

From the Reflections Group Lambeth Indaba 2008

Capturing the conversations and reflections from the Lambeth Conference 2008: Equipping bishops for mission and strengthening Anglican identity.

*Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy Name.
Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his benefits.*

The Reflections Group has been privileged to serve the Lambeth Conference in their capacity as Listeners in and for their indaba. Face to face conversations, often exchanging conflicting and challenging points of view, have led to deeper understanding and new insights. The task of the Listener has been to capture the spirit of these encounters.

This document is not the primary outcome of this Conference. Written words can never adequately describe the life-changing nature of our time together. We have gained a deeper appreciation of the worldwide Anglican Communion and of our common calling as disciples of Christ.

Each listener has tried to prayerfully reflect the conversations that have taken place in the sixteen indaba groups mindful of the mandate given to them to be faithful to the gospel, the indaba process, the bishops gathered at Lambeth Conference and the Anglican Communion.

The status of the document is that of a narrative. It seeks to describe our lived experience and the open and honest discussions we have had together on the daily themes of the conference. We acknowledge that the most powerful narrative that accompanies us on the journey back to our diocese is in the transformation that has taken place in our lives through the renewal of our faith in Jesus. Friendships formed, pain and brokenness experienced, gestures of generosity, and the testimonies of those who live out the gospel daily in costly acts of discipleship remain etched in our hearts.

The indaba must go on in our lives, in our diocese and in our communities, as we continue the process of purposeful discussion. This document may be used in appropriate ways to tell forth the good news of Jesus Christ and to strengthen our common life in the Anglican Communion.

I am grateful to the group of Listeners and to the Revd Canon Gregory Cameron and Miss Katrina Stevens from the Secretariat who worked together with dedication modelling through many hours of work the spirit of indaba. We thank the bishops who participated in their indaba and in the hearings for their wisdom and comments that have enhanced the Reflections document.

Our prayer is that God may teach us to continue our indaba with reverence, to go forth in obedience, to finish our conversations with love, and then to wait patiently in hope, looking joyfully to Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose promises are faithful and rewards infinite.

Roger Herft

Archbishop of Perth and Metropolitan of Western Australia
Chair, Reflections Group
3 August 2008

Lambeth Indaba

Capturing Conversations and Reflections
from the Lambeth Conference 2008

Equipping Bishops for Mission and
Strengthening Anglican Identity

The Reflections Group, Lambeth Conference, 2008

Section A: Introduction

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing. In him, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, you were marked with the Holy Spirit, to the praise of his glory¹.

To Christians everywhere and all people of good will, both in the Churches of the Anglican Communion, and in those of our ecumenical partners, greeting! May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace!²

1. As we, the bishops of the Anglican Communion who have been gathered here in Canterbury, get ready to return to our dioceses and churches, we wish to express our gratitude to the Archbishop of Canterbury and to his staff at Lambeth Palace, to the Lambeth Design Group, and to the Secretary General and the staff of the Anglican Communion Office for all that they have done together in order to enable this fourteenth Lambeth Conference to take place.

2. The Archbishop of Canterbury invited us to gather between 16th July and 3rd August 2008 in Canterbury for purposeful discussion to consider the two themes of “Equipping Bishops for Mission”, and “Strengthening Anglican Identity”. We gather at a sensitive time in the life of the Communion. Acknowledging this, the Archbishop of Canterbury wrote in his invitation that acceptance carried with it a willingness to work with the Windsor Report and the Covenant as tools by which the future of the Communion could be shaped³. From the very beginning, however, the Archbishop of Canterbury has indicated to us that, although we would have to give attention to the tensions which assail us, the wider life of the Communion is broader and richer than these matters alone. He invited us to reflect with him on how we as bishops might be better equipped for mission and the ways in which we could strengthen our Anglican identity as a faithful response to the gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

¹ Ephesians 1:3, 12-13

² Romans 1.7

³ Letter of Invitation from the Archbishop of Canterbury, May 22nd 2007.

3. Our time together has indeed demonstrated to us the breadth and richness of the Communion. It has been a privilege to be here together, to represent our dioceses and to grow in respect and affection for one another. With the many differences among us we have found ourselves profoundly connected with one another and committed to God's mission. Many of us have experienced a real depth of fellowship in our Bible Study Groups and have been moved, sometimes to tears, by the stories our brothers and sisters have told us about the life of their churches, their communities and their own witness. For many bishops, especially those for whom this has been their first Lambeth Conference, they have understood for the first time what a precious thing it is we have in the Anglican Communion and indeed what it is to be an Anglican. There has been a wonderful spirit of dialogue and we want that to continue beyond the Conference by every means possible - "the indaba must go on," as one group expressed it. For many of us have discovered more fully why we need one another and the joy of being committed to one another. At a time when many in our global society are seeking just the sort of international community that we already have, we would be foolish to let such a gift fall apart.

4. We miss the presence of our fellow bishops who are not here, whether through illness or the difficulties of travel or other reasons or pressures. We also deeply regret the absence of those who, out of conviction, did not feel able to accept the invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury to our gathering. We miss their presence, their fellowship and their wisdom and assure them of our continuing love and prayers. We are very aware that some of our fellow bishops who met in Jerusalem last month have not been present at the Lambeth Conference. We have been diminished by their absence. We shall seek ways in which they may be drawn into our deliberations and held in communion. Our concern now is to rebuild bridges, to look for opportunities to share with them the experience we have had in Canterbury and to find ways of moving forward together in our witness to the Lord Jesus Christ. At the same time we have been very conscious of the prayers of people across the Communion and among our ecumenical partners, which has supported our life here.

5. We give thanks for the presence of over seventy bishops in communion and ecumenical participants, who gathered with us. Representatives were welcomed from all parts of God's household, from Churches East and West. As Anglicans, we rejoice in our fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Christ, and we welcomed the opportunity to hear their perspectives and wisdom in our deliberations.

6. We wish to express our gratitude for the generous hospitality of the bishops of the Church of England, the Church in Wales, the Scottish Episcopal Church and the Church of Ireland to bishops from throughout the Communion in the period immediately before the Conference. We were made to feel at home and able to enrich the communion in which we participate even before we arrived in Canterbury. We are also grateful for 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.

7. We give thanks for the Conference in which our spouses have participated over the last three weeks, as they have lived and prayed alongside our own conference, studies and deliberations.

8. In addition to the staff of the Conference, we are particularly mindful of the hundreds of volunteers, stewards and other participants who made us feel welcome and for the time and energy they expended in ensuring our safety and comfort while we stayed in the University of Kent, Canterbury, and of the work of the chaplaincy team, whose quiet ministrations enabled and sustained our worship throughout the Conference⁴.

9. We wish to express our heartfelt thanks to the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral and to all the cathedral community for the way in which they welcomed us into this mother church for the Anglican Communion.

10. As is fitting, we began our time together in prayer and reflection as the Archbishop of Canterbury led us in three days retreat – a retreat which was centred upon the ancient precincts and spaces of the cathedral. We deeply appreciated this new way of beginning our time together: by enabling us to begin with quiet time in the presence of God, we were enabled to draw closely to him in a way which enabled our own communion through him with each other. In the addresses, based mostly on passages from the letters of Paul, the Archbishop of Canterbury invited the bishops to think about what it meant for the bishop to be a person in whom God revealed Jesus.⁵ More specifically, he encouraged us to reflect on how the bishop revealed the Christ who *gathers*: this means that for the bishop to be a sign of unity is for the bishop constantly to model and to encourage mutual self-giving, so that the community itself assembles to reveal Jesus, in its worship and its witness. During the period of retreat there was opportunity for silence, for building friendships and for people to pray together in small groups, in the hope that this would lay some deep foundation for further encounters during the Conference.

11. We met in the atmosphere of a regular pattern of worship and prayer⁶. As we moved from the retreat to a consideration of the work before us, we joined together in the opening Eucharist of the conference in Canterbury Cathedral. It was a beautiful expression of our Anglican cultural diversity, not least in the song and dance by the Melanesian brothers and sisters as the Book of the Gospels was carried through the Cathedral, and in the use of many languages. The Archbishop of Canterbury presided from the Chair of St Augustine and the sermon was preached by the Bishop of Colombo in Sri Lanka.

12. Worship has, of course, been at the heart of our time together. We have shared in the Eucharist each morning and Evening Prayer each evening, incorporating each day liturgical and musical material from different Provinces, with the worship led in a variety of languages by representatives of the Provinces. In addition, at the centre of the campus has been the “Prayer Place”, staffed by the chaplaincy team. Morning Prayer and Night Prayer have been celebrated there each day and many of us have found it a place to which to go to be still in the presence of God. The chaplaincy team and the musicians’ team have helped us to make worship both a key part of each day and a joy in which to share.

⁴ A fuller paragraph of thanks appears at the end of this document.

⁵ Galatians 1.

⁶ Philippians 4.6

13. In his Presidential Address, Archbishop Rowan set this fourteenth Lambeth Conference in the context of previous gatherings and urged the bishops present toward the fullest possible participation in every aspect of the agenda. He called for transformed relationships, which are about more than having warm feelings toward one another, but about “new habits of respect, patience and understanding that are fleshed out in specific ways and changed habits.” He noted the weaknesses of understanding our life together as simply a loosely federated group of provincial Churches while at the same time recognizing the discernible dangers of a centralized and homogeneous Communion that would inevitably lead us to becoming a confessional church contrary to our historic identity. It is the Archbishop’s urging that a middle way between these extremes be captured in a generous Anglican Covenant. “Whatever the popular perception, the options before us are not irreparable schism or forced assimilation.”

14. This conference has taken on a new form – the form of *indaba* – based upon an African ideal of purposeful discussion on the common concerns of our shared life. It is a process and a method of engagement as we listen to one another. An *indaba* acknowledges first and foremost that there are issues that need to be addressed effectively to foster ongoing communal living. It enables every bishop to engage and speak his or her mind and not to privilege the articulate or the powerful. Every aspect of the conference has been an expression of *indaba*, expressed through our worship and bible studies, self-select sessions, hearings, plenary sessions and speakers, listening and reflecting, and even conversation in the meal queues. Above all else, we have worked together on the themes of the Conference in our focussed *indaba* sessions, when we have spent two hours each day in purposeful conversation that invites us to encounter the reality of each other’s ministry and concerns. This person to person encounter has been one of the most encouraging, engaging – if at times frustrating - aspects of the Conference.

15. Bible Study has been the most enriching part of the Conference. In these times, we gathered in small groups of about eight bishops around the sacred scriptures to study the Gospel of John. We prayed; we read the text; we considered how the Lord God is speaking to us through the words of St John in our current contexts. Here we have learned of the gifts and struggles each bishop experiences in trying to live out the vows taken in ordination to the episcopate. These times together around scripture have been the life giving force of the Conference and will be the basis of ongoing commitment to one another. Of course there are different interpretations of the scriptures, and we can consider these within the solidarity that is built within the study group. It is here that we have experienced a death to self interest and the possibility of God’s Spirit bringing new life. It is here that “the stone is being rolled away.” The Bible studies offered to the Lambeth Conference sought to place every participant under the authority of scripture and to enable them to journey with John's Gospel, by following a particular feature of the Gospel itself, the "I am" sayings, by drawing attention to the detail of the text, whether historical, literary, or thematic detail, by offering opportunities for participants to place their contexts and personal concerns alongside scripture, by locating John's Gospel within the wider context of the biblical canon, and by placing the process of the Bible study in hands of a bishop who would serve the group by facilitating the formation of a sacred and safe site for a reverent and respectful engagement among the participants.

