

LIVING WITH A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

A five-session study course celebrating
diversity within the Anglican Communion



† UNITED SOCIETY
PARTNERS IN THE GOSPEL

USPG[†]

LIVING WITH A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

The Anglican Communion – a celebration of diversity

We rejoice to be a part of the Anglican Communion, which is extraordinary! It is the world's third largest Christian community, after the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches; a worldwide family of tens of millions of Christians, people from more than 165 countries stretching around the globe from Canterbury to Christchurch; from Jerusalem to Johannesburg and Trinidad to Tokyo.

Within the Communion there is an enormous breadth of cultural diversity. Hundreds of languages are spoken. Anglicans and Episcopalians live in modern cities and rural heartlands. And yet, in

spite of this wealth of difference and diversity, the Communion shares many aspects of its life of faith in Jesus Christ.

There is no single worldwide 'Anglican Church', rather there is a self governing Anglican Church for each of the 40 provinces. A province may be a single country, but may also be a group of countries. For example, the *Igreja Episcopal Anglicana do Brasil* (Anglican Episcopal Church of Brazil) covers only Brazil; the Anglican Church of Central Africa covers Botswana, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Each province is divided into dioceses. For example, there are



28 dioceses in the Anglican Church of Tanzania. There are even some dioceses that cover more than one country, for example, the Diocese in Europe, which is part of the Church of England, and the Diocese of Singapore. Each province is led by an archbishop or primate, and each diocese is led by a bishop.



Also within the Anglican Communion are the United Churches of North and South India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, where different Christian denominations have come together to form a United Church. The Holy Catholic Church in China is part of a post-denominational Church. The Anglican Communion has close relationships, and is in communion with, other churches, including, among others, the *Iglesia Filipina Independiente*.

The Anglican Communion is given focus and direction by what are called the four 'Instruments of Communion'. These instruments are:

- The Archbishop of Canterbury, as the 'first among equals';
- The Lambeth Conference, held every 10 or so years, to which bishops and archbishops are invited;

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Cover: Western hemisphere of the Earth (NASA/GSFC/NOAA/USGS/Wiki Commons)

Above left: The Compass Rose flag of the Anglican Communion (*Anglican Communion*)

Left, above and overleaf: The Most Revd Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury during his trip to India 2019 (*Lambeth Palace*)



- Primates' Meetings, to which all leaders of provinces are invited;
- The Anglican Consultative Council, which meets every three years and whose membership includes lay and ordained representatives from the church in every province.

More than 1,500 bishops and spouses from across the Communion have been invited to gather in Canterbury for the Lambeth Conference in July and August 2020. The conference will embrace the

diversity of the Communion - its theme is 'God's Church for God's World: walking, listening and witnessing together'. It will seek God's guidance and inspiration for the future direction of the Communion. The Bible study for the conference will be 1 Peter.

The size and diversity of the Anglican Communion gives it a rare position on the world stage. It advocates for truth and justice in the corridors of power while at the same time tending the sick, bereaved and marginalised.

But that diversity brings challenges. In this study we hear from five areas where Anglicans are being challenged to work through their differences, to work together in the face of adversity, to work outside their comfort zones or in new ways, so that the Kingdom of God can come afresh. As you read their stories and consider the questions and Bible passages we hope you will be challenged, encouraged and inspired in your faith journey. ■

USPG works across the Anglican Communion



MAKING THE MOST OF THIS STUDY COURSE

- 1.** Commit to attend all five sessions. The more you are able to attend, the more you will benefit and the more it will maintain the continuity of the group. Give yourself permission to refuse any other engagements or invitations that might arise at your regular study time.
- 2.** Begin each study with a short time of silence to help centre the group and recall God's presence, and then pray together the prayer at the beginning of each session.
- 3.** Commit to sharing honestly and to listening without judgement or trying to 'fix' someone else's life for them. Seek to create a safe atmosphere in which people feel able to share openly. Remember that none of us has all the answers; our aim is to be real, authentic and whole – not perfect!
- 4.** Acknowledge that everyone's experience of life and faith is unique and valuable. Seek to accept one another just as we truly are, just as God accepts each one of us.
- 5.** Give space for everyone to speak, although no-one need feel obliged to speak. If you are someone who tends to share a lot, remember to leave space for others who find it harder to share.
- 6.** Read the material in advance and spend time allowing the content to sink in – not necessarily needing to find the answers. Note that some of the articles are printed in the original language of the contributor as well as in English translation. This in itself reflects something of the diversity of language within the Anglican Communion. If a member of your group speaks that language please use both languages in the study.
- 7.** Remember that religious and theological words can mean different things to different people. Share your perspective and allow others to hold different perspectives.
- 8.** Close each session in prayer. Pray the Lord's Prayer aloud, inviting each person to choose their preferred language. For some groups this will make for something of a cacophony of language (cf Acts 2); celebrate this diversity, it is reflected across the Anglican Communion! All prayers used in this study course are from the USPG book 'Praying with the World Church', and may also be found at www.uspg.org.uk/pray

