is the time for a new stage of friendship and co-operation and evangelical *koinonia*.

The bishops suggested that it was time to recognise a new stage of relationship by signing a formal Joint Declaration of Agreement which would set out an agreed goal of visible unity, acknowledge the existing consensus in faith and set out commitments to share a common life and witness. To their statement the bishops appended an action plan for the future. The bishops were clear that the degree of theological agreement reached was sufficient to sustain a closer shared life and mission. They became increasingly aware of the special responsibilities of the episcopate to take a lead in developing Anglican – Roman Catholic relations:

We ourselves have a responsibility to guide, promote and encourage the on-going work of unity in our churches. We commit ourselves wholeheartedly to this task.

#### *IV The bishops take the lead: Growing Together in Unity and Mission*

*Growing Together in Mission and Unity (GTUM)* is the work of the group of Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops that was entrusted with the task outlined by the bishops at Mississauga. The first part of *GTUM* harvests the convergences of the ARCIC conversations and records honestly the remaining areas of difference. The second part offers a series of practical proposals for developing Anglican – Roman Catholic relations around the world for the sake of shared service and mission. Many of the proposals are appropriate for developing with Christians of other denominations.

*GTUM* was prepared against the backdrop of tension within the Anglican Communion which had consequences for Anglican relations with the Roman Catholic Church. The result was that instead of being seen as a Joint Declaration to be affirmed at the highest level of authority in both Communion, *GTUM* is offered as an agreed statement of the group of bishops that prepared it and is offered for study and response and not as a Joint Declaration to be formally endorsed and signed.

Part I: The faith we hold in common

Part I treats nine areas where Anglicans and Roman Catholics share a high degree of agreement in faith. Their understanding of:

1. God as Trinity (11-14)
2. the Church as communion in mission (15-25)
3. the Word of God (26-32)
4. baptism (33-38)
5. eucharist (39-49)
6. ministry (50-61)
7. authority in the Church (62-76)
8. discipleship and holiness (77-87)
9. the Blessed Virgin Mary (88-92).

But Part I also points clearly to a number of areas where differences exist between Anglicans and Roman Catholics. Seven boxed paragraphs explore differences in the areas of our respective understandings of the constitutive elements of the Church; eucharistic discipline; the validity of orders and the ordination of women; the exercise of authority in the Church – including questions about the exercise of a ministry of a universal primate; serious disagreements on specific moral issues in spite of our common moral foundations, and the Marian dogmas and the practice of devotion to Mary.

What is clear from Part I is just how much faith Anglicans and Roman Catholics hold in common. The remaining areas of difference are to be seen, evaluated and addressed in the context of this substantial agreement.

Part I places much emphasis on the importance of ‘mutual recognition of the holy gifts and essential constitutive elements of Church in one another’ (20). Discovering through theological conversation where Anglicans and Roman Catholics agree in faith about the essential elements of the Church’s life gives us confidence to look at one another and recognise ‘the holy gifts and constitutive elements’ of the Church of Christ in the other’s life and witness. Affirmation of our common faith is an essential step on the way to mutual recognition which makes possible, indeed obligatory, a common sharing in life and mission.

At the end of their summary of the degree of agreement in faith the bishops of IARCCUM say:

Genuine faith is more than assent: it is expressed in action. As Anglicans and Roman Catholics seek to overcome the remaining obstacles to full visible unity, we, the bishops of IARCCUM, recognise that the extent of common faith described in this statement compels us to live and witness together more fully here and now. Agreement in faith must go beyond mere affirmation. Discerning a common faith challenges our churches to recognise that elements of sanctification and truth exist in each other's ecclesial lives, and to develop those channels and practical expressions of co-operation by which a common life and mission may be generated and sustained. (96)

## Part II: Practical proposals

The bishops go on to invite Anglicans and Roman Catholics to consider what practical suggestions for joint action in mission are appropriate to their particular context. Many of the suggestions can be shared with other Christians, and not only in a bilateral relationship. The practical suggestions cover four areas:

- visible expressions of our shared faith
- joint study of the faith
- co-operation in ministry
- shared witness in the world.

### **Visible expressions of our joint faith**

- Anglicans and Roman Catholics already recognise one another's baptisms and this fact makes possible a number of practical initiatives: joint baptismal preparation, common catechetical materials, regular public confession of shared baptismal faith, the renewal of baptismal promises, perhaps at Pentecost, the use of a common baptismal certificate, and, particularly in the case of interchurch families, inclusion of witnesses from other churches. (100)
- Although our churches have different disciplines in regard to sharing the eucharist (39-44), attending each other's eucharists can serve to make us aware of the degree of spiritual communion we share and strengthen our desire for full communion. Anglicans and Roman Catholics should include in the prayers of the faithful a prayer for the Pope and for the Archbishop of Canterbury and indeed the leaders of all Christian churches.

- There are many non-eucharistic celebrations which can be shared, including pilgrimages, the celebration of each other's feast days, the saying together of the daily office.

### *Joint study of our faith*

- The Scriptures are the primary source of authority for both Communion which makes joint Bible study particularly for those training for ordained ministry appropriate. The ARCIC agreed statement on Mary has much to say about hermeneutical principles, including the ecumenical reading of Scripture which would form a good discussion basis for clergy and laity.
- Many clergy and laity know little about the agreed statements of ARCIC I and II. Bishops can do much to encourage joint study days on these documents in order to foster a greater appreciation of the substantial agreement shared between us and also those areas where differences remain. There is much misunderstanding on the part of Anglicans of the positions held by Roman Catholics and similarly by Roman Catholics of positions held by Anglicans. The study of the ARCIC texts can usefully be seen together with the documents from the multilateral conversations of the Faith and Order Commission of the WCC and the results of other bilateral conversations in which both our Communion are involved.
- The Roman Catholic Church as long ago as 1997 produced *The Ecumenical Dimension in the Formation of those Engaged in Pastoral Work* which has many useful suggestions about shared study and the use of ecumenical documents in the formation of those engaged in pastoral work.

### **Co-operation in ministry**

- It is important that bishops of both Communion are seen to meet together and work together in the local church. Where regional joint bishops meetings are not customary it may be useful to learn from other regions about the conduct and the content of joint bishops' meetings. It is an important witness when bishops in the diocese act together, speak together and where appropriate issue joint pastoral statements. (109, 110)
- Attendance at one another's collegial and synodical gatherings is another important witness. When issues of faith, order or moral life arise in one Communion



consultation is crucial before decisions are taken. There is not such thing as a unilateral action which does not have consequences for the other. (109)

- A range of initiatives at Episcopal level is suggested in *GTUM*, including letters of introduction to ecumenical colleagues whenever a new bishop is elected, the association of Anglican bishops in *ad limina* visits, the establishment of agreed protocols for handling the movement of clergy from one Communion to another. (111)
- An increased sharing in the formation of clergy. (112)
- The exploration of new ways to affirm publicly the fruitfulness of one another's ordained ministries even before the reconciliation of the two ministries. (113)
- Consideration might be given to the challenge issued in *The Gift of Authority* to explore how the ministry of the bishop of Rome might be offered and received even before full visible unity in order to help our two Communions grow towards full ecclesial communion. (114)
- Religious communities should be encouraged to continue along the way of sharing their heritage and vocations. (115)
- There is much that can be done in joint training of lay ministries for readers, evangelists, etc...(117)

### **Shared witness in the world**

- There is much our two Communions could do both internationally and nationally to promote social justice, to eradicate poverty and to care for the environment. (118, 119)
- In places where our Communions have contributed to the cause of division and strife then we should do all that is possible to show that reconciliation is possible which can lead to joint witness. (120)
- In the field of education churches are urged to consider the development of joint schools, shared teacher training and the production of outreach programmes especially for young people. (122)
- Both Communions could learn from new groups, movements and associations especially those with a special commitment to unity. (124)

The suggestions are not intended to be exclusive to Anglican and Roman Catholic partnerships but to be open to other traditions wherever appropriate. And together Anglicans and Roman Catholics are urged to work more closely with other faith communities. (125)

The programme set out in *GTUM* is not definitive. No single international report can address the specificity of every local context. *GTUM* offers only suggestions. Much will depend upon local circumstances and relations already established, and whether there is a local ARC and how proactive it is. Different regions can learn from one another's initiatives.

What is important for the authors of *GTUM* is that bishops, the promoters of unity, should recognise their particular responsibility for guiding and inspiring the deepening of Anglican – Roman Catholic relations and that each bishop should seek to do that with his or her Roman Catholic colleagues.

The challenges of *GTUM* come from a group of Anglican – Roman Catholic bishops and are addressed to bishops in the first place. In conclusion they say:

We the bishops of IARCCUM strongly commend these suggestions to members of the episcopate around the world, mindful of the specific responsibilities of bishops for promotion of Christian unity and the mission of the Church. We give thanks to God for the extensive theological consensus articulated in this document – fruits of the last forty years of dialogue – and we pray that God will richly bless all that we are now called to do in his Name. We call on all bishops to encourage their clergy and people to respond positively to this initiative, and to engage in a searching exploration of new possibilities for co-operation in mission.

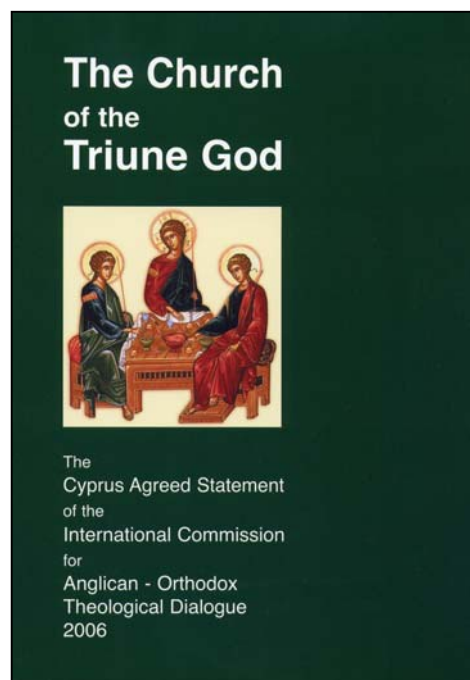
- Have you discussed *Growing Together in Unity and Mission* with any Roman Catholic bishops?
- Which of the practical proposals in *GTUM* can you envisage implementing locally?
- What do you consider are the most difficult outstanding theological areas of difference between the two Communion and what would you like to see an Anglican – Roman Catholic Commission addressing in the future?

*A summary, with extracts, of*

# *The Church of the Triune God*

*The Cyprus Agreed Statement of the International Commission for Anglican  
– Orthodox Theological Dialogue 2006*

*prepared for the Lambeth Conference by the Rt Revd Mark Dyer and the Revd  
Canon Hugh Wybrew, Anglican members of the Commission*



## *Introduction*

*The Church of the Triune God (The Cyprus Agreed Statement)* is the report of seventeen years of dialogue between the Churches of the Anglican Communion and the Eastern Orthodox Churches. It was published in January 2007 and follows on from the Dublin and Moscow Reports.

This is an ecumenical document articulating those things which both Anglicans and Orthodox perceive to be true of the Church and the way in which we are bound together into a common life. It is offered to the Lambeth Conference as a contribution to the bishops' thinking on the nature of the episcopal office and the relations of communion which bind the Church together.

The third phase of the dialogue began in 1989, when the commission was re-constituted as The International Commission for the Anglican - Orthodox Theological Dialogue (ICAOTD). Its task has been to consider the doctrine of the Church in the light of the doctrine of the Trinity, and to examine the doctrine of the ordained ministry of the Church. Particular attention has been given to the question of who may be ordained to the presbyterate and episcopate. This third phase of the dialogue has given further consideration to ecclesiological issues discussed in earlier phases, and to aspects of Trinitarian doctrine. The Cyprus Agreed Statement, like its two predecessors, registers considerable agreement over a range of issues, while leaving the question of the ordination of women unresolved. (*Introduction, p.11*)

### *The Trinity and the Church*

At the heart of the church is the reality of sharing the divine life of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This communion of life with God manifests itself in a church that is one, holy, catholic and apostolic. This grace-filled communion with God determines the identity and character of the church.

'This life was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us -we declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ' (1 John 1.2-3). (*1.1*)

'By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit' (1 John 4.13). (*1.2*)

What is the life revealed to us? St John makes it clear that the fellowship or communion (*koinonia*) of life in the Church reflects the communion that is the divine life itself, the life of the Trinity. This is not the revelation of a reality remote from us, for in the communion of the Church we share in the divine life. The communion manifested in the life of the Church has the trinitarian fellowship as its basis, model and ultimate goal. Conversely, the communion of the persons of the Holy Trinity creates, structures and expounds the mystery of the communion experienced in the Church. It is within and by the Church that we come to know the Trinity and by the Trinity we come to understand the Church because 'the Church is full of Trinity' (Origen, Fragment on Psalm 23.1, PG 12, 1265). (*1.3*)

All our theology of the Church presupposes the eternal priority of this mystery of communion in the life of God. If God were not eternally a communion of love, the *koinonia* of believers would not be what it is, a real participation in the divine life, a *theosis*. As the Church has

come to understand and articulate this truth, it has seen that the communion of the divine Persons must be a relationship in which each Person has identity and life in and through the others. The Father, the sole source of divine life and being, gives birth eternally to the Son, who has all that he has from the Father. The Spirit, eternally proceeding from the Father, receives from him the fullness of the same divine life. (I.4)

'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness' (Genesis 1.26). It is the will of the Blessed Trinity that each human being is created for, and called into, a personal way of existence in communion with God, the whole human community and all creation. That is why each human being is a person who not only shares with all others a common human nature, but also participates with them in the whole of creation. Humankind, however, rejected the call to personal life in communion, and instead fell into a narrow way of selfish existence leading to death rather than eternal life. (I.5)

In his own person, fully human and fully divine, Christ renews humanity disfigured by sin. In his body the Church, through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, sinful human beings are brought, through faith and the sacraments, into communion with God, for which they were created. Christ prays that all faithful humanity may by grace be embraced for ever in that divine communion shared by Father, Son and Holy Spirit: 'I ask, Father, as you are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be completely one, as we are one. I in them and you in me, that they may be completely one, as you and I are one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me' (John 17.20-23). (I.7)

The Church is both a local and a universal reality. As the one God is a communion of three persons, so the universal Church is one communion in Christ of many local churches. She is not a federation of separate parts. The relationship between the local church and the universal Church is determined by the revelation of the life of the Holy Trinity. (I.23)

The unity of the universal Church is the communion in faith, truth, love and common sacramental life of the several local churches. The catholic Church exists in each local church; and each local church is identified with the whole, expresses the whole and cannot exist apart from the whole. (I.24)

In this respect there is a convergence between Orthodox and Anglican understandings of the Church. Orthodox and Anglicans agree in rejecting a single centralised authority in the Church. This is not for local and cultural, but for profoundly theological reasons. (I.25)

*A Shared Anglican - Orthodox Understanding of Episcopacy, Primacy, Synodality and Collegiality*

*The Bishop and the Local Church*

The ministry of a bishop is to represent Christ and his Church as apostle, chief priest and pastor of a diocese. The ministry of episcopal oversight is essential to every aspect of church life. The bishop is the guardian of the faith, unity and discipline of the church. Anglicans and Orthodox agree that the local church is fully the church catholic.

