

THE ANITEPAM BULLETIN

*Newsletter of the African Network of Institutions of
Theological Education Preparing Anglicans for Ministry*

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ANITEPAM plans major consultation on theological education in Africa

*African Primates and theological educators
to meet in Limuru, June 2007*

Plans for a high-level consultation on the shape of Anglican theological education in Africa have reached an advanced stage.

ANITEPAM, Africa's only network for Anglican programmes of theological education, has been working towards the holding of such a consultation for several years.

In 2003 and 2004 ANITEPAM offered to co-host such a meeting with the Council of Anglican Provinces of Africa (CAPA), but CAPA's agenda at the time did not make that possible.

When the ANITEPAM Governing Council met in Johannesburg in January 2006, it decided to proceed with organising the consultation and to seek funding that would make it feasible.

In June ANITEPAM wrote to the eleven Primates of the Provinces of Africa and to the Archbishop of the Indian Ocean, inviting them to take part in the meeting.

In the letter of invitation, the Very Revd Victor Attabaffoe (ANITEPAM's Chairperson) and the Revd Mike McCoy (Corresponding Secretary) noted that the African bishops' conference in October 2004 had passed a number of resolutions that touched on theological education.

Two of them were:

1. ... THAT this Africa Anglican Bishops' Conference (AABC) calls upon CAPA to implement theological education structures that are Biblically based and holistic; effective mission oriented theological education and formation must adequately address contextual issues and maintain "catholicity", rooted in historic Biblicality.
2. ... THAT theological centres of excellence be developed in Africa; Provinces and Dioceses should review curricula and materials in current institutions with a view to... [a list of features followed].

"These resolutions raised many vital questions about the nature and purpose of theological education – questions that need to be addressed by theological educators and church leaders together," the letter said.

"So ANITEPAM hopes that this consultation can take place to do just that."

At the time of going to press, ANITEPAM had received replies from the Primates of Burundi, the Indian Ocean, Kenya, and Southern Africa. The first three have already committed themselves to coming.

ANITEPAM has obtained a generous grant from the St Augustine Foundation in Canterbury, which supports Anglican Communion events, to underwrite the gathering.

"Take more account"

The issues raised by the African bishops in 2004 are not just African issues. The 2005 Primates' meeting commented on the need for theological education "to take more account of Anglican history, formularies or spirituality".

The Primates' working group Theological Education for the Anglican Communion (TEAC) has emphasised the critical role that bishops play in theological formation and development.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, told the Primates in March 2006 that he hoped the main focus of Lambeth 2008 "will be upon 'equipping the people of God', a theme that has emerged strongly from the work of the Lambeth Conference Design Group.

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ANITEPAM

The African Network of Institutions of Theological Education Preparing Anglicans for Ministry seeks to strengthen the ministry of theological education throughout Africa.

The Corresponding Secretary of ANITEPAM is the administrator and the editor of our Bulletin and Journal. Address general correspondence (until 31 December 2006) to: The Revd Mike McCoy, PO Box 70610, The Bridge, SOUTH AFRICA, 6032. E-mail: <secretary@anitepam.org>. Ph & fax: +27 41 364-0902.

ANITEPAM is committed to fostering communication about theological education throughout the continent. Members are encouraged to enter into correspondence with members of our Governing Council.

The Governing Council is led by the Very Revd Victor Atta-Baffoe PhD, Dean of St Nicholas Seminary, PO Box A-162, Cape Coast, Ghana, representing West Africa (term expiring 2008). E-mail: <victorattabaffoe@yahoo.com>

Pour l'Afrique Francophone (term expiring 2007):

*The Revd Seth Ndayirukiye, Institut Theologique de Matana, Burundi; currently studying at Uganda Christian University, PO Box 4, Mukono, Uganda.
E-mail: <revsethndayirukiye@yahoo.fr>*

For East Africa (term expiring 2009):

*The Revd Dr Dickson Chilongani, Principal of Msalato Theological College, PO Box 264, Dodoma, Tanzania.
E-mail: <chilonganid@hotmail.com>*

For Southern Africa (term expiring 2006):

*The Revd Lababalo Ngenu, Rector, College of the Transfiguration, PO Box 77, Grahamstown 6140, South Africa.
E-mail: <cotoffice@intekom.co.za>*

For Nigeria (term expiring 2009):

*The Revd Canon George Njoku, Director of Theological Education and Doctrinal Matters, Primate's Office, Box 212 ADCP, Wuse Zone 5, Abuja, Nigeria.
E-mail: <gnjoku@anglican-nig.org>*

For Central Africa (term expiring 2009):

*The Revd Frazer Kachikoti, Rector of the Anglican Seminary of St John the Evangelist, PO Box 21493, Kitwe, Zambia.
E-mail: <rectorstjohns@kitwe.microlink.zm>*

Member-at-large (term expiring 2009):

*Dr Esther Mombo, Academic Dean, St Paul's United Theological College, PO Private Bag, Limuru, Kenya.
E-mail: <academicdean@stpaulslimuru.ac.ke>*

Liaison with North American and British partners:

*The Revd Dr Leon P. Spencer, Liaison Director, ANITEPAM Partnership, and Dean of the School of Ministry, 1901 West Market Street, Greensboro, NC 27403, USA.
E-mail: <LPSpencer@triad.rr.com>*

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downloaded from our web site
www.anitepam.org

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“This is very much in step with the work of the Primates’ working party on theological education... TEAC has been working hard on identifying training needs at every level and also at shaping a definition of ‘the Anglican Way’, the distinctive characteristics of Anglican theology and ministry,” Dr Williams said.

“Lambeth 2008 will offer a unique opportunity for us to think together as bishops about what we need to equip us for building up the Body of Christ, for really effective, truthful and prayerful mission.”

On the agenda

ANITEPAM’s Corresponding Secretary Mike McCoy, commented: “Theological education in the broadest sense is firmly on the Anglican Communion’s agenda.