STUDY 1

UNITY IN DIVERSITY



OPENING PRAYER

Hold a short time of silence together to still your minds and recall God's presence, and then pray aloud together:

Lord, may we live, work and pray as one body in Christ;
do apart nothing which we can do together
and do together what we cannot do apart. Amen.
Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands

Above: Welcoming to worship in Fiji during the USPG international consultation in 2016 (USPG)

INTRODUCTION

As its very name indicates the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia is made up of three equal elements. The province includes three cultural streams, known as the Three Tikanga – the Maori, the Polynesian and the Pakeha (or European-descent) strands. There is a General Synod but each church has its own culturally contextual ways of governing, decision-making, ministerial training and liturgy.

There are three Primates who share authority. The decision to create a Three Tikanga church came to fruition in 1992 in order to formally recognise these three very different but intrinsic parts and the importance of the particular expression of Anglicanism within each, from their own context. The church's constitution states that it is required to "maintain the right of every person to choose any particular

cultural expression of the faith". Te Hāhi Mihinare ki Aotearoa, or Te Pihopatanga o Aotearoa is the Maori Anglican Church; Tikanga Pasefika is the Polynesian Anglican Church and Tikanga Pakeha is the Pakeha Anglican Church.

For a long time, this church has bravely confronted and welcomed both the challenge and joy of its diversity. Each church has contextually appropriate methods of structure, authority, decision-making and liturgical expression which highlight and embrace all parts and define a new way of being a whole church. Their bravery and dedication to their togetherness, both in celebrating and not ignoring difference, is a striking witness in the Communion.

One of the three primates, Archbishop Fereimi Cama of Polynesia, reflects on his part of the province and the importance of celebrating unity in diversity:

Story from Polynesia

As I think about the words of 1 Peter 3:8-12, one thing is clear: sympathy and selfishness cannot co-exist. As long the self is the most important thing in the world, there can be no such thing as sympathy because sympathy depends on the willingness to forget self and to identify oneself with the pains and sorrows of others. Here Peter talks about brotherly love and the matter goes back to the words of Jesus: 'A new commandment I give to you... that you love one another as I have loved you'.

The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia is a three Tikanga church. It comprises Tikanga Maori, Tikanga Pakeha and Tikanga Polynesia and that in itself is quite diverse. We have different contexts, cultures and languages and sometimes our relationship is tested because of these differences, but because of our love for God, we strive to work together and celebrate our unity in diversity.

The Diocese of Polynesia is made up of four major people groups: Fijian, Indo-Fijian, Tongan and Samoan. We have

different cultures and different languages and it is always a challenge trying to accommodate the needs and aspirations of everyone. In the last ten years the distribution of our clergy has been by local ethnicity and I am hoping to change that. We would like to rotate the clergy among the four ethnic communities within the three countries. This will enable them to understand the context, the culture and the language of our people in the Diocese of Polynesia. This is not going to be an easy exercise, but if they adhere to what Peter

is saying about working in unity with the spirit of sympathy, with a tender heart and a humble mind, we will be able to bridge the gaps that have existed amongst our people over the years.

Despite the diverse nature of the Diocese of Polynesia, we have been able to co-exist with each other. We respect and celebrate our unity in diversity. As Jesus said, we need to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind and with all our strength – and love our neighbours as we love ourselves. ■

Questions

- The Diocese of Polynesia holds together people from diverse cultures and ethnicities. What do you think are some the blessings and challenges of having people from different ethnicities and cultures in a church and community?
- Think about your church and local community: where do you see diversity? Is the diversity of the demographic of your local area reflected in your church community?

BIBLE READING

1 Peter 3:8-12

- ⁸ Finally, all of you, have unity of spirit, sympathy, love for one another, a tender heart, and a humble mind.
- ⁹ Do not repay evil for evil or abuse for abuse; but, on the contrary, repay with a blessing. It is for this that you were called – that you might inherit a blessing.
- ¹⁰ For ‘Those who desire life and desire to see good days, let them keep their tongues from evil and their lips from speaking deceit;
- ¹¹ let them turn away from evil and do good; let them seek peace and pursue it.
- ¹² For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.’

