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News of the people, parishes, and places of the Diocese of

New Jersey

Special Edition: Lambeth Reflections

Province II Gathering: 4 October 2008

Our own Trinity Cathedral in Trenton was the host of the Province II Lambeth Reflections on 4 October 2008. We were fortunate that many bishops from our Province were present. Presentations were given by several bishops that ran the spectrum on some of the issues at the heart of talk of Anglican schism. Bishop Councill had also invited theologian and philosopher Gordon Graham to reflect on what he heard from the speakers and different Lambeth reports. Graham was able to pull together threads of some of the disparate issues raised. Later, each Province II bishop who was present was able to share a few of their experiences from the Lambeth Conference.

As you read this issue, summaries of what each speaker said are presented separately. Although there was a great deal of discussion during the afternoon, the thoughts of each bishop are presented as a whole. Many of the issues raised are difficult and emotional ones to discuss. Each bishop is to be commended for stating their views and concerns in a compassionate and heartfelt manner. While there was disagreement among those present, the gathering remained a conversation among much-loved and respected colleagues.

What were some of the issues addressed besides the structure of the Lambeth Conference? The ideas of an Anglican Covenant, of law and self-governance. The controversy surrounding the consecration of an openly gay bishop by The Episcopal Church. Concern over new Rites in the church such as "Blessing of Same Sex Unions." Poverty. Mission.

The Lambeth Conference is a gathering of Anglican bishops by the invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, held once every ten years. For an overview of Lambeth, the conferences began in 1867 when the Old Testament theology of a South African bishop sparked controversy within the Anglican Communion. The calling of the Lambeth Conference was not the calling of a synod or governing body. Its purpose was to bring bishops together in order to discuss the controversy face to face.



Lambeth Reflections opening prayer and song, led by the Rev. Jack Zamboni, St. Francis, Dunellen, NJ. Photo courtesy Dot Cellini.

The purpose of the 2008 Lambeth gathering was for prayer, scripture study and reflection for Anglican bishops. The 1998 Lambeth followed a parliamentary model, which was not the intent nor the purpose of past Lambeth gatherings. The 2008 Lambeth also offered daily video journals, which are available online.

Before the Lambeth Conference officially began, Archbishop Rowan Williams led a 3-day retreat for the bishops. Most of the bishops agreed that this retreat was an important event for them. It grounded them spiritually in a way that helped them be present to conversations at the subsequent conference.

Province II is comprised of the following dioceses: Albany, Central New York, Convocation of American Churches in Europe, Haiti, Long Island, New Jersey, New York, Newark, Rochester, the Virgin Islands, and Western New York.

The Rev. Gordon Graham

**Henry Luce III Professor of Philosophy & the Arts,
Princeton Theological Seminary; Anglican priest**

Though Professor Graham was ordained as a priest in the Scottish Episcopal Church, he was originally Irish. He opened with a story the Irish tell when a person asks for directions: "If I wanted to get there, I wouldn't start from

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Gordon Graham,

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here.” He thought that applicable to the issues confronting the Anglican Communion right now. He does not see the task as one of rebuilding trust, recovering the spirit of Anglicanism or discerning the workings of the Holy Spirit. The past decade has shown that it cannot be done.

Under “Anglicanism,” the Oxford Dictionary of the Church states

that the key to Anglicanism comes from the Book of Common Prayer and its combination of Protestantism and Catholicism. A church emerged that could be all things to all people, meaning that this church was not committed to one doctrine, which was an Elizabethan sentiment enforced by British law.

Some elevated this broad notion of Anglicanism to mean that there was no “litmus test,” nothing that they must believe, therefore nothing that they do believe. Because of this line of reasoning, Graham finds the notion to “respect differences” too easy a solution. In general, all Christians should find a way to respect differences in faith, as all faithful people are striving to discern God’s call in the world.

