

The Future of the Anglican Communion

**A public lecture given on February 28 2005 at St. Martin-in-the-Fields, London
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I was asked by the Archbishop of Canterbury to be part of the Lambeth Commission which met on three occasions, the first and third meetings at St Georges House in Windsor (and hence the title “The Windsor Report”). The first meeting was very much a preparatory meeting chaired by Archbishop Robin Eames which looked at the issues facing the Anglican Communion. While the Commission was focussing on the ecclesiology of the Anglican Communion it became very clear to us that we could not ignore the reasons why we were there. Then we met at Kenuga in the United States principally to hear two oral submissions to the Commission, one by the Alternative Anglican Church (Bishop Bob Duncan and that group) and the other by the Presiding Bishop of ECUSA (Episcopal Church of the United States of America), Bishop Frank Griswold. Now tonight I speak as an individual and as a member. I do not speak representing the Commission or its members and I take responsibility fully for anything that I want to say.

For me, one of the great sadnesses in this Commission was the fact that after the initial meeting when we looked at the way forward and the areas that we needed to address and asked for submissions through the Anglican Communion network website and office, there were very few submissions from anyone that I would call from the liberal wing of the Church. By far the majority of submissions made to the Commission were from the Conservative point of view. Tonight I want to reflect on that a little as well. I am not going to go through chapter and verse of what is in the report, but I want to put it in the context of where I think we are as an Anglican Communion.

Ola Tjorham in a book “*Visible Church, Visible Unity*” quotes David Mills when he talks about the disintegration of the mainline churches and their collapsing institutions. I want you to try an imagine where we are on this scale:

1. At least, in the initial stages these institutions simply deny the problems, often by appealing to rhetoric of unity and diversity.
2. Institutions that have lost their shared beliefs begin to centralise. Organisational unity is given priority over lost unity in faith. Be aware that there is a call for centralisation in the Windsor Report.
3. Centralisation is followed by a massive homogenisation that is directed particularly against extremes and eccentrics.
4. As a compensation for lost unity in faith, collapsing institutions initiate a frantic invention of programmes, projects and vision statements in order to try to create some sort of unity.
5. Divisive members are expelled directly or indirectly in the hope that the leaving might restore the lost unity. I hope that is not where the Primates got to last week.

Clearly when we published the Report not everybody agreed with every word in it. It is giving away no secrets from the Commission when I tell you that at the third meeting we re-drafted the first draft considerably. There were those of us who, having seen the first

draft, worked during the long journey to the third meeting on an alternative (or at least were prepared to submit an alternative Report). The fact that there was no Minority Report indicates a considerable shift from the original draft to the final draft version. Of course there were parts of the Report where I would not want to say that 'I own that entirely'. I think that there are significant weaknesses in the Report that I would want to share with you tonight. There are also sufficient strengths for us to sign it and make a unanimous Report.

The weaknesses I see are these: -

The Commission was caught up in one view of theology, and didn't fully explore different theological thoughts and forms and theories. It was caught up very much by the Fall/Redemption view of theology at the expense of other models of theology (e.g. Creation Theology and others).. Bearing in mind, our limited time and resources, it was unrealistic for us to re-write the whole of Anglican Ecclesiology in one year, whatever the brief. I submitted for discussion a query which, because of time constraints was not tabled, relating to what I feel passionately is one of the great strengths of the Anglican Communion and that is our diversity. While we treasure this incredible breadth within Anglicanism, we acknowledge that it is simplistic to view all people in terms of one model or to assume that all people have the same world view.

I wanted the Commission to discuss a process called 'spiral dynamics', about which considerable research is being done at the moment . This looks at different world views and I want, very briefly, to share this with you tonight.

If we are to go forward as a Communion, we have to accept that we are a Communion that embraces more than one world view. We have to look very carefully at this concept of different world views. These world views are all legitimate, they are not hierarchical, it is in a matrix form, people can move from one to another and may move from one to another in certain areas of their lives.

Here are some examples: the basic instinct of survival as one world view; the animistic or magical as another one. The first would see life as being threatening and unsafe, the second ruled by unseen powers of good and evil. Another world view would be based on Truth, Order and Loyalty, governed by timeless truth and order and moral values. Personal Fulfilment is another one where success, excellence and scientific endeavour with unlimited opportunity for success and personal fulfilment of prime importance, and we can see many forms of modern spirituality round that particular world view. Equality, idealism, caring for others, ecology, serving; all life forms and individuals are interdependent. This "big picture" integrated understanding of human development shows a vast network of complex interrelationships. The last one is a fully integrated view of the cosmos where we see a global, universal village as a matrix of everything being held together. That is not an exhaustive list of world views. But if we as an Anglican Communion are going to try to hold on in different parts of the world, from the sub-continent to Europe, to North America, to Australasia, to Africa we have to take into account and make allowance for different world views. We have also to recognise that those different world views will hold different opinions at different times, and not be threatened by that.