Questions

- How well is your church adhering to having 'unity of spirit, sympathy, love for one another, a tender heart, and a humble mind'?
- How far is your church aware of and involved in fostering unity in your local area? How might you increase your awareness and involvement in community issues that bring peace and unity?
- The Diocese of Polynesia respects and cherishes unity in diversity. In what ways might this be true also in your church? And in what ways could you improve this?

CLOSING PRAYER

Pray the Lord's Prayer aloud, inviting each person to choose their preferred language.

Have a time of silence, followed by an opportunity to pray aloud any issues that have arisen during the session. Conclude by praying aloud together:

Almighty God,
whose will it is that all should be saved
and come to the knowledge of the truth;
send forth labourers into the harvest,
that all may know you,
the one true God,
and Jesus Christ whom you sent,
our only Lord and Saviour. Amen.

Anglican Missions Board of the Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand, and Polynesia

STUDY 2

UNDERSTANDING EACH OTHER BY WALKING TOGETHER



OPENING PRAYER

Hold a short time of silence together to still your minds and recall God's presence, and then pray aloud together:

Teach me, O God, not to pass judgement on my neighbour until I have walked many miles in his sandals and carried his burden on my shoulders. Instead, make me mindful of the needs of my neighbour. Amen.
From Chile

Above: March in defense of religious freedom held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (Koinonia)

INTRODUCTION

Brazil is the largest country in Latin America, with an extraordinary mixture of ethnicities and cultures. The nation has a complex and at times, harrowing history: including the exploitation of indigenous peoples, of colonisation, the influence of the slave trade, huge international and internal migration, a rapid industrial rise, the degradation of traditional religions, and enormous disparity between the materially wealthy and poor and between urban and rural inhabitants. Such diversity can easily create tensions.

The *Igreja Episcopal Anglicana do Brasil*, IEAB, (Anglican Episcopal Church of Brazil) traces its roots back to 1810, with the establishment of expatriate Anglican

chaplains from Britain. Episcopalian missionaries from the USA arrived in Porto Alegre in the south of Brazil in 1889, after the separation of Church and State, and from there the mission spread northwards. The Province, which is one of the few Portuguese-speaking churches in the Communion, became autonomous in 1965. It now consists of nine dioceses and one missionary district. The IEAB is a church influenced by Liberation Theology, living out the Gospel with a clear 'bias for the poor', and with strong ecumenical and interfaith links. The Anglican Bishop of Rio de Janeiro, Eduardo Coelho Grillo, explains how an annual march through the city is leading to greater understanding and deeper trust:

Story from Brazil

A strong and brave inter-religious movement has been taking place in Rio de Janeiro now for more than 10 years. Under the motto 'we understand each other as we walk together', different religious groups have been literally walking together through some of the most important streets of the city in an atmosphere of trust and respect.

That is a symbolic act of communion in a country historically stained by the enslavement of indigenous and African peoples. Over 300 years, so-called western Christian society has 'demonised' indigenous peoples and African religious experiences, generating prejudice, scorn and violence. In many places in Brazil Umbanda and Candomble religious places of worship have been targets of violence and destruction –

even in the week that I am writing this. And yet every September we see this march through Rio de Janeiro as the fruit of greater tolerance, respect and acceptance as Christians, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, spiritualists, and members of the Baha'i, Wicca, Umbanda, Candomble and other faiths walk together.

There is an increasing wave of intolerance, fundamentalism and religious violence these days in Brazil that has led to disturbing acts of both emotional and physical violence. But we still believe that love overcomes hatred as we have been making clear at public events of ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue. We are firmly grounded in the words of Galatians 3:28 – 'There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus'. ■

Uma história do Brasil

Um forte e bravo movimento inter-religioso tem acontecido no Rio de Janeiro pelos últimos 10 anos. Sob o lema “*Caminhando é que a gente se entende*”, diferentes grupos religiosos têm literalmente caminhado juntos por algumas das ruas mais importantes da cidade, numa atmosfera de confiança e respeito.

Este é um simbólico ato de comunhão num país historicamente manchado pela escravização de povos originais indígenas e estrangeiros africanos. Durante mais de 300 anos, a chamada sociedade cristã ocidental “demonizou” as práticas religiosas indígenas e africanas, gerando preconceito, deboche e violência. Em muitos lugares no Brasil, templos do Candomblé e da Umbanda tem sido frequentes alvos de violência e destruição, inclusive nesta semana em que escrevo esse texto. Ainda assim, todo mês

de Setembro acompanhamos caminhadas em várias partes do Rio de Janeiro num belo sinal de respeito, tolerância e aceitação a medida que Cristãos, judeus, muçulmanos, budistas, espiritualistas, membros de fé Baha’i, da Wicca, da Umbanda e do Candomblé, e outros grupos religiosos caminham juntos pelas ruas da cidade.