For a long time the Anglican Church was united by the 1662 Book of Common Prayer, although the Communion actually began about 110 years earlier. In 1690 a Protestant became King of England, while in Scotland the official church became the Presbyterian Church. This shift in Scotland left only eight Church of England bishops in that region. After the American Revolution, the leaders of the Anglican Church in America wanted bishops. The difficulty was that any bishop consecrated in the Church of England had to swear allegiance to the British throne. So, the first American bishops were consecrated by bishops from Scotland, where that vow could be omitted.

Why did the young Episcopal Church go to all this trouble in order to consecrate bishops? Why not just elevate individuals to that position? The answer lies in the fact that while breaking with the central church, the Episcopal leadership still wanted to claim the inheritance of being part of the holy, apostolic church, a church which acknowledged the validity of the sacraments across the Communion.

When people move around within the Communion, they



The Rev. Gordon Graham. Photo Dot Cellini.

find differences. For example, some women ordained in some parts of the Communion are not recognized as priests in other parts. There are also differences in organization. For example, a bishop in South India was ordained to Congregational Ministry—not an ordained priest—but in their experience of Communion, that person can still become a bishop.

Graham was also struck by the ease with which the tensions over human sexuality have been presented as between The Episcopal Church and the African Churches. For a better perspective, remember that there are critics within The Episcopal Church and critics within our own dioceses. He believes that the hope of the Communion is by trying to be honest and saying what matters.

Clerics throughout the Communion are ordained in the holy, catholic and apostolic church. The pillars of Anglicanism are scripture, reason and tradition. As long as these remain central, the Communion will remain intact. If all of the Provinces are self-governing and are clear on what regulates their Province, as well as what is common to the faith, then these tensions become a matter of order, not theology.

However, Graham is a philosopher, and for him the fundamental question is: do we really want to resolve the conflict present within the Anglican Communion? Yes, there is deep confusion existing within the Communion—but do we really want to be clear? Is the heart of the matter a theological issue?

Graham is not so certain. Perhaps the true crux is determining what matters most. Is the divide more ethical or more theological? If ethical, then the arguments center on rights—such as the rights of the poor or the rights of lesbian, gay and transgender. He does not yet see that the church is called to set “rights.” For example, no one has the right to be ordained. Ordination is a gift from God and a call to service. Therefore refusing someone ordination is not a denial of a fundamental right. So the church is giving itself a power that it does not deserve. Issues of sexuality in the ordination process is a matter of discipline for Graham because it is about what conditions each Province decides for ordination.

The question is not about sexuality, it is about sin. Is a professed way of life, such as same-sex relationships, sinful? Those who have difficulty with homosexuality do not think that one sin should be picked out over another. The trouble comes with the belief that one who continues to live with an avowed sin in their life should not be ordained.

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Gordon Graham, *continued from page 2.*

The Episcopal Church was asked to suspend certain offices (e.g. Blessing of Same Sex Unions), which is an impossible request because the regulation of and saying of Offices is up to each individual Province. It is not up to the entire Communion. The important task is to understand that conservative bishops are not voicing old prejudices, nor are liberal bishops signing up for an agenda by going the way of the world.

The next questions we must ask are: what is the cost of failure? What is the prize if our differences are worked out? As things stand, God is still worshipped. If the Communion splinters, the Gospel will still be proclaimed. What price will we have to pay? Perhaps not a very large one.

Gene Robinson
Bishop of New Hampshire

Although Bishop Robinson was not invited to Lambeth by Archbishop Williams, Robinson went to England during the conference. He maintained a presence on the campus for two reasons: 1) to witness to the power of God working in his life—God’s forgiveness and grace; and 2) an unwillingness to let Lambeth meet and pretend that lesbian, gay and transgender people do not exist.

Emotionally, Robinson found the experience a roller coaster—at times devastating and at others uplifting. He grounded himself spiritually by worshipping every morning with a group of friars and was also able to spend time with Brothers from Melanesia.