“It is all the more important, then, that African Anglican church leaders and theological educators engage creatively with one another—not just to prepare for Lambeth 2008, but also to shape theological education on this continent for years to come.”

The content of the consultation has still to be finalised, but ANITEPAM hopes that participants will spend three days together at a conference centre in Limuru, Kenya, giving their attention to matters of common interest and concern.

Apart from the October 2004 resolutions, Mike said, the consultation should give participants time to hear and respond to any issues that Primates and theological educators brought from their own regions, as these were not always the same as those discussed at the level of the wider Communion or even of the continent.

In addition, he hoped that the important work of TEAC—including that on ‘the Anglican Way’ in theological education—could be fed into the discussions. ❖

HAVE WE GOT IT RIGHT?

ANITEPAM’s mailing list has grown steadily over the years.

It may be that we are sending our publications to people who have moved on, or to organisations and addresses that no longer exist.

Maybe some do not wish to receive our mailings any more. Or maybe we have got name or address details wrong.

Does any of this apply to you? If so, please let us know. We’ll gladly fix mistakes, change details, or stop mailing you.

You can also get the *Bulletin* and *Journal* via the internet. You get them first, and we save the mailing costs.

Contact us! We’ll gladly add you to our list of those who are sent an e-mail notification when a publication is available for download.

ANITEPAM's Corresponding Secretary to step down

The Chair of the ANITEPAM Governing Council, The Very Revd Victor Atta-Baffoe, has announced that the Revd Mike McCoy intends to resign as Corresponding Secretary with effect from 31 December 2006.

Mike was appointed to the post in July 2003, succeeding Canon Fareth Sendegeya of Tanzania.

He has also served part-time on the staff of the Theological Education by Extension College (TEEC) of Southern Africa.

Mike has been invited to become an assistant parish priest in the Diocese of Port Elizabeth.

"Mike has felt for some time that he needed a change in his ministry, having held diocesan, Provincial, regional, national, and international positions since 1988, when he was last a parish priest," Victor said.

"He now feels that time has arrived."

Old friends

Mike's decision came shortly before a visit to South Africa by the previous ANITEPAM Chair, Canon Chad Gandiya, now desk officer for Africa and the Indian Ocean at the mission agency USPG in London.

Mike and his family hosted Chad for the Eastern Cape leg of his visit in late August.

Chad, a Zimbabwean, and Mike, a South African, were students together at St John's College, Nottingham in the late 1970s, and found they had a special bond as Africans studying overseas.

Said Mike: "South Africa was in crisis at the time, and as a young white I had met very few Africans from north of the Limpopo River before I got to know Chad. He played a very special role in opening my eyes to the rest of Africa. So it was wonderful to work with him again nearly thirty years later."

"Commitment to God's mission"

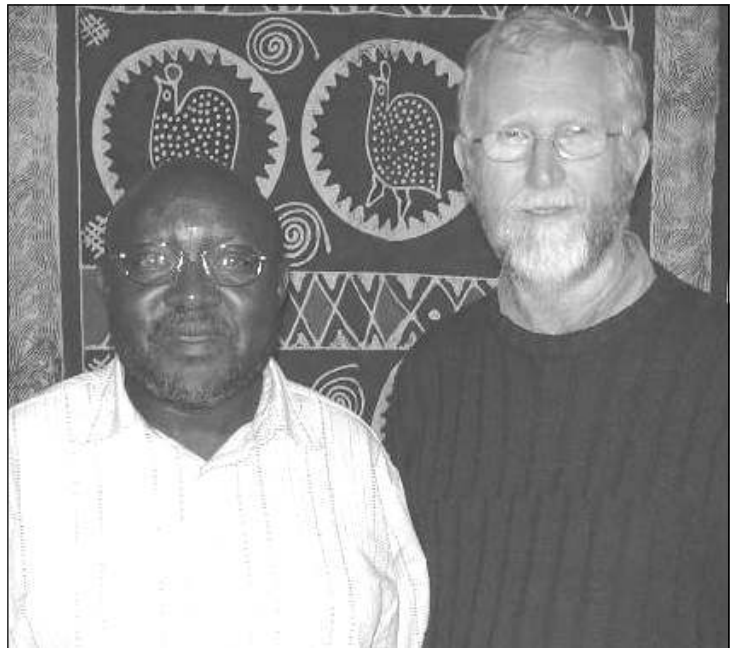
Chad Gandiya said: "Mike and I go back many years. It is always a joy and a pleasure to work with him.

"One thing that has always stood out clearly about Mike in all the years I have known him—apart from his wealth of experience, humility and many other qualities—is his total commitment to God's mission. This, in a very practical way, is central to his life and ministry.

"When he joined ANITEPAM as corresponding secretary, he committed his wealth of experience, talents and skills in a way that enabled ANITEPAM to play its part effectively as an arm of the African church in God's mission through theological education.

"I know that God's mission will be central in the next stage of his ministry in a parish. He takes with him the concerns of ANITEPAM for theological education on the African continent to the parish level.

"After all, God's mission should be at the heart of theological education!



Chad Gandiya, former Chair of ANITEPAM, visited outgoing Corresponding Secretary Mike McCoy while in South Africa recently.
(Photo: Lorna McCoy)

"We are not losing Mike. We will continue to be involved in God's mission at different levels."

ANITEPAM's Governing Council member for Southern Africa, Canon Lubabalo Ngewu, said that in the relatively short period that he had served as Corresponding Secretary, Mike had "infused tremendous energy and insight into the organization", and that he would be sorely missed.

Process

The ANITEPAM Governing Council now seeks a suitable person to take over the work of Corresponding Secretary from 1 January 2007, or as soon after that date as possible.

The first two Corresponding Secretaries—the Revd Dr Leon P. Spencer (1993-1998) and Canon Fareth Sendegeya (1998-2003)—were full time members of staff on their respective theological colleges when they were appointed, and served ANITEPAM half-time during their terms.