16. Equipping bishops for mission has been present in every aspect of the Conference, in all we have done, and the experience of being together with our peers for an extended period has been a profoundly enriching and renewing experience, and a great privilege. In presentations from outstanding speakers we have been enriched and challenged as we have looked at evangelism, social justice, ecology, and covenant in the Hebrew scriptures; and in a wealth of self select sessions bishops have been able to consider matters as diverse as micro finance and missionary dioceses, children, and young people, climate change, caste and apartheid, church schools and the healing of the memories, distance learning and keeping fit. The indaba groups have given us the opportunity of working and talking together, and of sharing our stories, thoughts and ideas. In so many ways, context shapes our perception of ministry and we have learned from one another's experience as we have discussed and listened together - bishops from the Arctic to the Equator, from mountainous regions to Pacific islands, from shanty towns to wealthy cities, from centuries-old dioceses to the newly planted. If we brought our dioceses with us, we carry back a rich experience of the universal Church.

17. We have been changed by this process, and as we come to the end of this indaba in Canterbury, we have to consider what record of our conversations we can carry back with us. From the beginning, each indaba group had been invited to nominate three persons from whom one would be chosen by the Lambeth Design Group to be a listener and representative to the Reflections Group⁷. The listeners chosen represented as far as possible the diverse nature of the Anglican Communion. The conversations in each indaba group were recorded by rapporteurs. This report was agreed with the animateur and the group and it is this material which has formed the primary documents for the Reflection Group's work. The group has sought to capture the spirit of our conversations in this document. It is not a set of traditional reports adopted by the conference, but rather a faithful attempt to summarize the bishops' conversations. It represents a snapshot of an encounter which has changed us and enriched our understanding of our communion. It is the beginning of a conversation, and indaba, into which all the Anglican Communion is now invited.

18. In composing this "Conversations and Reflections Document" the Reflections Group has sought to develop a document which is

- (a) **faithful to the Gospel.** Our conversations mean nothing unless they further the business of the Kingdom of God, and reflect the Good News of Jesus Christ, offering a message of hope and faithfulness for the world. The Lord Jesus himself is the centre of our common life, and we gather in order to discern together his will for the Church. There has been a deep sense of the Holy Spirit moving among us.
- (b) **faithful to the process.** In indaba we have had to make ourselves aware of challenges to life in communion without immediately trying to resolve them. We have met and conversed, ensuring that everyone has a voice in order to find the deeper convergences that might hold us together.

⁷ A list of members of the Reflections Group appears at the end of this document.

- (c) **faithful to the bishops and their context.** It is important therefore that this document is one which reflects the conversations of all the bishops gathered for the Lambeth Conference. It must seek to honour the participation and contribution of every bishop, and be written in a process which is faithful to the contexts in which we minister.
- (d) **faithful to the Communion.** We are all acutely aware that the Anglican Communion stands at an important point in its life. This document must be robust enough to describe realistically and honestly where the bishops of the Communion understand our life together to have come, and our resolve for the future.

Resources

The Archbishop of Canterbury's first Presidential Address at:

http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/media/pdf/n/0/Lambeth_20opening_20address.pdf

His second Presidential Address is at: <http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/1916>

His third Presidential Address is at: <http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/1925>

The retreat addresses are published in “*God’s Mission and a Bishop’s Discipleship*”, published by the Lambeth Conference, 2008.

Equipping Bishops for God’s Mission

19. In considering the nature of our calling in Christ, we gave attention through the conference to the question of Christian evangelism and mission. Mission is the total action of God in Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit - creating, redeeming, sanctifying - for the sake of the whole world. Evangelism is giving voice to the truth of Christ as Lord to all people. These two concepts are sometimes united under the term “evangelisation”, the orienting of the whole of society towards the imperatives of the Gospel, the *evangelium*, but in Anglican thought, the distinction tends to be maintained, in order to give emphasis to the personal response of faith evoked by the proclamation of the personal salvation found in Christ.

20. Nevertheless, we wish to acknowledge the important dimensions of mission as God’s reaching out to all of creation, challenging our structures as well as our souls, our communities as well as our Churches⁸. After a consideration of the nature of mission and evangelism therefore, we turn towards a consideration of the wider claims of the Gospel – oriented towards human and social justice and care for God’s creation. Finally, in this section we acknowledge the context of Anglican Mission – in the purposes of God in the wider *oikumene*, and in relations to the other major faiths of the world.

⁸ Luke 1: 51-53 (*The Magnificat*)

Section B: Mission and Evangelism

21. In Christ Jesus, God has revealed himself as the self-giving Lord of Creation, full of compassion and mercy⁹. That same Son who was sent by the Father into the world, in turn sent forth his disciples, instructing them to proclaim the good news, making disciples and baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit¹⁰. For God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself¹¹. It is therefore God's mission in which we share.

22. Mission belongs to God and we are called to engage in this mission so that God's will of salvation for all may be fulfilled. In this sense, mission is not primarily an activity of the church, but an attribute of God. The Church exists as an instrument for that mission. There is church because there is mission, and not vice versa. To participate in mission is to participate in the movement of God's love toward people, since God is the fountain of sending love.

23. As Anglicans, we value the "five marks of mission", which begin with the preaching of the Gospel and the call to personal conversion, but which embrace the whole of life: we would wish to see increased emphasis on ecumenism, peace-making and global mutuality as integral parts of God's mission. Mission is a rich and diverse pattern faithful to the proclamation of the Reign of God in Christ Jesus; a proclamation which touches all areas of life.

The Local Church

24. In our study together, we were asked in our indaba groups to consider the question, How in very different contexts can bishops learn and support one another so as to be better equipped in their role as leaders in God's Mission? For Anglicans, the diocese is the basic unit of the Church; it is on this front line that we must be most effectively engaged in mission. Our reflection on the current status of mission and evangelism in our dioceses involved the sharing of stories, a critique of the present situation and expressions of hope in relation to the concerns that were highlighted.

25. We affirm that evangelism concerns the making of disciples and spiritual growth. This must involve a personal encounter with the risen Christ and a commitment to discipleship. Evangelism is the cutting edge of mission in the proclamation of the Good News of Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour by word and deed. The Gospel is the life blood of the Church and involves mediating by proclamation, by word, and by action the good news of God's love in Christ which transforms the whole of life. 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.

26. We affirm that we minister to the whole community, including young and old. The history of Anglicanism has been characterized by a tradition of pastoral care

⁹ James 5.11

¹⁰ Matthew 28.19

¹¹ 2 Corinthians 5.19

which has centred around the care of persons through the various transitions in the life cycle. Of particular concern has been the ministry to the sick and housebound as well as the dying. In the indaba process there was expressed a particular concern for children and young people in the life of the Church. At the same time, it was acknowledged that many of the attempts to engage young people have been ineffective. Some models and understandings of young people are outdated. There is need for a greater effort to find fresh expressions of ministry with and to young people, and a sense of zeal and passion for their inclusion in the life of the church. There is also a recognition of the fact that young people are not only an integral part of the life of the Church, but, with their idealism, enthusiasm and creativity, can also make a positive contribution to the evangelistic work of the Church. We have been privileged to have the ministry of young people at this conference as stewards and rapporteurs, welcoming their contribution, passion and enthusiasm for the Gospel.

27. While in some contexts in the developing world, young people make up the majority of society, in many other contexts there is a preponderance of older persons in the composition of congregations: this is not to be seen merely as a source of despair. In addition to the fact that with improved living standards in some parts of the world this population is living longer and have many creative years ahead of them even in retirement. The elderly are in many instances an untapped resource for participation in the mission of the Church. It is this age group which often has the greatest concentration of resources, availability of time, experience, and a focussed religious commitment. This conference has also been supported by the ministry of older persons who served as stewards and hospitality personnel with distinction for the duration of the conference.

28. We affirm that the good news proclaimed in Christ is especially addressed to the poor and to the outcasts, to those on the fringes of our societies and to the dispossessed. In situations where there are immigrants, refugees and displaced persons, the Church often is the first to respond helpfully, but there is need to develop better Communion/Partnership networks for more effective ministry to this group. The Church needs to be watchful of the migration policies of governments. The need to welcome immigrants and those in the urban drift was expressed. It was also noted that evangelism to this population is often a hit-and-run process without evident signs of results. There are many settings in which the Church is actively involved in work among persons with HIV and AIDS. It was noted, however, that the Church needs to be more involved in advocacy, awareness building, pastoral care, and the provision of health care facilities for those affected.

29. We affirm that the good news should continue to be proclaimed in all circumstances in the joy of the Lord. It is particularly important that the Church seeks to minister in situations of need, of destruction and natural disaster. Stories of annual devastating natural disasters in Tanzania were shared along with positive accounts of the continuing ministry with signs of growth in that context. Demographics and economic decline were identified as factors in some situations. Growth and decline will co-exist in places. The needs which confront the church are many but in many places, there is inadequate income for undertaking the mission of the church. Note was taken of the sheer poverty of some areas of the Anglican Communion, and yet the Church continues to minister and be a sign of hope. Rural

depopulation in some other areas was also noted and the church's continuing ministry in these settings affirmed.

30. We affirm that the proclamation of the Gospel is the proclamation of a whole way of life – a vocation to personal holiness. As it is said, action speaks louder than words, personal holiness is vital in the proclamation of the gospel. The post-modern society has been characterized by scientific and technological developments which have seen the world become a global village. These advances have also contributed to the transformation of human society. At the same time it was observed that the cultural values of post-modern societies, especially their focus on individualism and relativity challenge the teachings of Christianity, which is decidedly counter-cultural. The call to holiness of living becomes a greater challenge in this milieu. *Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God- Romans 12:2.*

31. We affirm that the Church is called to be faithful in the exercise of its mission in the context within which it is located with due regard to culture. We acknowledge that in its understanding of the exercise of this responsibility what may be positive, acceptable and fitting in one culture, may be negative, harmful and may affect the witness and proclamation of the gospel in other parts of the Communion due to cultural differences. The Bible must be taken as authoritative guiding principle in our proclamation of the gospel.¹²

Provincial Life and its Contribution to Mission

32. Our dioceses are bound together as national or regional Churches, also known as Provinces. In some special situations there are units known as Extra-Provincial jurisdictions which lack the structure and independence of Provinces and are subject to special Episcopal oversight as in the case of the Falkland Islands. There are six such extra-provincial jurisdictions within the Communion. We affirm the value of our Provincial structures, by which the life of the local Church is nurtured and sustained. The mission work of dioceses would be made more effective through links and partnerships at the Provincial level which enable the sharing of information, resources, policies, stories, best practices, personnel, education and training programmes. This must include a process by which there is a change from a church culture of maintenance at the local level through fostering a focus on mission; Provinces must encourage local evangelical initiatives and help them to celebrate their gifts and share their stories. Provincial resourcing for mission and evangelism is one of the prime tasks of the national or regional Church, across a broad range of engagement:

33. Education and Training. We affirm the central role of the Provinces in the facilitation of education and training especially in ministerial, theological, and pastoral disciplines for the bishops, clergy and the whole people of God, thereby equipping them for leadership in the various areas of mission and evangelism. Youth must receive due consideration in this thrust. The promotion and enabling of creative thinking and the provision of personnel to help drive mission initiatives must be a major consideration

¹² 2 Timothy 3:16

34. Resources facilitation. We acknowledge the limitations which some parts of the Communion face with regard to the availability of adequate resources. One way in which the provinces can facilitate the dioceses is through the provision of a resource centre with the financial support for mission initiatives. Such a resource centre would enable responses to various disasters which arise from time to time.

35. Sector Ministry. The Province can facilitate and empower specific ministries which transcend the normal parish structures. Chaplaincies to the armed forces, hospitals, prisons, schools, and universities all enhance the witness of the Church and allow the development of specialist ministries which are tailored to the needs and perspectives of the groups with which they work.