After all we have had different views on different issues for a very long time. It is a fact that even here in liberated Britain today, you cannot have a woman Bishop yet. If a woman Bishop from North America came here you would not accept her Episcopal ministry. We are living with that impaired communion already aren't we? There are parts of Africa that do not ordain women yet and of course I could go on and on. So my one big criticism of the

Report is it adopted a simplistic one-model view of people, of Anglicans, whereas I think it is a whole lot more complicated than that.

I also think that the Report failed to recognise or encourage the prophetic voice. There was too much emphasis on the need for consensus. We have always been a church, that allowed and encouraged the prophetic voice – through individuals such as Desmond Tutu, or movements such as the Oxford Movement - and I would caution a communion that stifled the prophetic voice.

The Report failed to give clear guidelines on what are the essentials necessary to hold us together. Almost along the lines of the Tjorham quotes that I mentioned earlier, it is seeking unity in structures and not in our faith. I want a Church that holds together because of its faith in the Triune God who calls us to share in his own Communion. God doesn't call us because we are alike; he calls us because that is his will for us. It always amazes me at meetings that some people will not receive communion together. Jesus didn't say 'Receive Communion because you get on with, or even like each other.' He said 'Do it in memory of me and in memory of what I have done for all of you.' That is part of our Faith.

In the Commission, we tried to address the Ecclesiology within the Anglican Communion and also to attempt to hold the whole of the Communion together. From what I have said about this process, I want to draw out three things about which I feel passionately:

1. I want us to work as hard as we can to be a Communion that stays together.
2. That as a Communion we have a passion for our diversity, a passion that reflects our belief in a God who is big enough to cope with extremes of diversity - more than we could ever understand. In a very complex world that is facing huge, important issues, like globalisation, a church that tries to try to keep people together by binding them in a one-world view, is not the faith that the world is going to find attractive in the future.
3. If we are *going* to be an inclusive church and we *want* to be one, we have also got to include those who disagree with us.

Finally I just want to reflect briefly on what the Primates said. They have called for a three-year period, a further time of listening to each other before the 2008 Lambeth Conference. I support that, although I am not clear about the reasons behind it. I am sad that the Primates decided to go beyond what the Report called for in asking ECUSA and Canada to withdraw from ACC (the Anglican Consultative Council). I think that we have very little to say to the world outside if we cannot say it to each other. To exclude was certainly not in the spirit of the Windsor Report as we published it. We fought and achieved and got to a point where there was no exclusion. To bring it in, even in that limited form now, goes beyond the brief of the Windsor Report. I hope that the church in the United States, and the Canadians will not feel that they are excluded from other parts of the Communion at all. I certainly will keep my contacts with ECUSA and Canada because I think at the very heart of our Christian faith is a God who holds onto us in the very depth of our rebellion. I think that God calls on us to hold on to each other, even when we do disagree violently with each other. Exclusion is not a good sign to the world. However, that is what has been decided and we await ECUSA and Canada's response to that. I hope that they will be sensitive and I hope that we too will be more sensitive.

Before I finish, I want to say all of you (conservatives, liberals, or wherever you place yourself on the spectrum) two things; -

1. If we say we are committed to resolution 1.10 of the Lambeth Conference of listening to each other, let us *say* that. To those who quote 1.10 now I want to say, “What progress have you made on 1.10?” I don’t see much listening going round the Communion at the moment; I really don’t, not even in my own Province. If we are going to have these three years of listening then we have got to create opportunities for that listening to happen.
2. Whatever side you find yourself on you have to do more than listen. You have also got to contribute to the debate. I started off by telling you, when we were faced with this pile of submissions there were very, very few reflecting any form of liberal interpretation. Those of us, who would tend towards a liberal view need to remind ourselves (and I speak to myself tonight as well) that this is not an evolutionary process that will just happen. We have actually got to be part of the process. And I hope that is what you will commit yourselves to tonight.