Uma crescente onda de intolerância, fundamentalismo e violência religiosa nesses dias no Brasil que tem levado a perturbadores atos de violência emocional e física. Porém, continuamos a acreditar que **o amor vence o ódio** e temos proclamado reiteradamente em eventos públicos que expressam nossa fé no diálogo ecumênico e inter-religioso. Estamos firmemente fundamentados nas palavras de Gálatas 3,28: “*Não há judeu nem grego, escravo nem livre, homem nem mulher; pois todos são um em Cristo Jesus.*” ■

Questions

- What does ‘walking together’ in the context of the passage symbolise? Is there something comparable in your community or country and in what ways does the church respond?
- Are there groups within your community that are particularly marginalised because of their beliefs or practices? How might your church engage with these groups?
- Where are the opportunities for your church community to stand with others in solidarity? How and why might you do this?

BIBLE READINGS

Galatians 3: 23 - 28

²³ Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. ²⁴ Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵ But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, ²⁶ for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. ²⁷ As many of you as were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸ There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no

BIBLE READINGS

longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.²⁹ And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise.

Peter 3: 15 - 16

But in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defence to anyone who demands from you an account of the hope that is in you;¹⁶ yet do it with gentleness and reverence.

Questions

- Bishop Eduardo believes that his diocese is 'firmly grounded' in Galatians 3:28. To what extent does your church reflect this verse? To what extent is there room to grow closer to this ideal, and how might you begin to do that?
- Verse 27 reminds us that 'As many of you as were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ'. How does your church encourage ministry by the whole baptised family - sometimes called 'every member ministry'? In what ways might you personally grow deeper in the ministry to which God has called you?
- 1 Peter 3:16 reminds us to witness to Christ with 'gentleness and respect'. What are the implications of this request for your church's witness and ministry amongst those outside your church community?

CLOSING PRAYER

Pray the Lord's Prayer aloud, inviting each person to choose their preferred language.

Have a time of silence, followed by an opportunity to pray aloud any issues that have arisen during the session. Conclude by praying aloud together:

Praise my soul our good Lord,
sing songs to God's name,
for God has brought my life
into fresh waters when I was thirsty.
God has fed me with the Bread of Life
when I was starving.
God has sustained me along all my days
and never has put me to shame.
Praise my soul our good Lord,
for all his goodness. Amen.

From Uruguay

STUDY 3

TOGETHER IN THE FACE OF TERROR



OPENING PRAYER

Hold a short time of silence together to still your minds and recall God's presence, and then pray aloud together:

God, my Creator, I open my heart to you.
may it turn to you as the sunflower turns to the sun.
God, my Redeemer,
take away from my heart everything that is not love
so that I may reach out to you in my own unworthiness.
God, my Sanctifier,
journey with me along life's way so that all that I am and all that I do
may bring greater glory to you the triune God. Amen.

From Sri Lanka

Above: St. Anthony's Shrine, Kochchikade was the first church to be bombed Easter 2019, Colombo, Sri Lanka (*AntanO/Wiki Commons*)

INTRODUCTION

Suicide bomb attacks on churches and hotels in Sri Lanka on Easter Sunday 2019 killed about 300 people and injured 500 others. The nation was left shocked, grieving and bewildered. In the face of such trauma, Anglican leaders responded. The Bishop of Colombo, Dhiloraj Canagasabey, and the Bishop of Kurunegala, Keerthisiri Fernando, reached out across the country's diverse religious communities, imploring a united, peaceful response.

The bishops also cautioned against a spirit of vengeance. Despite knowing that the Anglican Church was a target, the bishops called for calm and a peaceful response from Christians. They bravely stood up for the Muslim community in Sri Lanka which had faced threats, exclusion and violence following the attacks. The church reached out to the families of the victims with love and solidarity as well as to the Muslim community facing

extreme discrimination. There continue to be numerous instances of Muslims and Christians in Sri Lanka and around the world standing together in solidarity and support, condemning violence of any kind against any religious group.

It was not unusual for the Anglican Church to call for peace. Bishop Dhiloraj has a reputation for standing against violence of any kind and has stood up in the past and condemned previous anti-Muslim violence in Sri Lanka. He stated in 2014 after particularly violent attacks on Muslim communities: "Sri Lanka is home to different communities who have co-existed for centuries, all of whom have partnered in the country's development and must be allowed to enjoy the right to security and dignity as equal citizens of a united Sri Lanka."