During Lambeth, each Province (here referring to the collective of dioceses under an archbishop or presiding bishop which may encompass one or more countries—in the United States, this is The Episcopal Church), held sessions of their House of Bishops. Robinson was not allowed to attend those meetings, and found it difficult and lonely to be separated from his own House of Bishops when they met. He was also not permitted to participate in the Walk of Witness in London for the Millennium Development Goals. And when all of the other bishops were having tea with the Queen, Robinson had tea with an AIDS/HIV group.

Several private meetings were arranged for those bishops who wanted to talk with him. There were two evening receptions for Robinson—one with 110 bishops and a second with 80 bishops. One of the Indian bishops spoke of how much more difficult his ministry was since Robinson had been ordained. This bishop did not place any blame on Robinson, but just gave a description of his experi-

ences. This incident reinforces Robinson’s opinion that Archbishop Williams was right in making the conference about relationship and conversation.



The Rt. Rev. Gene Robinson.
Photo courtesy Dot Cellini.

In 1998 the Lambeth homosexuality working group had come up with a statement that Robinson agrees with—the Anglican Communion is not of one mind regarding homosexuality, yet we should still be fiercely committed to one another while still disagreeing. Robinson admits that he is perfectly happy to be in a church with those who disagree with him. For him, the most problematic aspect to the Lambeth Conference was the refusal of the English bishops to acknowledge the reality of lesbian, gay and transgender people within their own communities.

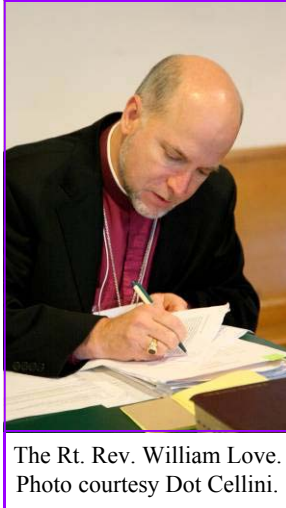
Robinson also wondered why there was talk of “instruments of unity” instead of “instruments of communion.” Furthermore, what had happened to the 1998 Lambeth covenant about mission? He sees great difficulty ahead if the Anglican Communion becomes the Anglican Church, with a central governing body setting rules. That would make us part of a very different sort of group. Currently, it is this flexibility for the churches of the Anglican Communion to adapt their governance structures for the local community that is its greatest strength.

What is at stake theologically? At the end of the Gospel, Jesus says, “much I would teach you, but you can’t bear right now.” Is the ministry of lesbian, gay and transgender people within the church of the Holy Spirit? Is it part of God’s will? As when women took on different leadership roles within the church (i.e.—ordination), it will take a while to figure out. Are we being prophetic or crazy? Prophetic or faithful?

It is very important to hold on to one another while we are trying to figure this out. In the meantime, we need to treat each other with respect. Robinson feels positive about the Anglican Communion, that it wants to work together in mission. Most leaders see homosexuality near the bottom of the list of major issues affecting their ministry—the greatest of which are malaria, poverty and starvation.

**William Love
Bishop of Albany**

Bishop Love found that the majority of bishops at the Lambeth Conference were what can be termed as “conservative” or “orthodox.” With those from the West, i.e. the United States, who are more liberal, there is a need to re-build trust and relationship. Love also found that there was some anger from the conservative bishops that those who participated in Gene Robinson’s consecration were invited to Lambeth.



The Rt. Rev. William Love.
Photo courtesy Dot Cellini.

Much of the conference was structured to enable people to listen to one another. He thought there was a flaw in this, in that the process is not over until all felt heard. For some people the process will not end until their view points are accepted. There was much talk of reconciliation within the Anglican Communion.

Love questions the possibility of reconciliation. He believes that there are irreconcilable theological differences within the Communion. For example he sees those advocating gay rights in the Church as declaiming the need for equal justice. One result is that Christians in Muslim countries become more persecuted as the Anglican Church opens up the road to gay rights. Thus the actions of one group within the Communion are creating life-threatening situations for another.