The *Dublin Agreed Statement* of 1984 states clearly that both the Anglican and Orthodox Churches share a doctrine and practice of 'seniority' or 'primacy'. 'The Ecumenical Patriarch does not, however, claim universal jurisdiction over the other Churches, as is ascribed to the Pope by the First and also the Second Vatican Council; and Orthodoxy sees any such claim as contrary to the meaning of seniority, as this was understood in the early centuries of the Church.' For Anglican Churches a similar seniority has come to be ascribed to the See of Canterbury. 'But this seniority is understood as a ministry of service and support to the other Anglican Churches, not as a form of domination over them... Thus, even though the seniority ascribed to the Archbishop Canterbury is not identical with that given to the Ecumenical Patriarch, the Anglican Communion has developed on the Orthodox rather than the Roman Catholic pattern, as a fellowship of self-governing national or regional Churches.' It remains unquestionably true that neither the Anglicans nor the Orthodox perceive the Church primarily in terms of a global bureaucratic structure which confers life and ministry downwards or outwards from its centre (cf. DAS 27 g. p.18). (V.1)

In the Anglican and Orthodox vision the primary way of ecclesial being is the local church. Existing agreements have recognised this fact and its ministerial implications. Ecclesiologically, the Reformation in the Church of England was a reassertion of the national or local church's right to govern itself within its conciliar relationship with the world-wide Church. The great schism of 1054 resulted from a rejection of the Western Patriarchate of Rome's claim to jurisdiction over the Eastern Churches. Historically and theologically Orthodox and Anglicans share a commitment to the ecumenical councils as decisive elements in their ecclesiology. (V.2)

In the New Testament the local churches never appear without *episcopos*, or oversight, the ministry of care rooted in the gospel. In the apostolic Church this ministry took various forms, but its presence seems to be invariable. There is scholarly debate regarding the early forms of *episcopos*. Sometimes the New Testament speaks of ministries in the plural (cf. Roman 12.4-8; Ephesians 4.11; Philippians 1.1; Hebrews 13.7, 17; Titus 1.5-8). At the beginning of the second century the Ignatian epistles provide the first unequivocal evidence of the three distinct but cohering ministries of bishop, presbyter, and deacon, of which the bishop provides *episcopos*. This seems to have been the case at least in the communities of Asia Minor, although we cannot assume that as yet this structure was universal. (V.3)

We agree that the Spirit had a guiding role in this development. How it should be interpreted, and how ecclesiology should draw on the past as a criterion for the present and future, is an important theological issue. Neither Anglicans nor Orthodox claim that the New Testament texts provide a blueprint for subsequent church order, although the Anglican Ordinal of 1662 assumes the threefold order to have originated in the time of the apostles. Anglicans and Orthodox regard Holy Scripture as a crucial source for all doctrine, including ecclesiology. Both regard the doctrinal decisions of the Ecumenical Councils as normative interpretations of scriptural witness, especially in trinitarian and christological doctrine (cf. MAS pp.84-85). (V.6)

The post-apostolic Church's need to develop *episcopos* is thought to have been motivated by the death of the apostles who had known Jesus Christ. Their loss, and the delay in the Second Coming, prompted the Church to find a way of preserving the apostolic witness to Christ. The essential link between the apostolic and post-apostolic Church proved to be the local community, rather than a centrally co-ordinated structure of missionary delegates. The post-apostolic Church recognized each local church as a full and catholic church, capable of judging any itinerant minister. The Church was also helped to make the transition from the apostolic to the post-apostolic period by the local church's celebration of the Eucharist, together with president's role in expounding the traditions received from the apostles, traditions which were subsequently canonised in the New Testament. (V.7)

With regard to the vital significance of the local church for ecclesiology in the early centuries, it is important to note that wider synods did not constitute an ecclesiastical structure over and above the local communities. Synodical decisions were not fully valid until they had been received by the local churches. *Episcopos* was not therefore a means of subjecting the laity to a superior authority; it was rather a ministry which enabled the local church to remain a concrete community. (V.10)

Apostolic succession is best regarded as a succession of communities represented by their bishops, rather than as a succession of individuals with power and authority to confer grace apart from their communities. Local churches participated in wider councils through their bishop who represented them. The unity of the local churches was thus maintained and the catholicity of the faith preserved, without the loss of varying local customs. Such an ecclesiology is central to the way in which both Orthodox and Anglicans understand themselves as communions of local churches. (V.15)

Anglicans and Orthodox agree that synodality is fundamental to the being of the Church. The bishop is only bishop in the context of his own community, and when he participates in a wider council he brings his community with him... Both Anglicans and Orthodox emphasise the significance of the local bishop with his community as the primary expression of church life. Any form of primacy has to take this into account. (V.20)

#### *Primacy, Collegiality and Synodality*

The vocation of a bishop is not an autonomous office but a servant ministry among the people of God. The bishop carries out this ministry in a collegial way, sharing the leadership with clergy and laity. Collegial responsibilities are exercised beyond the local diocese in provincial synods and international gatherings such as a Lambeth Conference.

Anglican ecclesiology gives to the laity an important place in the life of the Church: the laity have their proper place in Anglican synodical structures. The Orthodox regard the bishop in synod as representing whole community. This difference in approach requires further consideration, to see whether it can be regarded as a secondary matter about which there can be legitimate diversity. Anglicans and Orthodox agree that the whole local church should be represented in synodical structures, while seeing that end achieved in different ways. (V.18)

The concept of the college of bishops as an instrument of unity has been recently introduced into Anglican discussion as a means of unifying both teaching and policy (cf. *The Virginia Report*, p.26, 50 and appendix 16). Anglicans and Orthodox agree that bishops do not form an apostolic college apart from and above the local churches. Bishops are an integral part of their respective churches. Such an understanding precludes any form of universal episcopal jurisdiction standing apart from and above the local churches. (V.22)



If conciliarity is one important complement to primacy, reception is another. Decisions of councils and primates need to be referred back to the local churches for their acceptance. This was the case with the decisions of ecumenical councils in the early Church. In some cases local churches rejected conciliar decisions, as in the case of the council of Ephesus in 449 and the council of Ferrara-Florence 1438-9. Even when the local churches accept a council, time must always be allowed for them fully to appropriate conciliar decisions of major significance. Such decisions must be received by the community in order to become authoritative. This fact reinforces the truth that bishops, including primates, are not independent of their local churches. (V.23)

The ecumenical journey of our two churches is bringing them new insights and bearing fruit, and is indeed vital for them. Searching questions about the eschatological, christological, and local character of the Church require a fresh assessment of current patterns of ecclesial life. Mutual questioning in charity and ecclesial fellowship reveals aspects of church life which may need to be changed. Since each church is facing issues including those of unity and diversity, and orthodoxy and dissent, this process may open up new horizons, and we may be able to help each other more than we can imagine. (V.24)

The Orthodox emphasis on the local church is consistent with the Lambeth Quadrilateral's call for episcopacy to be locally adapted. Such a qualification excludes the suppression of legitimate local diversity. The Anglican and Orthodox Churches share too a eucharistic understanding of the local church. In this context 'eucharistic' must be understood in its widest sense: it includes the proclamation of the word and pastoral ministry, and presupposes the sacrament of baptism. (V.26)

#### *The Eucharistic Context and Sacramental Character of Episcopal Ministry*

In recent decades there has been a widespread revival of eucharistic ecclesiology, reflected in all ecumenical dialogues. The Christian community is most fully itself when it gathers to celebrate the Eucharist under the presidency of its bishop, and is in turn built up by the Eucharist. This theological understanding of the Church prompts Anglicans and Orthodox alike to bring their Churches' institutional life into conformity with their doctrine of the Church as a sacramental organism.

The association of *episcopus* with the local church and with the Eucharist implied that whenever the local community gathered to celebrate the Eucharist, the eschatological community was present in its fullness. In this way the local church reflected heavenly reality. Theologically this can be understood to entail a parallel between God and the president of

the eucharistic assembly, surrounded by presbyters. It is therefore possible to suggest that this eschatological understanding of the local church gave rise to the one bishop (*ho episcopos*) in Ignatius. The eschatological, rather than linear-historical, origin proposed here for the emergence of the one bishop is important, as is the context of worship and pastoral oversight in which episcopal leadership in the local church emerged. We should not think of a juridical caste handing on power over the church or indeed creating the church. Over against the claims of gnostic groups, Irenaeus always emphasises the local bishop within the worshipping community as the guardian of true catholic doctrine. (V.8)

A decisive change occurred as dioceses grew in size. In the experience of the majority of Christians the bishop was no longer the normal eucharistic president. Presbyters became the eucharistic ministers for parishes, although the bishop's name was mentioned in the eucharistic liturgy. The bishop's eucharistic role was overshadowed by his administrative and teaching functions. He never lost the right to ordain, although this was gradually seen, not as deriving from the relationship of his ministry to Christ, but as a function of the power (*potestas*) delegated to him through the apostolic succession. The link between ordination and the local community was thus weakened, and ordination became the sacramental act of the bishop. In the West the bishop's reduced eucharistic role, and his increased political and worldly power, meant that he ceased to be seen as an essentially ecclesial figure. (V.11)

In the early centuries there was the closest possible link between local churches and *episcopos*: neither could exist without the other. The local church understood itself as eschatological in character, gathered around Christ in the Spirit, with the Eucharist as a crucial moment in its ecclesial life. 'Eucharist' should be understood to include pastoral oversight and proclamation of the gospel, which are no less central aspects of ecclesial life. As the significance of the local church faded, and the bishop came to be seen more as an administrator, this local, christological and eschatological understanding of the church was lost. But the primary ecclesial claim of the local church, though marginalised and neglected, remains strong. (V.14)

To see the bishop as the normal president of the eucharistic assembly is to pose sharp questions about the presbyterate and the size of local churches. The presbyter is now the minister of word and sacrament and the pastor and teacher of his congregation, under the oversight of the diocesan bishop. So far as eucharistic presidency is concerned, the presbyter fulfils the role of the local bishop. Smaller dioceses would make it easier to recover the understanding of the bishop as eucharistic president. (V.17)

*The Cultural Context of the Church's Life and Episcopal Ministry*

The relationship between Christian faith and culture is a matter relevant to the ordination of women, and to other issues currently debated within the Anglican Communion. It is more generally relevant to each local church, to its witness to Jesus Christ in the society in which it lives, and to the ministry of the bishop within that church and society. The outcome of the dialogue between Christian tradition and culture is rarely if ever quickly clear. That is why there is need for a potentially lengthy process of discernment.

From the time of the New Testament to the present, Christology has never developed in a cultural vacuum, but always in relationship to a particular culture or grouping of cultures. The distinction between the Gospel and culture must not be ignored or blurred. There should be vigorous interaction and dialogue between them. There can also be a convergence between them, rooted in God's creation of human beings and their re-creation in Christ. That is why we need a theological interpretation of culture that will help us to understand it, and the part it can play in the life of the Church. (III.33)

Particular doctrinal definitions are not necessarily restricted to the cultures in which they emerge. The New Testament's and the Ecumenical Councils' affirmations of Jesus Christ as truly divine and truly human remain the foundation, touch-stone and nourishment of the Church's life and proclamation of the Gospel in every culture and in every age. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, the Church becomes a source of creativity in the cultures in which it is present. (III.35)

At the same time, cultures affect the articulation of the Gospel and Christology, and may prompt the Church to listen afresh to the Gospel, and perhaps hear it in new ways. That does not mean that culture will determine the meaning of Jesus Christ. It is vital to engage with the Scriptures and the living tradition of the Church, in order to ensure that faithfulness to Jesus Christ accompanies inculturation, and that cultures themselves are transformed. (III.36)

Christians need to address the particularity of each culture as they seek to bear witness to the Triune God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Christians have a primary responsibility for expressing the Gospel of Jesus Christ within their cultural setting. This obligation cannot be imposed from the outside, even though it does not take place in isolation. There is a necessary process of discernment, for which the local church is accountable to Jesus Christ and responsible to the whole Church. The articulation of Christology in worship, teaching and the arts within a particular culture needs to be tested

sympathetically but critically, to discern whether it remains true to Scripture and falls within the Church's living tradition. This same process of discernment is also required in our ecumenical dialogues, so that we can discern each other's standing in the faith. (III.37)

#### *Heresy and Schism, Reception*

Christians not infrequently accuse those with whom they disagree of heresy. Given the variety which may arise from local churches' proclamation of the Gospel in ways relevant to the society in which they live, it is important to be clear what constitutes a heresy. The bishop is always involved in the necessary process of discerning whether or not a given local development is contrary to fundamental Christian beliefs. All concerned with this process must be open to the Holy Spirit.

'The catholicity of the Church is shown in the multiplicity of particular local churches, each of which, being in eucharistic communion with all the local churches, manifests in its own place and time the one catholic Church. These local churches, in faithful response to their own particular missionary situation, have developed a wide diversity in their life. As long as their witness to the one faith remains unimpaired, such diversity is seen to be not as a deficiency or cause for division, but as a mark of the fullness of the one Spirit who distributes to each according to his will.' (DAS 12) (VIII.1)

Historically, however, certain instances of diversity have impaired their witness to the apostolic faith, distorting it and becoming a cause for division. Current imprecise and imprudent uses of the word 'heresy' may lead to the perception that the word is more of a problem than a help in dealing with emerging theological restatements or reconsideration, and the recovery of certain practices. But the classical sense of the term, and the criteria by which it is applied, may be very helpful to Christians at the present time as they seek to live out the Gospel in new situations, and especially as they work for the recovery of Christian unity. (VIII.6)

In the classical sense, heresy is a denial of the apostolic faith, and a betrayal of the existential reality of the Church as a community of faith. The self-revelation of God, in the prophets and in Christ, to which the Scriptures and Tradition bear witness, cannot be understood in isolation from the community in which it is received. The ecclesial reality can only be expressed in fidelity to the ways in which it has been expressed from its beginning in the apostolic witness, namely the canonical Scriptures and the Tradition as articulated in the Rule of Faith, culminating in the dogmatic teaching of the Ecumenical Councils. Any teaching or practice which denies the doctrinal truths they express must therefore be considered as

heretical. These criteria, then, place significant limits and conditions on the use of the term heresy. (VIII.7)

Teachings which attack the existential reality of the Church's distinctive life are unequivocally heretical in every sense of the word. The Church's existential reality can only be expressed in the terms in which it has been articulated from its inauguration: the creative love of God, God's truth, grace and self-revealing action in the history to which the Church belongs, redemption in the crucified and risen Christ, the forgiveness of sin, new life in the Holy Spirit, and the hope of an everlasting inheritance. Because these are the Church's distinctive and fundamental beliefs, any teaching which denies the objective truth they express empties them of their existential meaning. (VIII.8)

Because of the seriousness of heresy, the Church may at times find it unavoidable to disassociate itself publicly from teachings, theological views or practices which it considers to be seriously subversive of essential Christian truths. The need for wisdom, theological acumen, tact, patience, and firmness is obvious. To underline the pastoral rather than simply the juridical significance of such action, any public consideration or judgement of heresy must be undertaken in a positive and constructive manner, accompanied by a convincing explanation of what the Church does believe: the best answer to bad doctrine is good doctrine. (VIII.9)

Like reception, discernment of heresy does not take place on the level of individuals, but of the community. Such an activity can only occur within a dynamic community that is structured in such a way as to make the spiritual gift (charism) of 'reception' just as important as the charism of 'instruction' and indeed of 'rejection'...In this sense, the discernment of heresy is closely linked with the ongoing process of reception, in which innovations, proposed for the sake of actualising the Gospel, are first discerned, and then welcomed or rejected. An innovation can be rejected as heresy only when it is judged to deny, distort or undermine the apostolic faith. (VIII.10)

Such discernment properly begins as an exercise of *episcopate*, and its various modalities must always include the local bishop. At times, the assistance of other regional local churches and their bishops is required, in the form of a council or synod. Ultimately, however, it is only an Ecumenical Council, whose decisions are received by the whole Church, that can declare a teaching heretical. The whole canonical and synodical tradition of the Church can be understood as a series of attempts in the course of time to set out the forms of Church life and belief that would best enable local churches to live in love and unity. The

pastoral role of the bishop as teacher and interpreter of apostolic faith is inseparable from the episcopal ministry as guardian of unity, expressed liturgically in eucharistic presidency. In the eucharistic liturgy, the community's praise and thanksgiving to God, the unity of the Church is given ritual expression. The eucharistic liturgy itself may then be seen as the ecclesial community's criterion for determining orthodoxy and heterodoxy, as correct or incorrect praise (*doxa*) and giving of praise (*doxologia*), the concrete working out of the ancient principle *lex orandi lex credendi*. (VIII.11)

Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, it has often been the case that such discernment has led to a clearer articulation of the apostolic faith, as in the case of the Ecumenical Councils...Openness to the Holy Spirit is essential in the process of discerning heresy today. (VIII.12)

### *Conclusion*

Anglicans and Orthodox have not reached agreement on the ordination of women to the presbyterate and episcopate, but they have committed themselves to continuing the theological conversation.