The bishops released a joint statement in the aftermath of the 2019 attacks. Here is an extract of what they wrote:

Story from Sri Lanka

This is the opportune time for all people of every faith and belief in this nation to come together in our common humanity, to hold hands and work towards building One Family of One Nation. We need to commit ourselves to build bridges of trust and confidence with each other. Out of the debris of this chaotic situation something beautiful, something fragrant, something positive needs to emerge.

We cannot and must not act on the basis of "an eye for an eye, or a tooth for a tooth" but we will follow the Master's example and cry the same cry He cried

on the cross with so much sadness and heaviness of heart saying – "Father, forgive them for they do not know what they do".

I call on all our fellow citizens and Christians in particular to embrace the Muslim community who have lived in this country for many hundreds of years in peaceful co-existence. They must be treated with love and understanding.

It is important for our people to understand that such drastic and violent action cannot be generalised. We are thankful that the people of all religions and of all ethnicities in the country are able to understand this situation and

they have shown much maturity in the aftermath of this most recent and horrendous wave of violence. We need to go beyond and engage in committed acts of consoling and healing. It is now the time... to come together to protect each other. It is our time of unity

as Sri Lankans, to be together amidst the diversity we enjoy, in our communities. Diversity is a gift that God has given us. Let us celebrate that tremendous gift of diversity. Let us genuinely learn to respect each other, putting aside all our differences and private agendas. ■

Questions

- The relationship between Muslims and Christians in Sri Lanka had been good for hundreds of years before the Easter 2019 attack. We see here how external influences can undermine long-standing relationships. Are there instances within your church and or community where good relationships have been undermined by a change in circumstances, and how have you dealt with them?
- How can your church better understand the potential causes of conflict in your community, and work for reconciliation?
- What are the movements working for peace between different faith communities in your country, and how is or how could your church be part of this?

BIBLE READING

Acts 17: 22 – 31

²² Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, ‘Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. ²³ For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, “To an unknown god.” What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. ²⁴ The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, ²⁵ nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. ²⁶ From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, ²⁷ so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. ²⁸ For “In him we live and move and have our being”; as even some of your own poets have said, “For we too are his offspring.” ²⁹ Since we are God’s offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. ³⁰ While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, ³¹ because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.’

Questions

- 'For we too are his offspring.' How does your church recognise others outside its own community as God's offspring; and how does this influence your relationships with them?
- If God is not far from each of us (v.27) what are the ways that we can reach out to God, even with people from outside our own faith community?
- How can we in our context hold hands and work towards building 'One Family of One Nation'?

CLOSING PRAYER

Pray the Lord's Prayer aloud, inviting each person to choose their preferred language.

Have a time of silence, followed by an opportunity to pray aloud any issues that have arisen during the session. Conclude by praying aloud together:

Eternal God

we confess to you our sinfulness.

You made the world a paradise

but we have turned our lands into
places of tears and unhappiness.

People are fighting each other
race against race.

the holocaust of chauvinism
sweeps through countries

devouring humanity

terrorising us into submission.

Liberating One,

free us from all bondage

so that our faith in you

will make us free

to create with courage

a new world –

new societies. Amen.

From Sri Lanka

STUDY 4

WORKING TOGETHER TO BUILD THE CHURCH IN TANZANIA



OPENING PRAYER

Hold a short time of silence together to still your minds and recall God's presence, and then pray aloud together:

Holy Spirit, give us faith
Holy Spirit, give us hope
Holy Spirit, give us love
Revive your work in this land
beginning with me. Amen.

Namirembe Diocese, Uganda

Above: Congregation from St. Joseph Church in Peluhanda greeting their Bishop on the road with joyful singing and dancing, Tanzania (USPG/Leah Gordon)

INTRODUCTION

In 1964, the United Republic of Tanzania was born out of a union between Tanganyika and Zanzibar, unified under the principle of Ujamaa, which asserts that a person only becomes a true person through being in community.