36. Structural and Organizational Concerns We affirm that there is need for the review of the bureaucracy of provinces in order to facilitate more effective communication and efficiency. There is need to strengthen the sense of collegiality and the building of trust and accountability between dioceses, the assumption of some appellate function as a way of adjudicating issues which may arise, and ensuring that decisions and actions are taken at the appropriate level. (Be a clearinghouse for ideas and innovations coming from dioceses.)

37. Programmatic concerns. We acknowledge that in the exercise of its prophetic voice the Church needs to address issues of human rights, the environment, migrant workers, HIV and AIDS, reconciliation and truth in ecclesiastical and civil concerns, and fair-trade practices among the nations etc. In the exercise of its mission the Church needs to maintain a focus on community based services, social and medical services, and partnership with NGOs or international organizations, ministry to prisoners etc. In the exercise of mission ecumenical sharing and networking for partnership in ministry should be actively pursued. Provinces should initiate and promote programmes that would expose Anglicans, especially youth, to the Communion through mutual mission trips.

Mission and the Anglican Communion

38. We also celebrate our interdependent life in the Anglican Communion, as national and regional Churches are brought into co-operation for the good of the Gospel. There is a need for renewal and changes at the level of the Communion in order to facilitate our unity and more effective coordination and exercise of mission at the provincial, diocesan and congregational levels.

39. Coordinating functions: We affirm the Instruments of the Anglican Communion to be the appropriate bodies for providing the overarching symbols and resources which are translated into local contexts. The exercise of this function includes the sharing of experiences, policies, resources, appropriate training, education in core theological areas, and enable leadership in the exercise of mission, interfaith relationships, the identification of financial resources, and ecumenical partnerships.

40. Recognizing the importance of electronic technology in today's global environment there is then the prospect of use of technology such as the website and

other media, for the creation of multimedia resources for use in the dioceses and provinces (e.g. DVDs of Lambeth Conference, an introduction to Anglican Christianity, and an Anglican “state of the Communion address” by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the development of the Anglican Cycle of Prayer to include specific requests for prayer/mission and ministry in dioceses;

41. Structural and Organizational We affirm that the Instruments of Communion need to provide the ecclesial authority that interprets what is Anglicanism; provide clarification on the nature of the Communion; enable 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; assist in resolving internal problems and facilitate linkages and partnerships, (companion dioceses) and the flow of information within the Communion; support those who are isolated in their dioceses because of conscientious objections to actions taken by their dioceses or provinces; and promote regional or Cluster meetings within the Communion between Lambeth Conferences.

42. Programmatic concerns We acknowledge the growth of the Church in areas of the southern hemisphere and the many fresh expressions of church in the whole Communion. At the same time we are called as a Communion to develop a worldwide vision and strategy of church planting, growth, and mission. While we encourage these strategies we must be conscious of those diocese and provinces which are yet to achieve self-sufficiency and respond in appropriate ways to address the areas of need.

Resources

The Five Marks of Mission:

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

A story about the plenary address of Brian McLaren may be found at:

<http://www.lambethconference.org/daily/news.cfm/2008/7/22/ACNS4453>

This address is not yet online.

The plenary address of Cardinal Ivan Dias may be found at:

<http://www.lambethconference.org/daily/news.cfm/2008/7/23/ACNS4458>

We acknowledge and affirm the outstanding work that has been done over the years by MISAG (Mission Initiative and Strategy Advisory Group), MISSIO (Mission Commission of the Anglican Communion.) and IASCOME (Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Mission and Evangelism) and their contribution to the understanding of the mission imperatives of the Communion.

Initiatives

The development of a Lambeth Directory and the expansion of the Anglican Communion website to allow the sharing of theological thinking, mission ideas, partnerships etc. The Communion must recognize the individual Provinces as self-determining Provinces that walk together for strength. At the same time the Communion must help the Provinces, Dioceses and local churches to recognize the value of the gifts they bring to the whole Communion. One way of accomplishing this is for the Archbishop of Canterbury to endorse and lend his sponsorship (not necessarily do and pay for) initiatives that are designed for youth and young adults.

- The Communion could prepare a Bishop's Introductory Pack which would provide information about what resources and information are available throughout the Communion, including contacts, networks, commissions, etc. The current cycle of Lambeth meetings every 10 years is deemed inadequate. Perhaps there could be a meeting of a representative group every 3 years.

Section C: Human and Social Justice

43. God's mission is holistic; its orientation is toward the redemption of the whole of creation¹³. For Anglicans, indeed the whole Church, the Gospel is not just the proclamation of individual redemption and renewal, but the renewal of society under the Reign of God; the ending of injustice and the restoration of right relationship with God and between human beings and between humanity and creation. We recognise that social justice issues and global relationships are very complex and powerful.

44. The Gospel given to us by Jesus in the synagogue in Nazareth demands our commitment to the poor, the marginalised, the exploited, refugees, indigenous peoples, the internally displaced and victims of war, terror and natural disaster.¹⁴ We recognise the critical need to reaffirm, develop and strengthen our responsibility to the powerless, who have no voice. We are saddened and challenged by the fact that it is often women and children who are powerless and marginalised in our world. We want to encourage the good work that is already happening in many Provinces, with the support of other Provinces in our Communion. We also noted the amount of good that is already happening in many Provinces. These stories need to be told, affirmed and communicated to better effect. We need to establish a new Anglican Global Relief and Development Agency, as a matter of urgency, to co-ordinate and resource our commitment to the voiceless. We urge the Churches and Provinces of the Communion to pray without ceasing.¹⁵

45. The Millennium Development Goals are seen as an essential framework for engaging with social justice issues across the Communion at Provincial, Diocesan and Parish level. We recognise the theological imperatives underpinning the Millennium Development Goals. We need to clarify and state those imperatives clearly and help

¹³ Romans 8.22, Ephesians 1.10, Revelation 21

¹⁴ Luke 4:16-22; Isaiah 35, 42, 56, 61; Micah 4, 6

¹⁵ I Thessalonians 5:17

each other to engage with and act upon them as best we can. As part of our response to our Lord's command to speak for the poor, the conference was unanimous in its acceptance of the invitation of Archbishop Rowan and other religious leaders, to join them in a march of witness from Whitehall to Lambeth Palace. This was an inspiring occasion, not least by the conference being addressed, in an informed, impassioned and personal speech by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Gordon Brown. Hellen Wangusa, the Anglican Communion's Observer to the United Nations, was present and addressed the gathering. In a letter presented to the Prime Minister on behalf of the bishops, the Archbishop of Canterbury wrote: "Because our faith challenges us to eradicate poverty, and not merely reduce it, we should be all the more alarmed that ... most of these achievable targets will not be met. The cause is not lack of resources, but a lack of global political will. When they meet in New York at the United Nations on 25th September, world leaders must find greater political commitment to addressing poverty and inequality. A timetable for achieving the MDGs by 2015 needs to be created. Our leaders need to invest in and strengthen their partnership with the Church worldwide, so that its extensive delivery network for education and health care, along side other faiths, is fully utilised in the eradication of extreme poverty."

46. Individuals are held within the life of a family from birth to death. Anglicans affirm the place and goal of healthy family life for all, in terms of physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health. Families are part of the family of God as well as part of a larger community. All God's children, male and female, are equal before God and deserve to be treated equally with respect to health care, education and emotional and spiritual support. There should be no abuse of power within family life – especially in families who claim to be followers of Jesus Christ. As Anglicans we are called to have a personal Rule of Life. The old saying, "The family that prays together, stays together", can form the basis for a family rule of life that focuses the family on the centrality of Jesus Christ, with respect for each other as God's children, the brothers and sisters of Jesus. The Inter Anglican Family Network supports work on families around the Communion.

47. Jesus called the children to himself, and in our time we must extend our charity to the children of the world. Sexual exploitation in its varied expressions must not be tolerated. We work for the day when child pornography and the commercial sexualisation of children comes to an end. In God's kingdom no child will serve as a soldier, or slave, or labourer, but be set free from poverty, violence and their many manifestations.

48. The spouses of the Lambeth Conference took responsibility for planning a joint day of purposeful conversation on the place of power as abuse within society as well as in the church. Helped by addresses from Jane Williams, Jenny Plane Te Paa and Gerald West the conference considered the issues of violence and redemption located in the scriptural passage from 2 Samuel 2:13-22; the story of Tamar, the daughter of David, raped by her half brother Amnon. A dramatic presentation by the Riding Lights Theatre Company assisted the Conference as we considered the ways in which the characters in the biblical text were involved in the abuse of power.

49. The violence meted out to women and children within the body of Christ is violence done to the body of Christ. Violence takes many forms including physical,

financial, emotional, psychological, intellectual, cultural, sexual and spiritual abuse. Women and children suffer disproportionately from the effects of abusive power. The whole of the church and the world can be damaged by the human will to exercise power. Jesus offers an alternative use of power. He washes his disciples' feet, he submits himself to Pilate's unjust judgement, and he dies on the cross as the one through whom all things come into being,

50. It was noted that the abuse of power is an extraordinarily complex multi-layered issue and involves the individual, the group, the community, the institution, is intensely personal, unavoidably political and has far-reaching consequences. If clerical authority is abused or exercised without restraint, humility or respect the betrayal for all concerned is profound. Challenged to reclaim the gospel truth of the dignity of the human person the Conference affirmed the need for special care to be taken so that power would always be life-giving. It was acknowledged that in several diocese and provinces there is a need for training and appropriate pastoral measures to be put in place to make the church an accountable and safe place for all people.

51. The Churches of the Anglican Communion recognise, value and celebrate the contribution that single people have made to their common life and ministry throughout the Communion's long history and across the world. We uphold those in our midst who, irrespective of sexual orientation, feel called by God to give themselves wholly to Him, by living faithful lives as single, celibate people, either alone or with others, in monastic communities. We cherish their witness and the distinctive contribution they make to the life of the church. The sacrifices some are prepared make in the service of God's people gives Him glory. We are delighted to have them amongst us. We give thanks for them and undertake to support them in our prayers.

52. The first five of the Millennium Development Goals are intended to address this vulnerability by eliminating poverty, achieving universal primary education, promoting gender equality, improving maternal health and reducing child mortality. While the Lambeth Conference 1998 expressed support for the Millennium Development Goals, we do not know well enough what is happening around the Communion on achieving them. The Inter Anglican Women's Network works through the Anglican Observer at the United Nations and the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women to promote Goal 3, Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women.

53. We appreciate the work and witness of the Mothers' Union and other women's organisations within the Communion, as major implementers of the Gospel imperative to care for the poor. Their contribution to family life, education, health, pastoral care and development and relief work, is exemplary. In recognition of the importance of their work, it is imperative that we find better ways to co-ordinate and strengthen our work together for the Kingdom of God.

54. One of the chief aspects of Christian engagement with issues of social justice is the proclamation of reconciliation. Reconciliation is found primarily in God's act in Christ on the cross¹⁶. Because we have been reconciled to God in Christ, so we are

¹⁶ 2 Corinthians 5:19; Romans 5: 6-11

called to bring reconciliation into the world¹⁷. Baptised into Christ's death and resurrection, believers are called to embody the truth that there is nothing broken that is not repaired in Christ; no sin which cannot be redeemed by God. In the midst of our own brokenness as a communion, we can acknowledge the need for repentance and the gift of reconciliation given to us by the sheer grace of God in Christ.

55. Stories of experiences and situations in which reconciliation has been undertaken were shared. These included the situation in the Canadian Church in which the colonial experience in residential schools had caused great pain to indigenous peoples. In such situations, there is need for apology, listening and healing. Civil acts of apology and reconciliation in Aotearoa New Zealand, in Canada, and in Australia to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders were noted as signs of hope. Symbolic gestures expressing sorrow for past injustices made by the Church and by civil authorities need to be followed up by structural, social and economic policies that enhance the life of indigenous communities. Also discussed were initiatives of reconciliation in the context of India among the Dalits (untouchables) and in the Congo where there has been extended tribal fighting. The ministry of the Archbishop of Canterbury has been cited for us as a focus of reconciliation, carrying the cross of Christ in collegiality with us bishops, even as there is hope for reconciliation in the current situation of conflict within the Communion.

