



Proceedings of the Thirtieth Anniversary Conference
The Nature and Diversity of Authority in Anglicanism
31 March – 2 April 2017, Trinity Hall, Cambridge

Empowering Authority in the Anglican Communion ***The Revd Canon Dr Philip Groves***

In 2011 Archbishop Rowan Williams in his final address to the Anglican Communion warned against being satisfied with second best and falling into federalism. He commended corrective authority and the work of Canon Lawyers, but he also recognised the virtual impossibility of finding a locus of authority in a Communion of 38 autonomous churches.

In his address he chose to concentrate on a different form of authority – the authority Jesus displayed which he called ‘empowering authority’.

The Anglican Communion has failed to exert authority over the Episcopal Church (TEC). Arguments rage on the internet as to whether the consequences levelled on TEC were upheld by the ACC, but regardless no one believes that TEC will change direction. The Scottish Episcopal Church, the Church in Wales, the Anglican Church of Canada and the province of Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia are on the same trajectory – as might be the Church of England, which has already stepped over the line of acceptability according to Global South Anglican and GAFCON.

This is good. The so called ecclesial deficit was not served by a structure that paid no attention to Scripture. In my full paper I show how Global South Anglican has spread division and been divided by adherence to Covenant principles. GAFCON offers a different form of corrective authority based on confessionalism and conciliarism. I show that the approach leads again to division.

Authority in the early church was empowering. The deficit in ecclesiology lies in the inability to face the reality that we are a missionary church in a similar position to the churches Paul wrote to. This excerpt sets out the case for empowering authority.

Empowering Authority

Norman Doe claim that ‘there is no teaching of Scripture on the model of the organisation for a worldwide association of churches’ needs further scrutiny.¹ In contrast missiologists since Roland Allen have claimed that the missionary expansion replicates the Pauline advance of the church in the first century.² Allen faced scepticism over his claim that the

¹ Norman Doe, *An Anglican Covenant* (Canterbury Press, Norwich) 2008, 43

² Roland Allen, *Missionary Methods – St Paul’s or Ours?* (Eerdmans- Grand Rapids), 1962

methods employed by Paul could be replicated in the 20th, but when people such as Lesslie Newbigin put his practices into action they produced amazing results.

Allen dedicated a whole section to 'St Paul's method of dealing with organized churches' with chapters on 'Authority and Discipline' and 'Unity'.³ Andrew Walls pointed out the similarity of the present context to that of the emerging Pauline churches in his monumental essay 'The Ephesian Moment'.⁴ In addition I have developed a theology of partnership from Philippians and multiple theologians have taken that further thought the theology of *Continuing Indaba*.

The deficiency in ecclesiology is from those who ignore the shift from institutional churches within Christendom to missional churches within diverse societies. The rules that worked for churches within 'Christian' societies do not work in a world where every society is in turmoil with the advent of the new. For some societies – especially in Africa – this has been the emergence of Christian and Islamic values challenging millennia of inherited traditions. In Europe and the Americas it has been both the rise of non-Christian religions and of those who profess no religion. This context bears far stronger a relationship to that of the early church than to our traditional structure and the Bible is as relevant as ever.

Paul when he wrote his letters was concerned for unity locally and globally. Local reinterpretation of the gospel was vital,⁵ but it did create problems. The different interpretations of the gospel, not only between Jewish and gentile congregations, but also between gentile and gentile congregations in different places, constantly threatened the unity of the whole. People in Corinth took the freedom narrative way beyond the limits of acceptability and people from Jerusalem attempting to enforce circumcision and food laws on unwilling gentiles were joined in disunity by others such as Euodia and Syntyche who were locked in an unknown quarrel. Paul knew every inch of our present issues.