This merger of two countries also led to the formation of the Anglican Church of Tanzania (ACT) through the amalgamation

of two distinct strains of Anglicanism, the more evangelical group coming from historic Church Missionary Society (CMS) missions to Tanganyika, and the more Anglo-Catholic group from the Universities' Mission to Central Africa (UMCA) primarily in Zanzibar. Bishop George Okoth, of the Diocese of Mara, explains how they have been united in mission:

Story from Tanzania

The Anglican Church of Tanzania (ACT) knows the paramount reason for its existence is to be obedient to the Great Commission – our business is to make disciples and teach them all that Jesus commanded. Our two groups have been joined together in this by a number of factors including a belief in the authority of the Scriptures, the Book of Common Prayer and traditions. We understand that the Church grows by preaching the Gospel of Jesus and supporting the physical needs of human beings, in other words, holistic mission. If we don't do both, the church will cease to exist.

The ACT is aware of the concept of unity in diversity. We acknowledge that we have differences in many ways in Tanzania: ethnically, culturally, socially and economically. We are united in matters primary to our faith, like the Bible, but we do accept diversity on secondary matters such as ways of worship, vestments and preaching.

We uphold the human rights of people regardless of race, class or ethnic group.

We renounce any verbal abuse of

another person and treat each other with dignity and purity. We do this because of the foundation on which our nation was built – Ujamaa. It is about respecting every person because we believe that we are made people through other people.

Tanzanian Anglicans have a great sense of community. Behaviour that threatens the oneness of the community is gently but firmly not allowed. We are more communal than individualistic in our thinking, lives and decision-making. The ACT always engages her members to live lives worthy of the Gospel, because we live in the midst of Muslims and many non-believers. These people may never read the Bible – they will read our lives as their Bible. Thus by God's grace, we believe that our lives and actions themselves are evangelisation.

As we talk about the comprehensive nature of the Anglican Church, let us make sure that wherever the traditional practices conflict with the Holy Scriptures in this rapidly-changing world, we let go of the traditions and uphold the unchanging Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is possible, it has been done and it can be done today, by God's grace.

Hadithi kutoka Tanzania

Kanisa Anglikana Tanzania (KAT) linafahamu sababu muhimu ya uwepo wake kuwa ni utii kwa mamlaka kuu – kazi kubwa tuliyonayo ni kufanya watu kuwa waumini na kuwafundisha yale yote ambayo Yesu aliamuru. Katika hili, makundi yetu mawili yameunganishwa pamoja kwa namna mbalimbali ikiwemo uaminifu juu ya mamlaka ya neno la Mungu na kitabu cha Sala kwa watu wote.

Tunafahamu kuwa Kanisa linakuwa kwa kuhubiri injili iliyo thabiti ya Yesu kristo na kusaidia mahitaji ya kimwili ya mwanadamu, kwa maneno mengine, utume wa jumla. Kama hatutafanya hayo kwa pamoja, uwepo wa Kanisa utapotea.

KAT inafahamu dhana ya umoja palipo na utofauti. Tunakiri kuwa tunatofautiana kwa namna mbalimbali hapa Tanzania: kikabila, kiutamaduni, kijamii na kiuchumi. Tuna umoja katika mambo ya msingi ya imani, kama Biblia, lakini tunakubali tofauti katika masuala mengine kama namna za Ibada, rangi ya mavazi ya wahudumu na muda wa mahubiri.

Tunatetea haki za watu bila kujali utaifa, hali ya mtu au kabila lake. Tunakemea

unyanyasaji wa maneno dhidi ya mtu na tunamchukulia kila mtu kwa heshima na staha. Tunafanya hivi kutokana na misingi iliyojenga taifa letu – Ujamaa. Yaani kumheshimu kila mtu, kwa kuwa tunaamini kwamba tumekuwa watu kupitia watu wengine.

Wa Anglikana wa Tanzania wana heshimu sana umoja – tabia zinazotishia umoja wa jamii yetu hazikubaliki. Tuna umoja zaidi kuliko ubinafsi katika fikra, maisha na utoaji maamuzi yetu. KAT kila mara imewahimiza waumini wake kuishi maisha kwa kuzingatia mafundisho ya injili, kwa kuwa tunaishi kati ya waislamu na wengi wasio amini. Watu hawa kamwe hawatasoma Biblia bali watayasoma maisha yetu kama Biblia yao. Kwa hali hiyo, kwa neema ya Mungu tunaamini maisha yetu na matendo yetu kwa pamoja ni namna ya kueneza injili.

Tunapozungumzia asili pana ya Kanisa Anglikana, tujiridhishe kuwa popote pale ambapo mapokeo ya asili yana kinzana na maandiko matakatifu katika dunia hii yenye kubadilika kwa kasi, ni vema kuacha asili hiyo na kushikilia injili isiyobadilika ya Yesu Kristo. Inawezekana, ilifanyika na inaweza kufanyika leo, kwa neema ya Mungu. ■

Questions

- Many Christians live among people who do not hold to their beliefs. Bishop George states: 'These people may never read the Bible – they will read our lives as their Bible' How could we apply this principle to our context? What kind of a Gospel would people read in our lives?
- Bishop George also states that the Anglican Church of Tanzania 'upholds the human rights of people regardless of race, class or ethnic group'. To what extent does our church live these, and how could we improve this?