In contrast, Mike McCoy was a diocesan coordinator of theological education at the time of his appointment in 2003. In 2004 he left diocesan employ to serve TEE College alongside ANITEPAM.

The next Corresponding Secretary will most likely be a person currently serving on the staff of a theological college, although other patterns of service are possible.

- To see a job description or apply for the position of Corresponding Secretary, contact The Very Revd Victor Atta-Baffoe at St Nicholas Seminary, PO Box A-162, Cape Coast, Ghana; e-mail: <victorattabaffoe@yahoo.com>. ❖

Uniquely African Bible commentary

Julia Katorobo reports on 'a landmark in publishing' with contributions from 70 African theologians

The release of the *Africa Bible Commentary* in July 2006 has been hailed as a milestone in publishing. This is the first time that an African commentary on the whole Bible has been published.

Published by Zondervan, the commentary was put together by 70 African theologians to help pastors, students and lay leaders to apply God's Word to distinctively African concerns.

The project's General Editor, Tokunboh Adeyemo, traces the decision to publish this work to September 1994, when participants at the Second Pan-African Christian Leadership Assembly in Nairobi, Kenya, identified "deficient knowledge of the Bible and faulty application of its teaching as the primary weakness of the church in Africa".

"The Bible needed to be interpreted and explained to the people in familiar language, using colloquial metaphors, African thought-forms and nuances, and practical applications that fitted the African context."

Following that meeting, the Association of Evangelicals in Africa took the idea further.

African viewpoint

The commentary provides a section-by-section interpretation of the Bible from an African viewpoint. There are also insightful articles on topical issues like HIV/AIDS, debt, street children, syncretism, rape, poverty, refugees, war, funeral and burial rights, marriage and widow inheritance—as well as many others.

The commentary has been designed for use in personal devotion, sermon preparation and for study purposes.

In the introduction, Adeyemo recommends the *Africa Bible Commentary* to every missionary working in Africa or intending to serve in Africa because "it will give them insights into the Scriptures and into Africa that can only benefit their ministry".

He, however, adds that the commentary can also benefit those in other parts of the world because "reading the Bible through African lenses may help to inspire others with the dynamism and excitement that is common in African churches".

The commentary has received kudos from Christian leaders, including the Most Rev Dr Robert K. Aboagye-Mensah, the Presiding Bishop of the Methodist Church, Ghana, who, together with John Stott, contributed to the forewords.

Aboagye-Mensah describes the contents of the commentary as tried and tested material because it has been written out of the matured, practical experience

of scholars who love God and are committed to the life of the church.

In a foreword, John Stott refers to the commentary as "a publishing landmark... whose foundation is biblical, its perspective African, and its approach to controversial issues balanced".

Rick Warren, author of *The Purpose-Driven Church*, has called the commentary "a monumental work".

Professor George Kinoti, one of the scholars who contributed to the commentary, says that Africans stand to benefit from it because it helps to bring out the relevance of Scripture to their lives.

"When you read, say, from a Western point of view, what you are reading may be relevant to you but not to the African," he points out.

Dr Peter Okalet, who contributed a section on HIV and AIDS in Africa to the commentary, explains that when missionaries from the West taught the Bible in Africa, they had first to learn the local languages before they could truly 'minister' to Africans.

Nevertheless, their messages had to go through many filters and interpreters before it reached the African audience.

Moreover, he says, at the time of independence, when missionaries started leaving the continent, not many of the Christian leaders who succeeded them were truly educated generally or specifically in theology.

Given the combination of these factors, some parts of the Church in Africa are weak as far as understanding and application of Scripture are concerned.

"Now that we have our own PhDs on the continent, it is important that they 'go to work'... 're-educating' the church in Africa by using languages that the people can 'understand'," says Okalet.

Aggrey Mugisha, who lectures in Communication and also heads up the Department of Development Studies at the Kampala Evangelical School of Theology, says the *Africa Bible Commentary* will do for Africa what the New Bible Commentary and Dictionary did for the Western world in the '50s and '60s.

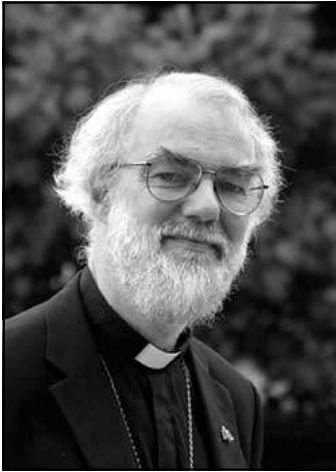
"It was a major landmark in theological writing and reflection—and a yardstick against which what comes after can be measured."

Mugisha explains that the challenge in Africa is not so much that Christian reflection is lacking, but rather that most of it has not been recorded and shared.

"This book is a step in the right direction in that light. Some of the very best of African theological reflection was put together in this project."

- *Some commentary in this article is adapted from the forewords and blurb for Africa Bible Commentary, edited by Tokunboh Adeyemo. Copyright © Zondervan (July 2006). Used by permission of Zondervan. Source: http://www.cms-uk.org/news/2006/african_bible_commentary_040806.htm*

Tokunboh Adeyemo (editor), *Africa Bible Commentary*. ISBN 0310264731, hardback, £23.99. Published in July 2006 by Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI. ❖



*The 104th Archbishop of
Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams
Photo: Lambeth Palace*

The challenge and hope of being an Anglican today

A reflection for the bishops, clergy and faithful of the Anglican Communion

Dr Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury

In July 2006 the Archbishop of Canterbury released this reflection for consideration throughout the Communion. In his covering letter to the Primates he wrote: "Following last week's General Convention of the Episcopal Church (USA), I have been preparing some personal reflections on the challenges that lie ahead for us within the Anglican Communion. I have addressed these reflections to a wide readership in the Anglican Communion and they are being made public today on my website. I wanted to bring them to your attention accordingly, for you to draw to the attention of members of your Province in whatever way you see fit. These reflections are in no way intended to pre-empt

the necessary process of careful assessment of the Episcopal Church's response to the Windsor Report. Rather they are intended to focus the question of what kind of Anglican Communion we wish to be and to explore how this vision might become more of a reality."