We are well aware of the divisive nature of this issue between our two Churches. Anglicans and Orthodox sometimes suspect that their differing positions on this question reflect an underlying division on fundamental Christian doctrines. (VII.22)

We each believe that our respective decisions have been made in fidelity to Scripture and Tradition, and in response to the leading of the Holy Spirit. It is essential therefore that in our continuing theological dialogue we respect and understand each other's theological explanations in this area. (VII.23)

The Orthodox think that in the context of the ongoing ecumenical dialogue, questions of such seriousness and significance as the ordination of women to the priesthood require profound theological examination. The cost of schism or of the perpetuation of division is too high to outweigh any pastoral benefits that may result from such innovation. While appreciating the pastoral motivation that has led the Anglican Communion to ordain women to the priesthood, the Orthodox think that the theological dimension of this matter remains open, and deserves further and deeper consideration and study in ecumenical dialogue. (VII.37)

Given the extent of our agreement on the role of women in the Church in general, and on the ordination of women as well as men to the diaconate, we need to reflect further on the issues involved in our disagreement on the priestly ordination of women in particular.

i. Earlier in our statement we agreed that the issue of Christ and culture is relevant to our dialogue (cf. III.6). In the light of what we said there, we need to consider to what extent our respective decisions to ordain, and not to ordain, women to ministries involving eucharistic presidency are influenced by culture. We need also to ask by what criteria we accept or reject cultural influences in this particular case.

ii. Further reflection is needed on the theological reasons for our disagreement on the ordination of women, and the place of canon law in this regard.

iii. Given that there is no conciliar teaching on the priestly ministries of women, we need to consider the extent to which our differences on this matter constitute heresies which justify division among Christians. The Orthodox must tell Anglicans whether or not the priestly ordination of women is heretical, in the sense that the Montanist practice of ordaining women was condemned as heretical. If the Orthodox consider it heretical, they must explain why. We need first, however, to define carefully what we mean by heresy, what constitutes a heresy, and the consequences of heresy for communion.

iv. If the ordination of women does not constitute a heresy, we need to ask to what extent the ordination, or non-ordination, of women affects our communion with one another. If our differences on this matter can be contained within Christian communion (*koinonia*), then we must ask what might be the next steps along the path to unity between Anglicans and Orthodox. (VII.38)

We wish in conclusion to affirm our conviction that our theological differences with regard to the ordination of women do not undermine the agreement we have reached in the previous sections of this statement. (VII.39)

**Generous Love:**

**The truth of the Gospel and the call to dialogue**

**An Anglican theology of inter faith relations**

**A report from the Anglican Communion Network for Inter Faith Concerns**

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## Foreword

Few subjects have more obviously grown in urgency and significance in the last few years than the whole area of relations between the great historic faiths of the world. The intellectual ferment of a couple of decades ago, when scholars began to reflect on the rival claims to truth or finality of the various faiths, has been brought home to everyone as our societies become more diverse – and, sadly, as conflicts on the global scene become more bitter. Many Christians are torn between wanting to affirm the importance of dialogue and not wanting to compromise their allegiance to the one Lord and Saviour whom they proclaim as the desire of all nations.

With great foresight, the Roman Catholic Church at the Second Vatican Council set out some of the theological perspectives that might help shape a faithful and generous approach to other faiths. But the situation has moved on, both in theology and in practical relations between communities, so that there is a need to draw together some of the rich reflection that has been going on more recently. The present document is an attempt from an Anglican point of view to contribute to this drawing together. It is offered for study to the Anglican Communion – and more widely – in the hope that it will stimulate further theological thinking among Anglicans who share that double conviction that we must regard dialogue as an imperative from Our Lord, yet must also witness consistently to the unique gift we have been given in Christ.

I am delighted to commend it for study and discussion as a sensitive and valuable survey of this complex field. I hope and pray that it will help us find ways of understanding other religious traditions that will be both fresh and faithful.

.. Rowan Cantuar

## 1 Beginning with God

Whenever as Christians we meet with people of different faiths and beliefs, we do so in the name and the strength of the one God who is Lord of all.

Addressing the pagan Athenians, the apostle declares that this God is the One in whom all human beings live, move and have their being; he is the One of whom all can say: 'He is not far from every one of us'.<sup>1</sup> We cannot measure the infinity of God's greatness nor exhaust the mystery of his being; the religions of humanity deceive themselves when they fail to acknowledge the limits of their knowledge.

We believe that through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth the One God has made known his triune reality as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The boundless life and perfect love which abide forever in the heart of the Trinity are sent out into the world in a mission of renewal and restoration in which we are called to share. As members of the Church of the Triune God, we are to abide among our neighbours of different faiths as signs of God's presence with them, and we are sent to engage with our neighbours as agents of God's mission to them. Thus,

We seek to mirror the Father's generous love.

The God who has created our world is generous in grace and rejoices in diversity – 'O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all!'<sup>2</sup> He has created all men and women in his image, and he wishes all to enjoy that fullness of life in his presence which we know as salvation.<sup>3</sup> God cares for each person with a parental love; called to be perfect as our Father is perfect,<sup>4</sup> we know that we must show that same love and respect to all.

We proclaim Jesus Christ as the one who shows us God's face.

Jesus Christ the Son of God shows us 'the radiance of God's glory'.<sup>5</sup> He opens for us the way to the Father and we wish others to walk that way with us; he teaches us the truth which sets us free, and we wish to commend that truth to others; he shares with us his risen life, and we wish to communicate that life to others.<sup>6</sup> Our witness to Jesus as Lord must be attested by Christlike service and humility <sup>7</sup> if it is to be heard and seen by our neighbours as the good news of

the Kingdom.

We celebrate the work of the Holy Spirit made known through the fruit of the Spirit.

It is not for us to set limits to the work of God, for the energy of the Holy Spirit cannot be confined. 'The tree is known by its fruits',<sup>8</sup> and 'the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.'<sup>9</sup> When we meet these qualities in our encounter with people of other faiths, we must engage joyfully with the Spirit's work in their lives and in their communities.

## 2 Our contemporary context and our Anglican heritage

We are called to discipleship in very different contexts around the world today, but in every place we encounter religious diversity and complexity. Those who predicted in the last century that questions of religion would fade away have been proved wrong, as societies throughout the world are experiencing what has been called a 'return of religion'. The heightened profile of religion, globally and locally, in the twenty-first century has both positive and problematic aspects. Individuals and communities use the language of religion to express important dimensions of their identity. Governments are exercised over the place of religion in public life, and the interaction of religious freedom and human rights. Aggressive and intolerant forms of believing and belonging are growing in all the world's religious traditions; at the same time, in some societies there is an increasingly influential form of secularism which is hostile to all religion. Many commentators trace an intimate linkage between religious difference and some of the bitterest and most intractable conflicts of our times. Through migration and mission, faiths once largely confined to one part of the world have become worldwide in their distribution, while formerly homogeneous societies and neighbourhoods have become marked by diversity of religions. Fair and accurate media reporting of religious issues can help build understanding and trust, just as inadequate, misleading or stereotyping images can foment ignorance and fear.

These social and political developments have affected in some measure all the contexts within which we are called to live out our faith. In some places, we ourselves and our Anglican forebears have been directly instrumental in these processes of change; in others we have witnessed societies changing around us. In parts of our Communion, mission work was historically associated with Western political and economic expansion, and memories of that can still shape current perceptions. In every context, whatever its historical background and current pressures, we face the challenge of discerning the loving purposes of God within the religious plurality of humankind.

We are particularly aware of societies where Christians as a small minority feel themselves to be beleaguered and vulnerable; we recognise that other religious communities also may have the same experience in some situations. Still, in encounter we believe that it is possible to experience the renewal of our life in Christ as we meet with people of different faiths. Acting together with fellow Christians of other churches, we as Anglicans can make a significant contribution to the complex and contested world of religious plurality.

For us as Anglicans, this contribution will be distinctively shaped by the ways in which our Church responded to the Christian plurality of the post-Reformation world, developing the contours of a Trinitarian approach which can inform our responses to religious diversity today.

Acknowledging that there is one God, the Creator, an Anglican approach dismisses nothing as outside God's concern, but attends to the world in its manifold differences in the expectation that it ultimately coheres, having one source and one goal in God. This is a discipline against sectarianism, and a resource for living with plurality.

Acknowledging that God is manifest in the particular human life of the Son, Anglicans have been committed to working out their concerns historically. As Jesus' ministry initiated an indefinite series of particular encounters, now limitless in reach in the light of his resurrection, so the Anglican Church has sought in making decisions to attend to the particular contexts of its work.<sup>10</sup> It has treated with caution generalised claims made for timeless and ahistorical systems, preferring to make its judgements – including those relating to other religions – through seeking to discern the implications of the catholic faith

within particular historical and social situations.

Acknowledging that the work of the Holy Spirit is not just about 'inwardness' but provides the operative conditions for flourishing social life,<sup>11</sup> Anglicanism has sought the formation of social contexts in which pressures towards liberty and towards order are both made to subserve a positive vision of human community.<sup>12</sup> Refusing to prioritise either inner conscience or external authority alone in the quest for human flourishing, Anglicans have been determined to minister to whole communities, to find ways of enabling people of robustly differing convictions to live together so that a public good may be formed. This understanding of the Spirit as the source of ground rules for productive social life is transferable to new situations of religious plurality.

### 3 Shaping Anglican insights: reading the Scriptures

The Bible has primacy in Anglican theological method, in that we seek to be a community living in obedience to Jesus Christ, the eternal Word of God who is revealed through the words of Holy Scripture. In identifying the message of the Bible for the present, the Anglican method brings the insights of tradition and reason to the interpretation of the text in the light of experience. Our presence in, and engagement with, multi-religious contexts lead us to read the Scriptures in new ways. We come to recognise that the people of God have already known and grappled with the challenges and opportunities of living amid religious plurality, and that those experiences have shaped the formative texts of Scripture. Thus, Israel worshipped the one Lord their God amongst the nations of the Ancient Near East, each following their own god; the first followers of the Way confessed the name of Jesus amidst the many philosophies and cults of the Roman Empire, and within the kingdoms to the east of that Empire. As the people of God today, we can find the biblical text coming to life in a new way as we engage in our discipleship with issues which raise questions similar to those they faced. For many in our Communion, the Bible speaks with immediacy and clarity into their contemporary situations of inter-religious encounter.

Many passages of the New Testament testify to the passion and persistence with which the first Christians struggled to understand their place within God's purposes for his people Israel. Whether Jews or Gentiles, they all believed that God had decisively and finally revealed himself in the person and work of the Jewish Jesus of Nazareth, and it was that conviction which gave such intensity to their efforts to understand the theological significance of Jewish law and religion and the Jewish people. Out of the rich and complex texts which record those efforts there have grown different ways of understanding Christian-Jewish relations in the history of the Church. 'A right understanding of the relationship with Judaism is fundamental to Christianity's own self-understanding';<sup>13</sup> as we seek guidance in this important area today, we need to recognise the continuing vitality of Jewish life and religion over the last two millennia. We must 'reject any view of Judaism which sees it as a living fossil, simply superseded by Christianity'.<sup>14</sup>



Our Scriptures speak to us in new ways when they are brought alongside the sacred texts of other religions in the practice known as 'Scriptural Reasoning'.<sup>15</sup> For example, believing ourselves to be in a dialogue with God enabled through the words of the Bible, it can be a profoundly humbling and creative experience for us to read the Bible alongside Muslims who likewise believe themselves to be addressed by the one God through the text of the Qur'an. Hearing the stark divine imperative that 'You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour',<sup>16</sup> and recognising the spiritual profundity of parts of the Hindu scriptures, we can ponder how often we collude with a distorted view of the other if we dismiss Hinduism as merely polytheistic idolatry. Treasuring the 'read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest'<sup>17</sup> which our own Anglican spirituality commends in relation to the Scriptures, we can be challenged by the prolonged and intense attention which Buddhist tradition teaches as necessary for the sutras to become an interior reality. Set alongside the scriptures of other religions too, and the orally transmitted texts of other traditions, reading the Bible in these fresh contexts can both motivate and challenge us for engagement with people of different faiths.

#### 4 Shaping Anglican insights: tradition and reason

Anglicans hold that Scripture is to be interpreted in the light of tradition and reason, meaning by these an appeal respectively to the mind of the Church as that develops and to the mind of the cultures in which the Church participates.<sup>18</sup> Tradition and reason are shaped by the lived experiences of Christians in their double contexts of Church and society, and they are inseparable as are those contexts.

The developing tradition of distinctively Anglican theological reflection on inter faith relations has grown within a broader ecumenical context, and has drawn significantly on insights from other Christian churches, at least since the 1910 International Missionary Conference in Edinburgh. The Second Vatican Council's declaration *Nostra Aetate* of 1965 and the work of the World Council of Churches have greatly influenced the teaching of successive Lambeth Conferences. The 1988 conference commended to the Communion

for study a key theological text entitled *Jews, Christians and Muslims: The Way of Dialogue*.<sup>19</sup> The 1998 Conference devoted particular attention to relations with Islam, and mandated the Anglican Communion Network for Inter Faith Concerns (NIFCON) to 'monitor Muslim-Christian relations and report regularly'.

In their studies and translations of the Hebrew Scriptures, early Anglicans drew on the scholarship of Jewish rabbis. Later, as the sacred writings of other faiths became known to them, Anglicans continued to be prominent among those committed to the textual study of religion, often in co-operation with colleagues of other faiths. The Anglican use of reason also drew on philosophical, sociological and psychological insights to inform a theological response to the growing awareness of religious plurality. From every branch of Anglicanism, evangelical, catholic and liberal, missionary scholars, both women and men, contributed alongside local Christians in developing a theology for mission and dialogue through inter faith encounter.