Question and Answer Session

Q1. In the Windsor Report, the particular statement that comes out which jars with me expressed ‘regret’ at gay ordination and same-sex blessings. From there you could say that it is a fairly logical, if slightly more advanced, step, to the Archbishop’s statement the other day. But that initial statement seemed to me to really start this thing going. Was there a majority agreement with that statement that there was ‘regret’ at gay ordination?

Answer: What we were trying to do on the Commission was not to pass judgement on those actions. If you look at the spirit of the Report, what we were addressing was the fact that ECUSA did not go through the right steps of going back to the instruments of Unity. We did not pass judgement on what they did. For example, we have not said anywhere in the Report that the consecration of Bishop Gene Robinson is not valid. Neither have we said that what New Westminster did was not valid. You don’t get your own way on everything and in the give and take of the heat of the moment that was a compromise that we got to. I think that this is an important compromise because at one stage there was a feeling that would the Commission look at that actual steps which were taken themselves. We decided against that and I think that is a very important thing. For many of us on that Commission, we regard the blessing of same sex unions as a pastoral matter, not a matter of doctrine. It’s a pastoral matter imparting the Grace of God to a people. We didn’t as a Commission go into that because that was not our remit.

Q2. I take the need for different world views as a compelling argument, but one of the problems is that globalisation itself presents a rather one-dimensional way of looking at the world. It joins up time, place, communication in a way that gives us an artificial sense of what the context is, because the context is best if it is local. Do you see a disparity between a strong case for different world views and the other dynamic that is there at the heart of globalisation?

Answer: I come from Africa and one of the great dangers of globalisation is that in a global world, the rich and the strong, dominate. Africa suffers because of globalisation. I've just been at a meeting earlier today, and in Geneva, on the issue of Fair Trade. The Church, if it is to be prophetic has got to be prophetic against what globalisation hurts and that is the individual nature of people to be different. Globalisation can have tremendous benefits and I am actually not anti-Globalisation. I think that the world views is an important reminder to us as a church to realise that we are not the same. Our prophetic voice to the powers that be at World Trade Conferences, IMFs, World Economic Forums and all those organisations is to remind us in this process of globalisation to draw the benefits of greater trade, we still have to respect the different world views and take people's cultures seriously.

Q3. When I was working in your own country on how it was that spirit-based, prayerful, believing Christians like the Dutch Reformed Church came up with the doctrine of Apartheid, I was told by the Professor at Stellenbosch that it was because we didn't listen. We stifled the voices of protest in the outside world and the voices of protest within our own world as well. That's a very salutary rebuke and reminder to me in all the things that I do. What worries me about the process of listening, is that here in England it is not safe particularly for the voices of lesbians and gays to tell us their story, if they are ordained at least, in the presence of bishops. The bishops have made it clear that they do not actually want to know these stories, because there are plenty of people who want to take action against them, if they do. So, no matter how much we say we want to listen we've made it not safe to do so. With all of your experience of the voices of protest in South Africa I wonder if you can help us to square that circle?

Answer: At the beginning of the Lambeth Commission I went back to Resolution I.10 of the last Lambeth conference as probably the only point of reference that we have. It says 'This Conference recognises that there are among us persons who experience themselves as having a homosexual orientation. We commit ourselves to listen to the experience of homosexual persons and we wish to assure them that they are loved by God and that all baptised, believing and faithful persons, regardless of sexual orientation, are full members of the Body of Christ.' But I agree with you that we, as Bishops, are in a difficult position, and I think that it is something that we have to take very seriously. I think our situation in South Africa is very different. I know that I have gay Clergy, and they can come and share and we are open about it. You can't accept somebody as a full member of the body of Christ unless they can be open. What is important, if we are going to take that listening process seriously, is not to blame the Bishops, as such, but to say to those of a conservative persuasion that, in the spirit of this Lambeth Conference to which they agreed, there needs to be a listening process and Bishops should not be under pressure. There needs to be that space for Bishops to listen pastorally and attentively to those Clergy, and if that can't be done we are not fulfilling the Lambeth Resolution.

Q3a. Can we press you on that, because that is a very important issue in this country? This is not a safe conversation and it doesn't happen on equal terms. Anybody who is already ordained and gay, and particularly if they have a partner is actually not supposed to exist and there is quite a body of experience that says 'and it's not safe to put your head above the parapet'. I think that this is a huge problem for us. Is that not the case in South Africa?

Answer: We do work differently in South Africa, although I think that there would be many in South Africa who would find it equally difficult. I am not a member of the House of Bishops in England, but from this meeting I would be very happy to write to the

Archbishop of Canterbury and put that very point to him, and to ask how does the Synod of Bishops intend to respond. I think that it would be useful thing that came out of this meeting, if this meeting agreed.