ANITEPAM commends this reflection to all who are engaged in theological education in Africa, as part of our journey towards a fuller understanding of our Anglican identity and sources of unity.

The Anglican Communion: a church in crisis?

What is the current tension in the Anglican Communion actually about? Plenty of people are confident that they know the answer. It's about gay bishops, or possibly women bishops. The American Church is in favour and others are against—and the Church of England is not sure (as usual).

It's true that the election of a practising gay person as a bishop in the US in 2003 was the trigger for much of the present conflict. It is doubtless also true that a lot of extra heat is generated in the conflict by ingrained and ignorant prejudice in some quarters; and that for many others, in and out of the Church, the issue seems to be a clear one about human rights and dignity. But the debate in the Anglican Communion is not essentially a debate about the human rights of homosexual people. It is possible—indeed, it is imperative—to give the strongest support to the defence of homosexual people against violence, bigotry and legal disadvantage, to appreciate the role played in the life of the church by people of homosexual orientation, and still to believe that this doesn't settle the question of whether the Christian Church has the freedom, on the basis of the Bible, and its historic teachings, to bless homosexual partnerships as a clear expression of God's will. That is disputed among Christians, and, as a bare matter of fact, only a small minority would answer yes to the question.

Unless you think that social and legal considerations should be allowed to resolve religious disputes—which is a highly risky assumption if you also believe in real freedom of opinion in a diverse society—there has to be a recognition that religious bodies have to deal with

the question in their own terms. Arguments have to be drawn up on the common basis of Bible and historic teaching. And, to make clear something that can get very much obscured in the rhetoric about 'inclusion', this is not and should never be a question about the contribution of gay and lesbian people as such to the Church of God and its ministry, about the dignity and value of gay and lesbian people. Instead it is a question, agonisingly difficult for many, as to what kinds of behaviour a Church that seeks to be loyal to the Bible can bless, and what kinds of behaviour it must warn against—and so it is a question about how we make decisions corporately with other Christians, looking together for the mind of Christ as we share the study of the Scriptures.

Anglican decision-making

And this is where the real issue for Anglicans arises. How do we as Anglicans deal with this issue 'in our own terms'? And what most Anglicans worldwide have said is that it doesn't help to behave as if the matter had been resolved when in fact it hasn't. It is true that, in spite of resolutions and declarations of intent, the process of 'listening to the experience' of homosexual people hasn't advanced very far in most of our churches, and that discussion remains at a very basic level for many. But the decision of the Episcopal Church to elect a practising gay man as a bishop was taken without even the American church itself (which has had quite a bit of discussion of the matter) having formally decided as a local Church what it thinks about blessing same-sex partnerships.

There are other fault lines of division, of course, including the legitimacy of ordaining women as priests

and bishops. But (as has often been forgotten) the Lambeth Conference did resolve that for the time being those churches that did ordain women as priests and bishops and those that did not had an equal place within the Anglican spectrum. Women bishops attended the last Lambeth Conference. There is a fairly general (though not universal) recognition that differences about this can still be understood within the spectrum of manageable diversity about what the Bible and the tradition make possible. On the issue of practising gay bishops, there has been no such agreement, and it is not unreasonable to seek for a very much wider and deeper consensus before any change is in view, let alone foreclosing the debate by ordaining someone, whatever his personal merits, who was in a practising gay partnership. The recent resolutions of the General Convention have not produced a complete response to the challenges of the Windsor Report, but on this specific question there is at the very least an acknowledgement of the gravity of the situation in the extremely hard work that went into shaping the wording of the final formula.

Very many in the Anglican Communion would want the debate on the substantive ethical question to go on as part of a general process of theological discernment; but they believe that the pre-emptive action taken in 2003 in the US has made such a debate harder not easier, that it has reinforced the lines of division and led to enormous amounts of energy going into 'political' struggle with and between churches in different parts of the world. However, institutionally speaking, the Communion is an association of local churches, not a single organisation with a controlling bureaucracy and a universal system of law. So everything depends on what have generally been unspoken conventions of mutual respect. Where these are felt to have been ignored, it is not surprising that deep division results, with the politicisation of a theological dispute taking the place of reasoned reflection.

Thus if other churches have said, in the wake of the events of 2003 that they cannot remain fully in communion with the American Church, this should not be automatically seen as some kind of blind bigotry against gay people. Where such bigotry does show itself it needs to be made clear that it is unacceptable; and if this is not clear, it is not at all surprising if the whole question is reduced in the eyes of many to a struggle between justice and violent prejudice. It is saying that, whatever the presenting issue, no member Church can make significant decisions unilaterally and still expect this to make no difference to how it is regarded in the fellowship; this would be uncomfortably like saying that every member could redefine the terms of belonging as and when it suited them. Some actions—and sacramental actions in particular—just do have the effect of putting a Church outside or even across the central stream of the life they have shared with other Churches. It isn't a question of throwing people into outer darkness, but of recognising that actions have consequences—and

that actions believed in good faith to be 'prophetic' in their radicalism are likely to have costly consequences.

Truth and unity

It is true that witness to what is passionately believed to be the truth sometimes appears a higher value than unity, and there are moving and inspiring examples in the twentieth century. If someone genuinely thinks that a move like the ordination of a practising gay bishop is that sort of thing, it is understandable that they are prepared to risk the breakage of a unity they can only see as false or corrupt. But the risk is a real one; and it is never easy to recognise when the moment of inevitable separation has arrived—to recognise that this is the issue on which you stand or fall and that this is the great issue of faithfulness to the gospel. The nature of prophetic action is that you do not have a cast-iron guarantee that you're right.