The contemporary implications of Paul's methods were set out by Roland Allen: in his classic *Missionary Methods – St Paul's or Ours?*

Allen argued that Paul did four things to establish unity:

1. He taught unity by taking it for granted
2. He used to the full his position as intermediary
3. He maintained unity by initiating and encouraging mutual acts of charity
4. He encouraged the constant movement of communication between the different churches.⁶

³ Ibid 111-140

⁴ Andrew Walls – 'The Ephesian Moment – at a Crossroads in Christian History' in *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History*, Orbis, 2002, 72– 81

http://www.anglicancommunion.org/listening/book_resources/docs/ephesian_moment.pdf

⁵ Zac Nyirige, 'To Proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom' in *Mission in the 21st Century* (Walls and Ross) DLT, 2008. Excerpt available here: <http://continuingindaba.com/2012/10/02/culture-and-the-gospel/>

⁶ Allen, 134-5

The community in Corinthian provided an example. Paul expected them to take responsibility for settling their own issues without reference to a council. He constantly reminded them of the core values that would see them reunited in one body. He did not take sides in the bitter disputes, but called them to value one another, especially valuing the most vulnerable. With trembling he sent Timothy to them, fearing he would be rejected by all for not taking sides. In the midst of this and in the context of their search for ultimate freedom Paul begged them to give with generosity to the Jerusalem community, the very group who he was accusing of legalism. This was not just about feeding the poor; it was about building relationships across difference and was essential for reconciliation. Despite all, he kept in touch, writing to them when opportunity arose.

Allen complained that the church in his generation was inhibited fear of innovation. He was dismayed when decisions on marriage practice in China were determined by a council in London with no reference to the context and customs of the Chinese people. He admitted that this gave a veneer of unity, but this was not the way of Paul. He wrote:

If there has been no heresy, there has been no prophetic zeal. If there has been no schism, there has been no self realisation... If there have been no schismatics, there have been no apostles. If there has been no heresy, there has been no native theology.⁷

These were and are deeply shocking words. Allen's point is that the unity of the church depends upon its ability to explore, push the boundaries, and engage in a conversation with cultures.

Archbishop Justin Welby describes a healthy understanding of diversity:

Conflict arises from the diversity in which we have been created. ... When we seek to find a way of life that avoids it we deny the three realities of our fallenness, our present diversity, and the tension between the realised present and anticipated salvation of our futures. The Quaker Faith and Practice book says "by their silence the progress of world peace has stood still", there is a need to name issues, to listen and to let go of fear.

If the Church is not a place both of conflict and of reconciliation it is not merely hindering its mission and evangelism, appalling as such hindrance is, but it is a failing or failed church. It has ceased to be the miracle of diversity in unity, of the grace of God breaking down walls. We must be reconciled reconcilers. When that happens we are unbelievably attractive, distinctively prophetic, not because we all agree, but because we disagree with passion in love, and set the bar high for the world around. And then reach out and help people over the bar.⁸

The failed Church clamps down on diversity and tries to destroy conflict through conformity.

⁷ Ibid, 137

⁸ Justin Welby 'The Crooked, Straight Path of Reconciliation' – Archbishop's address at 'Faith in Conflict' conference 28 February 2013 <http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/5023/archbishops-address-at-faith-in-conflict-conference#Address>

The leadership required amidst such conflict is demanding. Allen pointed to the pain endured by Paul in his life as a reconciler. Apostolic ministry was one of leadership that empowered, and takes courage. Weaker leadership will close down options and side with one over another.

Those who volunteer as intermediaries are to be valued. There is a need to recruit and train great facilitators. They need to participate in the design of processes that establish a constant movement of communication between churches and people and encourage all to participate in mutual acts of charity.

The issues we face today require Pauline leadership building community and focusing on the key elements of the gospel. Bishops will have a key role of constantly reminding all involved that they are to focus on Christ and his way.

The key for conversations across radical difference is our relationship with God and our relationships with one another. It was in this context that Paul regarded eating with one another as the essential act of communal living. If you could not eat together you could not share at the essential distinctive Christian act the sharing of bread and wine at the table of the Lord. This was true in Corinth and it was true in Ephesus where Paul reacted angrily to Peter's decision to eat separately from the gentiles.

