

# Dioceses of Kimberley & Kuruman and Oxford



## 2023 Summit

11-14 October



“Encourage one another and build each other up” (1 Thess. 5:11)

A message from +Brian, Bishop of Kimberley & Kuruman and +Olivia, Bishop of Reading

Our hearts are full of gratitude as we come to the end of a wonderful 4 day Link Summit meeting in Kimberley between our two Dioceses. Our time together has had, as its watchword

***Encourage each other, and build each other up***  
***1 Thess. 5:11***

And this is what our time together has achieved.

We believe that the ways in which we have engaged with each other in these few days is a first for dioceses sharing a link within the Anglican Communion. We have managed to use technology to share input and discussion, at different times, between 6 different hubs (including 2 youth hubs), some separated by thousands of miles. In addition, our time together has been live-streamed on Facebook, enabling participation by individuals unable to attend a hub, and others have been part of group discussions using WhatsApp. This has been an astonishing feat of imagination and technical expertise, and our deep thanks and appreciation go to all those who made this possible.

Our time together has been framed and greatly enriched by a series of Bible studies on Ezekiel, pre-recorded by Bishop Steven in Oxford. We have spent time together acknowledging and sharing the distress and pain of the Covid years, and naming the difficult realities of our two contexts, and then discerning where we are noticing that God is re-assembling our dry bones and breathing new life into them. This is where we have found hope.

We have listened to powerful voices speak on the key issues of the Environment and Gender Justice/Gender Based Violence. We are so grateful to Canon Rachel Mash and to +Margaret Vertue, Mandy Marshall from the Anglican Communion Office and Bishop Vicentia Kgabe from Lesotho for their passion and wisdom in these areas, which has been inspirational for all of us.

The action of the Holy Spirit has been apparent in our conversations, in the deepening of existing relationships and the forming of new ones, in the openness and honesty with which we have shared our lives. We have listened to the voice of the young people, and heard their longing to be resourced in their lives and faith, and embraced as ‘the Church of today’. They have not always felt that they are listened to or included, and we were humbled to hear this challenge and glad to receive it.

We have acknowledged together that each one of us needs to experience inner transformation – the softening of our hard hearts – and re-turning to God in order that we can become agents of transformation and grace in our broken and hurting world. From our time together, and renewed commitment to each other, we discern 5 priority areas for separate and joint work over the next 5 years. These are:

Young People  
Education and Training  
Community resilience  
Gender Justice/GBV  
Environment

More detailed work will follow on the ways in which we will approach each of these. For now we pray for God’s blessing on our two dioceses, holding each other before the Throne of Grace, and we give thanks for all that we have received in and through each other.