Tradition and reason are deployed in Anglicanism through the lived experience of Christian discipleship in a very wide range of different contexts, and this variety has contributed to the marked pluriformity of Anglican theological approaches to inter faith issues. In every context, though, the Anglican experience has been shaped by a constant reference to prayer and worship, by a

concern for the welfare of the whole of society, and by the centrality accorded to pastoral practice. One of the distinctive emphases arising from these priorities has been to place at the centre of our experience a deep, strong and Christlike friendship with people of other faiths.

Across a range of contexts, whether as minority or majority communities, whether in places of vulnerability or of security, whether in relations of dialogue or of tension, Anglicans today continue to engage with issues of religious difference as a key testing ground for discipleship, bringing opportunities and challenges which must be held together. Already in this millennium, the Communion's Network for Inter Faith Concerns has convened or participated in a number of key consultations addressing within particular regional settings issues of widespread resonance. For example, in Bangalore (India) in 2003, a South Asian consultation on 'mission and dialogue' stressed

the importance of engaging in trustful and respectful inter faith dialogue while vigorously advocating the cause of minorities suffering religious oppression.<sup>20</sup> In Oslo (Norway), also in 2003, Anglicans and Lutherans from the Northern European churches of the Porvoo Communion highlighted the need to maintain the integrity of the church's ministry while enabling the pastoral care of the other.<sup>21</sup> In Kaduna (Nigeria), in 2007, meeting in the Christian and Muslim setting of West Africa, a consultation on 'faith and citizenship' pointed to the challenge of witnessing persuasively to the Gospel while welcoming fellow citizens of other faiths as co-workers for the common good.<sup>22</sup>

From these and other gatherings, and from soundings across the Communion, it is evident that our churches can be renewed in their life and mission when they commit themselves as part of their discipleship to presence among and engagement with other faith communities. We can recognise the three following dynamic patterns in particular through which we are being led into this newness of life. First, maintaining our presence among communities of other faiths, we are abiding as signs of the body of Christ in each place. Second, engaging our energies with other groups for the transformation of society, we are being sent in the power of the Spirit into each situation. Third, offering embassy and hospitality to our neighbours, we are both giving and receiving the blessing of God our Father.

## 5 Celebrating the presence of Christ's body

Our Christian presence among other religions is honoured by ourselves as we keep faith with our commitment to witness in particular places, and it may also be honoured by others through the respect which they can show for that presence. Anglican churches are called to maintain a presence in very different places around the world, to sustain there a sense of sacred place, sacred time and consecrated lives, through which prayer and witness can be generated in local communities. In so doing, we become signs of the abiding life of God in his world, a life which invites others to participate in its rhythms. In some places, that invitation will be refused, and simply maintaining a Christian presence can be a costly and dangerous enterprise in a hostile environment. In other places, we may find that our presence is welcomed by people of other

faiths, who honour its outward signs such as buildings, liturgy and priesthood, and who appreciate our pastoral care offered to all people irrespective of their faith.

Both rejection and acceptance can awaken in us a fresh sense of the treasures that have been entrusted to us to share with others. Christian faith is a gift we can easily take for granted, and at the same time we can begin to regard it as our own possession. It can be an experience of renewal to be reminded by others both of its life-giving value for us, and of its free availability to all. In this way, our presence among people of other faiths becomes for us a journey into a deeper understanding of who we are, 'and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time'.<sup>23</sup>

Inter-religious relations are not always marked by mutual respect. The sanctification of time and place is a project for other faiths as well as our own, and any public space or local community can become an arena of contest. We must be committed to working and praying for the peace and welfare of the cities and societies where we live,<sup>24</sup> as our encounters with others challenge us to display open and gracious attitudes to those who share those places with us. Since a presence which cannot be manifested openly to others cannot serve these purposes, we strive to safeguard the principles of religious freedom for all which are recognised as central to human rights.

Where the freedom of the Church is repressed or Christians are oppressed, we recognise that we are still called to the costly vocation of offering love and prayer to all. The continuing vitality of the suffering Church is a reminder to us all of the strength through weakness of the community which abides at the foot of the cross. Our understanding and practice of reciprocity in inter faith relations globally must be patterned on the Lord's teaching of a generosity which transcends retaliation – Jesus said: 'Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you'.<sup>25</sup> At the same time, we recognise that as fellow members of the body of Christ it is imperative for us to offer our solidarity and support to Christians who have to witness to their faith in difficult circumstances.

Our commitment to be a stable presence in each place, to sanctify the life of the local community through prayer and witness, and in so doing to learn to value more deeply and share more widely the treasure entrusted to us, is a response to the incarnational logic that lies at the heart of the Christian story. The presence which we are living is that of the Body of Christ: the presence of the God who expresses himself in our midst in body language, by living a life, dying a death, and rising to a new life. Through his cross and resurrection, Jesus gives us forgiveness, healing and new life, and shapes us into a community which offers these blessings to our neighbours in a pattern of gracious and generous discipleship.

Most particularly, as we worship one who was rich but for our sake became poor,<sup>26</sup> emptying himself to take the form of a slave,<sup>27</sup> we remember that Jesus is present not only in the ministry and the sacraments of his Church but also in the persons of the poor, the hungry and the oppressed.<sup>28</sup> Our presence among them must be one of service, advocacy and empowerment, whatever their faith. We believe that in Christ God has come among us as a human living among humans, and as one who in his humanity crossed the boundaries which separated people of different groups from one another.

## 6 Communicating the energy of the Spirit

As we maintain our presence in the contexts of religious diversity and conflict to which our churches are called, we need also to be engaged with these contexts, both contributing to and drawing from the sources of energy in our societies which lead to transformation. Through that engagement, we find that we are being sent out to share in the Holy Spirit's mission of restoration and renewal. In some cases, the energetic forces of transformation in our societies will be channelled through the structures of religious communities. In others, they will be found in more flexible networks and groupings, which may yet draw inspiration and motivation from the values and beliefs of the world faiths. Churches can experience new life when they are open and adaptable enough to work in partnership with others for the common good of peace, justice and the integrity of creation. The convictions of John Wesley,<sup>29</sup> that though we cannot think alike yet we may love alike, and that we may be of one heart though we

are not of one opinion, are compelling for those of us who work with people of differing beliefs on practical projects.

In a world of increasing materialism and commodification, as Christians we can find a shared purpose in affirming the spiritual values of life, renewing our commitment to a better world, and evoking afresh our energy in the service of others. Where such partnership is possible, we are opened up to the life-giving Spirit into whose power we are given over as the people of Jesus. The working of this Spirit is unrestricted and constantly surprising; when we are born and led by the Spirit, we know that he is like the wind, which 'blows where it chooses'; we 'hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from or where it goes'.<sup>30</sup> A recognition of the sovereign unpredictability of the Spirit's mission in the world can set us free for new ways of engaging with people of different faiths in seeking the common good.

Not all energy is creative, and not every powerful spirit is to be aligned with the Holy Spirit of God. Religion of every variety can have a dark, a repressive, a divisive, even a violent side. However inadequate the word 'fundamentalism' is as a term applied to different phenomena in different faith traditions, there is abroad in all communities a spirit of defamation of 'the other', of the hardening of differences into divisions, of the suppression of variety, of the disempowerment of the vulnerable. There is abuse of religion for self-advancement, for the promotion of sectional interests, for the justification of comfortable lifestyles and of the exploitation of others. Partly as a result of such distortions, the appeal of a militant secularism is growing in many places. These dangers show the need for careful discernment when Anglicans engage with others, an engagement which must test our own motives as well. In the power of the Spirit, we have been entrusted with a ministry of reconciliation, and one of the most testing ways in which we demonstrate that power in today's world is through our commitments to conflict mediation, peace making, truth telling and community building in places where people of different religions are at enmity with one another. To fulfil those commitments requires us to seek the empowerment and inclusion of women, children, marginalised people and any others who are excluded.

The Spirit of God who leads us into all truth, and thereby sets us free, is the same Spirit who searches each of our hearts. It is this Spirit, coming to us in our weakness, who enables us to witness to the lordship of Jesus, and to commend to others the faith which gives us life through his name. So evangelism belongs together with practical co-operation, work for reconciliation, and inter faith dialogue, as all are ways of sharing in the energetic communication which is the mission of God's Spirit today. The desire to see others come to Christ is a primary motivation of that mission, and when the Holy Spirit works within the heart of our neighbours to bring them to faith in Jesus, we will rejoice. We always remember, though, that this is the Spirit's work, not ours, and we repudiate any attempt to coerce or manipulate people into conversion.

## 7 Practising the embassy and hospitality of God

As God both pours out his life into the world and remains undiminished in the heart of the Trinity, so our mission is both a being sent and an abiding. These two poles of embassy and hospitality, a movement 'going out' and a presence 'welcoming in', are indivisible and mutually complementary, and our mission practice includes both.<sup>31</sup> In the Gospel Jesus teaches his disciples to deliver their embassy within the setting of receiving hospitality: 'Whatever house you enter, first say, "Peace to this house".'<sup>32</sup> As disciples we have to learn to be guests, and the proclamation we make in our embassy is in the first place the blessing of peace, the announcement of the good news of the Kingdom, and the healing of the sick. As ambassadors of Christ, our mission is to meet, to greet, and to acknowledge our dependence on other people and on God: 'We do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake'.<sup>33</sup> The embassy which has been entrusted to us is the ministry of reconciliation,<sup>34</sup> and the giving and receiving of hospitality is a most powerful sign that those who were strangers are reconciled to one another as friends.

The Bible is full of images which point to the theological depth of the host-guest relationship. As God's people, we meet the test of hospitality when we offer the best provisions we have to the unexpected visitor, and still more

through the time and care we give to addressing our guests' weariness and thirst.<sup>35</sup> We will do that out of the integrity of our Christian faith and practice; true hospitality is not about concealing our convictions, but about expressing them in a practical way. We ourselves can in turn receive in friendship the hospitality of others, which may speak powerfully to us of the welcoming generosity that lies at the heart of God. Through sharing hospitality we are pointed again to a central theme of the Gospel which we can easily forget; we are re-evangelised through a gracious encounter with other people.

The challenges to the practice of hospitality are many and serious. Our guests may be suspicious, fearful, or hostile, as we may be when we are guests. There may always be failures to reciprocate on either side. It is possible to use the practice of hospitality, not truly to accept and to recognise one another, but rather to suppress difference through a superficial bonhomie. We have to learn that being embarrassed, perplexed and vulnerable may be part of our calling as both guests and hosts, for it is when we welcome one another in all our differences that we are truly enriched by one another.

Hospitality is strengthened through the always time-consuming, often costly, and sometimes painful process of building trust. As that trust develops, sharp distinctions between host and guest may fall away, as they do at any convivial meal. We come to learn that the spaces in which we meet one another do not ultimately belong to either host or guest; they belong to God, as do the so-called 'neutral' spaces of public life. None of the places, situations or societies where we meet and greet are the exclusive territory of any one group; they are entrusted by God to be shared by everyone, since all humans are made in God's image.

Anglican spirituality maintains that at the heart of our life as a Christian community is a meal for those who know themselves to be strangers and pilgrims upon earth. At the breaking of the bread our Lord himself came to his disciples as one at first unknown.<sup>36</sup> The Eucharist opens us to an awareness that we too are guests of the Father waiting for the completion of his loving purposes for all. As he strengthens us with bread for the journey to carry us to that place which is a home for all the nations of the world, so here we share our life with our neighbours of all faiths as citizens of our earthly kingdoms. We wait for the day when all humanity together will meet the one divine host, the



Father who invites all his children to share the joy of the banquet he has prepared.

## 8 Sending and abiding

Our human relationships at their best are marked by a dynamism and interactivity capable of changing all involved through genuine encounters which lead us into new life. Those we called 'other' are no longer over against us, but present to us and us to them, human beings whose energy connects with ours and ours with theirs, those who are fellow guests in God's house with us. So we come to know our neighbours of different faiths in a new way, both as fellow human beings, and also as those who seek, as we do, to orient their lives towards the One who is the source of all life. We will listen to and receive from our neighbours even while we speak and give to them, and in this mutuality of encounter we can experience God's gracious presence in a new way. In our time, we have seen a new readiness on the part of scholars and leaders of other faiths across the world to engage seriously at a theological level with the Christian faith. Two notable expressions of this have been the statements *Dabru Emet* and *A Common Word*, produced respectively by international groups of Jewish and of Muslim scholars.<sup>37</sup>

Our pressing need to renew our relationships with people of different faiths must be grounded theologically in our understanding of the reality of the God who is Trinity. Father, Son and Spirit abide in one another in a life which is 'a dynamic, eternal and unending movement of self-giving'<sup>38</sup>. This is expressed in a sending and being sent by the Father of the Son and the Spirit which is eternal, yet which also reaches out into our time and space to draw us into God's life. In our meeting with people of different faiths, we are called to mirror, however imperfectly, this dynamic of sending and abiding. So our encounters lead us deeper into the very heart of God and strengthen our resolve for inter faith engagement.

We will maintain our presence among communities of different faiths as we celebrate Jesus as the way, the truth and the life for us and for all people. We will channel our energies into connection, communication and reconciliation with other faith groups as we open ourselves to the energy of the Spirit. We

will build trust through giving and receiving hospitality and embassy as we respond to the Father's gracious invitation. We recognise that the actuality of our Christian life as it is lived among people of other faiths often does not meet these aspirations, and this may be painfully evident to our neighbours also. Theology is always in tension with experience, and in inter faith relations we

need to live with provisionality, paradox and disappointment. Nevertheless, as people who find healing through the broken body of Christ and confidence in the daring venture of the Spirit, we must not be deterred by the risk of failure or rejection. Even in our sin, weakness, fear and timidity, we are constantly challenged by the God who calls us to abide with our neighbours as signs of his presence with them, and who sends us to engage as agents of his mission among them. Through prayer and worship the triune God forms us to be a people called into newness of life in our inter faith encounter.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore.

## Notes

1. Ac 17.27-28. St Paul indeed goes on to cite the words of the poet Aratus: 'For we too are his offspring'.
2. Ps 104.24.
3. 1 Tim 2.4.
4. Mt 5.48.
5. Heb 1.3.
6. Jn 14.6.
7. 2 Cor 4.5.
8. Mt 12.33.
9. Gal 5.22f.
10. This can be seen as a theological parallel to the development of English common law, with its appeal to precedents at the same time as its openness to new applications in new cases.

11. Pentecost, the Christian Feast of the Spirit, corresponds to the Jewish Festival of Shavuot, associated with the giving of the Torah, which is likewise concerned with social life as well as with inward response to God.
12. For our Anglican forebears, seeking to chart a via media for their Church in the divided Christian world of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the pressures towards libertarianism and towards authoritarianism were identified with Protestant Nonconformism and Roman Catholicism respectively.
13. Jews, Christians and Muslims: The Way of Dialogue (commended for study by the Lambeth Conference 1988), §13.
14. Ibid., §16.
15. Scriptural Reasoning is 'a practice of group reading of the scriptures of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam that seeks to build sociality among its practitioners and release sources of wisdom and compassion for healing our separate communities and for repair of the world' (Steven Kepnes, 'A Handbook for Scriptural Reasoning', p.23, in David F. Ford and C. C. Pecknold, ed., The Promise of Scriptural Reasoning, (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006); also posted on the Journal of Scriptural Reasoning website, <http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/journals/jsrforum/>). The practice has its origins in dialogue between Jewish and Christian scholars.
16. Ex 20.16, Dt 5.20.
17. Book of Common Prayer, Collect for the Second Sunday in Advent.
18. Virginia Report (Report of the Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission, 1997), §§ 3.8-3.11.
19. Published as Appendix 6 in The Truth Shall Make You Free: The Lambeth Conference 1988 – The Reports, Resolutions and Pastoral Letters from the Bishops (ACC, 1988). In preparation for Lambeth 1988, the Anglican Consultative Council republished, for study and reflection by all the dioceses of the Communion, the 1984 Church of England report Towards a Theology of Inter-

Faith Dialogue, together with a response by Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali entitled That Which Is Not

To Be Found But Which Finds Us.