Even after this tensions in Ephesus remained. They became so bad that those who would only eat with the circumcised and those who would not eat with the circumcised both began to seek a radical solution. Both sides saw themselves as orthodox and sought support to either suppress the other, or to divide – to agree to disagree – the great enemy of reconciliation.

Andrew Walls describes this point in history as the 'Ephesian Moment.' He argues that we are reliving that moment in our present generation where we are presented with a choice to agree to disagree, become two churches or to be a union of irreconcilable entities. In Ephesians, for Walls there was only one answer:

Emphatically, there was to be only one Christian community. That community had become more diverse as it crossed the cultural frontier with the Hellenistic pagan world; and Christian obedience was tending to increase the diversity by developing parallel lifestyles that would penetrate and influence Jewish society on the one hand and pagan society on the other. But the very diversity was part of the church's unity. The church must be diverse because humanity is diverse; it must be one because Christ is one. Christ is human, and open to humanity in all its diversity; the fullness of his humanity takes in all its diverse cultural forms.

The Ephesian letter is not about cultural homogeneity; cultural diversity had already been built into the church by the decision not to enforce the Torah. ***It is a celebration of the union of irreconcilable entities, the breaking down of the wall of partition, brought about by Christ's death (Eph. 2:13-18).*** Believers from the different

communities are different bricks being used for the construction of a single building—a temple where the One God would live (Eph. 2:19-22).⁹

This Pauline vision is an uncomfortable and unsettling picture of an ongoing search for truth, rather than a fixed defence of established truth. ‘The church must be diverse because humanity is diverse; it must be one because Christ is one’¹⁰ is not an easy option, it is an emotionally challenging vision and is reflected in the Anglican way as described in the Virginia Report:

The characteristic Anglican way of living with a constant dynamic interplay of Scripture, tradition and reason means that the mind of God has constantly to be discerned afresh, not only in every age, but in each and every context.¹¹

Good disagreement is not about making the best of a bad situation – a planned divorce. It is the radical opposite of agreeing to disagree. It is the discerning afresh of the gospel in every culture and age and is a painful and complex journey towards the fullness of truth.

Partnership

The Anglican Communion committed itself in 1963 to such a way when it embraced Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence, but the experiment failed because it did not have adequate models of partnership. Over the last 40 years some biblical scholars have offered models of how such diverse communities can function. In particular J. Paul Sampley identified the social paradigm of consensual *societas* defined the relationships between Paul, his community and the churches he founded.¹²

Using his work and the work of many other scholars I studied the relationship between Paul and his community in Rome and the community of Christians in Philippi to distil a model of effective partnership for mission.¹³ This model has been adopted by the Church of England as a basis of its world mission policy.¹⁴

The Philippian Model

1. Partners have a common purpose

Sampley argues that partnership is driven by purpose. The common purpose of the partnership between Paul and the Philippian Church was “the gospel” (Phil. 1:5). Paul rejoices in their partnership in the gospel and their participation from the first

⁹ Andrew Walls – ‘The Ephesian Moment – at a Crossroads in Christian History’ in *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History*, Orbis, 2002, 72– 81. (emphasis mine).

¹⁰ Andrew Walls – ‘The Ephesian Moment – at a Crossroads in Christian History’ in *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History*, Orbis, 2002, 72– 81

http://www.anglicancommunion.org/listening/book_resources/docs/ephesian_moment.pdf

¹¹ The Virginia Report Para 3.11 page 16 <http://www.lambethconference.org/1998/documents/report-1.pdf>

¹² J. Paul Sampley, *Pauline Partnership in Christ* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980)

¹³ Philip Groves, ‘A Model for Partnership: A model of partnership distilled from the relationship between Paul and the Philippian church as a tool to examine the partnership programmes of the Anglican Communion and to propose new directions’ Ph.D. thesis, University of Birmingham (2010) <http://etheses.bham.ac.uk/654/>

¹⁴ Janice Price *World-shaped Mission Exploring new frameworks for the Church of England in world mission* (Church House Publishing, London) 2012, 83-4

<https://www.chpublishing.co.uk/uploads/documents/worldshapedmission%20sample%20pages.pdf>

day until the point of the writing of the letter (4:15-16) and assures them that his imprisonment has not hindered his participation (1:13). Even those with dubious motives are within the partnership because they further the aim (1:15-18).