56. 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.

57. The work of education, undertaken across the Communion, through schools and universities of Anglican foundation, is an important and vital ministry and witness to Jesus Christ. Many of the world's poor do not have access to formal education and we want to give them opportunities to realise their full potential and shape their own future. We need a development programme to assist Diocese who need help in existing institutions and help others to build, resource and staff educational institutions in more places.

58. 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. The Bishops role in all of this is to enable communities of faith to be agents of transformation and reconciliation. We commit ourselves to discerning and interpreting local needs in a way that leads to action, because this is being prophetic. 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.

¹⁷ 2 Corinthians 5:18-21

Initiatives

1. Establishment of a global Anglican Relief and Development Agency.
2. The Provinces of the Communion should call for a Day of Prayer, Fasting and Witness on 25th September 2008 when there is a special session of the United Nations to discuss the Millennium Development Goals.

Resources

The Millennium Development Goals:

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Achieve universal primary education
- Promote gender equality and empower women
- Reduce child mortality
- Improve maternal health
- Combat HIV and AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Ensure environmental sustainability
- Develop a global partnership for development

Plenary presentations at the Conference included:

Jane Williams “When Power is Abused”

Jenny Plane Te Paa “Equal in God’s sight: when power is abused”

Section D: Environment

59. The fifth mark of mission is: “To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and renew the life of the earth.” So far this is the mark of mission least universally owned by the churches of the communion. If we say that “The earth is the Lord’s...”, we must be prepared to live as if that is true! We can not misuse a gift from the Lord. If we are to call ourselves disciples of Jesus Christ, we must be prepared for radical discipleship by “living simply, so that others may simply live.” Safeguarding creation is a spiritual issue. Climate change is posing questions freshly for us about our attitudes toward creation, technology, sustainability for a future, and justice for all people. This is a discipleship issue not something we might possibly do. When others see that we Anglicans take the issue of environment seriously, they may be drawn to work alongside us, and in so doing they may see the Good News of Jesus Christ proclaimed in action.

60. Ignorance of the issues of environment is a priority that must be addressed. Stories shared from bishops around the Communion give a picture of a global crisis. There are many examples including water pollution, dumping of toxic waste, air pollution, deforestation, irresponsible disposal of garbage. It is clear that the personal level exchange of issues being faced (with first hand knowledge) has a greater impact on us than Western media reports. Environment is the top priority for some provinces and

must be a high priority for all of us. In developing countries and among Indigenous peoples, notably in the Arctic, safeguarding creation is a day to day activity, not an intellectual exercise. The Communion's bishops should take a leading role by example, modelling a simpler lifestyle, using a carbon offset for meeting travel, or travelling less!

61. While many agencies can engage with environmental issues, the church must do so from the starting point of Scripture and a credible theology. One particularly difficult Scripture reference has been Genesis 1:28 where the words 'have dominion over' or 'subdue' have been misinterpreted as 'Do whatever you want with the earth.' If humanity is made in the image of God, who saw that creation was good, then humanity needs to learn to care for God's creation. Theologies of creation, Sabbath, stewardship and "enough" need to be developed for general use. Creation did not fall, humanity did, and this has led to the destruction of creation. Some of the symptoms of this human sin include selfishness, greed, consumerism and overindulgence. The destruction of the environment is a spiritual issue and the church can suggest taking actions in terms of spiritual disciplines, including repentance of ingrained habits that are ecologically irresponsible. This is not just trying to fix up the world but living toward the hope of the promised redemption of the creation by God.

62. Indigenous peoples have traditional understandings of the earth as a gift of the Creator and of their relationship to it and its creatures being one of interconnectedness and responsible caring. The Indigenous peoples have reminded us that we are not aliens in a wilderness to be conquered, but integral parts of the created order, as are plants and animals, which are to be cherished and nurtured. The Anglican Indigenous Network could provide good resources for the Communion to develop these ideas more fully.

63. Many examples of destruction focused on various concerns about water. Water is central to baptism, the sacrament of new life. This is a reminder that we have a responsibility for those yet to be born to ensure conditions for their potential life and flourishing. The Communion, Provinces and Dioceses could focus on one major campaign - the human right to water.

64. There is only one instrument for sustaining God's creation – humanity. To get people moving requires moral leadership and this is the role of the church together with other aware bodies, e.g. the United Nations. The Anglican churches must engage with other agencies with sound knowledge and experience to impact church members, various levels of government and the business communities.

What can the church do? Take action! Do not wait any longer!

65. **Education:** Engage with scientists to have accurate and credible information. Scriptural and theological education should be available for seminary students to produce knowledgeable clergy and lay leaders to engage congregations. We need educational materials to encourage children and youth to engage with programs for change. Adult education materials for parishioners would be helpful. Every Anglican must understand that it is their personal responsibility to live a rule of life that sustains and restores God's creation. The changing climate is a call upon us to examine our

impact on the environment – as individuals and as a community of faith with buildings.

66. **Empowerment:** There is also an opportunity for bishops to raise the consciousness of church members as well as the public. The Communion/Province should position itself to be a symbol for ecological commitment to sustaining and renewing God’s creation. Dioceses and parishes provide opportunities for learning and action. People respond well to specific, simple actions, e.g. plant one tree each year, use no plastic in the churches, walk whenever you can instead of using a car. Bishops can also have specific actions, e.g. plant a tree on each parish visit, focus sermons for one season on the Environment. “Green Awards” are also incentives to dioceses and parishes to decrease the damage they do to creation and improve the ways they contribute to renewing the earth.

67. **Advocacy:** The Bishop is often in a position to make connections with levels of government and business where there are opportunities to advocate for change. Accurate information containing requests for specific actions must be at hand. As well the bishop can maintain ecumenical and interfaith connections in order to speak with one voice to the powers. The Bishop is also often needed/wanted as a public figure to head up campaigns but these should be chosen keeping the suitability of the campaign.

68. **Liturgy:** The Communion and Diocesan worship committees can develop worship resources on creation and environmental themes, and use the liturgical seasons for environmental awareness, e.g. planting time and harvest thanksgiving, the memorial of St. Francis, a Lenten fast from energy consumption. Scripture that speaks to the integrity of creation can be identified in the Lectionary and support materials be made available for study and preaching. (e.g. Genesis 1:27,28, 29 or 9:11; psalm 8; John 1:1-3; Romans 8:18-21; Colossians 1:15-20)

69. **Empowerment for Action:** Think globally, act locally and globally. Work ecumenically and with other faith groups to lobby governments for laws and implementation of international agreements, e.g. Kyoto and Copenhagen 2009. The bishops could also have a reconciling role for brokering conversations between business, government and environmentalists. We must be aware of the political and economic aspects of caring for creation. Ecology and economics are connected. The desire for economic development can start a vicious cycle of damage to the environment. Damage to the environment creates conditions that impact developing nations and those living in poverty (women and children) first. Economic improvements for one group may bring environmental disaster to another. In many Provinces, this is especially true for Indigenous Peoples. Bishops need to learn how to exert pressure on governments in regard to environmental issues and this means they have to be correctly informed and have credibility with governments.

70. Environmental destruction is also connected to internal displacement of people and to migration. Sometimes the creation is deliberately destroyed by companies seeking access to resource, such as oil, and the local people are driven away. Sometimes, when the land is devastated by natural disaster, the people migrate seeking safety and a livelihood.

Initiatives

Green Conference: The next Lambeth Conference should be a green conference where the host institution is under clear direction from the Design Group to provide recycling facilities.

Follow up on the Lambeth Conference 1998's affirmation of the Millennium Development Goals, especially #7, "Ensure environmental sustainability". The Anglican Consultative Council 2009 should ask provinces to report on their work on Millennium Development Goal #7 towards sustaining and renewing the creation in 2012.

Resources

The plenary address of Professor Christopher Rapley may be made available in due course.

Anglican Communion Environmental Network has pages at:
<http://acen.anglicancommunion.org/index.cfm>

Section E: Ecumenism

71. As we witness to the Gospel of Christ to the world and the power of his love, we have to acknowledge the continued reality of our divisions in the Church of Christ. We believe that the ecumenical vocation is one which comes directly from the Lord, empowered and directed by the Holy Spirit¹⁸. Our Lord Jesus Christ prayed for the unity of his followers on the night before he died. We believe it is the will of God that his Church be one. Bishops recalled with gratitude that successive Lambeth Conferences have cumulatively and authoritatively spoken of the Anglican Communion's vision of the unity of the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ. One bishop reminded us of the prayer from the Conference of 1878 that *there may be one flock with one shepherd*¹⁹, and another of the reaffirmation of the Anglican commitment "to full, visible unity as the goal of the Ecumenical Movement."²⁰ This accords with the growing ecumenical consensus involving a common sacramental life, mutual accountability and a shared ministry. The Anglican Communion has never seen its life as a family of Churches as self-sufficient, nor does it claim any universal identity other than as part of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.

72. We recognise that all the baptised are brought, through their grafting into the Body of Christ, into a relationship of communion with one another. The vocation of the Anglican Communion and the ecumenical vocation are therefore one and the same: to deepen our expression of the gift of full communion imparted to us already through our communion with and in Christ.

¹⁸ John 17:20-23

¹⁹ John 10:16

²⁰ Resolution IV:1, Lambeth Conference 1998.

73. We reaffirm the commitment of the Anglican Communion to the full visible unity of the Church now, and our strong desire has received physical expression in this Lambeth Conference by the participation of our ecumenical partners and of the bishops in communion. They have participated as brothers and sisters in the Lord, and spoken as friends, both ready to support and to challenge. We also reaffirm the Lund Principle as a commitment “on the way”: “Churches should act together in all matters except those in which deep differences of conviction compel them to act separately”. At this stage of the ecumenical movement, we have to recognise that what affects one affects all, and that it behoves each Church to live in accountability to the rest of the *oikumene*.

74. Unity is both a gift and vocation from God to the Church for the world. We must learn how to receive that gift. Mindful of the fact that our Lord Jesus Christ prayed that the Church be one,²¹ it is, therefore, an imperative for all his followers. They should use “every ounce of their energy” in seeking for that unity. It is ultimately a question of integrity and credibility, for if Christians are not seen to stand together in worship and work, our witness is impaired and none will believe us.

75. The Gospel is at the heart of the Church's life and mission and is the truth that sets people free. Because the Church is divided its mission is impaired. Ecumenism, therefore, which seeks to make the Church one, is intimately and urgently linked with that mission, and becomes a powerful route into the freedom which is displayed in the Lord's passion and resurrection and is for us the source of new life.

76. Ecumenism is a meeting in truth in Christ.²² It is part of the Church's vocation of reconciliation. The Church should be made up of reconcilers and reconciled, an instrument and sign of reconciliation. This role as a reconciling community is urgent because it offers a paradigm for what more generally humanity is seeking in its search for authentic life, faith and truth. It should be pursued through servanthood, mutual support, and most especially through prayer.

77. The quest for unity must have a theological core. There are very many theological principles we hold in common with other Christian world communions. We give thanks to God for the presence of our ecumenical partners in the Conference and rejoice in the way he has blessed us in our formal conversations and dialogues with them since the Lambeth Conference last met in 1998.

78. We give thanks to God for the diverse and strong patterns of ecumenical relationship continuing to develop in the Anglican Communion. We commit ourselves to sustain and nourish of relationships of communion with the Independent Philippine Church, the Mar Thoma Church in India, and the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht. We welcome the growth and renewal of relationships of communion with the Lutheran Churches of northern Europe and North America. In addition to the denominations and churches we have related to for many years, we note the emergence of many non-denominational churches but that because of their congregational structure it is often difficult to engage with them. We affirm the work

²¹ John 17

²² Pope John Paul II

of the Global Christian Forum²³.