But let's suppose that there isn't that level of clarity about the significance of some divisive issue. If we do still believe that unity is generally a way of coming closer to revealed truth ('only the whole Church knows the whole Truth' as someone put it), we now face some choices about what kind of Church we as Anglicans are or want to be. Some speak as if it would be perfectly simple—and indeed desirable—to dissolve the international relationships, so that every local Church could do what it thought right. This may be tempting, but it ignores two things at least.

First, it fails to see that the same problems and the same principles apply within local Churches as between Churches. The divisions don't run just between national bodies at a distance, they are at work in each locality, and pose the same question: are we prepared to work at a common life which doesn't just reflect the interests and beliefs of one group but tries to find something that could be in everyone's interest—recognising that this involves different sorts of costs for everyone involved? It may be tempting to say, 'let each local church go its own way'; but once you've lost the idea that you need to try to remain together in order to find the fullest possible truth, what do you appeal to in the local situation when serious division threatens?

Second, it ignores the degree to which we are already bound in with each other's life through a vast network of informal contacts and exchanges. These are not the same as the formal relations of ecclesiastical communion, but they are real and deep, and they would be a lot weaker and a lot more casual without those more formal structures. They mean that no local Church and no group within a local Church can just settle down complacently with what it or its surrounding society finds comfortable. The Church worldwide is not simply the sum total of local communities. It has a cross-cultural dimension that is vital to its health and it is naïve to think that this can survive without some structures to make it possible. An isolated local Church is less than a complete Church.

Both of these points are really grounded in the belief that our unity is something given to us prior to our

choices—let alone our votes. ‘You have not chosen me but I have chosen you’, says Jesus to his disciples; and when we gather to celebrate the Eucharist, we are saying that we are all there as invited guests, not because of what we have done. The basic challenge that practically all the churches worldwide, of whatever denomination, so often have to struggle with is, ‘Are we joining together in one act of Holy Communion, one Eucharist, throughout the world, or are we just celebrating our local identities and our personal preferences?’

The Anglican identity

The reason Anglicanism is worth bothering with is because it has tried to find a way of being a Church that is neither tightly centralised nor just a loose federation of essentially independent bodies—a Church that is seeking to be a coherent family of communities meeting to hear the Bible read, to break bread and share wine as guests of Jesus Christ, and to celebrate a unity in worldwide mission and ministry. That is what the word ‘Communion’ means for Anglicans, and it is a vision that has taken clearer shape in many of our ecumenical dialogues.

Of course it is possible to produce a self-deceiving, self-important account of our worldwide identity, to pretend that we were a completely international and universal institution like the Roman Catholic Church. We’re not. But we have tried to be a family of Churches willing to learn from each other across cultural divides, not assuming that European (or American or African) wisdom is what settles everything, opening up the lives of Christians here to the realities of Christian experience elsewhere. And we have seen these links not primarily in a bureaucratic way but in relation to the common patterns of ministry and worship—the community gathered around Scripture and sacraments; a ministry of bishops, priests and deacons, a biblically-centred form of common prayer, a focus on the Holy Communion. These are the signs that we are not just a human organisation but a community trying to respond to the action and the invitation of God that is made real for us in ministry and Bible and sacraments. We believe we have useful and necessary questions to explore with Roman Catholicism because of its centralised understanding of jurisdiction and some of its historic attitudes to the Bible. We believe we have some equally necessary questions to propose to classical European Protestantism, to fundamentalism, and to liberal Protestant pluralism. There is an identity here, however fragile and however provisional.

But what our Communion lacks is a set of adequately developed structures which is able to cope with the diversity of views that will inevitably arise in a world of rapid global communication and huge cultural variety. The tacit conventions between us need spelling out—

not for the sake of some central mechanism of control but so that we have ways of being sure we’re still talking the same language, aware of belonging to the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church of Christ. It is becoming urgent to work at what adequate structures for decision-making might look like. We need ways of translating this underlying sacramental communion into a more effective institutional reality, so that we don’t compromise or embarrass each other in ways that get in the way of our local and our universal mission, but learn how to share responsibility.

Future directions

The idea of a ‘covenant’ between local Churches (developing alongside the existing work being done on harmonising the church law of different local Churches) is one method that has been suggested, and it seems to me the best way forward. It is necessarily an ‘opt-in’ matter. Those Churches that were prepared to take this on as an expression of their responsibility to each other would limit their local freedoms for the sake of a wider witness; and some might not be willing to do this. We could arrive at a situation where there were ‘constituent’ Churches in covenant in the

“There is no way in which the Anglican Communion can remain unchanged by what is happening at the moment. Neither the liberal nor the conservative can simply appeal to a historic identity that doesn’t correspond with where we now are.”

Anglican Communion and other ‘churches in association’, which were still bound by historic and perhaps personal links, fed from many of the same sources, but not bound in a single and unrestricted sacramental communion, and not sharing the same constitutional structures. The relation would not be unlike that between the Church of England and the Methodist Church, for example. The ‘associated’ Churches would have no direct part in the decision making of the ‘constituent’ Churches, though they might well be observers whose views were sought or whose expertise was shared from time to time, and with whom significant areas of co-operation might be possible.

This leaves many unanswered questions, I know, given that lines of division run within local Churches as well as between them—and not only on one issue (we might note the continuing debates on the legitimacy of lay presidency at the Eucharist). It could mean the need for local Churches to work at ordered and mutually respectful separation between ‘constituent’ and ‘associated’ elements; but it could also mean a positive challenge for Churches to work out what they believed to be involved in belonging in a global sacramental fellowship, a chance to rediscover a positive common obedience to the mystery of God’s gift that was not a matter of coercion from above but of that ‘waiting for each other’ that St Paul commends to the Corinthians.

