

Reflections upon the Lambeth Conference 2008

First Draft 27.07.08:

Section A: Introduction, Greetings, Process, Retreat and Logistical Account

1. Apostolic Greeting

Expression of gratitude to the Archbishop of Canterbury and his staff at Lambeth Palace, the Lambeth Design Group, The Secretary General and the staff of the Anglican Communion Office;

Attendance; number of bishops present and provinces represented; we regret the absences of our brother bishops who are not here and assure them of our love and prayers;

2. Pre-Lambeth Hospitality

Gratitude for the hospitality of the bishops of the Churches of the United Kingdom and Ireland;

Gratitude for providing the opportunity to experience the life of the church in the British Isles and Ireland and for the privilege of preaching and presiding among our sisters and brothers;

We are particularly mindful of the hundreds of volunteers who made us feel welcome and for the time and energy they expended

3. Retreat

Description, gratitude to the Dean, Chapter and Cathedral Community; Touch briefly on the over-arching themes of the ABC's addresses; different tone and context

4. Opening Service

5. Aim of the Conference

Presidential Address

pick-up main themes

6. Process
 - Bible studies
 - Indaba
 - Self-select sessions
 - Listening and Reflections
 - Conversations – even in queues

Section B: Anglican Bishops, Anglican Identity

The Bishop and Anglican Identity (1)

7. The Bishops in the Anglican Communion serve in a variety of contexts, but their fundamental ministry is common to them all. They are called to be people of prayer, disciples of Jesus Christ, servants of the people of God and leaders in mission

- as shepherds, pastors and encouragers
- proclaiming the Word of God
- as teachers, guardians and interpreters of the faith and the apostolic tradition,
- making and nurturing disciples
- as voices for the voiceless and as prophets.

They are committed both to the Church and to the wider community and to civil society. They are symbols of unity, representing the local to the universal and the universal to the local, belonging within a world-wide college of bishops across the Communion.

The Bishop and Anglican Identity (2)

8. *Formed by scripture:*

As Anglicans we wrestle with scripture, seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit, so that it may shape and form us.

The over-arching issues are the authority and interpretation of the Bible.

We believe the scriptures to be primary, but read them informed by tradition and reason and with regard for the cultural context.

We find biblical scholarship a helpful tool to unpack the scriptures, but cannot avoid a divergence in interpretation, which leads to confusion.

9. Shaped by worship:

Worship involves encountering the mystery of God and participating in the life of the Trinity.

Anglican worship encourages local freedom and inculturation, but values common structure and common prayer across the Communion.

We recognise the relationship between liturgy and doctrine - worship shapes belief.

Shared reading of scripture through a common lectionary is a strength.

We seek worship that engages with youth cultures.

10. Ordered for communion:

There is a strong desire to stay in communion with one another. Some of our bishops come from countries or situations where there is strong persecution; here the Communion offers invaluable support and solidarity.

There is some lack of confidence in the “instruments” as the means of achieving this and a particular concern about the role of the Primates’ Meeting.

There is a strong view that the way forward lies chiefly through deepening

- person to person relationships
- diocesan partnerships
- a sense of belonging and mutual affection.

There is concern caused by intervention across provinces, by impaired communion and by a perceived lack of restraint and self-limitation.

We recognise that the variety of provincial order - different polities - produces misunderstandings and confusions.

There seems to be a general acceptance that we shall have a Covenant.

We value the historic three-fold ministry.

Footnote: One group wrote interestingly “Anglicanism identifies what is sufficient, not what is comprehensive.”

11. Directed by God’s mission

It is God’s mission in which we share.

We value the “five marks of mission”, though we would wish to see greater emphasis on ecumenism, peace-making and global mutuality.

We recognise that to speak out for social justice is a part of mission.

Theological reflection as an important equipping for mission.

We believe that loving service, prophetic witness and a respectful evangelism that speaks of the uniqueness of Christ belong together.

Section C: Evangelism

12. Reflection on the current status of Evangelism in the various Dioceses

This section consists of the sharing of stories of evangelism at diocesan level; a critique of the present situation and expressions of hope in relation to the following particular areas of concern:

- Young People – Some models and understandings of young people are outdated. There is need for a greater sense of zeal for young people and their inclusion in the life of the church.
- Reconciliation
- Inter/Other Faiths Dialogue
- Migrants, Refugees and Displaced People – The Church often is the first to respond helpfully, but there is need to develop better Communion/Partnership networks. The Church needs to be watchful of the migration policies of governments.
- Responses to Decline – Demographics and economic decline were identified as factors in some situations. The need to welcome immigrants and those in the urban drift was expressed. Growth and decline will co-exist in places.
- Responses to Emergencies
- Economic Viability – The needs which confront the church are many but there is inadequate income for undertaking the mission of the church;
- Growth – This must involve a personal encounter with the risen Christ and a commitment to discipleship. There must also be a compassionate community, the enabling of others by the leadership of the church, and the marginalized must be kept in focus.

- Christian Values –
- HIV and AIDS and other pandemics – The church needs to be involved in advocacy, awareness building, pastoral care, and the provision of health care facilities for those affected.

The bishop must model evangelism in his or her own ministry and diocese, being an evangelist, and promoter of fresh expressions of evangelism.