79. Current divisions between Anglicans and the actions by certain provinces that have provoked them have inevitably disrupted not only the internal life of the Communion but also ecumenical dialogues and cooperation. Our ecumenical partners are sometimes bewildered by apparent Anglican inconsistency especially where issues of authority and ecclesiology are concerned. This is immediately relevant to the dilemmas facing this Conference.

80. While we rejoice in the advances made in our conversations with other denominations, we must acknowledge that there is often a tension between formal dialogues and the Church at local level, between the structures of the Church and local congregations. Very often issues of faith and order are not communicated or seen as relevant to local situations and they do not always translate into practical outcomes in our congregations. At the same time there is much ecumenical activity at local level. Perhaps the future of ecumenism should be from the bottom up and not the top down. However whatever we do at local level must accord with dialogue at the top.

81. Ecumenism and mission go hand in hand. This will be highlighted at the World Missionary Conference in 2010, marking the centenary of the Edinburgh Missionary Conference in 1910 at which the modern ecumenical movement had its origins. It was recalled that one of our predecessors, Bishop Charles Brent, a missionary bishop of the Episcopal Church USA in the Philippines and one of the founding fathers of the modern ecumenical movement, was a key player at that first conference. Cooperation in mission between Churches requires theological foundations and matters of faith and order belong together with life and work. The ecumenical quest that all may be one in Christ is not only a witness to the truth revealed in Christ, but also an empowerment of the Church for its part in God's mission.

82. However, not only is ecumenism a vocation to witness to the unity of the Body of Christ and to the one Lord, one Faith and one Baptism²⁴ of Christian revelation, it is a singular truth that the response of the Church to God's call to embrace his mission can only be fully realised in the action of the whole Body of Christ united in its response to God. The ecumenical vocation that all may be visibly one in Christ is not only a witness to the truth revealed in him, but also an empowerment in relation to the Church's mission and to issues of justice and peace. Bishops emphasised the connection between ecumenism and aid and relief following times of warfare, natural disasters and human catastrophe. On such occasions we can stand and work together in a way that no single Christian family can achieve on its own. (Of course many disasters and issues of desperate human need go far beyond what even the churches together can face and demand cooperation with other religions, agencies and governments bodies.)

83. One of the keys to ecumenism is relationships, especially between Christian leaders. Bishops, therefore, must be leaders involved in local ecumenism, standing together with leaders of other denominations in the proclamation of the Gospel and

²³ <http://www.globalchristianforum.org/>

²⁴ Ephesians 4:5

the empowerment of the Church in its mission and witness.

84. The nature and extent of ecumenical cooperation on the road to full visible unity often depends on context. There was a clear witness that good relations between churches flourish in times of testing, and that such times have proven plentiful for ecumenical thinking and works. Where churches face crises or challenges they are more motivated to stand and act together in witness. For example in India where Christianity is a persecuted minority there is much cooperation between churches. On the other hand when it is in a majority, there is often complacency.

Resources

The establishment of the Inter Anglican Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations (IASCER) was endorsed at Lambeth Conference of 1998 to monitor and enable Anglican participation in ecumenical activity and to ensure consistency of approach. IASCER has met annually and has proved itself a useful instrument for the Communion and its partners in many matters touching faith and order. Their work is recorded on the Anglican Communion website.

Three reports were offered to the Lambeth Conference as of particular significance and as a resource to the bishops:

“The Church of the Triune God” (The Cyprus Statement) concludes the third phase of the Anglican - Orthodox international theological dialogue (1989-2007). The Statement sets out significant material on the life of the Church which is timely and pertinent to many of the current debates within Anglicanism. available for purchase from Church House Publishing

www.anglicancommunion.org/ministry/ecumenical/dialogues/orthodox/index.cfm

See also: <http://www.chbookshop.co.uk/product.asp?id=2394753>

“Growing Together in Unity and Mission” The Report of the International Anglican – Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission:

www.anglicancommunion.org/ministry/ecumenical/dialogues/catholic/iarccum/index.cfm

“Called to be the One Church” The ecclesiological Statement of the World Council of Churches Porto Alegre Assembly

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/assembly/porto-alegre-2006/1-statements-documents-adopted/christian-unity-and-message-to-the-churches/called-to-be-the-one-church-as-adopted.html>

These three reports were used as resources for the Lambeth Conference. The bishops commend them for study and reception in the Anglican Communion.

The Anglican Consultative Council carries its task of co-ordinating and enabling ecumenical dialogue through the work of several bilateral commissions, whose work is reported through the Anglican Communion website. The Anglican Communion currently has dialogues with the Oriental Orthodox Churches, the Eastern Orthodox Churches, the Roman Catholic Church, the Lutheran World Federation and the

Methodist World Council. A full listing of the Commissions and of their work, together with notes on all the bilateral conversations and reports published since the 1998 Lambeth Conference can be found on the Anglican Communion website. The Anglican – Old Catholic International Co-ordinating Council continues the work of implementation of the Bonn Agreement (1931).

In 1999, the Anglican – Roman Catholic International Commission published the Report *The Gift of Authority*, its third text on authority in the Church,
www.anglicancommunion.org/ministry/ecumenical/dialogues/catholic/arcic/docs/gift_of_authority.cfm

and in 2005, *Mary, Grace and Hope in Christ*, on the subject of the Blessed Virgin Mary's place in Christian doctrine and devotion.

www.anglicancommunion.org/ministry/ecumenical/dialogues/catholic/arcic/index.cfm

In 2002, the Anglican – Lutheran International Working Group published their report, *Growth in Communion*, exploring the theological implications of agreements of communion at regional and international level between the Churches of the Anglican Communion and the Lutheran World Federation.

www.anglicancommunion.org/ministry/ecumenical/dialogues/lutheran/docs/growth_in_communion_report.cfm

In 2005, “*Conversations around the World*”, the report of the dialogue with the Baptist World Alliance set out convergences in the faith and life of these two traditions and benchmarks for co-operation.

www.anglicancommunion.org/ministry/ecumenical/dialogues/baptist/index.cfm

Section F: Relations with other World Religions

85. We recognise that we live today in a world where many faiths live side by side. We encounter each other on a daily basis and as neighbours are drawn into dialogue together. Such dialogue, in truth, arises from our love and concern for all humanity, who like us are created in the image and likeness of God.

86. One bishop, born into a Hindu family in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), told of the persecution he experienced by Muslims in his early years. Some time later, after moving to India, he became seriously ill. On his sick bed in a missionary hospital he experienced the love of Jesus and says that it transformed his life and especially the way he sees other people, including Muslims. Now, besides the 35,000 Anglicans of his diocese, he feels a responsibility in his episcopal ministry for all the people of the region in which he lives, of whatever faith.

87. In the national Inter-Confessional Committee of Peru we learnt that Palestinians - mainly middle aged men and women - were unable to visit their elderly parents living on the West Bank. A deputation of us - Christians and Jews - went with them to the Israeli Embassy and spoke to the Ambassador. We explained that they did not want to pass through the territory of Israel but would reach the West Bank through Jordan.

The Ambassador told us that he could not authorise visas and that they would be unlikely to receive them. However, he said that as a last resort we could write to the Israeli Prime Minister and appeal to him. Together we wrote to Ariel Sharon and, to the surprise and joy of us all, within three months all the members of the group received their visas and were able to travel. This action by the Committee has radically changed the atmosphere of the Inter-Confessional Committee and the participation of the Muslim community in a predominantly Roman Catholic culture, and their friendship.

88. The good news we share is of a God who loves all, who invites them into the fellowship of his Spirit and the grace-filled embrace of his Son Jesus Christ. In our relations with those of other faiths we are committed to honour other people's humanity, to serve them and to show them Christ. Our meeting together with those of other faiths is often spoken of as dialogue. *Dialogue* comes from the Greek and means literally *through word(s)* and for Christians the Greek word *logos* is also the word used in John's Gospel for Jesus, the Word of God.

89. The purpose of dialogue is not compromise, but growth in trust and understanding of each other's faith and traditions. Effective and meaningful dialogue will only take place where there is gentleness, honesty and integrity. In all of this, we affirm that Christianity needs to be lived and presented as "a way of life", rather than a static set of beliefs.

90. Perhaps there are situations where the word *conversation* is a more appropriate word than *dialogue*, and it is clear that hospitality is a key principle for dialogue. As one bishop said, "the business of dialogue can break down, but hospitality will not." We need to learn the Benedictine principle of hospitality, which is about relationships - making space in our hearts for one another.

91. We honour the special relationship we have, as Christians, with the Jewish community. It was a delight and honour for the Conference to be addressed by Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks, Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth. His paper moved and challenged us with a powerful presentation on the biblical understanding of covenant, which enables God's people to face the future without fear. Covenant, he insisted, is the redemption of solitude. If we can honour a covenant of fate together, we make space for God and each other and move forward together towards a covenant of faith. In a moving final appeal, he noted that the Anglican Communion has held together more gracefully than any other religion he knows. We renew our commitment to on-going dialogue and genuine friendship with the Jewish People.

92. Dialogue and action together for the promotion of the wider common good should go together. Bishops spoke of the common challenges facing humankind and our people, for example poverty, water, malaria, HIV and AIDS, disasters. As we commit ourselves to the issues raised, for example, by the Millennium Development Goals, it is clear that we must stand and work together with other faith communities and all people of good will.

93. The contexts within which the Church ministers around the world vary widely and the potential for inter faith dialogue will vary accordingly. In some situations,

Christians are faced with hostility and even persecution, and entering into dialogue with people of other faiths can be difficult and even dangerous, if not impossible. We recognise that our fractured Communion is at times impairing dialogue and sometimes making it impossible.

94. We urge local churches to contextualise their faith in such a way that Christianity is no longer seen as a western faith, especially in minority settings. This is particularly important in the light of the "war on terror".

95. There are many instances where Christians are a minority in our world and other faiths are growing. In such contexts there may be active discrimination against Christians. In those places where the Church is under pressure or facing situations of conflict, the support and encouragement of the wider Communion will be of real importance. Where Christians are in a majority, other faiths may experience similar forms of pressure or discrimination and the Church, as always, should be aware of and offer support to minorities who suffer human rights abuses. We recognise the human right of individuals to convert from one faith to another.

96. There are situations, particularly in secular societies, where faith is regarded as no more than an aspect of culture. The Christian faith will always need to challenge this way of understanding.

97. There is a need for education to help all the baptised to understand and engage with people of other faiths. In furtherance of this we urge that interfaith understanding be part of theological formation.

98. We recognise that there are some situations in which engagement with and understanding of traditional religions is part of our responsibility. Furthermore, the growth of New Religious Movements should be addressed through appropriate structures.

Initiatives

NIFCON is the Network for Inter Faith Concerns of the Anglican Communion. Established in 1994 it is now linked to the work of the Anglican Communion Office through the Department of Theological Studies. NIFCON could be encouraged to facilitate the sharing of stories and good practice and make more widely known its guidelines of best practice.