There is no way in which the Anglican Communion can remain unchanged by what is happening at the moment. Neither the liberal nor the conservative can simply appeal to a historic identity that doesn’t

correspond with where we now are. We do have a distinctive historic tradition—a reformed commitment to the absolute priority of the Bible for deciding doctrine, a catholic loyalty to the sacraments and the threefold ministry of bishops, priests and deacons, and a habit of cultural sensitivity and intellectual flexibility that does not seek to close down unexpected questions too quickly. But for this to survive with all its aspects intact, we need closer and more visible formal commitments to each other. And it is not going to look exactly like anything we have known so far. Some may find this unfamiliar future conscientiously unacceptable, and that view deserves respect. But if we are to continue to be any sort of ‘Catholic’ church, if we believe that we are answerable to something more than our immediate environment and its priorities and are held in unity by something more than just the consensus of the moment, we have some very hard work to do to embody this more clearly. The next Lambeth Conference ought to address this matter directly and fully as part of its agenda.

The different components in our heritage can, up to a point, flourish in isolation from each other. But any one of them pursued on its own would lead in a direction ultimately outside historic Anglicanism. The reformed concern may lead towards a looser form of ministerial order and a stronger emphasis on the sole, unmediated authority of the Bible. The catholic concern may lead to a high doctrine of visible and structural unification of the ordained ministry around a focal point. The cultural and intellectual concern may lead to a style of Christian life aimed at giving spiritual depth to the general shape of the culture around and de-emphasising revelation and history. Pursued far enough in isolation, each of these would lead to a different place—to strict evangelical Protestantism, to Roman Catholicism, to religious liberalism. To accept that each of these has a place in the church’s life and that they need each other means that the enthusiasts for each aspect have to be prepared to live with certain tensions or even sacrifices—with a tradition of being positive about a responsible critical approach to

Scripture, with the anomalies of a historic ministry not universally recognised in the Catholic world, with limits on the degree of adjustment to the culture and its habits that is thought possible or acceptable.

Conclusion

The only reason for being an Anglican is that this balance seems to you to be healthy for the Church Catholic overall, and that it helps people grow in discernment and holiness. Being an Anglican in the way I have sketched involves certain concessions and unclarity but provides at least for ways of sharing responsibility and making decisions that will hold and that will be mutually intelligible. No-one can impose the canonical and structural changes that will be necessary. All that I have said above should make it clear that the idea of an Archbishop of Canterbury resolving any of this by decree is misplaced, however tempting for many. The Archbishop of Canterbury presides and convenes in the Communion, and may do what this document attempts to do, which is to outline the theological framework in which a problem should be addressed; but he must always act collegially, with the bishops of his own local Church and with the primates and the other instruments of communion.

That is why the process currently going forward of assessing our situation in the wake of the General Convention is a shared one. But it is nonetheless possible for the Churches of the Communion to decide that this is indeed the identity, the living tradition—and by God’s grace, the gift—we want to share with the rest of the Christian world in the coming generation; more importantly still, that this is a valid and vital way of presenting the Good News of Jesus Christ to the world.

My hope is that the period ahead—of detailed response to the work of General Convention, exploration of new structures, and further refinement of the covenant model—will renew our positive appreciation of the possibilities of our heritage so that we can pursue our mission with deeper confidence and harmony.

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Is there an ‘Anglican Way’ in African theological education?

What is ‘the Anglican way’? And what does it mean for African theological education? This is to be the focus of the *ANITEPAM Journal* in November 2006.

We’d like to examine questions like: Is there an Anglican way of doing theological education in Africa? How do we form and educate Anglicans—lay and ordained—in our programmes and institutions? What is the style and content of distinctively Anglican theological education? Do we need a distinctive style and content? If so, why, and how? What resources do we have, and what do we need?

You are invited to share your story of ‘the Anglican Way’ with others in African theological education through the pages of the *ANITEPAM Journal*. Tell us how ‘being Anglican’ shapes the way you do theological education—and *vice versa*.

The deadline for sending in contributions has been extended to **30 October 2006**. So this is your last chance! Please contact the Corresponding Secretary soon. ❖

Anglican women in Africa: 'the priority is for life'

Kenya's Dr Esther Mombo lectures at women's ordination conference in Manchester

By Matthew Davies

The impact of Christian women on African society was the focus of a lecture by Dr Esther Mombo titled "We see them and hear them... but has it made a difference?" at a conference on women's ordination hosted by the University of Manchester's Lincoln Theological Institute, July 12-14.

Mombo, academic dean of St Paul's United Theological Seminary in Limuru, Kenya and a member of ANITEPAM's Governing Council, acknowledged that the present church leadership is extremely vocal on issues of sexuality, but insisted that for women in Africa that is not a priority.

"The priority is for life," she said. "We are not having the discussions that we see in public, such as human sexuality, but discussions of life and death issues."

One of the world's largest continents, Africa accounts for about 14 percent of the total population and boasts vast ethnic and cultural diversity, but some countries are roiled with conflict, and HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases continue to pose life-size challenges.

'Heterosexuals are the problem'

Recent statistics suggest that 42 million people in the world are living HIV/AIDS, with 25.8 million of those cases in Africa. "Although Africa has 14 percent of the world's population, it has 62 percent of the world's HIV/AIDS cases," Mombo said.

For women in Africa, the problem is with heterosexuality not homosexuality, she said. "It is the heterosexuals who will rape small children in the hope that [such a myth] will rid them of HIV/AIDS."

Women's ordination in Africa plays a vital role in helping to overcome gender inequality, poverty, violence and HIV/AIDS, Mombo explained, as "it provides an important place for women to contribute to the wellbeing of people in society."

African Christianity, she said, has created its own unique flavour of religion and has assumed a more charismatic character.

It tends to be described as conservative, especially in light of its proactive evangelistic mission, but has long been presented as vital and growing. The 11 Anglican provinces in Africa account for almost two thirds of the world's 77 million Anglicans.