In addition, the longer the debate goes on, the more distracted we become from the Gospel. Consequently, Love supports the idea of an Anglican Covenant which would provide clarity of identity and relationship among the different parts of the Communion. Yet even the discussions of an Anglican Covenant reveal the vast differences among Anglicans throughout the world. Those in the West hesitate because of the perceived strictures imposed by such a document. Others hesitate because of the legalistic nature of a covenant. Loves sees the covenant as necessary because he believes that confusion over the nature of the Communion is at least in part at the root of the divisions. In reality, the Anglican Communion is dependent on the relationships of bishops with each other and with the Archbishop of Canterbury. Because of this dependence, it is important to figure out these relationships.

Love objects to the suggestion that tensions on human

sexuality were a matter of discipline and not theology. For example, the issues of women’s ordination and homosexuality seemed to be brought together, with one justifying the other. Love does not believe that they should be lumped together. Paul wrote contradictory statements regarding the function of woman in leadership roles within the church. In addition, when Christ rose from the dead, he first shared the great news with women. Scripture is more clear on homosexuality.

Love recognizes that there are different understandings of the authority of scripture. Is scripture the Word of God or not? Is it the inspired living Word of God? Some parts of the bible are history, some law, some poetry—which means that not all is subject to literal interpretation. But how do you go about distinguishing the differences?

There is also the matter of discipline within living out ordination vows, and repentance when failing to live up to those vows. Some people say that it is all about sex, and we need to struggle with how sex reflects, blesses, honors, and glorifies God. The question, as Robinson asked, is it of God to include lesbian, gay, and transgender people in ministry? This is a personal and passionate issue for everyone because sexuality is such a tremendous force. But it is not just an issue of homosexual behavior but also heterosexual behavior, such as the ramifications of single parents of unwanted children.



Knudson and Graham looking on as Bishop Love speaks. Photo courtesy Dot Cellini.

For Bishop Love, frustration occurs when discussions on sexuality are turned into an argument that it is not, especially when it turns to abuse. Yes, homosexuals have suffered abuse. Yet the church has gone too far in responding to those in homosexual relationships. How does the church love and help those in homosexual life-styles,

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William Love, *continued from page 4.*

when the church loves but cannot bless. Bishop Love makes the distinction between orientation and lifestyle. The question is not whether God loves homosexuals, because God loves all.

Although Bishop Love sees great division within the Communion and the Church, the thing that gives him hope, is that from the very beginning this church has always had something to argue about. This issue is not different, as long as there is always a part that the Holy Spirit can work in and through.

He believes that the very real state of division in The Episcopal Church and Anglican Communion stem from the interpretation and understanding of holy scripture and how best to involve homosexuals in the life of the church. The church is divided by irreconcilable differences, but that does not mean that different sides necessarily have to be a part. How do we let people be who they are? We re-orient around theological or pastoral boundaries. But we should stop looking at the conservative or the liberal as the enemy that must be destroyed. Evil is the true enemy. So the real question becomes, how do we be brothers and sisters in Christ and build up the Kingdom in one another, remaining open to God's plan of life and resurrection.

Bishop Love thinks that there is an injustice in embracing people who live a homosexual lifestyle. By sanctifying homosexual relationships, we leave no room for repentance. As a person who regards the behavior as sinful, Bishop Love feels that it would be doing them an injustice by saying to someone that they could continue living a sinful life. By asking the church to bless same sex unions, the church is then encouraging people to live in a state of sin. Bishop Love is trying not to judge, but to live out the Christian life.

In the bible study groups, the bishops focused on the "I Am" statements. Archbishop Burundi said during the course of their studies: "Before the Anglican Communion was, I AM." No matter the outcome of the divisions and turmoil within the Anglican Communion, Christ and his

people, His Church, will go on.



The Rt. Rev. Chilton Knudsen. Photo courtesy Dot Cellini.

Chilton Knudsen
Bishop of Maine, retired

One item that struck Knudson was Bishop Love's statement: Before the Anglican Communion was, I AM. This points to the question of, not who is the Anglican Communion, but who is God? If the Anglican Communion does not survive, God still reigns.



The Rt. Rev. Chilton Knudsen. Photo courtesy Dot Cellini.