BIBLE READING

1 Corinthians 1: 10 – 17

¹⁰ Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you should be in agreement and that there should be no divisions among you, but that you should be united in the same mind and the same purpose. ¹¹ For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there are quarrels among you, my brothers and sisters. ¹² What I mean is that each of you says, 'I belong to Paul', or 'I belong to Apollos', or 'I belong to Cephas', or 'I belong to Christ.' ¹³ Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptised in the name of Paul? ¹⁴ I thank God that I baptised none of you except Crispus and Gaius, ¹⁵ so that no one can say that you were baptised in my name. ¹⁶ (I did baptise also the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptised anyone else.) ¹⁷ For Christ did not send me to baptise but to proclaim the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power.

Questions

- What are the different Christian traditions and groups within your local community? Are there differences even within one religious denomination, e.g. more liberal or more conservative? How well do these groups work with each other?
- Historically, differences between groups of Christians have led to serious conflicts and even wars. What is the potential for serious controversy with the different Christian groups in your area, and how do you deal with that?
- Chloe reported quarrels within the church in Corinth. What would she report about your church community today?
- Verse 17 is a very powerful statement. How would you respond to that within your community?

CLOSING PRAYER

Pray the Lord's Prayer aloud, inviting each person to choose their preferred language. Have a time of silence, followed by an opportunity to pray aloud any issues that have arisen during the session. Conclude by praying aloud together:

Almighty God, merciful Father, we pray thee to direct thy holy church, that it may abide and grow in unity and in its witness throughout the world, and that our faith may increase.

Grant, we beseech thee, that we may dwell in peace and have thy blessing on our work. Amen.

A United Liturgy for East Africa

STUDY 5

A BILINGUAL ADVENTURE IN SOUTH LONDON



OPENING PRAYER

Hold a short time of silence together to still your minds and recall God's presence, and then pray aloud together:

Lord Jesus, I am happy you made my neighbour different from me. I need all my neighbours to teach me about you for my neighbour knows many things I do not know. Help me to love my neighbour as I love myself. Amen.

From Melanesia

INTRODUCTION

Across the Anglican Communion, many churches have long benefited from the experience of multilingual parishes. One such experience in the Church of England is Holy Trinity with St Matthew in South London. The vicar, the Revd Hugo Adán-Fernández, leads

a fully bilingual parish, right at the heart of a Spanish-speaking community in south London. He is also Hispanic Diocesan Missioner for the Diocese of Southwark. He reflects on the positives of his parish and the challenges for the Church of England:

Story from England

St Matthew's is completely bilingual. Our PCC, our churchwardens and everything we do, discuss and produce responds to this reality. In our parish, Spanish and English are equally official, promoted and encouraged. This goes beyond offering services in two languages – our structures are bilingual.

Being part of the Church of England with its approach to ecclesial multiculturalism means that St Matthew's enjoys the benefits of such an approach but also suffers from its weaknesses. The Church of England is not monochrome: we have all 'colours and tastes' from Evangelicals to Catholics, from liberals to conservatives, with all sorts of tones in between. The ability to hold together such diversity places the Church in an unusual place in society. I believe this is one of our main strengths.

What is happening at St Matthew's is possible because the Church sees diversity as a Gospel value. But there are challenges too. The Church of England is the national church but sometimes it's not clear what we mean by 'national'. I think we need to keep reflecting theologically about the identity of Anglicanism within our Church. Sometimes it's unclear if we are called to be Anglicans – or to be English! I remember going to a conference for candidates for the priesthood. People had come from across Europe. The speaker was trying to explain the meaning of being a Church of England minister. The focus was English history. Not a word was said about multiculturalism. St Matthew's is trying to go beyond this model. This is a real adventure and we are investing lots of energy to make it a success.

Photo: The Revd Hugo Adán-Fernández sprinkles Holy Water onto First Communion candidates after the Spanish language mass at St Matthew/San Mateo at the Elephant, London. (USPG/Leah Gordon)

Una historia de Inglaterra

La parroquia de San Mateo es completamente bilingüe. Nuestro PCC, nuestros churchwardens, y todo lo que hacemos, discutimos y producimos responde a esa realidad. En San Mateo inglés y español son co-oficiales y ambos son usados por igual. Este bilingüismo va más allá de ofrecer servicios religiosos en ambas lenguas pues lo que en realidad significa es que toda la estructura parroquial es bilingüe.