Incredible faith

"When you look at the ordinary Christians, they have an incredible faith just as if God is walking with

them," Mombo said. "They never let go even when death is wiping them out ... Because Jesus saves!"

Mombo explained that women have been ordained in Africa for nearly two decades, "but it is not uniform, just like Africa is not uniform," she said. "One side of a country may ordain women when another does not."

In addition to the practices, policies and leadership of the church, the ordination of women in Africa has been affected by its history of colonialism and conflict. Education and female literacy levels have also played a significant part.

Offering an historical account of the ordination of women during the time that missionaries were delivering Christianity to Africa, Mombo said, "Mission Christianity, which began in North Africa, was always fourfold, through evangelism, education, health, and industrial training. Through this framework the missionaries found a way of liberating women in what they saw as oppressions."

The Anglican-run Mothers' Union, the Presbyterian Church's Women's Guild, and other denominational women's organizations, have consistently been the backbone of the church, Mombo added, as they are the groups that carry the social welfare banner.

The 1950s and 1960s in Africa saw the liberation struggles that brought independence to both the churches and countries, and women began to receive the education that prepared them for roles in business and the government.

"The church lagged behind in terms of women's leadership because of its historical context and women weren't given the education to prepare them to become church leaders," she said.

"The churches at the time would also say no to women's ordination because of theological reasons," a more common one being that Jesus never appointed a woman as one of his disciples.

Ecumenical moves

Through ecumenical initiatives, the churches began to address the ordination of women. The All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) began discussions on the subject in 1963 when a consultation in Kampala, Uganda, welcomed a conversation on the place of women in the church. The World Council of Churches held a consultation in 1970 that had an impact on the African churches.

A further AACC meeting in 1974 resolved to urge the formation of an advisory committee of men and women to draw a program for the inclusion of women in society, and in 1980, another conference called for equal rights for women in the church and for them to be ordained into full pastoral ministry.

Before the 1978 Lambeth Conference, a number of African Anglican provinces were already discussing the ordination of women.

Africa acts

In Uganda in 1974, the issues were raised at the provincial synod. One of the bishops asked why the

province couldn't wait until the Church of England had made a decision on women's ordination.

According to Mombo, one bishop replied, "If you wait for the Church of England, you'll wait until doomsday."

In 1975, some Kenyan bishops brought a motion to their Provincial Synod, which affirmed the principle of women's ordination.

It was decided that any possible candidates should undergo theological training and that there should be further consultation with the House of Bishops before any ordinations took place.

In 1979, one Ugandan bishop ordained a group of women as deacons and four years later, ordained three

as priests.

Today, six of the 38 Anglican provinces do not allow women's diaconal, priestly or episcopal ordination. They are: Central Africa, Jerusalem & Middle East, Melanesia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, and South East Asia.

"The women pioneers' story is a mixed bag," Mombo said. "Some of them left ministry because the church was not ready for them, some have continued to study and work and to serve the churches today."

She noted that, in terms of members, they may be small, "but the disciples of Jesus were small in number, yet they turned the world upside down." [ENS, edited by ANITEPAM] ❖

African Institute for Contemporary Mission and Research (AICMAR)

Communiqué of the Sixth Annual School of Theology, 2-3 August 2006

We, the delegates of the Sixth Annual School of Theology of the African Institute for Contemporary Mission and Research (AICMAR) in Butere, Kenya, met in Chadwick Library to grapple with issues arising from our theme: "The Gospel and the Contemporary Challenges of African Cultural Heritage".

Revd Professor Kwame Bediako, one of Africa's leading Christian interpreters of African Christianity, and founder director of Akrofi Christaller Institute of Theology, Mission and Culture, Ghana, presented two papers. Other speakers were Revd Dr Dickson Chilongani, Principal of Msalato Theological College, Tanzania; Dr Margaret Gecaga of the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Kenyatta University; Revd Zablon B. Mutongu of St Paul's University (designate); Revd Ben Shikwati Keya (Bible Expositions), Academic Co-ordinator, AICMAR.

The Bible is more than a text: it is our life

We underscore that all Christians in every place and time do have a pre-Christian past connecting them with the present. We maintain that no significant and enduring theology in the history of Christian thought has ever proceeded on the basis of a religious vacuum.

What constitutes the pre-Christian preparation for the Gospel will vary in different cultural settings. We reject the early missionary and armchair anthropological conclusions of some Western scholars that African religion and philosophy had nothing significant to offer. Such skewed thoughts may explain the seeming lack of a Christian theology in Africa until recently. The Living God, as known and hallowed in many African pre-Christian indigenous traditions, is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ named in many vernacular translations of the Bible. It is possible therefore, to make a case for the indigenous ancestry of African Christian experience.

We recognise a valid pre-Christian preparation for the Gospel in African religious and cultural traditions. Within them, we find an authentic transmission of the Gospel in Africa and hear Christ's call to Africans. It is what Africans do with Jesus Christ that matters—that is, how Africans respond to Jesus Christ in the complexities of contemporary life and society. This is the most vital theological challenge facing African Christians and African churches today. The rest of the world will learn from the African response.

'Prosperity gospel' is a lie

The so called 'prosperity gospel' is a misrepresentation of the Gospel and an alien import to Africa. Drawing from the example of Job, we maintain that suffering and poverty are not necessarily the result of sin, ignorance and lack of faith and that righteousness, understanding and faith do not necessarily lead to good health and prosperity. The 'prosperity gospel' leads to a false sense of wellness, security and, ultimately, false hope. It is exploitation and often adds pain to the sufferer. In African culture, prosperity was linked to work ethic and communal co-existence.

Values for economic recovery

We realize that although Africa is endowed with numerous natural resources, many civilians die of hunger and disease as a result of conflicts over poor management of these resources. This creates a contradictory state—the African people's hope to share and benefit from their natural resources and their despair and despondency in the face of famine, illness and war which excludes them from the 'banquet of the kingdom' (Matt 22:1-14, Lk 14:15-24). We need to go back to the traditional values of sharing and solidarity and build new relationships rooted in Christ and expressed in this cultural vitality.

