



Pray Lambeth Bulletin is Produced by SOMA UK and Crosswinds Prayer Trust

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Thank you for registering. We really appreciate that you are making time to offer your fellowship in prayer for the 2008 Lambeth Conference.

These daily prayer bulletins will be sent to all those who have so requested. They are in many parts of the world. In the UK we have massive media coverage – and anyone can become well-informed if they have time and energy to wade through the press coverage.

But in some regions people have far less access to such a welter of information. Accordingly, these bulletins will bear in mind the diversity of recipients and not regard the tangled strands of the Canterbury scenario as self-evident.

As well as informing and equipping prayer partners around the globe, we would welcome insights and feedback, which can be directed through the Contact Link above.

Every Blessing

**Canon John Simons & Rev Stephen Dinsmore**



## Today in Lambeth

- Most of the bishops have now arrived in Kent, and will have a fairly gentle start to the conference. These first three days will be spent in retreat "reflecting on God's mission and a bishop's discipleship". Then on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> comes a very purple passage, as the bishops fill Canterbury Cathedral, as they share in a spectacular opening celebration.

As has been widely reported, the Anglican Church is in a seriously fragmented condition, as the 10-yearly Lambeth event begins. In early July, an alternative conference ([GAFCON](#)) was held in Jerusalem, attended by many hundreds of dissenting bishops – those who are opposed to the liberal drift in various parts of the Communion, reflecting a drift from the authority of Scripture. Most of these GAFCON bishops will stay away from Lambeth 2008. A short overview of the issues over which sharp divisions (even schism) could emerge can be found on the BBC website at the 'More' link >

**More:**

- Points for Prayer: 'Lambeth is a response to an invitation'**

It is important to remember that the Anglican Communion is a voluntary fellowship, not bound together and steered by bureaucratic legislatures nor top-down executive authority. Rather, Anglicanism has been in essence a matter of mutual loyalty, sustained by the common counsel reached by the bishops in conference.

Rowan Williams does not have any comparable power to enforce compliance to that of the Pope. However, while the ship of this church may sail through the decades of calm waters without too many problems, things get very different when the river has rocks and rapids, as now. There is plenty of current scope for mutiny, castaways, drownings and shipwreck. Maybe even piracy! Rowan Williams urgently needs our prayers as he hangs on to the helm amid rough water, opposing currents and even personal attacks from crew members.

Despite all this, the Archbishop has said to his fellow bishops, "**C o m e**". Jesus also said '*Come to Me, all who are weary and carrying heavy burdens*'. Even without the draining squabbles, most bishops work very long hours, and are constantly pushed to the limits by the pressures of their service. And so it is good that the Conference begins with a three-day opportunity for rest and reflection (rather than debate).

Jesus also said '*Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me*'. The Greek word for yoke is 'chrestos' which means well-fitting. It is doubtful whether Jesus, the Carpenter of Nazareth, had a shelf full of 'one-size-fits-all-yokes'. Each one was bespoke. Equally, each bishop has a different local task and is a different personality.

So Lambeth is a unique opportunity for each bishop to come, to rest, and to learn afresh of the distinctive yoke given him or her by the Master Carpenter. Also, as the days unfold, to learn from each other as to how, and why the yoke of 2008 can chafe. And that will take grace and humility. So perhaps another watchword as we pray over the next 21 days for Lambeth from the relative safety of the pews and pulpits, lies in the words of St Peter:

*All of you, clothe yourselves with humility, because God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Therefore, humble yourselves under God's mighty hand, that He may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you* 1 Peter 5:5-7

**A Prayer:** Lord of the church and nations, have mercy on all your servants who bear the burden of Anglican

leadership at this time. Grant them rest for mind and body; wisdom to find the way forward ; and humility to listen to one another, and to discern what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

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