Q4. I wonder whether those who were very concerned about the outcome of the Windsor Report - for example the proposals for the Covenant and also the proposals for an enhanced role for the Archbishop of Canterbury - might also be taking some comfort from the Primates' despatch of last week which gave only half-hearted agreements to those proposals. Given the fact that most people think that the ACC is a bit of a non-event anyway, I wonder whether ECUSA's suspension from membership of that body is not nearly as serious some make out and perhaps that indicates the finessing of people like Rowan Williams, in trying to navigate through this difficult position.

Answer: I was part of a sub-committee that looked at the instruments of Unity - the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Primates Meeting, the ACC and the Lambeth Conference. I did write a fairly radical review of them and I want to, with respect, disagree a little with you. One of the great gifts that Anglicanism can give to the wider church is our synodical government where there are Bishops, Priests and Laity together. I do not think that the ACC is fully synodical yet so my proposal was that it should really be beefed up and given more authority and status because I don't want a church that is governed by the Primates as a sort of Anglican form of Curia. I want to affirm the office of Primate, but I don't want them to run the Communion. I want the Laity and the Clergy with the Bishops to run the Communion. That is our only form of synodical government and I did propose that the ACC be strengthened and increased and we would have to look at how representation took place.

I think that there are times when it is important for the Archbishop of Canterbury to have the authority to intervene, but that such times need to be clearly defined. A situation in Burundi, for example, some years ago, was a case where it needed intervention. I know that Archbishop George Carey intervened, not ecclesiastically, but certainly in the situation in the Sudan in a creative way. I do think that there are times when that sort of position requires leadership and should have the authority to do that, but we need to look at that carefully.

Q5. Listening in any direction to someone who is different from yourself, in another part of the world, is a hard thing. One of the things we have to look at is our own emotional defences of *our* particular spirituality, and tools to do that are needed. One of the sets of tools that I begin to explore with is different ways of reading the Bible. If we begin to understand how people other than ourselves can read the Bible and come to their conclusions and we can articulate how we read it, then we at least have a framework within which we can listen to each other. I am sure that there are similar tools and set ups that we need to learn about all the other forms of listening which including listening while knowing that we can't understand - and we have to accept that is possible.

Answer: I have learnt so much from Ignatian spirituality and Benedictine spirituality in really trying to listen. It goes back to something I said earlier - are we looking for structures rather than our Faith? If you look at the monastic style of our Office, of reading Scripture, Morning and Evening prayer, and in the Eucharist there are spaces for listening. One of the things we have got to cultivate again in our liturgy is the listening aspect, not just the reading aspect, of Scripture and if we listen to Scripture we listen to each other. I often ask in my own Diocese: "How are we teaching our people the faith today?" We have assumed the faith in people, but how are we taking people the next step of the way? How

are we teaching them? In some American churches, there is a gap between the morning services when Sunday School is held - not for children, it is for adults. I have tried to develop it in my Diocese, but it is a foreign concept. I am deeply concerned as a Bishop that our people do not know the Faith. And if they don't know the Faith they don't grow in it.

Q6. I'd like to explore further the question of whether the actions taken against ECUSA and Canada really matter. It strikes me that in terms of Ecclesiastical politics I don't know, but, in terms of the way in which the world reacts to it, it matters quite a lot because it looks as if they have been banned from something by the rest and therefore that they have done something wrong. It would be interesting to have your reflections, to use a sporting analogy, as to whether they are like the footballer who has been sent off and who has been told to miss three matches but will come back after three matches, carry on sin again and maybe get away with it, or whether this is the beginning of the end, which is the way it looks to those who are not so well acquainted.

The other thing I wanted to seek your reflection on was your very first point about how little you heard from the liberals. I was reflecting on that and trying to work out why. Is it because it is not in the liberal nature to make a noise or because the liberal wings of the Church are simply not structured in such a way to make a noise? Or is it that the liberal wing of the Church thought it was game, set and match when Rowan Williams became Archbishop of Canterbury. If anybody has any doubt about that, hear what he said yesterday morning, "I am not the leader of a political party" - if that wasn't a wake-up call then I don't know what is. Did you feel, as I did that it was code for saying "If you want to make this case, you have to go out and make it - you can't expect me just to do it".