Ser parte de la Iglesia de Inglaterra, con la comprensión que ésta tiene del multiculturalismo eclesial, le permite a nuestra parroquia vivir plenamente la diversidad y alegrarse con ella. La Iglesia de Inglaterra no es monocromática sino que tiene una gran riqueza de posicionamientos y diversidad teológica: desde los que se consideran más evangélicos a los que se sienten más católicos pasando por todo tipo de posiciones intermedias. La capacidad de mantener la unidad en medio de tanta diversidad es uno de los grandes dones de pertenece a la Iglesia de Inglaterra.

Esta diversidad la coloca en un lugar

privilegiado para hablar de unidad respetando la diversidad en medio de una sociedad a veces en exceso polarizada.

Pero también hay algunos problemas. La Iglesia de Inglaterra es una Iglesia nacional pero a veces no queda claro qué estamos queriendo decir cuando decimos “nacional”. Todavía queda mucho que reflexionar teológicamente hablando sobre la identidad de nuestro anglicanismo aquí en Inglaterra. A veces cuando ministramos a personas de otras culturas y lenguas no queda clara la diferencia entre ser anglicano y ser inglés en la propuesta eclesial que les damos. Todavía recuerdo ir a una conferencia vocacional organizada para candidatos al sacerdocio venidos de toda Europa. Uno de los ponentes, mientras trataba de exponer el significado de ser ministro en la Iglesia de Inglaterra hoy, se refirió en exclusividad a la historia de Inglaterra sin hacer una sola referencia al multiculturalismo. En San Mateo tratamos de ir más allá y explorar una respuesta. Es sin duda una aventura que merece la pena aunque demande lo mejor de nuestras energías. ■

Questions

- The congregation of St Matthew’s clearly speak different languages: Spanish and English. Do you know how many languages are spoken in your church or community, and in what ways do you reach out to different language groups?
- In some congregations differences in language are more subtle: some people may be more comfortable with one type of liturgical language or musical style than another in worship. What are some of the practical ways that we might celebrate the different ‘colours and tastes’ within one church community?
- Revd Hugo challenges us to reflect theologically on the identity of Anglicanism. What might your church community bring to this discussion?

BIBLE READING

Acts 2: 1 - 12

2 When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. ² And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³ Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. ⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. ⁵ Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. ⁶ And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. ⁷ Amazed and astonished, they asked, 'Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?' ⁸ And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? ⁹ Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, ¹¹ Cretans and Arabs - in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power.' ¹² All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, 'What does this mean?'

Questions

- One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit of Pentecost was to transmit the message of Jesus to a diverse range of people. How might the church in the 21st century use different methods and technologies to communicate the Gospel afresh today?
- How practically is your church engaged in communicating the Good News, both in speech and action, with marginalised communities, and what more could be done?

CLOSING PRAYER

Pray the Lord's Prayer aloud, inviting each person to choose their preferred language. Have a time of silence, followed by an opportunity to pray aloud any issues that have arisen during the session. Conclude by praying aloud together:

Blessed be God in the joy of creation.

Blessed be God in the sending of Jesus.

Blessed be God in the work of the Spirit.

Blessed be God in martyr and saint.

Blessed be God in the spread of the gospel to every race and every land.

Blessed be God in the church of our day in its preaching and witness and its treasures of grace.

Blessed be God who has called us to mission

who forgives and who heals and is strength in our weakness. Amen.

USPG



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Above: Sister Lucy prays for Rustika in front of altar at the Anglican Church in Matiganjole, Tanzania (*USPG/Leah Gordon*)



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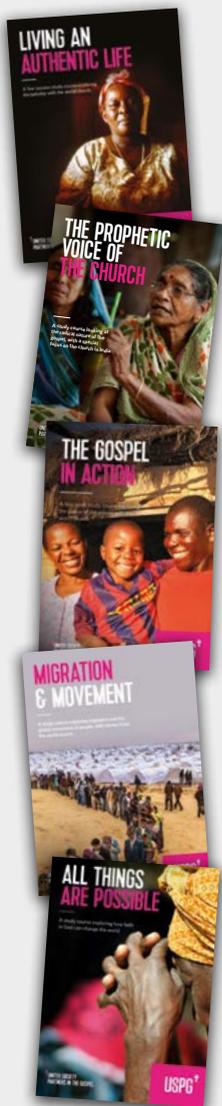
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