20. Report posted on <http://nifcon.anglicancommunion.org>.

21. Guidelines posted on [www.porvoochurches.org](http://www.porvoochurches.org).

22. Report posted on <http://nifcon.anglicancommunion.org>.

23. T. S. Eliot, 'Little Gidding', V, in Four Quartets.

24. Jer 29.7

25. Mt 5.44.

26. 2 Cor 8.9.

27. Phil 2.7.

28. Mt 25.31ff.

29. John Wesley, Sermon XXXIV in Forty-Four Sermons on Several Occasions. Wesley draws from

his text, 2 Kgs 10.15, the need for a 'catholic spirit' among Christians of differing persuasions, but

the application of this to the wider and deeper differences between religions is easy to see.

30. Jn 3.8.

31. Embassy, Hospitality and Dialogue: Christians and People of Other Faiths – Report to the 1998

Lambeth Conference by Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali, posted on <http://www.lambethconference.org/>.

32. Lk 10.5-9.

33. 2 Cor 4.5.

34. 2 Cor 5.20.

35. Gen 18.1-15, Heb 13.2.

36. Lk 24.16.

37. Dabru Emet: A Jewish Statement on Jews and Christianity (2001), posted on [www.icjs.org/what/njsp/dabruemet.html](http://www.icjs.org/what/njsp/dabruemet.html); A Common Word between Us and You: An Open Letter

and Call from Muslim Religious Leaders (2007), posted on: [www.acommonword.com](http://www.acommonword.com).

38. The Church of the Triune God – The Cyprus Agreed Statement of the International Commission

for Anglican-Orthodox Theological Dialogue (ACC, 2006), II.5.

## **NETWORK FOR INTER FAITH CONCERNS OF THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION (NIFCON)**

The role of bishops in helping to equip Anglican Christians for God's mission in a world of many faiths will be one of the major themes of the 2008 Lambeth Conference. NIFCON – the Anglican Communion's Network for Inter Faith Concerns – has been asked to coordinate the Indaba Group and self select sessions linked to this theme.

NIFCON was established in 1994 as a result of the important profile given to inter faith Concerns at the 1988 Lambeth Conference. Its mandate was reaffirmed at the 1998 Lambeth Conference. The mission statement of the Network highlights its commitment to draw together engagement by Anglicans in dialogue, evangelism and advocacy. The mission statement says:

The Network for Inter Faith Concerns (NIFCON) of the Anglican Communion exists to encourage:

- Progress towards genuinely open and loving relationships between Christians and people of other faiths.
- Exchange of news, information, ideas and resources relating to inter faith concerns between provinces of the Anglican Communion.
- Sensitive witness and evangelism where appropriate
- Prayerful and urgent action with all involved in tension and conflict
- Local contextual and wider theological reflection

*NIFCON does this by:*

- Networking and meeting;
- The written word in its various forms;
- Gathering information through its international presidents, correspondents, and contacts support groups.

It has been charged by the 1998 Lambeth Conference to study and evaluate Muslim-Christian relations and report regularly to the Anglican Consultative Council.

NIFCON has three Presidents, Bishop Josiah Fearon (Kaduna, Nigeria), Bishop Louis Tsui (East Kowloon, Hong Kong) and Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali (Rochester, England). It has a widespread network of correspondents covering most parts of the Anglican Communion. The work of the Network is coordinated through the Anglican Communion Department of Theological Studies, with the help of a Management Group chaired by Bishop Michael Jackson (Clogher, Ireland). The staff of NIFCON liaise closely with colleagues in the Archbishop's team at Lambeth Palace.

Developments in the work of NIFCON since 1998 have included the holding of two consultations, one exploring the connections between dialogue and mission (Bangalore, India), and one looking at inter faith concerns and citizenship issues (Kaduna, Nigeria). NIFCON also administers the annual Anglican Communion-Al Azhar dialogue. The Network maintains a substantial website of news and relevant resources (<http://nifcon.anglicancommunion.org/index.cfm>), and has produced a number of issues of a digest which monitors Christian-Muslim relationships. Recently a significant document setting out an Anglican theology of inter faith relations has been produced by the Network after widespread consultation around the Anglican Communion. Entitled *Generous Love: the truth of the Gospel and the call to dialogue* it has been commended by the Archbishop of Canterbury for study and discussion and will provide the framework for the Lambeth Conference Indaba Groups on the day when the topic is *Engaging with a Multi-Faith World*.

NIFCON seeks to serve the Anglican Communion as effectively as possible in the areas covered by its mandate. During the course of the Lambeth Conference members of staff and the Management Group will be seeking suggestions from the gathered bishops relating to priorities for NIFCON's life and work over the coming 10 years.

## **Section 3**

### **The Anglican Communion – Ordering our Life Together**

## **Consideration of the St Andrew's Draft Covenant By the Bishops of the Anglican Communion**

The Covenant Design Group met in January 2008 for the second time and revised the draft Covenant it had prepared the previous year in Nassau. This second draft is called the St Andrew's Draft and incorporates varying responses from the Provinces to the earlier Nassau draft.

Following the meeting of the Joint Standing Committee of the Primates and ACC in March 2008, the St Andrew's Draft has been referred to all Anglican Provinces for evaluation. Alongside this, the Covenant Design Group has prepared questions to assist bishops in their consideration of the St Andrew's Draft in the context of their diocese. Although the timescale is short, this is intended to resource discussion of the Covenant at the Lambeth Conference, enabling bishops to bring their dioceses with them. Written responses to these questions are not being requested prior to the Lambeth Conference.

The St Andrew's Draft is accompanied by a number of supporting documents, including a brief commentary which outlines the thinking of the Covenant Design Group, together with a tentative draft of an appendix on procedures. The Covenant Design Group will be meeting shortly after the Lambeth Conference to consider the bishops' insights, as the wider consultation process continues.

### **Questions concerning the St Andrew's Draft Covenant**

#### **A. The Text of the Covenant**

1. To what extent would you and members of your diocese recognise your own identity in the St Andrew's Draft Covenant?
2. Are there any parts of the Draft Covenant whose meaning is not clear to you?
3. Is there anything you feel is lacking in the Draft Covenant?
4. Is there anything presently included in the St Andrew's Draft that you feel strongly ought not to be within the text of an Anglican Covenant?

#### **B. The Covenant and your Diocese**

5. How varied would you expect reactions to this Draft Covenant to be within your diocese or Province?

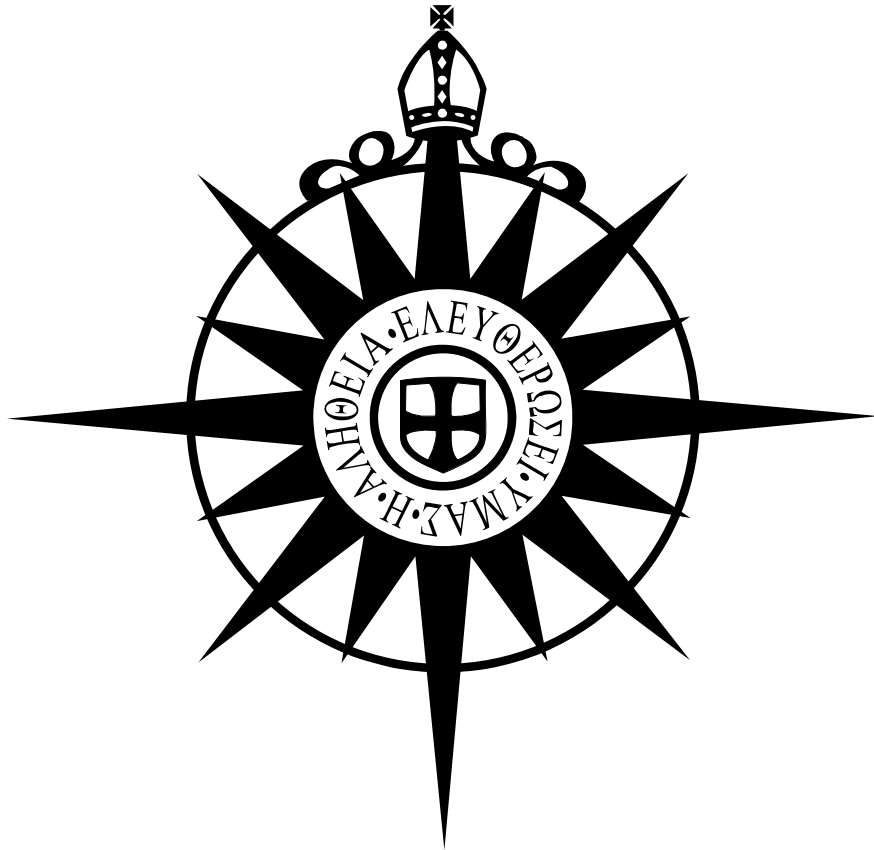


6. In what ways does this Draft Covenant helpfully challenge the life of your diocese or Province?
7. Are there any ways in which this Draft Covenant might have a stabilising or destabilising effect in your diocese or Province?

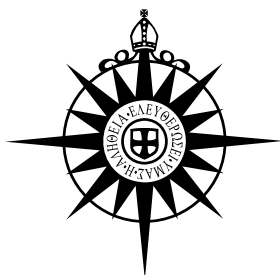
**C. The Covenant and the Future of the Anglican Communion**

8. How far is this Draft Covenant, or a more mature version of it, likely to be of lasting benefit to the Anglican Communion and to assist cooperation in mission with ecumenical partners?

# The Anglican Communion



*Report of the Second Meeting of the Covenant Design Group*  
London, February 2008



The Anglican Communion

Communiqué

The Covenant Design Group

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The Covenant Design Group (CDG) held its second meeting at the Anglican Communion Offices, St. Andrew's House, London, UK, between Monday, 28<sup>th</sup> January, and Saturday, 2<sup>nd</sup> February, 2008, under the chairmanship of the Most Revd Drexel Gomez, Archbishop of the West Indies.

The main task of the group was to develop a second draft for the Anglican Covenant, as originally proposed in the Windsor Report 2004; an idea adopted by the Primates' Meeting and the Joint Standing Committee of the Anglican Consultative Council and the Primates in their following meetings. At their meeting in January 2007, the CDG produced a first draft – the Nassau Draft - for such a covenant, which was received at the meeting of the Primates and the Joint Standing Committee in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, in February of that year. This draft was subsequently sent to the Provinces, Churches and Commissions of the Anglican Communion for consultation, reflection and response.

At this meeting, the CDG reviewed the comments and submissions received and developed the new draft, which is now published. In addition to thirteen provincial responses, a large number of responses were received from commissions, organisations, dioceses and individuals from across the Communion. It is intended that these responses will be published in the near future on the Anglican Communion website. The CDG is grateful to all those who contributed their reflections for this meeting, and trust that they will find their contributions honoured in the revised text prepared.

The current draft – known at the St Andrew's Draft – will now be offered for reflection in the Communion at large, and in particular by the Lambeth Conference, which has been convened by the Archbishop of Canterbury to meet in his see City of Canterbury, England, between 16<sup>th</sup> July and 3<sup>rd</sup> August of this year. The CDG hopes that bishops will study the present draft in their preparations for the Conference, consulting in their dioceses and sharing their reflections at the Conference.

The draft is accompanied by a number of supporting documents, including a brief commentary which outlines the thinking of the CDG on some of the issues considered, and which also gives responses to some of the specific suggestions and criticisms made to them. It also includes a tentative draft of a procedural appendix, the status of which is set out in the Commentary.

Following the Lambeth Conference, the CDG will meet to review the progress on the development of the Covenant project within the Communion, and will submit a Covenant draft to the Provinces and ecumenical partners of the Communion for formal comment and response. It is the intention to produce definitive proposals for adoption in the Communion following that further round of consultation. Proposals for the process of consultation on, and reception of, the Covenant and its ultimate consideration by synodical process will be presented to the Joint Standing Committee of the Anglican Consultative Council and the Primates at their meeting in March 2008.

The CDG is grateful to the Archbishop of Canterbury, who received the CDG at Lambeth Palace on Tuesday, 29<sup>th</sup> January, and to the Dean and Chapter of Westminster Abbey, who welcomed the group to Evensong later that day. The Secretary General of the Anglican Communion hosted a dinner for the group on the Thursday.

Because they have been unable to attend the meetings of the CDG, Ms Nomfundo Walaza of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa and Ms Sriyangani Fernando of the Church of Ceylon have graciously resigned their membership of the CDG. The Archbishop of Canterbury has nominated Mrs Rubie Nottage (Church in the Province of the West Indies) to membership of the group. He further nominated Dr Eileen Scully (Anglican Church of Canada) to be a member of the group for the London meeting, and Professor Norman Doe (Church in Wales) as a consultant for that meeting.

The members present in the meeting in London were:

The Most Revd Drexel Gomez, Primate of the West Indies, Chair

The Revd Dr Victor Atta-Baffoe, Anglican Church of West Africa

The Most Revd Dr John Chew, Primate of South East Asia

The Revd Dr A Katherine Grieb, The Episcopal Church (USA)

The Rt Revd Santosh Marray, Bishop of the Seychelles

The Most Revd Dr John Neill, Archbishop of Dublin

Chancellor Rubie Nottage, Church in the Province of the West Indies

Dr J Eileen Scully, Anglican Church of Canada

The Revd Dr Ephraim Radner, The Episcopal Church (USA)

The Revd Canon Gregory Cameron, Anglican Communion Office, Secretary

Professor Norman Doe, Cardiff University, Consultant

The Revd Canon Andrew Norman, Archbishop of Canterbury's Representative

The Covenant Design Group will meet again later this year after the Lambeth Conference.

For further information, please contact:

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St Andrew's House, London

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“This life is revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us – we declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have communion with us; and truly our communion is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ” (I John 1.2-3)

1. God has called us into communion in Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 1:9). This communion has been “revealed to us” by the Son as being the very divine life of God the Trinity. What is the life revealed to us? St John makes it clear that the communion of life in the Church reflects the communion which is the divine life itself, the life of the Trinity. This life is not a reality remote from us, but one that has been “seen” and “testified to” by the Apostles and their followers: “for in the communion of the Church we share in the divine life” (*The Church and the Triune God*<sup>22</sup>, par. 1-2). This life of the One God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, shapes and displays itself through the very existence and ordering of the Church.
2. Our divine calling into communion is established in God's purposes for the whole of creation (Eph. 1:10; 3:9ff.). It is extended to all humankind, so that, in our sharing of God's life as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, God might restore in us his own image. Through time, according to the Scriptures, God has furthered this calling through covenants made with Noah, Abraham, Israel, and David. The prophet Jeremiah looked forward to a new covenant not written on tablets of stone but upon the heart (Jer.31.31-34) In God's Son Christ Jesus, a new covenant is given us, established in his “blood ... poured out for the many for the forgiveness of sins” (Mt. 26:28), secured through his resurrection from the dead (Eph. 1:19-23), and sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit poured into our hearts (Rom. 5:5). Into this covenant of death to sin and of new life in Christ we are baptized, and empowered to share God's communion in Christ with all people, to the very ends of the earth and of creation.
3. We humbly recognize that this calling and gift of communion entails responsibilities for our common life before God as we seek, through his grace, to be faithful in our service of his purposes for the world. Joined to one universal Body, who is Christ the Lord, spread throughout the earth, we serve his Gospel even as we are enabled to be

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<sup>22</sup> The Cyprus Statement of the International Commission for Anglican Orthodox Theological Dialogue, 2007.

made one across the dividing walls of human sin and estrangement (Eph. 2:12-22). The forms of this life in the Church, caught up in the mystery of divine communion, reveal to the hostile and divisive power of the world the “manifold wisdom of God” (Eph. 3:9-10): faithfulness, honesty, gentleness, humility, patience, forgiveness, and love itself, lived out among the Church’s people and through its ministries, contribute to building up the body of Christ as it grows to maturity (Eph. 4:1-16; Col. 3:8-17). (See *The Windsor Report*, par. 2).