Answer: Tonight we have got to really commission ourselves to do something if we really want to do it. I think it is absolutely right that the liberal wing of the Church believed this was an evolutionary process which would just take place. It is not. I don't want to draw the battle lines between conservatives and liberals. I want us to be inclusive and journey together as much as possible. I am not trying to establish a group to go out and to fight. I want a group that will listen and share. I'm certainly not here as any sort of ringleader of a cause. But let me tell you that the conservative groupings are not short of money and are incredibly well organised. They were at the Primates meeting, informing, supporting their Primates that they want to push with the conservative point of view. I am not wanting to establish a rival grouping, but I am saying that as liberals, those of us with liberal persuasions need to take it far more seriously and listen and engage more effectively.

On the "red card" question. I said in my initial talk that I don't like this exclusion, and it goes against what we asked for in Windsor. Once you start doing something like this you can do it again, and I think that it is a very bad signal to send. One of the things that I was at pains to say at the Lambeth Commission over and over again was if somebody does something that you don't like you cannot then make a law and charge them in terms of that law after the event. Now it may be that ECUSA should have taken the Instruments of Unity seriously, but other people have defied the Instruments of Unity beforehand on issues. You can't suddenly say that we have got a law where we didn't have a law. We have always agreed the moral, hortatory nature of our actions and decisions. I think that exclusion is creating something new in the Communion, which I don't think should have been done.

Q7. I couldn't agree more with what you say about listening being essential, but the problem is that in my experience conservatives are not interested in listening. They might

enter into a debate, but all that they will do is hear and wait for an opportunity to express their opinions. They won't actually discuss, or make any concession that a view opposed to theirs might have something to be said for it. I don't quite know how we deal with that?

Q8. I am in the invidious position of being from the conservative wing of the Church, who discovered their homosexual inclinations and got booted out. My ex-conservative friends do not want to listen to me. I am quite prepared to debate the issues, I want to do that. I am now involved in an organisation called the 'Evangelical Fellowship for Lesbian and Gay Christians' which is predominantly, though not exclusively Anglican. And many of our members have been kicked out or marginalised in churches- simply because they were gay. This is in Britain now, and I am not quite sure if this applies South Africa. I am not quite sure where we go from here. If people are not prepared to listen to our stories and take them on board I don't really see what we can do.

Q9. I am of a conservative view myself. I've lived through a long period of church history and been on the battlefield, one side or the other, myself. And no, we don't want to shout at each other across the barricades. But I do get worried about the general liberal view that there aren't any absolutes, and when conservatives pop up and say that there are, we get in an *impasse*.

Q10. I graduated from an Anglican university in theology. I was an evangelical from my upbringing having had conversion experiences etc. My sexuality became an issue when I was studying and I found myself again excluded from The Christian Union, the Chaplaincy and in very subtle and quite hideous ways. Having been in the position where my views were accepted and listened to, suddenly they were treated with intense suspicion. Having read, many years ago, 'Issues in Human Sexuality', and now having looked briefly at the Windsor Report I have issues even with how the Church defines this debate. It always centres round homosexuality. They talk about sexuality in a very loose way but it always comes back to *homosexuality*. There are much deeper issues here as to how we understand the whole nature of human sexuality in itself and I don't think that the Church has started to engage with that at all. How can we move on in our discussion when people don't really understand what they are talking about?

Answer. I want to move the debate on generally in the Communion from throwing Biblical texts at each other. A friend of mine who is the Professor of Pastoral Theology at General Seminary in New York, said, "Remember neither side will ever find a text that will convince the other side".

Yesterday in my sermon in this church I quoted Miroslav Volf who in his book "*Exclusion and Embrace*" says "The right design and the final argument can be, must be, and will be found' is modernity's *Credo*. The wisdom of the Cross, the contrary, teaches that ultimately, salvation does not come either from the miracle of the right design, or from the wisdom of the final argument. We cannot and ought not dispense with design and argument, but if design and argument are not to create larger wounds (and that's the danger at the moment they are creating larger wounds than ones they are seeking to heal) design and argument will themselves need to be healed by the weakness and foolishness of the self-giving love. This weakness is stronger than social control and this foolishness is wiser than rational thought." Now those are wise words from Miroslav Volf. It is very difficult for us to engage in listening if we are going to throw texts at each other. We have to try to find a way in which we listen beyond that level of debate. Whether three years is enough for it I don't know. Certainly, I think experience of sharing the stories is important. I am

deeply moved by the stories that we have heard this evening and within this church you are safe and we hallow and treasure these stories.