Resources

Generous Love: The report "*Generous Love: the truth of the Gospel and the call to dialogue (an Anglican theology of inter faith relations)*", was offered by NIFCON, the Network for Inter Faith Concerns for the Anglican Communion, and used as the resource for the Indaba session on 'Engaging with People of other Faiths'. The document was welcomed and commended for study in the Anglican Communion.
<http://nifcon.anglicancommunion.org/resources/documents/index.cfm>

A Common Word for the Common Good: *the Archbishop of Canterbury's letter to the signatories of "A Common Word Between Us and You", an open letter from Muslim religious leaders and scholars.*

http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/media/word/2/j/A_Common_Word_for_the_Common_Good.doc

Strengthening Anglican Identity

99. In the light of this great vocation, we have to ask ourselves what the distinctive contribution of the life of the Anglican Communion is to God's Mission, and to the proclamation of the Gospel. What is the distinctive vision of Christian faith embodied in the history and heritage of the Anglican Churches which can be offered to our sisters and brothers in Christ and to the world in the service of Christian discipleship and in the healing of the world? As bishops in the Anglican Communion, we recognise and cherish four particular dimensions to our life in communion: that we are formed by scripture, shaped by worship, ordered for communion, directed by God's mission. These four notes call us to enrich our life together, and require us to address honestly and frankly the tensions at work within the Anglican Communion. In exploring Anglican identity, we therefore address directly the tensions concerning human sexuality, and the way in which we understand the authority of scripture in our life. Finally, we consider the place of the recommendations of the Windsor Report 2004 in our life together, and address the proposal for an Anglican Covenant.

Section G: Anglican Bishops, Anglican Identity

Formed by Scripture

100. As Anglicans we acknowledge the joy of engaging with the scriptures in setting forth the authentic proclamation of God's Word. We are attentive to scripture in our worship, prayer and study, seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit so that scripture may form us and shape our worship, our doctrine and our community life. We believe the scriptures to be primary and we read them informed by reason and tradition and with regard for our cultural context. We value the place of biblical scholarship as a critical tool, recognising nevertheless that this leads to divergent interpretations across our many and varied contexts, and of listening to our sister churches as they interpret the same scriptures. The over-arching issue with which we wrestle in relation to the scriptures is the interpretation of the Bible in our ongoing life. (*see below*)

Shaped by Worship

101. Christian worship involves encountering the mystery of God in our Lord Jesus Christ and participating in the life of the Trinity. We delight to meet Christ in word and sacrament. The sacraments of Baptism, whereby we are joined to Christ, and the Eucharist, where we are nourished by his body and blood, bind us together in unity.

The Anglican approach to worship places a high value on common structure, common prayer and a common lectionary, sharing the scriptures, across the Communion, while at the same time encouraging local freedom, and inculturation. We are committed to praying for one another and we want to deepen that fellowship of prayer and intercession. As Anglicans, we recognise the relationship between liturgy and doctrine - worship shapes belief - and between worship and mission - worship energises mission. We particularly need to be reminded of our evangelistic context and to seek worship that engages with youth cultures and with children.

Ordered for Communion

102. We have been brought by the redeeming work of Christ into a living communion with God and with all Christian people in our baptism. This communion, which mirrors the life of the Holy Trinity, is God's gift to the Church, which our human structures only inadequately reflect and sustain. The Anglican Communion shares a particular history within the one holy catholic and apostolic Church and that history brings us into particular relationship one with another. There is a strong desire to stay in communion with one another. Such communion is vital to our common life. Some of our bishops, for example, come from countries or situations where there is strong persecution; here the Communion may offer invaluable support and solidarity. We have inherited and hold firmly to the pattern of the three-fold ministry of bishop, priest and deacon, which guarantees our historical continuity and unites us with the many churches who hold to this order. There is a strong view that an important part of the way forward in deepening our communion is (a) in the development of person to person relationships, (b) in diocesan partnerships and (c) in recovering our sense of belonging and mutual affection. At the same time we recognise that the variety of ways in which Provinces are ordered - the different polities of our churches - can produce misunderstandings and confusions that need to be understood and addressed. We need to acknowledge that the whole is more than the sum of the parts and that each part of the Communion, when it acts, must do so in the knowledge of what it means for the whole.

Directed by God's Mission

103. It is God's mission in which we share, participating with him in the making of disciples. Mission is the total action of God in Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit - creating, redeeming, sanctifying - for the sake of the whole world. The gospel is the life-blood of the Church and evangelism is the process whereby people are led to be strengthened in God's mission. We have set out above the immensity of the challenge of the proclamation of the gospel in the reality of the modern world. Anglicans must be leaders in that proclamation. We believe that loving service, prophetic witness and a respectful evangelism that speaks of the uniqueness of Christ belong together.

The Service we offer as Bishops

104. The Bishops in the Anglican Communion serve in a variety of contexts, but our fundamental ministry is common to us all²⁵. With all the baptised, and with our

²⁵ 1 Timothy 3.1

fellow presbyters and deacons, we are called to be people of prayer, disciples of Jesus Christ, servants of the people of God and leaders in mission. The characteristics of the bishop's ministry include:

- To gather the whole community in celebration, presiding over the sacraments and ordaining new priests and deacons
- To proclaim the Word of God as an apostolic witness to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ
- To be a teacher, guardian and interpreter of the faith and the apostolic tradition
- To be active in making and nurturing disciples
- To be a shepherd (pastor) of the whole people of God, with a special concern for the clergy of the diocese
- To be a prophetic voice for the voiceless.

As bishops, we are committed to the life of the Church, to the wider communities in which we minister and to civil society. We recognise that it is in our calling to be bridge-builders, reconcilers and symbols of unity, representing the local to the universal and the universal to the local, taking our place within a world-wide college of bishops across the Communion and within the one Church of Christ.

Resources

The framework for this section of the 'Reflections' (Formed by Scripture; Shaped by Worship; Ordered for Communion; Directed by God's Mission) is taken from the document *The Anglican Way: Signposts on a Common Journey* produced by TEAC (the Primates' Working Party on Theological Education in the Anglican Communion) and is available on

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

Booklets in the ongoing and developing 'Signposts series' exploring aspects of the statement *The Anglican Way: Signposts on a Common Journey* in more detail are available from the Anglican Communion Office.

The 'Bishops Grid' produced by TEAC and published in the *Lambeth Reader* sets out formational competencies for episcopal ministry.

<http://www.anglicancommunion.org/ministry/theological/teac/grids/BishopsGrid110406.pdf>

Communion, Conflict and Hope: Kuala Lumpur Report of the Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission

http://www.anglicancommunion.org/ministry/theological/iatdc/docs/communion_conflict_&_hope.pdf

Three papers on Episcopacy: Resources for the Lambeth Conference, published in A Lambeth Reader. These three papers, from the Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission, in conversation with the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission for Ecumenical Relations, address questions of Anglican polity and episcopal ministry.

Section H: Human Sexuality

105. This section appears here to address the tensions that have arisen in our common life. It should have been titled “The Bishop and Homosexuality” because these discussions were the focus of this topic in the indaba groups. The self select sessions identified with human sexuality included Human Sexuality and the Witness of Scripture, Listening and Mission, The Anglican Communion and Homosexuality, Listening in Practice, Sexuality and Spirituality, Questions of Science, Culture and Christ, Culture and Homosexualities, Listening to the Experience of Homosexual People.

106. Faced with the issue of the ordination of women, the third meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council in 1976 spoke about the Communion in this way: “As in the first century, we can expect the Holy Spirit to press us to listen to each other, to state new insights frankly, and to accept implications of the Gospel new to us, whether painful or exhilarating.”²⁶ Lambeth 1998 Resolution 1.10, while reiterating clearly the traditional stance of the Church, also called for sensitive listening. The Bible study and indaba groups gave us the opportunity to meet in a spirit of generosity and prayerful humility which helped us to listen patiently to each other and to speak honestly.

107. Christians are called to exercise judgement and discernment in their vocation and discipleship, and to embrace that discipleship with humility and with generosity. The Lord himself warned us to avoid judgementalism²⁷. It is important therefore to be careful not to make dismissive judgements, because people have come to their decision after prayer and careful study of the Bible. Nor is there a monopoly on Christian charity: those who take different positions regarding this issue have often been the bearers of compassionate pastoral care to homosexual persons, though we must confess some failure in this regard. We come from different backgrounds, contexts and experiences. As Bishops we need to repent of the ways in which our hardness of heart toward each other may have contributed to the brokenness of our Communion at this present time. We need to repent of statements and actions that have further damaged the dignity of homosexual persons. People who have held traditional views on this matter have sometimes felt that they have been dismissed with ridicule or contempt.

108. There were repeated statements of the desire to remain in communion while attempting to maintain a generous space for ongoing discussions. Although there has been a great appreciation of one to one conversations, there is the need to develop further trust in the relationships that have started here. In addition to previous expressions of regret by both the House of Bishops and the General Convention of The Episcopal Church²⁸, some individual bishops of The Episcopal Church have expressed apologies in their groups, noting that they had not previously grasped the depth of the negative impact that their action in the consecration of a bishop living in a same gender union had caused in many parts of the Communion.

109. There were several references to the Lambeth 1998 Resolution 1.10, although it sometimes appeared that only one section was being referenced and not the whole

²⁶ ACC-3, page 55.

²⁷ Matthew 7:1-5

²⁸ See box below.

report on Human Sexuality to the 1998 Lambeth Conference or the whole resolution.

110. There is confusion about what “the issue” really means. There are three aspects that would help to clarify discussions:

- How the church evangelizes, disciples and provides pastoral care for homosexual people;
- How and on what basis the church admits people to Sacred Orders;
- How the church deals with the first two locally and globally.

111. The issue of homosexual relations is as sensitive as it is because it conflicts with the long tradition of Christian moral teaching. For some, the new teaching cannot be acceptable on biblical grounds as they consider all homosexual activity as intrinsically sinful. Tension has arisen when those who hold the traditional teaching are faced with changes in the Church’s life or teaching without being able to understand or engage with a clear presentation of how people have come to a new understanding of scripture and pastoral theology.

112. The whole issue of homosexual relations is also highly sensitive because there are very strong affirmations and denials in different cultures across the world which are reflected in contrasting civil provisions, ranging from legal provision for same-sex marriage to criminal action against homosexuals. In some parts of the Communion, homosexual relations are a taboo while in others they have become a human rights issue.

113. In the framework of the bishop in mission, it is agreed that the ordination of a bishop living in a same gender union has compromised mission in many parts of the Communion and has had a profoundly disruptive effect on the Communion by detracting from other aspects of mission. There is anxiety that this will not turn out to be a single act but something that is likely to happen again and further compromise mission.

114. For some, the way the Communion has been perceived to handle polygamy has complicated the issue. Polygamy has been part of the history and of the present of some Provinces of the Communion. It is unacceptable in other parts of the Communion. The Communion made a space for such Provinces to deal with this issue at their local level. This they have done, setting clear standards while providing pastoral attention. The question from some is: why can we not make the same space in regard to homosexuality? In the case of polygamy, there is a universal standard – it is understood to be a sin, therefore polygamists are not admitted to positions of leadership including Holy Orders, nor after acceptance of the Gospel can a convert take another wife, nor, in some areas, are they admitted to Holy Communion.

115. There have been many aspects of the history of this current situation that have brought us to this point in time. In some parts of the Communion the issue of homosexuality has been under discussion for over thirty years, whereas for others it is a more recent conversation. In other places, there are legal or cultural reasons which constrain dialogue. In some Provinces, the acceptance of homosexual practice would be seen as a betrayal of the teaching of the missionaries who brought the faith, and experienced as a new form of colonialism. In the time frame of Christianity, or even of the Anglican tradition, there has not been enough time to allow for the Bishops of the Communion to come to a new consensus within Provinces or worldwide – either

to agree, or to live together in disagreement.

116. The issue of homosexuality has challenged us and our Churches on what it might mean to be a Communion. We are still learning how to be the Communion that God has called and gifted us to be.

117. For many Anglicans, the ordination of a bishop living in a same gender union is seen as questioning the authority of scripture and the Church's traditional reading on these matters. It calls into question traditional moral teaching concerning the nature of marriage. The question for many is "Whether the Bible transforms the culture or the culture is allowed to transform the Bible".