Christ is also African

We recognize that Christ is African as he is Jewish or European. He is the Alpha and the Omega. In our reading and application of the Holy Scriptures we do well to be confident in the knowledge that Christ meets us in our culture. Christ speaks and understands

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Parish decides to support ANITEPAM

An Anglican parish in South Africa has decided to make a monthly gift to support the work of ANITEPAM.

The Parish Council at St Hugh's, Newton Park—a suburb in the Eastern Cape city of Port Elizabeth—voted earlier this year to give ANITEPAM R500 (about US\$70) each month, and has done so since June.

It may be pure coincidence, but St Hugh's is also the parish where ANITEPAM's Corresponding Secretary, Mike McCoy, is licensed as a self-supporting priest.

The rector, Archdeacon Christopher Holmes, said: "In these past few months, we at St Hugh's have been very happy to have made a small contribution to the work of ANITEPAM. This arose through our contact with Mike McCoy, who has re-located to Port Elizabeth, and who has been helping with ministry in our parish when he has some spare time.

"Our financial year is now drawing to a close, and I am sure that our support for this important service for this link in theological education throughout our continent of Africa will continue. May God continue to pour His blessing on all that ANITEPAM stands for."

The Church of the Province of Southern Africa (CPSA) also supports ANITEPAM financially. In 2005 its Provincial Synod approved an annual grant of R5,000 (about US\$700) for the 2006-2008 triennium.

Is your parish, diocese, Province, or institution willing to follow the example of St Hugh's Parish and the CPSA, and to support the work of ANITEPAM? Contact the Corresponding Secretary for more information about how this can be done. ❖



The Ven. Christopher Holmes (right), rector of St Hugh's, Port Elizabeth, with the Revd Jean Budgen (centre), a deacon on the staff, and members of the parish.



Ngewu to leave College of Transfiguration

Canon Lubabalo Livingstone Ngewu (left) has announced that his term as Rector of the College of the Transfiguration, the only residential seminary in the Church of the Province of Southern Africa (CPSA), will end in December 2006.

Canon Ngewu has been Rector since January 2000. He also became a member of ANITEPAM's Governing Council in that year, serving latterly as Deputy Chair.

Although his plans for the future have not yet been finalised, Canon Ngewu intends to return to Pretoria, his home diocese. He also says that he wants to write a history of the CPSA "from the margins"—a project that has been a passion of his for some time.

The last comprehensive history of the CPSA was Peter Hinchliff's *The Anglican Church in South Africa* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd), published in 1963.

The College of the Transfiguration was established in 1992 when the CPSA's two remaining residential seminaries, St Bede's in Mthatha and St Paul's in Grahamstown, were closed. The new College took over the St Paul's campus, and was headed by Canon Luke Pato, Canon Ngewu's predecessor both as Rector and as Southern African representative on the Governing Council.

In a message to Canon Ngewu, the Revd Dr Leon P. Spencer, ANITEPAM's Liaison Director in North America, expressed "appreciation for your wonderful sense of humour, your friendship, and your deep commitment to the place of theological education in the life and witness of the people of God".

- Do you have news of staff moves or changes in your institution? Keep us informed through the ANITEPAM Bulletin! ❖

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our languages because he is one of us. He transforms us and calls us into a new relationship with him within our cultural experience. Our love for Christ ought to inspire us to love our neighbours as we live out this faith together.

Attending the School of Theology were 40 Christian leaders and scholars (15 women, 25 men) from Ghana, Burundi, Uganda, Tanzania, and Kenya, who represented various institutions including Akrofi-Christaller Institute of Theology, Mission and Culture;

Uganda Christian University; Msalato Theological College, Tanzania; Kenyatta University; Moi University; St. Paul's University (designate); Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology; Kimia International School of Theology; and ANITEPAM.

—*Revd Prof. Kwame Bediako (keynote speaker),
Rt Revd Michael J. Sande (treasurer, AICMAR Trustees)*

- ANITEPAM was represented by Dickson Chilongani (the Governing Council member representing East Africa, and one of the speakers) and Seth Ndayirukiye (Francophone Africa). ❖

African seminaries find a place on the World Wide Web

ANITEPAM's web site is their new cyber-home

Three Anglican theological colleges—two in East Africa and one in Nigeria—are making themselves known around the world, thanks to ANITEPAM's web site.

When we launched our web site in late 2004, one of our goals was to support theological education institutions that had little or no access to the Internet, by offering to give them a web page. Three have taken up the offer so far.

Up and running

First off the mark was **Bishop Balya College** in Fort Portal, near the foothills of the Ruwenzori Mountains in Western Uganda. Its principal, the Revd Kisembo B. Reuben, contacted us and sent information and photographs. Their page can be seen at www.anitepam.org/Uganda Bishop Balya College.htm.

Next, the Ven E.F. Ikupolati, Dean of **Bishop Crowther College, Okene** in Jos State, Nigeria, sent us information and several photographs.

When told that the College's web page was up and

running, Dean Ikupolati wrote: "With great delight we receive the good news from you that we have been given a space in your website. We have gone to browse and have seen it. We are very grateful."

The College's web page is at www.anitepam.org/NigeriaBishopCrowther.htm.

Watch this space...

St Barnabas' Christian Training Centre in Korogwe (Diocese of Tanga, Tanzania) has sent us a leaflet containing their history and programmes. Principal Emmanuel Mnkai now looks forward to seeing the Centre in cyberspace.

ANITEPAM is willing to create a web page for any African institution or programme of theological education that does not have its own web site.

We are also glad to provide links to institutions that have their own web sites. Several are already in place—see www.anitepam.org/African TE.htm.

Please contact the Corresponding Secretary for more information. ❖

ANITEPAM
PO Box 70610
The Bridge
SOUTH AFRICA
6032