Knudsen also heard both Love and Robinson talk about the importance of trust. She found trust

an enormous gift. During Lambeth, she found herself meeting people whose views were very different. Yet they told each other stories of trust. They dared to let the self be truly known to one another. One bishop who had verbally belittled her in their Indaba group kissed her ring at the end of the conference. Trust developed and respect was earned.

At the 2008 Lambeth there was a fascinating blend of culture and language. For example, every time the Lord's Prayer was said, each individual spoke the words in their native language. Although the result was a cacophony of sound, the impression was one of harmony. Knudsen was also struck that the older and powerful bishops were shepherded, guided and protected by youth (the Stewards).

The first Lambeth Conference with women bishops present was in 1998. While some of the male bishops were opening and welcoming, others were uncomfortable. At this Lambeth, the normalization of women bishops was beginning. Knudsen found there was open engagement of how it was like to be a woman bishop. She was even asked by others how they might support women clergy in their diocese.

Knudsen was an Indaba animateur (a facilitator for an Indaba group), in which she experienced what she termed the holiness of the teabag. They had tea before the Indaba groups. However, she usually missed it because of her responsibilities as animateur. In her Indaba group there were several bishops displeased with the process. The one who most disagreed with, wound up bringing her tea each day. So grace was present in the midst of disagreement.

In her discussions with bishops from around the world she discovered how great the chasm was and how large the differences in the Anglican Communion. For example, she

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met one person who had been a bishop for two years in a newly made diocese of 90 churches. He had no office, no house, no staff, and no money. She was also asked by a bishop from Africa who was baffled by the concept of homosexuality: how come in the U.S. men go with men? Are there not enough women?

During the talk on domestic violence, bishops and spouses were separated by gender—because even among bishops discussions on violence and gender was not a safe space. We should keep asking what it is that being human really means. In an age where people and sex is a commodity, the church has to talk about sexuality, and not just about homosexuality.

The structures of the conversations at Lambeth were not designed to change anyone’s mind. Instead, the purpose was to come to a deep understanding of positions held and recognize that these differences do not have to be resolved before we can do mission together. In order to be faithful to one another, we have to offer ourselves in vulnerability to each other. We need to continue these conversations about the mysteries of human sexuality. We also need to remember that the People of God find ways to serve God through the grace of God.

Pierre Whalon
Bishop of the Convocation of American Churches in Europe

Bishop Whalon said that during Lambeth he learned how little he knows. He believes that the only facet of Anglicanism that is comprehensive for all groups in the belief in the Trinity, and the death and resurrection of Jesus. His question is—do we really follow Jesus?

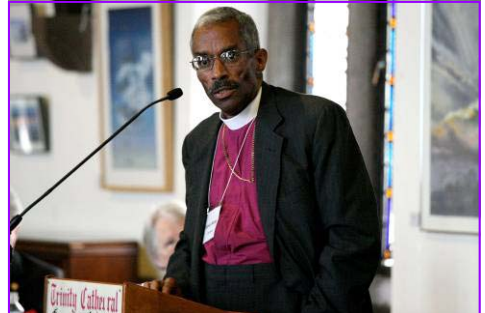
Since World War II, the U.S. has been in a state of introspection, of which it is now coming out. The world is interconnected, yet wide and deep. The gap is also present, yet wide and deep. Communication is also a problem. 1) Christians talk about love of each other, but cannot stand each other. Christians trust in Jesus, but not in each other. 2) We do not practice love, justice or mercy, and no longer have the structures in place to do either.



The Rt. Rev. Pierre Whalon.
Photo courtesy Dot Cellini.

Orris G. Walker, Jr.
Bishop of Long Island

Bishop Walker wanted to take time to remind people that the American Revolution was a revolt against England, and subsequently altered the life of the Anglican Church in the United States.



The Rt. Rev. Orris G. Walker.
Photo courtesy Dot Cellini.

With the antagonism between the two countries after the Revolution, the American Anglican Church (Episcopal Church) was without bishops for a significant period of time. Why? Because of the emphasis placed on Apostolic succession.