118. The ordination of a bishop living in a same gender union and the open blessing of same sex relationships has had many negative results including:

- Partnership in mission is lost and damaged, as we are diverted from our primary focus. In some places the church is ridiculed as the "gay church", so membership is lost. In some regions the issue has become a test of orthodoxy and a basis for hostile actions.
- Ecumenical and interfaith relationships have been damaged. Some ecumenical participants present underscored this point.
- Bishops cannot be a symbol of unity when their consecration itself divides the church. The unique focus for catholicity in the Communion is lost. Confidence in the validity of the Anglican Communion, the bonds of affection and our mutual interdependence is severely damaged.
- It is dishonouring to former Lambeth Conference decisions.

119. It was also reported that there has been positive effects in parts of Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, Mexico and Central America and in other parts of the world when homosexual people are accepted as God's children, are treated with dignity and choose to give their lives to Christ and to live in the community of faith as disciples of Jesus Christ with fidelity and commitment.

Possible Ways Ahead

120. There are competing visions of how the Communion should responsibly handle our current situation:

- "If your eye cause offence, pluck it out"²⁹ - decisive action
- "Let God be God" - allow God to transform our attitudes and behaviour while we look for further insights.
- "If it is from God it will last"³⁰ - Gamaliel's advice can be followed here, so wait.
- Some people are looking for a clear direction from the Communion, and from this conference in the form of a pastoral letter or direction.
- More "listening" is needed where the purpose is not "I win, you lose", but "Nobody wins, nobody loses" and we grow together in Christ.
- Ongoing dialogue itself is a "Christian witness". The Communion needs a 'catholic patience'.

²⁹ Matthew 5:29

³⁰ Acts 5.38, 39

- Further careful study of the Scriptures, theology, doctrine and other disciplines, such as theological anthropology, must be pursued together through a formal Commission at Communion-wide level. This would equip the bishops in their teaching office.
- Give pastoral care but do not canonize, regularize, legalize or endorse homosexual relationships.
- Cross-provincial and diocesan intervention must stop to create the time and space for the Spirit of God to “lead us into all truth”. The perspectives of bishops and dioceses need to be heard and respected.
- Legal action in the courts should be avoided if at all possible.
- Reaffirm the moral authority of the whole of the Lambeth 1998 Resolution 1:10, and the report commended in it, and continue its implementation, but not the style of debate that led to it. Acknowledge that some good work has been done on the resolution such as the development of listening processes, and the intentional development of closer relations among bishops and dioceses.
- Declare a “Decade of Sharing and Generosity” and keep walking, keep talking, keep listening together.

Resources

The Anglican Communion and Homosexuality – A resource to enable listening and dialogue, edited by Philip Groves; published by SPCK, 2008.

Resources on sexuality and the Listening Process, together with material from the Provinces are also available through the Anglican Communion website.

<http://www.anglicancommunion.org/listening>

For creating safe space for listening, go to www.dontthrowstones.info

Lambeth I.10 text may be found at

<http://www.lambethconference.org/resolutions/1998/1998-1-10.cfm>

The report of Section 1 of the 1998 Lambeth Conference on Human Sexuality is published in *The Official Report of the Lambeth Conference 1998*, Morehouse, 1999, pp.93,94

The Episcopal Church House of Bishops statement may be found at

<http://www.anglicancommunion.org/acns/news.cfm/2007/9/26/ACNS4322>

The resolutions of the General Convention 2006 may be found at

http://gc2006.org/legislation/view_leg_detail.aspx?id=201&type=CURRENT

Section I: The Scriptures

121. The dispute concerning sexuality has reflected among some a deeper unease about the acceptance of the authority of scripture. It behoves us therefore to explore the nature of our understanding of scripture in the life of the Church.

122. Jesus Christ is the Word of God, the true light that enlightens all, incarnate in human form, full of grace and truth, from before time and forever³¹.

123. God's first and eternal Word to us is Jesus. Because of this our reading and interpretation of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments possess a clear Christ-centred quality rooted in the Incarnation. St. John the Evangelist announces that "these things are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name".³² We proclaim Jesus as Saviour of the world and Lord of the Church. Jesus Christ, crucified, risen, ascended, and coming again, is the holy one of God through whom the meaning of the Scriptures is revealed to us by the Holy Spirit.

124. In the Anglican tradition, the Holy Scriptures are central to our life together as servants of God's mission. In like manner, the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the primary sources for equipping our apostolic ministry as bishops. Indeed, the bishops of our Communion, at the time of their ordination and consecration to the episcopate, claim for their ministries and in their own lives that they believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God and to contain all things necessary to salvation. This affirmation of the authority of the Holy Scriptures in our common life is shared across the Communion, enshrined in the various prayer books, canons, and official documents of our tradition, and found deep in the heart of our vocation as bishops of the Church. It is clear to us that the Holy Scriptures do not belong to us alone and that the fullness of the revealed truth of God in Jesus Christ is a treasured gift from God that belongs to the whole church catholic. Together with the church universal, we are humbled by the custodianship of the sacred texts given into our care and we seek to honour that responsibility by living under God's Word in obedience, humility and joy.

125. For Anglicans, the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds are understood to be faithful and sufficient statements of the essentials of the biblical witness as revealed by the power of the Holy Spirit to us and to the whole church in every generation. We acknowledge the full reliability of the texts of the canonical Scriptures given to us by God, and seek to proclaim afresh with clarity and power the full revelation of God in Jesus Christ. From this strong sense of biblical reliability the Church derives norms of moral and ethical life that are to be honoured by the whole Body of Christ; at the same time we discover biblically faithful means to respond pastorally to those who are unable to observe such norms. When serious disagreements arise among us about moral and ethical norms we are called to intensify our efforts to discover God's Word through continuing scriptural discernment. We rejoice in the Holy Scriptures as God's gift to the whole church for teaching and guidance, admonition, and pastoral care.

126. In the Anglican prayer book tradition, the following collect, composed by Archbishop Cranmer, sets a proper framework for our understanding of the Holy Scriptures in our lives as bishops and in the lives of all God's faithful people.

Blessed Lord, who hast caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and

³¹ John 1:1-18

³² John 20: 31

inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of thy holy Word we may embrace, and ever hold fast, the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

127. Praying this collect reminds us that an Anglican approach to Scripture honours the sacred texts as inspired and revealed by God while inviting us to use the resources of the human intellect to interpret and apply those texts for making faithful disciples and for the deepening of holy lives worthy of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Utilizing the God-given gifts of reason and tradition as resources for the interpretation of the Scriptures enables the fullest possible exploration of the whole counsel of God³³ and calls to mind the unfathomable depths and richness of the ways of God.³⁴ Biblical interpretation is the work of reverent inquiry that approaches the Holy Scriptures in a spirit of awe and wonder as holy writings different from all other texts.

128. In the history of the Anglican tradition, biblical scholarship and exegetical theology have held an honoured place. We rejoice that many faithful scholars of the Bible, both past and present, have been Anglicans and our Church and its ministry has been immeasurably enriched by their faithfulness. Such scholarship, however, does not happen in isolation from the ecumenical community of biblical theologians. We also note the importance of hearing again the voices of the preachers and teachers through the centuries as they sought to speak a lively word in their own time and place. We are grateful to God for the strong contributions made to our own understanding of God's Word by scholars and teachers of other traditions past and present.

129. Biblical scholars have a variety of exegetical tools for their use and employ many different methods of biblical exposition and interpretation. When used discerningly and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, these tools and methods can assist us in breaking open the Holy Scriptures and enrich our understanding of God's Word. As bishops of the Church, we commend the use of faithful biblical scholarship by our clergy and people in the full confidence that there is still more light and truth to break forth from God's Word.

130. In addition to the more formal means of biblical scholarship, our tradition makes use of a number of spiritual disciplines and practical methods that enhance our hearing of the Scriptures. For example, some Anglicans read the Scriptures to discern a rule of life for themselves and for their community. Others find the practice of praying with the Scriptures and utilizing the gifts of our monastic traditions as particularly powerful ways to listen for the Word of God. Still others find the discipline of the Daily Office a faithful means by which to engage the full range of the Scriptures. As bishops of the Communion we commend to our people every opportunity possible to encounter God in the living word of Holy Scripture, whether reading and studying for personal devotion, gathering with others for Bible study and holy conversation, or studying more formally under the care of a pastor or teacher, and in worship.

³³ Acts 20:27

³⁴ Romans 11:33

131. Worship and common prayer are central to our identity as Anglicans. Consequently the liturgical reading of Scripture and the ministry of preaching are primary aspects of how we listen for and hear God's Word to us. Preachers are called to expound the whole counsel of God and especially at the Eucharist to point God's people toward the saving death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and hold him up as God incarnate, crucified, risen, ascended, and coming again in glory.

132. We are grateful for the various lectionaries adopted by the Provinces of our Communion. The use of lectionaries for the Daily Offices and the Holy Eucharist greatly enhances the breadth of our hearing of Scripture and provides good discipline to those among us who are called to preach.

133. We are mindful that God's people hear Jesus, God's incarnate Word, and the vital preaching of Holy Scriptures, from within the varied contexts of their lives. Above we affirmed the faithful reliability of God's Word, and here we acknowledge that the context in which one seeks to listen shapes, at least in part, how one hears. Across our Communion we tell the good news of Jesus in many cultures, in many languages, and in the face of many different political, economic, and social realities. It is always our desire to proclaim the authentic Word of God for all, but we acknowledge that our people hear the Holy Scriptures conditioned by the needs and passions of their local situations. We recognize, for example, that communities that have faced natural disasters or systemic injustice will hear God's Word with different ears than others who are far removed from such realities. We note that the particularity of mission strategy from one place to another or difficult pastoral realities may have impact upon how the Holy Scriptures are heard. We are clear that the Word of God does not change from place to place and its light and truth applies throughout the whole of God's world. At the same time we acknowledge that our ability to hear God's Word is profoundly affected by the context in which we listen for it.

134. God's Living Word, incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth and revealed in Holy Scripture, challenges and transforms us in ways that can be full of joy and at other times quite unsettling. Even as our contexts influence our interpretation of Holy Scripture, we affirm that the Scripture also addresses our contexts with both judgment and consolation, with conviction and with grace. The Word of God has always held a primary and cherished place in the Churches of the Anglican Communion. So shall it always be.

135. As we face the challenges of our time, the Holy Scriptures will continue to be for us a springboard into mission – that the world may have life in all its fullness.³⁵

Section J: The Anglican Covenant (St. Andrew's Draft)

136. **Positive descriptions.** There were many positive responses to the idea of a Covenant. We recognise that any possible Covenant would be grounded in God's covenant with us. It would carry horizontal and vertical realities, reflecting the sign

³⁵ John 10:10

of the cross. It is the image of Christ's deep and faithful covenant made in Baptism and revealed in the Eucharist and is thereby Christ-centred.

137. The covenant could provide historical continuity with the past, creativity in the present and lead us into the future. It could provide a structure within which we can explore relationship, delighting in unity and diversity, rather than imposing uniformity and conformity. It should help affirm our common life and care, rather than restrict life in the churches. A covenant may help heal present wounds and prevent new ones.

138. Relationship must be pre-eminent within the covenant, creating mutuality, care and responsibility, thereby offering a binding voluntary agreement. We recognise that a covenant would be costly and self-limiting, yet would strengthen the bonds of love among us. As such, it would give us a sacrificial way to move forward, for the sake of the other, which would be life-giving. It invites us to be generous to one another.

139. A Covenant could draw more dioceses back into the conversation of the Communion. Any possible Covenant could help small communities demonstrate the power of a world wide body, which could help in dealing with government. A Covenant could be a structure to make incursions unnecessary, but without a Covenant, our continuing relationship with those who chose not to be here at this Conference may be imperilled.