A partnership depends upon a clear, common task in which all partners can be involved.

2. Partners are of equal status

Sampley showed that “people of diverse economic and social backgrounds might be drawn together into *societas* by the mutual valuation of a particular aim.”¹⁵ While *societas* relationships were formed between those of differing status within society, the relationship within the partnership required equality.¹⁶

In the Anglican Communion churches are described by words such as founding, giving, stronger, older, growing, receiving, numerous, Spirit-filled and declining. All these terms delineate power relationships. Each one may be used as a claim to authority that brings into question the reality of partnership. Claims that the Church of England is an ‘elder sister’ destroy the notions of partnership.¹⁷

Paul sheds the title of apostle in Philippians, replacing it with slave (1:1), stresses the equality with his ‘son’ Timothy (2:19-23) and stresses the maturity of the Philippians themselves (3:15). He goes to great lengths to establish the equality of relationship.

In a partnership both partners must have equality of status. There must be mutual respect. Partnership cannot work where there are feelings of inferiority or superiority on either side.

3. Partners have a common basis of belief

Sampley states that: ‘A partnership [*societas*] lasts as long as the parties remain of the same mind.’¹⁸ The Philippians shared Paul’s basic understanding of the gospel.. However, there is room for contextual differences in how these fundamentals are worked out in their lives both corporately and individually.

Phil. 2:12-13 recognises that the working out of salvation is contextual. The basis is humility in the service of Christ, but the living out varies from person to person and from place to place. The Philippians are asked to move from assent to an agreed faith statement to the actuality of working out what that means in their lives. What is interesting is the way Paul encouraged diversity in those he considered partners.

Absolute theological parity is not a requisite for partnership, but a common basis of belief and a shared theological language within which to discuss our relationship in partnership is of vital importance.

4. Partners have a concern for unity in one another’s community

¹⁵ Sampley, *Pauline Partnership*, 13.

¹⁶ Sampley, *Pauline Partnership*, 17.

¹⁷ Idowu-Fearon, ‘To the General Synod of the Church of England 16 February 2017’

¹⁸ Sampley, *Pauline Partnership*, 15.

Sampley shows that the failure to agree terminated the *societas*.¹⁹ Paul is painfully aware that, where the partners are themselves communities, disunity within one of them causes the disunity between them. The divided groups in individual provinces have become splits across the Communion.

Paul has to show the Philippians that his community is one despite rumours of division (1:15-18). Unity is found through the exercise of humility (2:1-8) and conflicts require facilitated conversations (4:1-3).

Partnership between two groups depends upon each group being united. Unity is forged by humility. Without unity the partnership will be between parties within one or both of the groups, and will encourage division. It is the responsibility of each partner to encourage unity in the other, and, when appropriate, to offer services of reconciliation and not judgement.

5. Partners are eager to communicate and to be with one another

The desire to visit the Philippians overrides his desire to be with the Lord (1:21). The Philippians sent Epaphroditus, risking his life, to maintain the communication. When Paul could not travel letters and intermediaries such as Timothy maintained the relationship. Communication is vital.

Partners will seek ways to be in communication, using whatever means are available, but never neglecting personal visits. The purpose of the visits is for mutual encouragement and to discover how the partnership is proceeding.