However, the organizational result was that the laity in the U.S. had to step up and take greater roles in leadership in the early Episcopal Church. Even after bishops were consecrated for leading the Episcopal dioceses, a high emphasis on the Baptismal covenant remained. This view of the ministry of the baptized is not the same in all parts of the Anglican Communion. Walker believes the time is ripe throughout the Communion for an examination of the part of the baptismal covenant where we swear to “respect the dignity of every human being.” Walker thinks that the whole Episcopacy experience, such as Lambeth, is outdated, that the whole of the Communion should be involved—lay, clerics and episcopates.

During this, Walker’s third Lambeth Conference, he found the sharing in small groups profound and real. His group also had a great deal of laughter. His Indaba group was a very powerful experience. During the pre-Lambeth retreat, Archbishop Williams asked each bishop to go around the Minster, find someone they did not like, and pray with them. Walker had one difficulty. Everywhere he went, he only found friends.

And yes, while they were struggling with what it means to be Anglican, they were also able to recognize the beauty within the Anglican Communion which is the ability to hold extremes together.

James Ottley
Assisting Bishop of Long Island



The Rt. Rev James Ottley. Photo courtesy Dot Cellini.

The 2008 Lambeth Conference was Bishop Ottley’s third such event. He went with preconceived ideas, thinking that they would be dealing with a Covenant, and leaving very confused. Instead, he found that the bishops began with misunderstandings in their Indaba groups, but left as friends.

Ottley also talked about the spouses conference which was occurring simultaneously with the Lambeth Conference. The spouses decided that they wanted to give a presentation on violence, focusing on the story from 2 Samuel 13—the rape of Tamar. This tremendously powerful presentation focused on how violence is a spiral, and how we respond to violence with violence, so that grace eludes us.

Ottley ended his remarks with the following observation: Since we receive the message of salvation in different ways, that affects how we interact with each other.

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J. Michael Garrison
Bishop of Western New York

Bishop Garrison experienced both awe and frustration at Lambeth. He was awed by the Canterbury Cathedral retreat with the Archbishop. He felt frustration with the struggle to keep it together—with the ones who chose not to be there and for those excluded.



The Rt. Rev. J. Michael Garrison. Photo courtesy Dot Cellini.

He felt awe within the small groups, and that they were able to use bible study to get beyond their differences and find opportunities for mission. The Indaba groups were both awe-inspiring and frustrating. In the Indaba process, a group comes together for conversation in order to resolve conflict. Yet this process was overlaid with the Western need to produce reports.

Throughout discussions with bishops from around the world, Garrison found a lack of understanding of the piety of the U.S. Church. He asked, why do we think that we can be of one mind? We never have been before. We gather together at events such as Lambeth, only to be scattered in mission. If we cannot focus on mission, then we do deserve to die—but Garrison does not believe that is where we are going.

The last service at Canterbury Cathedral was very impressive. Towards the end of the service, Melanesian Brothers chanted a Litany of Martyrs as they walked to the Chapel of the Saints and Martyrs of Our Own Age. As they moved, their chanting grew fainter. When at the Chapel, they presented Archbishop Williams with a list of their martyred brothers. It was an extraordinarily moving event.

Sylvestre Romero
Assistant Bishop of New Jersey

Bishop Romero summed up this Lambeth Conference with one word: relationship. He had been a priest in The Episcopal Church before becoming Bishop of Belize. So even though his see was in the Province of West Indies, he had much more in common with the direction The Episcopal Church was heading. Because of this he found the 1998 Lambeth Conference very tense, and was not looking forward to this Lambeth experience.



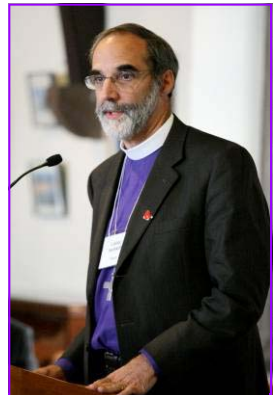
The Rt. Rev. Sylvestre Romero. Photo courtesy Dot Cellini.