140. **Reservations and concerns.** There was an overall willingness to enter a Covenant, particularly to help us in the present crisis, conscious that it is critical for some to have something positive to report on their return home. There was a general satisfaction with the first half of the main text of the St. Andrew's Draft, but there were real concerns with section 3 and even greater concern about the appendix.

In particular:

- The biblical and theological basis of Covenant need to be clarified and developed in a more profound way.
- The proposed Covenant is formulaic rather than relational, and could thereby prove punitive, restrictive and limiting, rather than facilitating unity.
- The Instruments of Communion could become micro-managers.
- There is concern that this Covenant process could prove expensive to implement and concern as to who would pay for it.
- There is concern that the Province rather than the diocese might become the local Church. There is also some uncertainty as to how Provinces might relate to the Communion.
- Our modality is historically the "bishop-in-synod" rather than "episcopally led and synodically governed".
- The broad sweep of the text reads as a very western document.
- The position of the United Churches is not addressed.
- What happens if the Church of England is the offending Church?
- The appendix is particularly seen as over-detailed and an instrument of punitive measures.
- There is a danger that we are simply papering-over the problems, whereas healing needs to take place first.

- The Instruments of Communion need time to evolve before we can be sure what form a Covenant should take.

141. **Suggestions.** The Covenant could be a more generous document, couched as invitation. It should be an instrument of listening before anything else. We need to steward ourselves to give attention to the “bonds” as well as the “affection.” We ought to ask “What can we do for the Communion?” not vice versa.

142. There is a tension between wanting to take time over the process and the need for urgency in repairing the tears in the Communion’s fabric. “Are we being a little quick in trying to heal ourselves?” However, some bishops have stated the need to return home with an agreement of some kind.

143. A number of practical and detailed suggestions were made, which will be reflected back to the Covenant Design Group:

- A Province might be asked to withdraw after a breach of the Covenant to repair trust.
- As an immediate response, we should establish a pastoral response group, which could be in operation more quickly than a Covenant and could operate instead of revisions in the appendix.
- The document needs to have a less Church of England basis, particularly in regard to the formularies.
- Can we learn about handling conflict from around the world, eg. South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the culture of responsibility and restraint in South East Asia, unity and diversity in the “Three Tikanga” way of working in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia and the Japanese preference for a less stated way to resolve conflicts?
- “Better than a covenant would be a theology of abiding, where we can affirm one another in Christ”.
- Should we explore a missional Covenant?
- Rather than a Covenant, should we explore an Anglican Rule of Life?
- Do we need a shorter Lambeth Conference every five years?
- Would the Covenant be better called a.) “entente”, b.) “memorandum of understanding”, or c.) “communion agreement”?
- There is a need for better translations of the St. Andrew’s Draft.

144. There is a welcome from many to the idea of a Covenant. We recognise the urgent need to find a workable way forward, particularly for those of us who live and minister in minority or hostile situations. However there is a strong sense that the appendix could be too legalistic and too difficult to implement. Overall, there was a concern that what is proposed in the appendix might prove too punitive. From the experience of this Lambeth Conference and the building and deepening of relationship, there is a willingness to continue exploring a Covenant together.

Section K: The Windsor Process

The moratoria

145. The moratoria cover three separate but related issues: ordinations of persons living in a same gender union to the episcopate; the blessing of same-sex unions; cross-border incursions by bishops. There is widespread support for moratoria across the Communion, building on those that are already being honoured. The moratoria can be taken as a sign of the bishops' affection, trust and goodwill towards the Archbishop of Canterbury and one another. The moratoria will be difficult to uphold, although there is a desire to do so from all quarters. There are questions to be clarified in relation to how long the moratoria are intended to serve. Perhaps the moratoria could be seen as a "season of gracious restraint". In relation to moratorium 2 (the blessing of same-sex unions) there is a desire to clarify precisely what is proscribed. Many differentiate between authorised public rites, rather than pastoral support. If the Windsor process is to be honoured, all three moratoria must be applied consistently.

The Pastoral Forum

146. There is clear majority support for a Pastoral Forum along the lines advocated by the Windsor Group, and a desire to see it in place speedily. There is agreement that it should be pastoral and not legal and should be able to respond quickly. It was also clearly stated that this process should always be moving towards reconciliation. There is concern about mandate, membership, appointment process and authority. Some wondered whether the Pastoral Forum should have members from outside the Communion. Many felt strongly that the forum could operate in a Province only with the consent of that Province and in particular with the consent of the Primate or the appropriate body. It is essential that this should be properly funded and resourced if it has any chance of being productive. There was some support for an alternative suggestion: to appoint in any dispute a Pastoral Visitor, working with a professional arbitrator and to create in the Communion a "pool" of such visitors.

Instruments of Communion

147. The four "Instruments of Communion" are the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lambeth Conference, the Anglican Consultative Council and the Primates' Meeting. There is a need to clarify the role and function of each of these instruments and their relationship one to another.

148. **Archbishop of Canterbury.** There is honour and respect for the office of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Being in communion with the See of Canterbury is one of the essential elements of belonging to the Anglican Communion. There is a need to explore the role of the Archbishop in the Communion and a desire not to burden the office further, creating inappropriate and unbearable expectations.³⁶ We would welcome more visits by the Archbishop around the Communion in the exercise of his apostolate. In discussing the role of the Archbishop, great affection and love was expressed for the present Archbishop of Canterbury.

³⁶ See the Hurd Report 2002

149. **The Lambeth Conference.** There was a desire that the Lambeth Conference should meet more frequently, for a shorter period of time and a particular suggestion of a ten-day meeting every five years. The reason for this sense of wanting to be together again so soon was the continuation of the indaba process. The Lambeth Conference needs to consider the appointment of a fundraiser to facilitate its future well-being. There was support for the view that one of the roles of the Lambeth Conference is to allow the bishops to exercise a collegial teaching ministry. There was also support for furthering diocesan partnerships, in order to sustain, between conferences, the relationships made at Lambeth.

150. **Anglican Consultative Council.** There is a lack of knowledge in the Communion about the Council and its members and therefore an uncertainty about its role. Some believe it exercises too much authority; others would like to see it reconstituted and given more. One suggestion was of a two-tier Council with a tier of Primates and another of clergy and laity with the inclusion of younger representation. There was a desire to enhance the presence of clergy and laity in decision making at the Communion level.

151. **Primates' Meeting.** There is much discomfort about the role that the Primates' Meeting now finds itself exercising. Many fear that it is trying to exercise too much authority. Others believe that the Primates are the only ones who can bear the weight of our current challenges. Perhaps their key role is in supporting the Archbishop of Canterbury. The primates should not exercise collectively any more authority than they have in their Provinces.

Section L: Statements of Solidarity

153. "If one part of the body suffers, all the other parts suffer with it; if one part is praised, all the other parts share its happiness.³⁷" We stand in solidarity to support God's people throughout the world who have commended themselves and their concerns to the wider Anglican family, especially:

154. We decry the persecution, torture, imprisonment and killing of people on account of their faith whatever their faith may be. We are particularly distressed when some acts are carried out by or with the connivance of the police, the military or the agents of state;

155. The Anglican Communion supports the reunification of the Korean peninsula for establishing permanent peace in North East Asia, and also collaborates with Toward Peace in Korea (TOPIK) launched November 2007 in order to advance the movement effectively. At the same time, the Anglican Communion actively supports Nippon Sei Ko Kai (The Anglican Communion in Japan), which is leading a peace movement for protecting the Peace Constitution for settlement of peace in North East Asia.

(Japan's Constitution, Article 9: the renunciation of the use of military force which the current Japanese government is trying to remove).

³⁷ 1 Corinthians 12.26

156. We stand in solidarity with Australia's indigenous peoples, both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. We applaud the apology made by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd to the stolen generations and acknowledge that the journey towards reconciliation has only just begun, particularly in relation to remote Aboriginal communities in Australia;

157. We are in solidarity with the six million people currently hungry in Ethiopia; with Christians in Somalia who live daily with fear for their lives.

158. We have heard disturbing stories from around Africa; political conflict in Zimbabwe; de-humanizing conditions in Sudan; xenophobic violence in South Africa, and we strongly register our support for the bishops who are working under extreme and trying conditions. We call on President Mugabe to stop harassing the bishops and the faithful of our church. In solidarity with the continent of Africa we call for a speedy, peaceful settlement involving all political parties that would lead to democratic government.

159. We stand with all who suffer from the consequences of natural disaster. We support the peoples of Myanmar suffering from the effects of cyclone Nargis. We are in solidarity with the victims of Hurricane Katrina, in New Orleans and along the Mississippi Gulf Coast, especially the poor, children and youth; and with the Church in Louisiana as she attempts to promote a Truth and Reconciliation Commission despite widespread opposition.

160. We decry the situation in India and stand in solidarity with the dalits who continue to suffer injustices. We call on the government to exercise restraint and to broaden their practice of democracy.

161. We plead for much greater attention to and action for the two million Iraqi refugees outside that country, and the two million displaced persons in that country. The ancient churches of that nation must not be allowed to disappear. We are alarmed by the diminishing presence of Christian churches in Lebanon, and Iran.

162. We continue to honour Jerusalem as having a special place as a "home" for three major world faiths, i.e. Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. We commit to ongoing prayer for the land of Israel/Palestine and all peoples living in it, especially for our Christian brothers and sisters and their witness to Christ. We support the inter-faith initiatives for peace making in the Land of the Holy One.

Section M: Expression of Thanks

161. The Lambeth Conference thanks God for the ministry of so many whose dedication and service have enabled the Conference to do the work of the Church:

- For our host the Most Revd and Rt Hon Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury; for his confident proclamation of the Word; his love, vision and scholarship and for Dr Jane Williams for her welcome, hospitality and leadership of the Spouses' Meeting.

- For the generous welcome and friendship displayed by all those involved in the Hospitality Programme in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland prior to the Conference.
- For the Chaplaincy Team who have supported us in prayer before and throughout the Conference.
- For the Worship Team and musicians and all others involved with the services here on campus.
- For the Bible Study Team and Leaders who have led us in studying the Gospel of St John.
- For the Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral Church of Christ, Canterbury for their welcome and hospitality throughout the Conference.
- For the animateurs and rapporteurs of the Indaba Groups who have facilitated the work of the Conference.
- For the Reflections Team who have brought together the work of the Indaba Groups.
- For the plenary speakers, and those who spoke, led or facilitated the Self Select Sessions.
- For the Stewards who have willingly assisted us in every aspect of the Conference.
- For the Translators who have played such an important role in helping us to listen to each other.
- For the people who have staffed the Conference, from the Anglican Communion Office, Lambeth Palace and Volunteers from around the Anglican Communion.
- For the Volunteers from the Diocese of Canterbury who have assisted us in so many ways.
- For the Communications Team who have helped us send our messages to the world.
- For the Spouses Implementation Group.
- For the Lambeth Conference Design Group and the Team of staff who have worked with them

Conclusion

The Reflections Group offers this narrative to the Conference, believing that the same God who calls us together into communion through his Son Jesus Christ and who has begun this good work in us will bring it to completion in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Reflections Group Membership	Indaba Group
Roger Herft Australia	
Andrew Proud Jerusalem & the Middle East	A
Alan Abernethy Ireland	B
Howard Gregory West Indies	C
Sue Moxley Canada	D
KG Daniel South India	E
Peter Lee Southern Africa	F
James Ochiel Kenya	G
Jo Seoka Southern Africa	H
Ezekiel Kondo Sudan	I
Neil Alexander United States	J
Roger Chung Po Chuen Indian Ocean	K
Gerry Wolf United States	L
David Njovu Central Africa	M
Bill Godfrey Southern Cone	N
Michael Perham England	O
Thomas Soo Hong Kong	<u>P</u>
Gregory K Cameron ACO (Staffing)	