

Anglican Peace and Justice Network: Report to ACC 17

The mission of the Church is the Mission of Christ:

To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation

ACC 16

At ACC16 members emphasised that issues of peace and justice were central to the concerns of Anglican Provinces. Members had been asked to come prepared to raise the issues of pressing concern to them and their provinces: almost all the key themes that emerged were related to justice and peace.

The most common issue raised was the impact of the mass movement of people as refugees and migrants. Members were also very concerned by the rise of cultures of violence motivated by racism, misogyny and sectarianism. Members lamented violence around national elections and the easy access to guns. Concern was raised over climate change, the increasing marginalisation of indigenous peoples, and the persecution of minorities. Corruption – especially government corruption and inequality were also raised.

All these issues were raised more frequently than discipleship, evangelism and human sexuality. ACC members linked discipleship with the struggle for justice, with some recognising that some of their corrupt and violent leaders were also Anglican worshipers. Discipleship needed to include commitments to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation.

APJN at ACC 16

The Anglican Peace and Justice Network was not officially represented at ACC 16. Bishop Sue Moxon retired as convenor and no one remained from the Steering Committee. It was recognised that the network lacked direction.

Canon Dr Phil Groves led a workshop on behalf of the Network that was attended by many members of the ACC.

They set these aims:

We aim to have a community of people who are mutually supportive as they build just and peaceful societies around the world.

This network will:

- Share information and resources, enable prayerful practical support and engage others in the local and global task of living reconciliation.
- Seek to make a difference to the lives of the oppressed, diminished and victimised in every society and contribute to peace-building locally and globally,

Specifically, it will:

- Enable capacity to focus on content creation and network engagement,
- Run campaigns in support of local Anglican initiatives,
- Enable mutual support through connecting people with common interests,
- Support the practice of living reconciliation in communities locally and globally,
- Promote the use of Continuing Indaba as a resource for conflict transformation and reconciliation.

Those present asked Canon Dr Phil Groves as Director for Reconciliation and Continuing Indaba at the ACO to form a Steering Group and with them find a convenor.

Following his move to parish ministry he continued with a watching brief and in 2018 enabled the formation of a Steering Group. Canon Groves has continued as convenor. The Steering Group will need to consider ongoing leadership on an annual basis.

The APJN Steering Group meets every month using a virtual meeting platform. ACC Members are welcome to participate.

Sharing Information

- Facebook – our reach and engagements are slowly rising.
- Newsletter – our newsletters are designed to be easily downloaded, printed and distributed.
- Website – we have launched our dedicated website www.anglicanpeacejustice.net with articles and news.
- Email letter – we connect with members through our e-news.
- Monthly Share and Prayer meeting – we invite all members to join us once a month for a prayer and sharing meeting on a virtual network.

Making a Difference

- **Human Rights Defenders**

The State has the duty to protect its campaigners for a better world, but instead the State remains the main perpetrator of violations against human rights defenders, either directly or in complicity with non-State actors. If change is to come states must break the cycle of impunity by holding perpetrators to account for attacks against human rights defenders. Killings, criminalisation and smear campaigns must stop.

Anglicans worldwide can challenge their states and support human rights defenders. We ask all Anglicans to raise the profile of those who struggle to find a voice and empower those who seek justice and peace and are protecting the fragile environment. We especially ask our Bishops and prominent leaders to take a lead in speaking out.

Anglicans have prominent roles in human rights either through government agencies or through civil society. In December 2018 Alice Mogwe – ‘Human Rights Defender’ and prominent Anglican – became the first person from civil society to address a High Level Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly. We support her call for Anglicans to act. Anglican human rights defenders need our support: People such as Shunila Ruth in Pakistan, Alice Mogwe in Botswana, Bishop Samuel Peni in South Sudan, Maurice Tomlinson working out of Canada, and thousands of others.

- **Advocacy**

We provide advocacy models to help those who can speak truth to power to do so with authenticity.

The Archbishop of Canterbury gave a fantastic example of advocacy in his address to the UK Trades Union Congress, and the Church of England is pioneering the partnership. We offered commentary in support of him, encouraging others to support great leadership.

We also support the Church of England’s ethical investment policies which, in partnership with others, use financial power to support justice through shaping the policies of multinational companies.

We are supporting the commitment of the Primates of the Anglican Communion to ending the criminalisation of LGBT+ people around the world. Specifically we supported the former Archbishop of West Indies in his campaign to challenge discriminatory laws in his province.

We hope to support further initiatives in the future to end the victimisation and diminishment of any person due to their sexuality.

- **Supporting Anglicans everywhere to live out the 4th Mark of Mission**

Our platforms have begun to offer encouragement to Anglicans making a difference across the world by connecting them with other Anglicans and offering theological and process resources. We are at an early stage and hope that resources will be widely shared and be effective.

Continuing Indaba

At ACC 16 the Archbishop of Canterbury endorsed the Indaba hosted at the Cathedral in Lusaka aimed at ending politically motivated violence surrounding the upcoming elections. In November 2018 ACNS heralded the ongoing use of Indaba in the Zambian political process. Continuing Indaba processes of mutual listening continue to be used within Anglican circles – notably the Consultation of Anglican Bishops in Dialogue and continue to result in energy for mission.

Continuing Indaba methodology has been shown to be an effective Anglican tool in reconciliation and peace building. It was endorsed by successive ACCs as the distinctive Anglican model of reconciliation that draws upon Scripture, traditions of non-Western peoples, and the Benedictine traditions. APJN is committed to re-publishing and promoting the theological resources that underpinned it and those that emerged from it. Steering Group

The Steering Group consists of:

Selo Moshoeshe – Lesotho, Katete Jackson Jones – Zambia, Alan Wilson – England, Luiz Coelho – Brazil, Paula Nesbitt – USA, Julie Foster – Canada, Phil Groves – England, Katharine von Schubert – England, Catherine Fungai Ngangira – Zimbabwe (England), Adam Boulter – France, Andrea Mann – Canada, James Boliget – Philippines, Jenny Te Paa Daniel – Aotearoa, Michael Horvath – USA, Pat Dickin – England (Argentina), Sue Parks – Jeanne Samuel – Sri Lanka, Restie Ong – Philippines, Clifton Nedd – Grenada, Reid Simon – Antigua.