13. Provincial Contribution

Provinces should

- Promote five Marks of Mission and assist Dioceses through links and partnerships and enable the sharing of information, resources, policies, stories, best practices, personnel, education and training programmes;
- Provide training for bishops that would equip them for leadership in the various areas of mission and evangelism;
- Enable responses to disasters;
- Promote and enable creative thinking and the personnel to help drive mission initiatives;
- Provide a resource centre for the various dioceses for engagement in mission;
- Enabling financial support for mission initiatives;
- Reduce the bureaucracy while facilitating communication;
- Assume an appellate function as a way of adjudicating issues which may arise;
- Strengthen the sense of collegiality while building trust and accountability;
- Be a clearinghouse for ideas and innovations coming from dioceses;
- Subsidiarity: Making sure that decisions and actions are taken at the local level;
- Encourage fair-trade practices *among constituency*;
- Recommitment to the Five Marks of Mission in order to change the church culture at the local level and foster a focus on mission;
- Initiate and promote programmes that would expose youth to the Communion through mission trips;
- Acknowledge their mutuality in mission; decisions made in one province have a deep impact on the context for evangelism in every other province
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- The adequacy (or otherwise) of structures within the provinces needs to be examined with a view towards more effective functioning;
- Education especially ministerial, theological, pastoral
- Education of youth for the future, the use of music in ministry to youth;

- Community based services, social and medical services, and partnership with NGOs or international organizations;
- Prophetic voice – human rights, environment, migrant workers, HIV and AIDS, and others;
- Prison ministry;
- Reconciliation within faith communities through our common identity;
- Ecumenical sharing and networking for partnership in ministry;

14. The Contribution of the Communion to Evangelism

- Be the centre of unity and provide the overarching symbols and resources which are translated into local contexts;
- Be a centre for the sharing of experiences, policies, resources, covering the various aspects of mission;
- Provide appropriate focus, training, education in core theological areas and leadership in the exercise of mission as these relate to such areas as interfaith relationships, the identification of financial resources, and ecumenical partnerships;
- Resolve internal problems and facilitate linkages and partnerships, (companion dioceses) and the flow of information within the Communion;
- Be a centre for the development of new and creative ideas and resources concerning mission and sharing these with the various dioceses;
- Provide ecclesial authority that interprets what is Anglicanism;
- Provide clarification on the nature of the Communion whether it consists of independent denominations or independent provinces;
- Initiate and channel worldwide emergency responses;
- Strengthen advocacy, stand in solidarity with those facing persecution, injustice and whose voice is silenced, and those Provinces/Dioceses encountering difficulties in the exercise of mission, and provide active support for peacemaking initiatives;
- Improve communication through the use of technology such as the website and other media, and create multimedia resources for use in the dioceses (e.g. DVDs of Lambeth Conference, an introduction to Anglican Christianity, and an Anglican “state of the Communion address” by the Archbishop of Canterbury);
- Help to train bishops to be Anglicans in mission through global initiatives;
- Nurture Anglican spirituality and prayer across provincial boundaries, and develop the Anglican Cycle of Prayer to include specific requests for prayer/mission and ministry in dioceses;
- Create a means by which young people from around the Communion can spend time in other Anglican provinces through mission trips or exchanges;

- Encourage ecumenical efforts at various levels throughout the Communion;
- Help provinces achieve self-sufficiency;
- Support those who are isolated in their dioceses by initiatives such as that by Gafcon;
- Make support for the Millennium Development Goals and support for HIV and AIDS ministry a primary focus;
- Develop a worldwide vision and strategy of church planting and mission;
- Promote the exchange of quality clergy (and bishops) around the Communion for experience and context learning;
- The development of a Lambeth Directory or inter-provincial website that would allow the sharing of theological thinking, mission ideas, partnerships etc.
- The creation of Regional or Cluster meetings within the Communion

Reflection from Listening Group

- Priority of Evangelism as the cutting edge of Mission
- Acknowledge the failures in evangelism through the contradictory doctrines now arising and incursions into the diocesan partnership and coercion without consent;
- The need for more open communication;

Section D: Social Justice

We recognise that social justice issues and global relationships are very complex. This may explain some cynicism as to how much anyone can do to address social justice issues. We also noted the amount of good that is already happening in many Provinces. These stories could be communicated to great effect. Many of us are committed to praying regularly for these issues.

- The MDGs are seen as a very good framework for engaging with social justice issues across the Communion at Provincial, Diocesan and Parish level. We recognise the theological imperatives underpinning the MDGs. We need to clarify and state those clearly.
- Existing Diocesan links and this conference have helped us understand the challenge of cultural and social issues across the Communion and how they each impinge upon our interpretation of the Gospel. These links clearly work and should be developed further, for the good of all.
- Through education at every level (in the Diocese, Parish, Theological institutions and Schools), formally and informally, social justice issues should be addressed regularly and systematically.
- As Bishops, we must model and encourage others to live out their faith in

Christ in a way which demonstrates our commitment to these issues.

- Taking due regard of local contexts, we commit ourselves to advocating and lobbying (government, agencies, business, ecumenical, inter-faith partners and any other appropriate agencies or bodies) on the many issues of social justice we find in our world.
- We commit ourselves to discerning and interpreting local needs in a way that leads to action, because this is being prophetic.
- The Bishops role in all of the above is to enable communities of faith to be agents of transformation and reconciliation.

(We note that some groups tackled this session differently, and chose to discuss process questions instead of addressing social justice per se.)

Section E: Ecumenism

Material yet to come

Ecumenical Participants, Church of the Triune God, Growing Together in Unity and Mission

Section F: Environment

Material yet to come

Further Sections to come by daily theme. These matters are still before us.

Inter-Faith

Generous Love

Gender and Power

The Scriptures

Sexuality and Listening

The Covenant

The Windsor Process

Leading in God's Mission

Conclusion