4. In the providence of God, which holds sway even over our divisions caused by sin, various families of churches have grown up within the universal Church in the course of history. Among these families is the Anglican Communion, which provides us a special charism and identity among the many followers and servants of Jesus. Recognizing the wonder, beauty and challenge of maintaining communion in this family of churches, and the need for mutual commitment and discipline as a witness to God’s promise in a world and time of instability, conflict, and fragmentation, we covenant together as churches of this Anglican Communion to be faithful to God’s promises through the historic faith we confess, the way we live together and the focus of our mission.
5. To covenant together is not intended to change the character of this Anglican expression of Christian faith. Rather, we recognise the importance of renewing our commitment to one another, and our common understanding of the faith as we have received it in a solemn way, so that the “bonds of affection” which hold us together may be affirmed. We do this in order to reflect in our relations with one another God’s own faithfulness in his promises towards us in Christ. (2 Cor 1.20-22)
6. We are a people who live, learn, and pray by and with the Scriptures as God’s Word. We seek to adore God in thanks and praise and to make intercession for the needs of people everywhere through a common voice, made one across cultures and languages. We are privileged to share in the mission of the apostles to bring the Gospel of Christ to all nations and peoples, not in word only but in deeds of compassion and justice that witness to God’s character and the triumph of Christ over sin and death. We give ourselves as servants of a greater unity among the divided Christians of the world. May the Lord help us to “preach not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake” (2 Cor. 4:5).

7. Our faith embodies a coherent testimony to what we have received from God's Word and the Church's long-standing witness; our life together reflects the blessings of God in growing our Communion into a truly global family; and the mission we pursue aims at serving the great promises of God in Christ that embrace the world and its peoples, carried out in shared responsibility and stewardship of resources, and in interdependence among ourselves and with the wider Church.
  
8. Our prayer is that God will redeem our struggles and weakness, and renew and enrich our common life so that the Anglican Communion may be used to witness effectively in all the world, working with all Christians of good will, to the new life and hope found in Christ Jesus.



# An Anglican Covenant

## The St. Andrew's Draft

### A Second Draft for Discussion

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#### Preamble

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We, the Churches of the Anglican Communion, under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, solemnly covenant together in these following affirmations and commitments. As people of God, drawn from “every nation, tribe, people and language”<sup>23</sup>, we do this in order to proclaim more effectively in our different contexts the Grace of God revealed in the gospel, to offer God's love in responding to the needs of the world, to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and together with all God's people to grow up together to the full stature of Christ.

#### Section One: Our Inheritance of Faith

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##### 1.1 Each Church of the Communion affirms:

(1.1.1) its communion in the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, worshipping the one true God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit<sup>24</sup>;

(1.1.2) that, reliant on the Holy Spirit, it professes the faith which is uniquely revealed in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as containing all things necessary for salvation and as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith<sup>25</sup>, and which is set forth in the catholic creeds, and to which the historic formularies of the Church of England<sup>26</sup> bear significant witness, which faith the Church is called upon to proclaim afresh in each generation<sup>27</sup>;

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<sup>23</sup> Revelation 7.9

<sup>24</sup> Cf. The Preface to the Declaration of Assent, Canon C15 of the Church of England.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. The Lambeth Quadrilateral of 1888

<sup>26</sup> The Thirty-nine Articles of Religion, the 1662 Book of Common Prayer, and the Ordering of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons

<sup>27</sup> Cf. The Preface to the Declaration of Assent, Canon C15 of the Church of England.

(1.1.3) that it holds and duly administers the two sacraments ordained by Christ himself – Baptism and the Supper of the Lord – ministered with the unfailing use of Christ's words of institution, and of the elements ordained by him<sup>28</sup>;

(1.1.4) that it upholds the historic episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of his Church<sup>29</sup>;

(1.1.5) that our shared patterns of common prayer and liturgy form, sustain and nourish our worship of God and our faith and life together;

(1.1.6) that it participates in the apostolic mission of the whole people of God, and that this mission is shared with other Churches and traditions beyond this Covenant.

## **1.2 In living out this inheritance of faith together in varying contexts, each Church of the Communion commits itself:**

(1.2.1) to uphold and act in continuity and consonance with Scripture and the catholic and apostolic faith, order and tradition;

(1.2.2) to uphold and proclaim a pattern of Christian theological and moral reasoning and discipline that is rooted in and answerable to the teaching of Holy Scripture and the catholic tradition and that reflects the renewal of humanity and the whole created order through the death and resurrection of Christ and the holiness that in consequence God gives to, and requires from, his people;

(1.2.3) to seek in all things to uphold the solemn obligation to sustain Eucharistic communion, in accordance with existing canonical disciplines as we strive under God for the fuller realisation of the Communion of all Christians;

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<sup>28</sup> cf. The Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral 1886/1888, The Preface to the Declaration of Assent, Canon C15 of the Church of England.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. The Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral 1886/1888

(1.2.4) to ensure that biblical texts are handled faithfully, respectfully, comprehensively and coherently, primarily through the teaching and initiative of bishops and synods, and building on habits and disciplines of Bible study across the Church and on rigorous scholarship, believing that scriptural revelation continues to illuminate and transform individuals, cultures and societies;

(1.2.5) nurture and respond to prophetic and faithful leadership in ministry and mission to equip God's people to be courageous witnesses to the power of the Gospel in the world.

(1.2.6) pursue a common pilgrimage with other Churches of the Communion to discern the Truth, that peoples from all nations may truly be set free to receive the new and abundant life in the Lord Jesus Christ.

## Section Two: The Life We Share with Others: Our Anglican Vocation

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### **2.1 Each Church of the Communion affirms:**

(2.1.1) that communion is a gift of God: that His people from east and west, north and south, may together declare his glory and be a sign of God's Reign. We gratefully acknowledge God's gracious providence extended to us down the ages, our origins in the Church of the Apostles, the ancient common traditions, the rich history of the Church in Britain and Ireland shaped by the Reformation, and our growth into a global communion through the expanding missionary work of the Church.

(2.1.2) the ongoing mission work of the Communion. As the Communion continues to develop into a worldwide family of interdependent churches, we embrace challenges and opportunities for mission at local, regional, and international levels. In this, we cherish our faith and mission heritage as offering Anglicans distinctive opportunities for mission collaboration.

(2.1.3) that our common mission is a mission shared with other churches and traditions beyond this covenant. We embrace opportunities for the discovery of the life of the whole gospel and for reconciliation and shared mission with the Church throughout the world. It is with all the saints that we will comprehend the fuller dimensions of Christ's redemptive and immeasurable love.

**2.2 In recognition of these affirmations,  
each Church of the Communion commits itself:**

(2.2.1) to answer God's call to evangelisation and to share in his healing and reconciling mission for our blessed but broken, hurting and fallen world, and, with mutual accountability, to share our God-given spiritual and material resources in this task.

(2.2.2) In this mission, which is the Mission of Christ<sup>30</sup>, each Church undertakes:

- (2.2.2.a) to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom of God;
- (2.2.2.b) to teach, baptize and nurture new believers;
- (2.2.2.c) to respond to human need by loving service;
- (2.2.2.d) to seek to transform unjust structures of society; and
- (2.2.2.e) to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and to sustain and renew the life of the earth.

Section Three: Our Unity and Common Life

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**3.1 Each Church of the Communion affirms:**

(3.1.1) that by our participation in Baptism and Eucharist, we are incorporated into the one body of the Church of Jesus Christ, and called by Christ to pursue all things that make for peace and build up our common life;

(3.1.2) its resolve to live in a Communion of Churches. Each Church, episcopally led and synodically governed, orders and regulates its own affairs and its local responsibility for mission through its own system of government and law and is therefore described as autonomous-in-communion<sup>31</sup>. Churches of the Anglican Communion are not bound together by a central legislative, executive or judicial authority. Trusting in the Holy Spirit, who calls and enables us to live in mutual affection, commitment and service, we seek to affirm our common life through those Instruments of Communion by which our Churches are enabled to develop a common mind;

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<sup>30</sup> Cf. The five Marks of Mission as set out in the MISSIO Report of 1999, building on work at ACC-6 and ACC-8.

<sup>31</sup> The Windsor Report, paragraph 76

(3.1.3) the central role of bishops as guardians and teachers of faith, leaders in mission, and as a visible sign of unity, representing the universal Church to the local, and the local Church to the universal. This ministry is exercised personally, collegially and within and for the eucharistic community. We receive and maintain the historic threefold ministry of bishops, priests and deacons, ordained for service in the Church of God, as they call all the baptised into the mission of Christ;

(3.1.4) the importance of instruments in the Anglican Communion to assist in the discernment, articulation and exercise of our shared faith and common life and mission. In addition to the many and varied links which sustain our life together, we acknowledge four particular Instruments which co-operate in the service of Communion:

- I. The Archbishop of Canterbury, with whose See Anglicans have historically been in communion, is accorded a primacy of honour and respect as first amongst equals (*primus inter pares*). As a focus and means of unity, he gathers the Lambeth Conference and Primates' Meeting, and presides in the Anglican Consultative Council;
- II. The Lambeth Conference, expressing episcopal collegiality worldwide, gathers the bishops for common counsel, consultation and encouragement and serves as an instrument in guarding the faith and unity of the Communion and equipping the saints for the work of ministry and mission<sup>32</sup>;
- III. The Anglican Consultative Council is comprised of laity, clergy and bishops representative of our Provincial synods. It facilitates the co-operative work of the Churches of the Anglican Communion, co-ordinates aspects of international Anglican ecumenical and mission work, calls the Churches into mutual responsibility and interdependence, and advises on developing provincial structures<sup>33</sup>;
- IV. The Primates' Meeting is called by the Archbishop of Canterbury for mutual support, prayer and counsel. The Primates and Moderators are called to work as representative of their Provinces in collaboration with one another in mission and in doctrinal, moral and pastoral matters that have communion-wide implications.

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<sup>32</sup> Ephesians 4.12

3.2 Acknowledging our interdependent life,  
each Church of the Communion commits itself:

(3.2.1) to have regard to the common good of the Communion in the exercise of its autonomy, and to support the work of the Instruments of Communion with the spiritual and material resources available to it;

(3.2.2) to respect the constitutional autonomy of all of the Churches of the Anglican Communion, while upholding the interdependent life and mutual responsibility of the Churches, and the responsibility of each to the Communion as a whole<sup>34</sup>;

(3.2.3) to spend time with openness and patience in matters of theological debate and reflection to listen, pray and study with one another in order to discern the will of God. Such prayer, study and debate is an essential feature of the life of the Church as it seeks to be led by the Spirit into all truth and to proclaim the Gospel afresh in each generation. Some issues, which are perceived as controversial or new when they arise, may well evoke a deeper understanding of the implications of God's revelation to us; others may prove to be distractions or even obstacles to the faith: all therefore need to be tested by shared discernment in the life of the Church.

(3.2.4) to seek with other Churches, through the Communion's shared councils, a common mind about matters understood to be of essential concern, consistent with the Scriptures, common standards of faith, and the canon law of our churches.

(3.2.5) to act with diligence, care and caution in respect to actions, either proposed or enacted, at a provincial or local level, which, in its own view or the expressed view of any Province or in the view of any one of the Instruments of Communion, are deemed to threaten the unity of the Communion and the effectiveness or credibility of its mission, and to consent to the following principles and procedural elements:

(3.2.5.a) to undertake wide consultation with the other churches of the Anglican Communion and with the Instruments and Commissions of the Communion;

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<sup>33</sup> cf. the Objects of the ACC are set out in Article 2 of its Constitution.

- (3.2.5.b) to accept the legitimacy of processes for communion-wide evaluation which any of the Instruments of Communion may commission, according to such procedures as are appended to this covenant;
- (3.2.5.c) to be ready to participate in mediated conversation between parties, which may be in conflict, according to such procedures as are appended to this covenant;
- (3.2.5.d) to be willing to receive from the Instruments of Communion a request to adopt a particular course of action in respect of the matter under dispute. While the Instruments of Communion have no legislative, executive or judicial authority in our Provinces, except where provided in their own laws, we recognise them as those bodies by which our common life in Christ is articulated and sustained, and which therefore carry a moral authority which commands our respect.
- (3.2.5.e) Any such request would not be binding on a Church unless recognised as such by that Church. However, commitment to this covenant entails an acknowledgement that in the most extreme circumstances, where a Church chooses not to adopt the request of the Instruments of Communion, that decision may be understood by the Church itself, or by the resolution of the Instruments of Communion, as a relinquishment by that Church of the force and meaning of the covenant's purpose, until they re-establish their covenant relationship with other member Churches.
- (3.2.6) to have in mind that our bonds of affection and the love of Christ compel us always to seek the highest possible degree of communion.

#### Our Declaration

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With joy and with firm resolve, we declare our Churches to be partakers in this Anglican Covenant, offering ourselves for fruitful service and binding ourselves more closely in the truth and love of Christ, to whom with the Father and the Holy Spirit be glory for ever. Amen.

“Now may the God of Peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, make you complete in everything good so that you may do his will, working among us that which is pleasing in his

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<sup>34</sup> cf. the Schedule to the Dar es Salaam Communiqué of the Primates' Meeting, February 2007

sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.” (Hebrews 13.20, 21)



The Anglican Communion  
The Covenant Design Group  
COMMENTARY on THE ST. ANDREW'S DRAFT  
for AN ANGLICAN COVENANT

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## General Comments

*The Covenant Design Group (CDG) received formal responses to the 2007 Draft Covenant from thirteen (13) Provinces. The Group were hopeful that the lack of formal discursive responses from other Provinces does not necessarily signal disapproval. The CDG is cognisant of mitigating factors (such as the lack of translations of the text available, other foci in the local lives of Provinces and lack of consultative resources, etc.). Of the formal responses we did receive, all signalled a willingness to move forward, despite various questions and concerns, and a clear mandate was given to this meeting of the CDG.*

Originally, the 2007 Nassau draft cited a number of Biblical passages without showing clearly their relationship to the text of the covenant. Many Provincial Responses therefore questioned the scriptural references contained in the draft. The St. Andrew's draft takes a different approach, showing its biblical framework primarily in the introduction and conclusion, and referencing scriptural passages throughout the draft. This present draft intentionally uses biblical language wherever possible and is rooted in Scripture, through phraseology, direct quotation in the text, through some explicit engagement with Scriptural passages in certain parts of the text (e.g. the Introduction) and through discussion and indication of the Scriptural base and soil of the Covenant.

