

LAMBETH CONFERENCE
DIOCESE OF ABERDEEN AND ORKENY

Monday 1 August – Day 6



The Lambeth Conference – a different view.

Before I get into today's blog, let me write again what an immense privilege it is to be here. The best moments are the unplanned conversations – with people in coffee or meal queues, or sitting next to me in the main venue hall. In the next days all kinds of stories might be in the papers – of dislocation and disagreements across the communion. But we should know better than believing stories in the papers!! In reality conservatives from the global south and more liberal people from the north and west are becoming friends. We

laugh and chat together, share news of our dioceses (and also our families). However, when it comes to ‘voting’ on issues, there could be block voting by province, and some here have to think very carefully about what they do in public, as it could lead to persecution or difficulties at home when they return. All this is understood, and there is a sense of determination to stick together and work together for the common good.

Inclusion issues

One of the subjects often mentioned here is that of ‘inclusion’. How can everyone be equally included and valued? At the same time there are some matters arising from the planning of the conference which repeatedly put some people at a disadvantage.

LAMBETH CONFERENCE 2022 SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

	Arrival Tues 26 July	Day 01 Weds 27 July	Day 02 Thurs 28 July	Day 03 Fri 29 July	Day 04 Sat 30 July	Day 05 Sun 31 July	Day 06 Mon 1 Aug	Day 07 Tues 2 Aug	Day 08 Weds 3 Aug	Day 09 Thurs 4 Aug	Day 10 Fri 5 Aug	Day 11 Sat 6 Aug	Day 12 Sun 7 Aug												
0630-0900	Breakfast																								
0630-0700	Lambeth Conference Timetable - 2022																								
0715-0800	MORNING PRAYER																								
0830	EUCARIST																								
0915	Press Briefings																								
1000	Arrivals, Registration and Campus Orientation	Welcome to Canterbury Programme Begins	BISHOPS' RETREAT Canterbury Cathedral	BISHOPS' RETREAT Canterbury Cathedral	BIBLE EXPOSITION Called into hope & holiness in Christ 1 Peter 1:1-25	OPENING SERVICE Canterbury Cathedral	BIBLE EXPOSITION A Holy People following Christ 1 Pet 2:1-12	BIBLE EXPOSITION Resistance & Resilience 1 Pet 2:13- 3:22	BIBLE EXPOSITION Suffering in Christ 1 Pet 4:1-9	BIBLE EXPOSITION Authority in Christ 1 Pet 5: 1-14	STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT	KEYNOTE ADDRESS 3 The Archbishop of Canterbury													
1115					BIBLE STUDIES		BIBLE STUDIES	BIBLE STUDIES	BIBLE STUDIES	LAMBETH CALL	Small Groups														
1145					Break		Break	Break	Break	Break	Break														
1300					SPOUSES' RETREAT University of Kent		SPOUSES' RETREAT University of Kent	SPOUSES' photo & spouses' photos	SPOUSES' RETREAT University of Kent	PLENARY Mission & Evangelism	PLENARY Life of the Communion	PLENARY Peace and Reconciliation	A DAY AT LAMBETH PALACE Environment and Sustainable Development			PLENARY Christian Unity	PLENARY Discipleship	PLENARY The Decade Ahead	Free Time						
1430										LAMBETH CALL Mission & Evangelism	PLENARY Safe Church	SEMINARS 2				LAMBETH CALL Reconciliation	PLENARY Hospitality and Generosity	LAMBETH CALL Discipleship	SEMINARS 3						
1545										SPOUSE EVENT	Break	SPOUSE EVENT				Break	Break	Break							
1615										SEMINARS 1	LAMBETH CALL Safe Church	LAMBETH CALL Anglican Identity				LAMBETH CALL Human Dignity	LAMBETH CALL Christian Unity and Inter Faith Relations	KEYNOTE ADDRESS 2 The Archbishop of Canterbury	LAMBETH CALL	1600 CLOSING SERVICE Canterbury Cathedral					
1730										Press Conferences (Times and frequency to be advised)															
1800-1830										EVENING PRAYER															
1900										Dinner															
2000										Dinner															
2030										EVENING EVENTS												CLOSING EVENT			
2130	NIGHT PRAYER																								

Included above is the Lambeth Programme. You will see that it is very full. There is something to fill every minute from early morning through to dinner time. There are addition events in the evening. What you cannot tell by looking – but we now know, is that we regularly find that events are thirty minutes walk apart. The conference is not taking place in a conference centre, but on a university campus. All of us are tired, but those who are less mobile, or who have pre-existing health conditions are particularly stretched.

So, every day we are walking miles. This is proving very difficult for many of the women who are not used t walking on pavements, or wearing western-style shoes. They are in agony with their feet. One result is an increasing tendency to miss things that require (yet another) big walk.

As bishops we are now meeting to discuss the Lambeth Calls. These are printed out for us and put on the tables – but only in English. There are two bishops on my table who do not have very good English. They find it very difficult to join in the discussions.