However, the shape of the 2008 Lambeth Conference was very engaging for Romero, as it centered around sharing and discussions of experiences. More importantly, his wife Eva Romero enjoyed the spouses conference. Both conferences were structured so that the two were able to worship together, making the worship experiences much more positive.

Romero created many new relationships with his Anglican colleagues. He discovered that in the poorest diocese, the Diocesan Bishop is the entire diocesan staff. He returned to the U.S. much more keenly aware that bishops need to be revealing Christ as a living model for their dioceses, and not just burdened with administration.

Mark Beckwith
Bishop of Newark

After the 1998 Lambeth, the Windsor Report was generated. Bishop Beckwith thinks that this report was very British—focused on establishing authority and subsidiary relationships and punitive directed. The 2008 Lambeth focused more on covenant, which created a very different approach to faith—story through bible study and through personal experiences.



The Rt. Rev. Mark Beckwith. Photo courtesy Dot Cellini.

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Beckwith was astonished at the disparity of wealth among the bishops present. For example, in the evenings many bishops had discussions over a pint in the pub. Half of the bishops at Lambeth could not afford a pint. It is important to recognize the completely different contexts throughout the Anglican Communion in terms of wealth.

There were people present at Lambeth who were upset with the state of the Anglican Communion. There were people absent from the gathering intent on discrediting the Anglican Communion. Beckwith kept calling to mind a variation on Psalm 23, “Yea though I walk through the valley of dread...” Though during the conference, he found moments that led out of dread into hope. He suspects that we may all have to live in a place of dread for a while until God leads us into a place of truth and hope.

George Councill
Bishop of New Jersey

Although Bishop Councill thought the bible study groups were worth the whole trip and the foundation of the conference, he saw sharp disagreement among bishops, especially around the interpretation of scripture. Each bishop had a choice of lecture series to attend during the conference. Among the ones Councill attended was one given by Richard Burridge, a New Testament scholar and Dean of King’s College, London. Councill found the negative reactions to the lectures dispiriting. There were many people critical of The Episcopal Church in addition to those from Africa, from places such as Canada, Scotland, and New Zealand. Councill realized that some of the difficulties gripping the Anglican Church stems from the reality that the Communion does not share a hermeneutic.

Councill also wondered how do we go about the business of consulting with other parts of the Communion. As the Indaba groups went on, he began to hear questions from those who previously just discounted The Episcopal Church. Indaba roughly means: a sustained conversation about a matter important to the community. Thus the bishops were called to go to a deeper place, which made this Lambeth at times, very different from past events. Councill started to hear statements that were followed by “but I may be wrong.” This small shift in language gave Councill hope for the future of the Communion.



The Rt. Rev. George Councill. Photo courtesy Dot Cellini.



Bishop Council’s birthday happened to be on 4 October. Bishop Romero arranged a surprise during lunch: a mariachi band serenading Bishop Council. Photo courtesy Dot Cellini.

At the end of the conference, each bishop was asked to turn to the person next to them and ask, “What did you think?” Councill turned to a Sudanese bishop, who proceeded to tell him for 10 minutes what he thought wrong with The Episcopal Church. However he ended by saying, “we don’t like what you did by consecrating Bishop Robinson or understand it and are critical of what you did, but we want to work with you and find a way forward.”

The final paper is a snapshot of what is going on in the community of those present at Lambeth at that time. Councill went to listen to others, but also to bear witness to our ministry of gay and lesbian brothers and sisters. The pain and listening was very real. For example, the Archbishop of Sudan had people who have died in his area over the actions of The Episcopal Church.

Councill came away from Lambeth renewed in his faith. He came away with a much more profound understanding that people have died for the Gospel, and that his purpose is also to die for this and follow Jesus Christ.



Bishop George Councill, Canon Servio Moscoso and Dean René John clap to the music of the mariachi band. Photo courtesy Dot Cellini.