Several comments pointed to the confusing numbering and divisions of the Nassau Draft. We have sought to make this clearer. Now, the Covenant is broadly divided into three main sections, offering first affirmations and then commitment dealing with shared faith, mission, and the maintenance of communion.

The Covenant Design Group noted that in some of the responses both the idea of covenant and the usefulness of the term "covenant" were questioned, both in terms of its use in the Old Testament and its historic connotations in some parts of the Anglican Communion. The idea of a covenant was first suggested in the Windsor Report and a sample covenant was

put forward in Appendix 2 of that document. Subsequently, the desirability of a covenant has been reaffirmed by 3 out of the 4 Instruments of Communion.

As to the term “covenant”, the CDG discussed other suggested alternatives such as “concordat” or “common declaration,” each of which has its own difficulties, and finally returned to “covenant” as the best descriptor of the task ahead of us. Almost all of the responses received expressed a readiness to work with the idea of covenant.

The CDG was unanimous in believing that we cannot abandon the word and concept of ‘covenant’, and for several reasons: theologically, we believe that it is correct to say that covenant emerges out of communion, and also ‘serves’ communion, both in terms of God’s relations to us, but just as importantly in our mutual relations as reflective of God’s life that we share. It is related, in a concrete way, to the expression of ‘bonds of affection’ in their pneumatic, relational and responsible power. The distinction between ‘covenant’ and other possible concepts (‘concordat’, ‘compact’, etc.) is quite clear in these respects. Finally, the term now has an accepted currency within the Communion that commends its common usage.

**We noted the historical use of ‘the bonds of affection’ and asked ourselves: What is the bare minimum of infrastructure that the communion needs? At a time of fragmentation, a covenant is a basis for mutual trust and reduced anxiety. Habits of civility and mutuality of respect have taken us a long way in the past. We are now in a place where our structures must provide a framework for the context of our belief.**

Some have asked about the proposed covenant: What difference does it make in the life of the Communion? Does it simply make explicit what is already implicit, or is it a device for achieving something else? Some responses raised questions about the rationale for the Covenant: “what positive difference will it make?” Is it just about “conflict management” or discipline, so that the final section is the “real reason” for the Covenant? Questions have also been raised around the Communion as to why the Lambeth Quadrilateral is not enough. The present concern is to achieve sufficient accountability among Provinces to be able to work more corporately. That will mean creating some structures. The proposed draft Covenant is our answer to all of these questions.

*We have sought to emphasize more obviously the missionary element constitutive to our valuing of unity. Finally, we also believe that our revisions in the final sections provide some*

*greater clarity about what is at stake – a way of life “in communion” that is faithful to the form of our Gospel vocation.*

We have sought, through the use of phraseology borrowed from the recent Anglican-Orthodox Cyprus Agreed Statement<sup>35</sup>, to be faithful in describing the relationship of the Anglican Communion to the Universal Church. At the same time, despite the desires of some that the Covenant provide a more definitive statement of Anglican ecclesiology, we recognized the still-open-ended character of this task, and sought not to pre-empt its fruit and conclusion by too precise formulations in this way.

*A key question which the group addressed was “Is the Draft ecclesologically coherent?” Is, for instance, the final section at odds with previous affirmations regarding interdependence? We have reflected seriously on this matter, and believe that the character of ecclesial communion does not submerge the responsible choices that local churches must engage in order to be faithful to their calling by and under Christ. A model which empowers the Churches of the Anglican Communion to speak to one another and inform each others life, while respecting provincial autonomy does indeed embody the kind of “autonomy-in-communion” that informs the Draft.*

## The Introduction

Several comments expressed a desire for greater theological breadth in the Introduction, that might better reflect the relation between Trinity and communion, the forms of ecclesial life this represents, and the place of the Anglican Communion in particular within this reality. The section was expanded in this direction and has now sought to offer a fuller theological rationale.

## The Preamble

The Preamble uses the form, “the Churches of the Anglican Communion”. These are the churches recognised in the Schedule of Membership of the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC). At present they consist of 34 national or regional Provinces, the 4 United Churches

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<sup>35</sup> *The Church of the Triune God*, the Cyprus Agreed Statement of the International Commission for Anglican Orthodox Theological Dialogue, ACO, London, January 2007

of South Asia and 6 extra-provincial churches, dioceses or, in one case, a parish, duly recognised by ACC procedures.

## Section One: Our Inheritance of Faith

### **Clause 1.1.1**

Some responses wondered if the first section on the “One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic Church” should be framed in terms of “recognition” relating to other Churches’ membership within it. We decided that, in this Covenant, the signatories needed to affirm their own self-understanding, and not their view of other churches, and therefore the covenant itself must be limited to simple affirmation.

The unity of the universal Church is the communion in faith, truth, love and common sacramental life of the several local churches. The catholic Church exists in each local church; and each local church is identified with the whole, expresses the whole and cannot exist apart from the whole.

### **Clause 1.1.2**

Some Provinces do not formally recognise the 39 Articles within their canons and constitutions. We, however, accepted one suggestion that the realities of Scripture, Creed, and formularies be more closely linked, but in a way that did not transgress the particular canonical and historical diversity of Anglican churches with respect to the last element.

### **Clause 1.1.3**

Some responses questioned whether the Covenant unduly limits the sacramental life of the Anglican churches to only two sacraments (Baptism and Eucharist). There are some different views held among Anglican churches regarding e.g. the “number of sacraments” and their meaning. This statement in clause 1.1.3 is not meant to be an exhaustive treatment of sacramental theology or to resolve questions about the nature or number of the sacraments. The CDG decided, therefore, to stick to the express wording the Lambeth Quadrilateral in this respect, as articulating “constitutive” elements of the Church, without seeking to define further other sacramental realities.

#### Clause 1.1.4

The group have now incorporated (as several submissions suggested) all four elements of the Chicago Lambeth Quadrilateral in this opening section.

#### **Clause 1.1.5**

The group have added a clause referring to the importance of Common Prayer as one of the defining characteristics of Anglicanism and of our common bonds.

#### **Clause 1.2.2**

One of the questions addressed to the Design Group was “Where in the Covenant does the lively and responsible role of human reason, so consistently important to Anglican practice, find a substantive mention?” Taking up one suggestion, the active and disciplined use of reason in theological and moral decision-making, bound to Scriptural authority, was used to replace a previous paragraph (3.3).

#### **Clause 1.2.3**

The CDG accepted that there is an obligation to work to sustain Eucharistic communion even where there is conscientious objection.

### Section Two: The Life We Share with Others: Our Anglican Vocation

#### **Clause 2.1.3**

The ecumenical dimensions of Anglican witness and mission are expressed more explicitly both here and in 1.1.6.

#### **Clause 2.2.2**

There was some discussion about the adequacy of the stated “Five Marks of Mission” and several attractive suggestions were received with respect to enlarging the outline. However, because these five marks have already emerged from inter-Anglican discussion and been given a real measure of reception around the Communion, this is one of several places

where the CDG elected to honour the wording of the original text, in this case that of the MISSIO Report of 1999.

In spite of our own questions about the sufficiency of the list and ACC-8's own questions about that sufficiency, we agreed to maintain this enumeration, cognizant (along with the original commission that proposed them) that they may not yet fully represent the summary shape of our missionary commitments. At the same time, we have tried to indicate the missionary essence of a range of elements dealt with in other sections. It remains an open question as to whether the commissions would want us to suggest revisions of their language that may occur to us?

### Section Three: Our Unity and Common Life

**Clause 3.1.3:** The central role of bishops as a visible sign of unity was recognised in The Windsor Report (para. 64) where it was stated that, "Bishops represent the local to the universal and the universal to the local". We note the significance of the Episcopal office for the Communion of the Church as set out in Appendix Two of the Report of the Inter Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission (IATDC), "The Anglican Way: The Significance of the Episcopal Office for the Communion of the Church"<sup>36</sup>.

**Clause 3.1.4:** There are many and varied links which sustain our life together include: The Anglican Cycle of Prayer, the various commissions, the Mothers' Union, companion dioceses and parish relationships, mission agencies and networks.

Some comments indicated that the Covenant was somehow "canonizing" four instruments of Communion that have evolved in a somewhat haphazard way. We have therefore amended the text to allow both for the evolution of the Instruments, and to acknowledge the existence of other informal instruments and links.

While the Covenant does not preclude or even seek to limit the possible development of these and other Instruments, we nonetheless believe that the Instruments as now working represent a special means of faithfully maintaining our common life, and ones that need to remain at the centre of our common commitments. The Archbishop of Canterbury's place within this grouping is maintained, even while his character as a "focus" – according to the redefinition adopted from the Windsor Report by ACC-13 – is acknowledged. The

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<sup>36</sup> The Report, *Communion, Conflict and Hope*, is to be published by ACO later this year.

Archbishop of Canterbury exercises his ministry in a collegial manner with his fellow Primates.

The order of listing the Four Instruments has been changed to follow their more formal chronological development. Their ministries have been described according to various Communion documents including, in the case of the ACC, its formal constitution.

The history of the Primates' Meeting is set out in Paragraph 104 of The Windsor Report which states that its purpose was "to initiate consideration of the way to relate together the international conferences, councils, and meetings within the Anglican Communion, so that the Anglican Communion may best serve God within the context of one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church." It is noted that in Appendix 1(5) of the Windsor Report it was suggested that the Primates' Meeting serve as a standing committee of the Lambeth Conference, but since this has not been received by the larger church, the Covenant Design Group decided not to include it in our description.

#### The Commitments in 3.2

This was the most contentious section of the Nassau draft, and the one which therefore required our greatest attention, and which has been considerably rewritten. In articulating a model for interdependent life, we have tried to be faithful to a few models developed in the Windsor Report. The section therefore begins with a commitment to a common life would also respects the proper autonomy of our Churches.

#### Clause 3.2.2

This statement of the autonomy of the Provinces is taken from that written by the primates in their meeting at Dar es Salaam, " directly from the schedule to their communique from that meeting.

#### Clause 3.2.5

Many commentators on the Nassau draft did not like the pattern of consultation as proposed in the draft, which placed the Primates Meeting in a significant co-ordinating position. The St Andrew's Draft limits the commitments made by the Churches to ones of care and receptivity with respect to Communion relations. It is open to any Province or the instruments of

Communion or indeed the national or regional Church itself to identify matters which threaten “the unity of the Communion” or “ the effectiveness or credibility of its mission”, and which therefore invoke a higher duty of care. The clause sets out four elements to that duty of care: consultation (3.2.5.a), Communion wide evaluation (3.2.5.b), mediation (3.2.5.c) and a readiness to consider a request on the controversial matter from the Instruments of Communion (3.2.5.d). The draft stresses that there is no intention to erect a centralised jurisdiction and that the Instruments of Communion cannot dictate with juridical force on the internal affairs of any Province. However, since Communion is founded on the mutual recognition that each Church sees in the other of our Communion in Christ, we recognize that it cannot be sustained in extreme circumstances where a Church or Province were to act in a way which rejects the interdependence of the Communion's life.

We recognize that the Communion may well require more detailed procedures which offer a way in which these principles and procedural elements may be lived out in its life. The group therefore attaches to the St Andrew's Draft a tentative draft for the possible shape of such procedures might take. This procedural appendix will need much scrutiny and careful analysis. The CDG particularly welcomes comments and response on this appendix, while also recognizing its provisional nature in the St Andrew's Draft. It is important to note however that the elements set out in clause 3.2.5 are not intended to form a sequential process, but to be elements which can all be active and present at any stage in the process of common discernment and reconciliation.

#### Clause 3.2.6

The commitments close with the renewal of the commitment to seek to live into the fullness of Communion into which we are called by our Lord.

## **DRAFT APPENDIX FRAMEWORK PROCEDURES FOR THE RESOLUTION OF COVENANT DISAGREEMENTS**

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### **1. General Principles**



1.1. All processes for the resolution of covenant disagreements which threaten the unity of the Communion and the effectiveness or credibility of its mission shall be characterised by the Christian virtues of charity, humility, patience and gentleness and the canonical principles of fairness, transparency, and reasoned decision-making.

1.2. No process shall affect the autonomy of any Church of the Communion. The term “Church” and all terms in this Appendix take their meaning from the Covenant itself.

1.3. No process shall exceed five years as from the date upon which a Church consults under Paragraph 3 of this Appendix.

1.4. Any matter involving relinquishment by a Church of the force and meaning of the Covenant purposes must be decided solely by that Church or by the Anglican Consultative Council in accordance with Paragraph 8 of this Appendix.

1.5. Each Communion body or instrument involved in the following procedures shall make its own rules, in consultation with the other Instruments of Communion, for the transaction of its business in accordance with the Covenant, the Framework Procedures and the Christian virtues and canonical principles set out in Paragraph 1.1 of this Appendix.

## **2. The Principle of Informal Conversation**

2.1. If a Church (X) proposes to act or acts in any way that another Church (Y) or an Instrument of Communion (Z) claims to threaten the unity of the Communion and the effectiveness or credibility of its mission, then X Church, Y Church and Z instrument shall engage in informal conversation, as an act of communion, to try to resolve the matter.

2.2. The Anglican Consultative Council shall be disqualified from making a claim under 2.1, on the basis that it may later make a decision as to the relinquishment on the force and meaning of the Covenant purpose under paragraph 8, but it shall not be disqualified from entering into informal conversation under 2.1..

*[ie 2.2 is about natural justice and keeps ACC in reserve for Paragraph 8]*

## **3. The Principle of Consultation**

3.1. If informal conversation fails in the view of X, Y or Z, or if X Church itself considers that an action or proposed action might threaten Communion unity and mission, then X Church must consult the Archbishop of Canterbury on the matter.

3.2. Within one month of being consulted, the Archbishop of Canterbury must either (a) seek to resolve the matter personally through pastoral guidance or (b) refer the matter to three Assessors, appointed as appropriate by the Archbishop.

3.3. If after one month of its issue, the pastoral guidance of the Archbishop is unsuccessful as determined by the Archbishop, the Archbishop shall as soon as practically possible refer the matter to the Assessors who shall act in accordance with Paragraph 3.4.

3.4. Having considered whether the matter involves a threat to the unity and mission of the Communion according to Article 3.2.5 of the Covenant, the Assessors shall recommend to the Archbishop, within one month of receiving the referral, one of the following routes:

(a) if it is clear in the opinion of the Assessors that the matter involves a threat to the unity or mission of the Communion and that time may be of the essence, a request from the Archbishop of Canterbury;

(b) if it is unclear in the opinion of the Assessors whether the matter involves a threat to the unity or mission of the Communion and time is of the essence, referral to another Instrument of Communion;

(c) if it is unclear in the opinion of the Assessors whether the matter involves a threat to the unity or mission of the Communion, if time is not of the essence, and if the case would benefit from rigorous theological study, referral to a Commission for evaluation; or:

(d) if it is clear that the matter does not involve a threat to the unity or mission of the Communion, mediation.

3.5. The Archbishop of Canterbury, having considered the Assessors` recommendation, and within one month of its receipt, shall either: (a) as an Instrument of Communion, issue a request to any Church involved; (b) refer the matter to another Instrument of Communion; (c) refer the matter to a Commission of the Communion for evaluation; or (d) send the matter for mediation.

#### **4. Route 1: A Request of the Archbishop of Canterbury**

4.1. When the Archbishop of Canterbury makes a request to a Church, that Church must within six months of receiving it (a) accept the request or (b) reject the request. The absence of a response will be considered as a rejection.

