



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

ISSUE 08 **Website** **Contact Us** **Donations** **Print Version** **Friday 25 July '08**

Since the first Lambeth Conference, in 1867, things have certainly changed vastly.

A century earlier, Voltaire memorably observed that the English bishops were "forced to content themselves with one wife only, and that generally their own". Certainly the Conference organisers were not expecting more than one spouse per bishop! And nowadays the Conference is beset with the issues of same-sex partners around the dioceses they lead (or, in the case of Gene Robinson, of some gate-crashing that would never have happened in the good old days.)

As one contributor has observed: If God had wanted homosexual partnerships, he would have created two Adams and two Eves and invited humans to pair up as they pleased.

Yesterday, was a welcome lull in the proceedings, as the bishops moved to London for what looks to have been an influential act of witness.

Please pray - and also encourage other intercessors you know to join this prayer team around the world - at www.praylambeth.org

John Simons (on behalf of the team)



Today in Lambeth

Friday's Agenda:

Here is Friday's agenda. **HINT!** - If the image is not displaying below, you may need to 'right click' to download the graphic, or check your email software settings. Click 'Print Version' above to print the Prayer Bulletin.

Friday 25th July 2008

ORDINARY DAY 4 SERVING TOGETHER: THE BISHOP AND OTHER CHURCHES			
TIME	EVENT	DETAILS	LOCATION
06:30	Morning Prayer	With the Chaplaincy Team	Prayer Place
07:15	Morning Worship	Eucharist: The Church of North India and the Church of Bangladesh	Big Top
08:15	Breakfast		Eliot/Rutherford Dining Rooms
09:15	Bible Study Groups	John 8 : 31 – 59 Jesus said to them, 'Very truly I tell you, before Abraham was, I am'	Allocated Bible Study Rooms in Eliot
10:30	Tea		Keynes Lobby
11:00	Indaba Groups	Serving Together – The Bishop and Other Churches	Keynes Building
13:00	Lunch		Eliot/Rutherford Dining Rooms and other outlets
14:00	Provincial meetings		See page 42
15:30	Tea		Keynes Lobby
16:00	Self-Select Sessions	See details on pages 24 – 41	Various
17:45	Evening Worship	Led by the Spouses' Conference	Big Top
19:00	Evening Meal		Eliot/Rutherford Dining Rooms
20:15	Plenary Session	Given the Ecological Crisis, what is the role of the Church ? Professor Chris Rapley OBE – Director of the Science Museum since 2007. A well known expert in climate change who was previously Director of the British Antarctic Survey.	Big Top
21:45	Night Prayer		Prayer Place

Pray: Please feel free to use the agenda in whatever way you like to prompt your prayer cover over the day's proceedings. Click the more link to the right to find further information from the main Lambeth Conference website.

More:

Secrecy and the 'Numbers Game'

A number of people who have registered to receive these bulletins from www.praylambeth.org have inquired of us as to the relative numbers of bishops who attended GAFCON (in Jerusalem) and those at Canterbury. We have also had requests for information as to which bishops are in the UK, from intercessors who wish to pray for every bishop from their nation, by name.

Alas, even the bishops themselves have rather scant knowledge of what is taking place. Unlike past Lambeth Conferences, there is no daily newspaper and what information that can be gleaned from official channels is available only to those bishops who can access the Internet with laptop computers.

For the first time in its history, the Lambeth Conference has refused to list which bishops are present, or how many, citing the 1998 Data Protection Act. (It is believed the number is around 650 of 880 invited). Inquiries last week were met with the response that a roster of bishops present would be provided once registration closed on July 20, 2008.

Subsequent inquiries by ReligiousIntelligence.com were answered by saying the list was a secret, and the reasons for keeping it secret, were secret! In the same way, GAFCON information is only approximate, we understand, in reply to those who wondered how many attending were retired bishops.

Pray: for the bishops you know about - and commend them all each day to the Lord of the harvest. Please also remember in prayer the ones who are not there, by choice or circumstances.

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From the Conference...

■ Doing the Lambeth Walk

The famous song dates from the 1930's, from the musical 'Me and my Girl', being a cockney story about 'first love' almost lost amid the stark contrasts of wealth and destitution. Any time you're Lambeth way, Any evening, any day, You'll find us all, Doin' the Lambeth Walk.

Today in London, a similar, yet rather different Lambeth message was proclaimed. Up to 670 Anglican bishops and other faith leaders and leaders of charitable Aid agencies, were marching from Whitehall past the Houses of Parliament to Lambeth Palace today to call for an end to world poverty.

Gordon Brown described the march of hundreds of the world's religious leaders today as "the greatest public demonstration of faith" Britain had ever seen. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, led the bishops, who are attending the Lambeth Conference, as they moved slowly and silently past Westminster.