Let me just give you a brief example from my own experience. When the Ordination of Women was approved in South Africa, dioceses could ordain or not. I chose to ordain, though some parishes objected to it. One of the parishes that objected most strongly had a vacancy two years ago. They had never had a woman priest in that Parish. The Wardens came to me and said “ There is only one priest in the Diocese that we want” and it was this woman priest. And I said “You have never, had a woman priest in your parish” and they said “ No but we know her, we’ve seen her and we want her”. And I said “ How do I get it past your Council?” and they said “ That is your job, not ours”. I did. It’s the most thriving parish now and recently their Vestry Meeting elected two women Churchwardens. So there has been a real turnaround there.

On Ash Wednesday in one of my big parishes, I said “ My challenge to the Diocese this Lent is to forget about sugar in your tea, and whether you give it up or not, or the glass of wine. But to do something positive in our world. Now, of course, we are full of diversity in South Africa - culture, race, gender and all sorts of things. And I want to challenge each one to find somebody who is different and to befriend them during Lent and to journey with them. It’s a small start. And maybe those who are liberal need to befriend conservatives, and conservatives liberals and journey together. It is only when we do the walk to Emmaus together that we can look back and say “ Goodness me, Jesus was here in our midst”.”

As someone who treasures and values liberalism within the church with deepest respect I would have to say that for us and for me there are real absolutes. My absolutes would be the values that Christ gives and sends to us. The absolutes of treasuring the sacredness of human life, of trying to love the other as I love myself. The absolutes of seeking to be peacemakers where there is conflict. There are many absolutes that I live by. They may not always seem obvious, but I reckon they are as difficult to live by as any other code, if we take them very, very seriously. There are the absolutes; they may just be phrased in a slightly different way.

To those of you who have spoken so movingly tonight again I want to remind you that you are not to be excluded. And if you are, as a Bishop of the church I want to say I am sorry. The Lambeth Commission makes it quite clear that you remain a beloved member of the body of Christ within this Church and I hope, that if that doesn’t happen you will make it known.

Q10. My husband and I will be returning to our outcast church in the Southern United States this summer. Do you have any practical advice for us? We’ve been through this in our parish, and owing to the listening that took place with our Rector and the people in the parish we are still a unified parish. I have a personal involvement with this question because our daughter will shortly be ordained in the Episcopal Church. What kind of Church is she going to be a part of?

Q11. I was ordained last year and my brother, who was gay, came and I was honoured but he feels terribly excluded from the Church. My brother with autism, he also came and I was really grateful. My sister with schizophrenia just can’t face coming through the church door. In terms of my wider experience, I’ve been running schools before I went in for wearing dog collars. What on earth is the point of excluding children or people from a community? It’s terribly dangerous. If you get rid of someone for three week or three days

or whatever the most likely thing is that they can't come back. You think that you can set up a programme for them to come back. But I'm really, really worried about excluding people from the community.

Q12. If religiosity is easier to manage than practicing the presence of God, and if fiddling around with Church structure is easier to do than living the Church of Christ, and if listening to words is easier to do than listening to presence, how practically would you encourage us to put ourselves in the position of the living listening of something different which, as I understand it, is what we are being called to do in the next three years?.

Q13. One of the most distressing things for me in this whole conversation is that it is defined in political terms. I don't see anything uniquely Christian about the terms of much of the debate. I think of a quote of Henri Nouwen who says that we are called not to be successful, but to be fruitful. It seems that much of the debate is trying to work out who is being "successful" in this and I am wondering how we can shift the terms of the debate into something that reflects Christian fruitfulness rather than political success?

Answer: I would want you to go back to your Parish and to know that you, as the Episcopal Church of the United States, have played a very important role in the life of the Anglican Communion in many different ways. That you would see yourselves as part of the Communion and that in the difficult days ahead as we work our way forward, you would understand that the friendship and the love of many in the Anglican Communion will be there to support you and that your daughter must go forward to ordination. God never tells us what we are going into. I think that if I knew what I was going into as a Bishop I would have run away. I had to deal with violence of 8,500 people in the first four years as we moved towards a new political dispensation in South Africa. For a pacifist that was very difficult. So God never tells us it is going to be easy. But he does call us to faithfulness and there will be a Church. After all it's not our Church, it's God's Church and in God's way he will show us a new vision, a new hope and new beginnings. They will be about fruitfulness, they will be about each other. They will be about care; they will be about celebrating the risen Christ in our midst - the one who calls us into the very communion of God, where there is no exclusion and where we can listen above all to those wonderful words that come up within us that cry "Abba, Father".