4.2. If a Church rejects the request, that Church may within three months of rejecting the request appeal against it to the Joint Standing Committee of the Anglican Consultative Council and the Primates. The Church may appeal when it considers that there has been no threat to the unity or mission of the Communion.

4.3. On appeal, and within three months, the Joint Standing Committee must decide whether there has been a threat to the unity or mission of the Communion.

4.4. If the appeal is successful, the Joint Standing Committee shall certify immediately that the matter is closed subject to Articles 3.2.1, 3.2.4 and 3.2.5b of the Covenant.

4.5. If the appeal is lost, the Archbishop shall submit the request, rejection and appeal decision to the Anglican Consultative Council which shall deal with the matter in accordance with Paragraph 8.

#### **5. Route 2: A Referral to another Instrument of Communion**

5.1. When the Archbishop of Canterbury refers the matter to another Instrument of Communion, that Instrument must within one year of receiving the referral decide whether there has been a threat to the unity or mission of the Communion. Having considered the matter, the Instrument shall make a request to any Church involved.

5.2. A Church shall within six months of receiving the request either (a) accept the request or (b) reject the request. The absence of a response will be considered as a rejection.

5.3. If a Church accepts the request, the Instrument of Communion to which referral is made shall as soon as is convenient certify that the matter is closed subject to Articles 3.2.1, 3.2.4 and 3.2.5b of the Covenant.

5.4. If a Church rejects the request, the Instrument of Communion to which the referral is made shall at its next meeting submit the request and rejection to the Anglican Consultative Council which shall deal with the matter in accordance with Paragraph 8.

## **6. Route 3: An Evaluation by a Commission**

6.1. When the Archbishop of Canterbury decides to refer the matter to a Commission in the Communion, he shall choose which Commission in consultation with the Secretary General of the Anglican Communion.

[NOTE: This is without prejudice to the entitlement of any other Instrument of Communion requesting the Archbishop to set up Commissions or to any other Instrument of Communion likewise setting up such Commissions.]

6.2. The Commission shall engage in study of the issues involved in the matter, bringing in expertise as needed, and shall evaluate the acceptability of the act or proposed act of any Church involved.

6.3. Within eighteen months of the referral, the Commission shall submit its evaluation to an Instrument of Communion other than the Anglican Consultative Council as determined by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Having considered the evaluation, the Instrument shall issue a request to any Church involved.

6.4. If a Church accepts the request, the Instrument of Communion to which the evaluation is submitted shall certify as soon as is convenient that the matter is closed subject to Articles 3.2.1, 3.2.4 and 3.2.5b of the Covenant.

6.5. If a Church rejects the request, the Instrument of Communion to which the evaluation is submitted shall send the request and rejection to the Anglican Consultative Council which shall process the matter in accordance with Paragraph 8.

## **7. Route 4: Mediation**

7.1. When the Archbishop of Canterbury decides on mediation, the Assessors shall work with the parties to set up a mediation process.

7.2. The parties shall appoint an independent third party who shall assist the parties involved to achieve a mutually acceptable resolution of the points of disagreement.

7.3. The mediator shall participate actively in the mediation, offering suggestions for resolution, trying to reconcile opposing assertions, and appeasing feelings of resentment between the parties.

7.4. The mediator has no decision-making authority and cannot compel the parties to accept a settlement.

7.5. On each anniversary of the establishment of the mediation, the Assessors shall report on the process to the Archbishop of Canterbury. Within three years of the establishment of the mediation, the Archbishop of Canterbury together with the Joint Standing Committee of the Anglican Consultative Council and Primates` Meeting shall certify the conclusion of the mediation process.

7.6. If a party refuses to enter mediation, it will be presumed to have threatened the unity of the Communion and the effectiveness or credibility of its mission, under Article 3.2.5 of the Covenant, and the matter shall be dealt with at the next meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council in accordance with Paragraph 8.

## **8. Rejection of a Request from an Instrument of Communion**

8.1. If a Church rejects a request of an Instrument of Communion, that Instrument shall send the request and rejection to the Anglican Consultative Council.

8.2. At its next meeting, the Council shall decide whether the rejection of the request is compatible with the Covenant.

8.3. If the Council decides that the rejection of the request is compatible with the Covenant, the matter is closed subject to Articles 3.2.1, 3.2.4 and 3.2.5b of the Covenant.

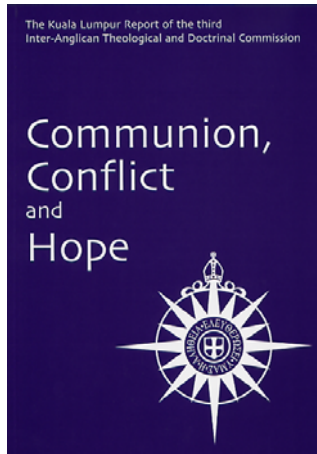
8.4. If the Council decides that the rejection is incompatible with the Covenant, then during the course of that meeting of the Council either (a) the Church involved may declare voluntarily that it relinquishes the force and meaning of the purposes of the Covenant, or (b) the Council shall resolve whether the Church involved may be understood to have relinquished the force and meaning of the purposes of the Covenant.

8.5. If a declaration or resolution of relinquishment is issued, the Anglican Consultative Council must as soon as is practicable initiate a process of restoration with the Church

involved in consultation with all the Churches of the Communion and the other Instruments of Communion.

## **A précis and introduction to the Inter-Anglican Doctrinal and Theological Commission's report,**

Communion, Conflict and Hope



**The present Inter-Anglican Doctrinal and Theological Commission (IATDC) was appointed in 2001 to study the 'nature and maintenance of communion', especially of the Anglican Communion. It did this by inviting all dioceses and theological institutions throughout the Communion to share in a conversation about principles which were seen to hold Anglicans together, and the underlying issues which threatened to pull them apart. The report is a reflection on that conversation, and an invitation to extend it into situations of current controversy.**

When Jesus arrived at the wedding in Cana of Galilee (John 2), his disciples came too. It can perhaps be inferred that these followers were not actually expected, and possible to speculate that such an unanticipated increase in the number of guests contributed to the embarrassing situation which the narrative describes! Whatever the circumstances, the first sign that St John recounted shows Jesus revealing his glory in an act of gracious provision by the miraculous transformation of water into wine. His presence at an anxious moment in a very human celebration came to offer an anticipation of the promised messianic banquet at the end of time.

In the life of the early church, the coming together in table fellowship of Jew and gentile was one of the things that authenticated the preaching of good news to the nations (Acts 15.30-31; Galatians 1.6ff). In time, overcoming other ancient divisions of geography, culture, class and gender also became characteristic transformations achieved among new companies of believers (Galatians 3.28), and over the centuries since then, deep longings for a sense of community in faith and purpose have always been near the top of the Christian movement's priorities. In recent decades processes of rapid social change, in particular the opposing pressures of globalisation on one hand and survival of personal and local identity on the other, have made the pursuit of Christian community increasingly important – and problematic.

## **Anglicans, communion and the Anglican Communion**

The world-wide Anglican family has grappled with that problem as much as most.

At the 1978 Lambeth Conference, Archbishop Coggan identified the question of authority as being at the heart of most Anglican controversies, and afterwards appointed the first Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission to chart a response. Its report, *For the Sake of the Kingdom* (1986), offered a subtle attempt to discern the 'transcendent horizon' in the midst of human history within the yes and no, the even now but not yet, of the reign of God. Anglicanism's particular vocation is to do that within "a fellowship based in a common set of institutions ... through practical acts of sharing, through mutual consultation, through mutual admonition and criticism [and] through a common willingness to take up difficult – even divisive – issues for the sake of the truth of the Gospel" (pp59-60). A succeeding commission explored the way in which those common institutions –instruments of unity or communion – were developing. *The Virginia Report* (1997), sought to provide for them some theological space in which to function through notions of 'subsidiarity' (decisions should be made at appropriate levels of the church's existence) and 'reception' (the truth of the gospel is progressively discerned, which "is never an uncomplicated and straightforward matter. There are always setbacks along the way"(p55)).

The third commission has produced a report *Communion, Conflict and Hope* (2008) for this year's Lambeth Conference that consciously builds on those documents (as will be seen in paras 40-44). What is different about its approach came from a recognition that the intensity of the debates which threatened to divide the Anglican Communion – not least those which followed the 1998 Conference discussion of human sexuality – meant that terms like 'progressive discernment' or 'mutual admonition' could not be taken to suggest that deeply felt differences would be resolved by calm, almost detached, theological reflection alone, leave alone by the dictat of any church court or theological commission! The present IATDC concluded that the eschatological motif of the first report and the Trinitarian emphasis of the second, needed to be complemented by an approach which was more engaged, historical and Christological. A theology of communion must register the reality of sin and suffering, controversy and conflict. It needs to grapple with actual experiences of communion – and its potential for breaking down – in situations where Christians feel isolated, and the promises of Christ's presence seem remote. Furthermore, a different method of study and reportage was needed if its work was to make any tangible difference to the future of Anglicanism.

## **Consultative Theology**



Part I of the report describes the circumstances and outlines the rationale by which the Commission proceeded. A series of questions, affirmations and clarifications were circulated to provinces, diocesan bishops and theological institutions throughout the Communion. The process is described at greater length in paragraphs 55-60, and the actual questions etc are gathered together in Appendix 1 of the report.

The replies received contributed materially to the Commission's agenda (records of the different phases of the conversation can be seen on the Anglican Communion web-site), were incorporated in a rolling summary of the debate, and from that absorbed into the document which is presented now. The study process was more than a consultation, in the sense of inviting comment on ideas that the Commission was proposing: it invited conversation partners to participate in shaping a fresh understanding of the churches' calling to faithfulness and service.

**Throughout our work we have held to the vision of the church as a learning community which is being led by the Spirit on a pilgrimage into truth, which will honour yet also transfigure our shared history. The collegial method we have adopted throughout our work and in the production of this report, an approach which requires detailed listening to and engagement with a wide range of voices throughout the Communion, is an example of Communion in action.**  
**(Para 21)**

Such listening and engagement involves more than simple debate. Too often attempts to discuss theological differences degenerate into the parties issuing a series of assertions and counter-assertions at each other. What was attempted was an exposure to the underlying factors which contribute to the disagreement – not least to the different interpretations or assumptions attached to the very things which participants appear to hold in common.

Such foundational issues running below most contemporary Anglican debates were identified in six propositions or statements.

- The Gospel and Scripture: the centrality of the Bible in the Anglican tradition.
- Christian living: the gospel and Christian ethics.
- Responding to the Gospel where we are: context and culture.
- The limits of diversity: encountering disputes and failures.

- Life with others: accountability and competence.
- Dispute resolution: finding appropriate structures.

These issues provided the 'stuff' of the interchange that we began with the Anglican Communion. (It is summarised in Part III, paras 61-116). What became clear was that while those of widely varying opinions generally agreed that these were indeed the sort of factors on which the common life of the churches was built, there was little likelihood of agreement about how they should be applied to particular controversies. This however was not unexpected. Throughout history, and particularly during times of rapid growth or change in the church, "... the life of the community had the usual elements of moral failure, conflict, mistaken paths, as well as the resilient impulse to be faithful to Christ, to be led by the Spirit" (para 32).

### **Testing Communion**

It is that very tension in a fallible community, seeking to know the leading of God in its life and worship, which makes the duty to pursue the gift of communion (para 15), possible. The heart of the Commission's belief is that communion is best discovered in times of conflict, and that disagreements are best faced within the context of communion. The common life of the church is not established just through intellectual or institutional agreements, but by the gift and the promise of Christ. That provides grounds for hope. Even for the Anglican Communion.

**Sometimes we hear of the Communion being broken, and often this language is used in rhetorical exchanges about particular issues of dispute. The greater reality, however, is the brokenness of the church within which communion can and does flourish. Communion flourishes when we accept that discipleship in the church is a call to the way of the cross in the brokenness of the church to which we all contribute.**

**Such costly participation in the crucifixion and resurrection sharpens our sense of the hope we have in Christ. (Paras 50-51)**

The fact that there were six issues, or propositions at the centre of IATDC's consultation was purely coincidental. They were condensed down from a whole range of other statements that sounded throughout the conversation. But in the spirit of the slightly whimsical introduction to this précis, might not the fact that there are six of them mean that they could be considered

to represent the water-pots standing in the courtyard of that home in Cana? Some unexpected guests have found a place at the table of the Anglican family over the last century. Inevitably that creates occasions when the Communion is aware that it is theologically under-prepared or inadequately resourced to meet challenges to its common life. Yet just as the water-pots signified promises of God which were believed although yet unfulfilled, so a commitment to work out our differences in relation to scripture; holiness; faithfulness; discernment; mutuality and authority, provides the material which Christ can use to provide the opportunity for new joys and wider celebration. He fulfils what we may only dream about, and the more unlikely the situation in which he is asked to work, it seems, the better.

### **Dynamic Catholicity**

The Commission was not asked (indeed it was asked not) to give its attention to contentious issues such as human sexuality. Nonetheless it believes that the ‘transferable’ method of questioning and listening demonstrated by the report can be used to address particular causes of division at local and even parochial levels of the church’s life, as well as contributing to Anglicanism’s self-understanding on a wider stage. (It has introduced criteria – of intensity, substance and extent (see para 104, and its footnote) – to suggest how ‘subsidiarity’ can be applied, even at cross-provincial levels of discussion. And Appendix 2, on ‘The Significance of the Episcopal office for the Communion of the Church’ offers direction to the way in which such an approach might work at diocesan level.)

The report does not believe that disagreement is a matter of indifference. Dealing with controversy should expect a resolution. Any issue can become crucial for the maintenance of the church’s faithfulness, it insists (para 97). “Key issues for the church’s faithfulness today have to do with human sexual activity, that of hetero- as well as homosexual orientation.” However it is clear that no single issue is determinative for understanding the nature and maintenance of communion:

**The above process of listening, responding, reflecting and questioning, points to the dynamic aspect of the communion in the body of Christ. Communion is not a steady state reality that one either has or does not have. It has to be nurtured through open and persistent conversation where there is mutual trust and forbearance, always thinking the best of the other, always hoping and praying for new ways of sharing in the riches of the gospel. (Para 114)**

In Part II of the report, the substance of that conversation so far is synthesised in an analysis of the relationship of conflict and hope. Here too, a distinctive use of Christian scripture – “not as ‘proof texts’ to bolster points being made but as tokens of the promise and fulfilment of God’s faithfulness to his people...” (as highlighted by the Chairman, Bishop Sykes, in his Foreword) – can be followed. It is on this section that much of the discussion of the report itself will be concentrated. Critical attention to Anglicanism’s present trials will be vital, but they remain means to a more far-reaching end.

**The experience of conflict can offer an opportunity for Christians in the midst of their disagreement to discover the love for the other that is at the heart of Christ’s sacrifice and which characterises our vocation in Christ. Our constant temptation is to grasp at the resolution of conflict by deployment of power and by manipulation. This is not the way of Christ .... Costly participation in the crucifixion and resurrection sharpens our sense of the hope we have in Christ. (Paras 50-51)**

It is the church’s task to fill the water-pots. Christ alone can take what we offer, and turn it into new wine and a foretaste of his Kingdom.

Dr Philip H.E. Thomas, with Bishop Stephen Sykes and Bishop Stephen Pickard