They carried a banner telling governments to Keep the Promise to Halve Poverty by 2015 which was part of the Millennium Development Goals set in 2000. Rowan Williams handed a letter to Prime Minister Gordon Brown, saying the church could not stand silently by and let promises be broken. "In our human family the continuing consequence of failure is the death of millions of women and children from childbirth and preventable childhood diseases," the letter said. "Millions more have hopes for sustainable life diminished because of poverty-fuelled conflict, lack of education and gender inequality, all of which undermine a new generation's liberation from HIV." Climate change, global trade and economics were also having an impact on poverty, the letter said.

The Prime Minister told the bishops, who had been joined by up to 1,500 faith leaders, diplomats, politicians and heads of charities, on the March, that "100 years is too long to wait for justice and that is why we must act now".

Mr Brown joined Dr Williams in warning the world that time was running out if the goal to halve poverty by 2015 was to be achieved. He told the bishops and their spouses gathered in the courtyard of Lambeth Palace that the world owed a "debt of gratitude" to their dioceses for the work they do in "upholding the cause of the poor." He said that people of faith had helped to bring an end to apartheid and the Cold War and were at the forefront of eradicating poverty – able to reach areas that governments and other organisations couldn't reach. Mr Brown told the bishops at the rally: "This is one of the greatest public demonstrations of faith that this country has ever seen." You have sent a simple, a very clear message, with rising force that poverty can be eradicated, poverty must be eradicated and if we all work together for change poverty will be eradicated.

BBC television coverage of the event was extensive and sympathetic - none of the reporters sought to score points by comparing the high cost of the Lambeth Conference with the desperate plight of the poor.

Pray: that the leaders, in church and state, will heed this act of witness - and do more to fulfil the promises made by governments at G8 gatherings.

[More:](#)

■ Vertigo

One of the new features of Lambeth 2008 are the 'blogs' (web-logs for the uninitiated) by bishops and commentators.

But the process has yielded some vivid insights. One bishop wrote: "I have the feeling we are on the edge of a 10-storey building - and the Archbishop of Canterbury is trying to talk us down without a safety net".

Rowan Williams (not in a blog) has described his own experience as being like a canary being lowered down the shaft of a deep mine, to test the toxicity of the atmosphere below.

Pray: that the Anglican Communion will avoid the precipice - and by the grace of God, find that the Shepherd leads them as

a united flock, into new pastures and beside still waters.

■ Provisional verdicts on Indabas

Dr. Phillip Aspinall, the Anglican primate of Australia, acting as chief spokesman for the conference, offered a weary prognosis after Sunday's Eucharist of what the talking might achieve. "The last Lambeth Conference didn't resolve our differences, the one before that didn't resolve them, and this one won't, either," he said. "That's the journey of life, until the Lord returns, I'm afraid."

Some bishops are quite negative about the Indabas – seeing them as a ploy to prevent discussion by keeping the real issues under the surface; and thus a lid to prevent decision-making. However, there are more optimistic assessments.

The Bishop of Croydon, Nick Baines, is one of those who are finding initial grounds to be positive about the Indaba process. In his blog, he wrote:

An American in my group pointed out that the Indaba process involves time and space and we are finding the limited time and controlled agenda doesn't fit it a Lambeth conference. However, an African bishop helpfully suggested that if we were to do Indaba properly, we would all have to be African anyway and couldn't be in a 'temporary community' such as this conference.

I ventured the suggestion that this process enables every voice to be heard and was corrected by another African who said that the priority is not actually that the voices be heard, but that everyone takes responsibility for the process and the outcomes. The Indaba creates the relational space in which the issue can be identified and discussed, resolutions offered and agreed, and responsibility taken for the implementation and consequences.

Now, that is what is happening! We agreed that we would concentrate on certain key issues and that we would own our process - which might mean staying up all night until we have got somewhere with it. I know that some bishops here will say that this is fine for us, but it isn't happening in their groups. My answer is dead simple: make it happen!

If this had been part of any other process, parties would have adopted their positions, entrenched their defences and played the debating game to get their way and their words (in resolutions). But the process thus far has allowed a different sort of conversation in which people are ready to speak and to listen without having to force a conclusion right now. Call me naive, but I think this is a much more mature approach to conflict resolution and I have experienced something completely new in it.

Pray: for patient perseverance among the bishops, to listen to each other, and to allow time for this discussion process to yield benefit.

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Global Input...

■ Steering the Ship

We received a picture of a large ship. Time and space is needed to change direction. A small rudder is sufficient, but it keeps on moving - sometimes it has to move a bit backwards in order to find the right direction forwards. Patience is needed for the direction to emerge. Big ferries are delayed by small yachts - the irritants we prayed would be turned into pearls earlier in the week. Steam must give way to sail.

Pray: For a calm sea to enable the work of the rudder to be most effective. That what is wind (Spirit) driven will not be steam-rollered, however small.

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