And one final example. Over three days we have had three different ways of assessing where the ‘mind of the room’ is with regard to the issues we are discussing. On Saturday we voted using electronic devices. Explaining how to use these proved difficult, and about a third of the bishops did not vote. Yesterday the devices had been removed, and we were instructed to show assent by remaining silent. If a person wanted to dissent, then they had to shout out – only a very brave person would do this. As a consequence there was no dissent in the room. Today we were instructed to vote by raising a hand and shouting ‘yes’ or ‘no’. Hands were not being counted, the general sense was judged by appearance and noise. For most of us the changing processes have been bewildering, but for those for whom our culture and language is strange, there was the experience of exclusion.

Now I don’t think that any of the examples above that have caused difficulties and exclusion were deliberate, but it does show how cultural assumptions can very quickly leave people out. If this keeps happening that it will be less and less clear that we are really discerning the mind of the church.

Menstruation workshop

Roger and I attended a workshop this afternoon on ‘menstruation’, one issue which causes many girls and women to be excluded from elements of society including education. This is a world-wide problem. The Bible reading for this workshop was offered by Rt Revd Eggoni Pushpalalitha from South India. She explored the story of the woman who was healed by Jesus after bleeding for twelve years (Luke 8). She considered what it means for women to be ‘unclean’.



+Eggoni was accompanied by members of the organisation 'Days for Girls'. They gave an excellent presentation on menstruation and its management by girls and women. Days for Girls are producing bags of materials that can be used each month. It was very inspiring to see and hear how a small practical project like preparing a bag could so change a girl's life.



Women Bishop's Dinner

At the end of this day there was a dinner of the women bishops. During the evening three bishops spoke about their ministries. On the left of the picture here is Rt Revd Marinez Rosa Dos Santos Bassotto of the Diocese of Amazonia, standing with Archbishop Linda Nicholls, who read +Marinez' translated speech for her.

The Province of Brazil passed legislation to allow women to be bishops, priests and deacons 33 years ago. It took 30 years for the first women to be elected bishop – which +Marinez described as a failure of 'prophetic courage'.

There are now three woman bishops in Brazil.

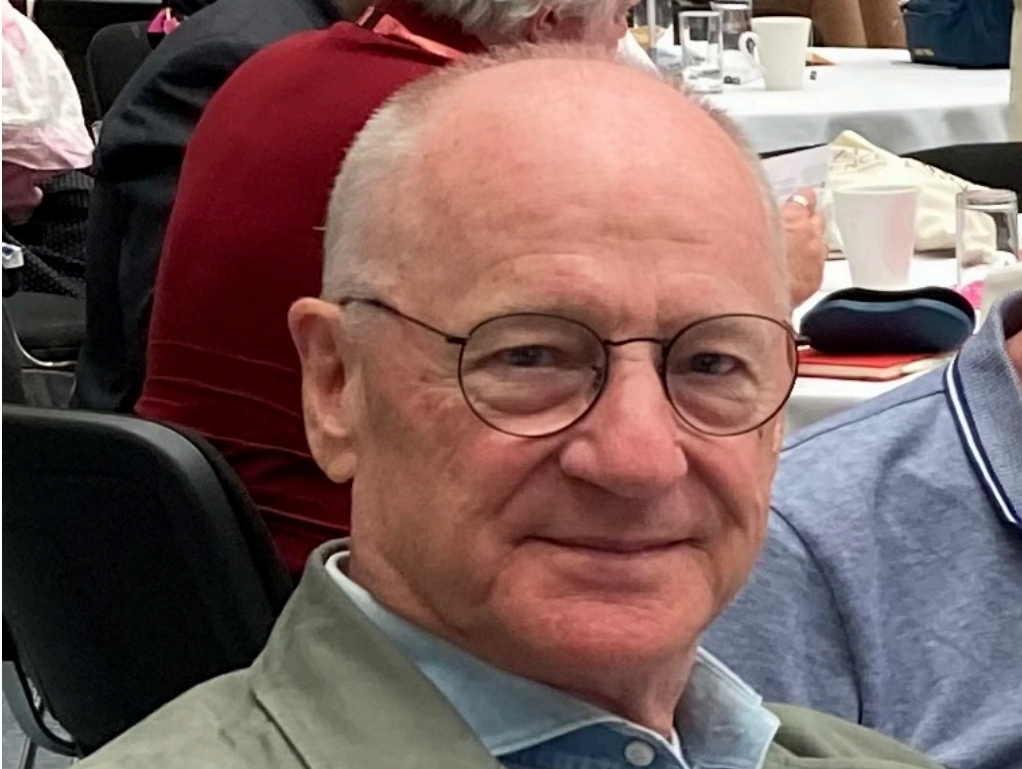
+Marinez and I will travel together to Rome and Canterbury next year, as part of the body that enables the Anglican Communion and Roman Catholic Church to relate to each other. We will be the only women in the delegation.



Spouse of the Day

Roger writes:

Men are a minority amongst the spouses - the flip-side of the gathering of bishops who are mostly male. Amongst them is Tom Bair, an actor. You can check him out on IMDB - The Post (2017 Steven Spielberg) alongside Meryl Streep and Tom Hanks!



Tom is married to Bishop Gerry Wolf (Diocese of Long Island). He is also a member of my spouses' small group for our Bible studies.

Tom is a quiet, reflective person who has been married to a woman bishop for quite some time. We have spoken and prayed together about being alongside our wives in their vocation within a western culture that aspires to gender equality but where much misogyny persists. I am grateful for the godly wisdom he has shared.