6. Partners share complementary resources and skills

Sampley states that: "Each of the parties to consensual *societas* contributed to the partnership one or more of the following: property, labour, skill, or status."²⁰

In the Anglican Communion partnership has often been between donor and receiver with the former generally considered the holder of power. Paul defines how this can be challenged in his thank you for the gift he receives (4:10-20). Money is a significant part of the sharing, but it can only be offered and received in the context of reciprocal exchanges and must not dominate the exchange. Partnership is with god and then with one another.

Partners will have complementary gifts and resources to share. Money will often be part of this, but money cannot dominate the relationship. Other gifts are required from both parties. The richer party must be prepared to offer more than money and neither side can take power over the other by the giving of gifts.

7. Partners share in one another's struggles and victories

The predominant reason for forming a *societas* relationship was to gain a profit. While the terms of the partnership could be negotiated Sampley says "it was not permitted to say that one partner was liable for losses alone but ineligible for

¹⁹ Sampley, *Pauline Partnership*, 14-5.

²⁰ Sampley, *Pauline Partnership*, 13-4.

profits.”²¹ Neither was it permitted for a party to withdraw from partnership prior to the declaration of a great loss.²² The commitment was to share in both profit and loss. Such sharing in liability is key in any partnership relationship.²³

The Corinthian church was prepared to pay for services rendered and to engage in reciprocity, paying for Paul's preaching. However, they were not prepared to enter into suffering for him and showed no interest in sharing the credit for their own victories. In contrast, the Philippian Church demonstrated solidarity with Paul through being prepared to face poverty and economic disadvantage, and being prepared to offer sacrificial giving for the sake of the partnership.

The acceptance of liability is fundamental to a partnership relationship, but so is the sharing in profit. The theme of rejoicing runs through Philippians, both Paul rejoicing in the Philippians and the Philippians being encouraged to rejoice by Paul. Paul describes the Philippians as “his crown” (4:1).

Partners will be prepared to share in liability and rejoice in one another's success. Partnership requires commitment that may, at times, lead to suffering in solidarity. It requires the ability to rejoice in the partner's success.

Lived out this partnership model creates the structure for empowering authority that enhances mission locally and globally. It is a missiological ecclesiology that offers an empowering alternative to ecclesiologies based on institutional understandings of church.

Indaba

Partnership is understood in African societies as Ubuntu – a relational commitment to one another.²⁴ Every African language has words for the concepts of shared humanity understood by Ubuntu and also for the Zulu word Indaba. In the Anglican Communion Indaba is understood as a process of honest conversation that seeks to build community, energize mission, and provide a context in which conflict can be transformed.²⁵

In 2009 the Anglican Communion began a programme called Continuing Indaba. It gathered theologians from different regions to establish the biblical and cultural basis for Indaba. African and Asian theologians responded by publishing short essays that guided process.²⁶ The resulting theological material is rich and varied – the widest collection of theological work from Africa and Asia on any subject available from Anglican sources.

Process involved groups from diverse dioceses across the communion travelling with one another, hosting and being hosted. The results were sometimes extraordinary. Each one

²¹ Sampley, *Pauline Partnership*, 15.

²² *Ibid.*, 16.

²³ See Warren, *Partnership*, 13.

²⁴ Michael Battle *Ubuntu: I in You and You in me* (Seabury Books, NY) 2009

²⁵ ACC 15 'Resolution 15.39: Understanding of Continuing Indaba'

<http://www.anglicancommunion.org/structures/instruments-of-communion/acc/acc-15/resolutions.aspx#s39>

²⁶ 'Continuing Indaba Theology' on 'Continuing Indaba Resources'

<http://www.anglicancommunion.org/mission/reconciliation/continuing-indaba.aspx>

was monitored at every point by a team of sociologists led by Paula Nesbitt, who has just published the definitive book on Continuing Indaba.

She writes:

Indaba has served many roles in the Anglican Communion. It has deepened relationships across cultures and other differences; helped transform conflict... brought mutual respect and movement toward mutual mission and reconciliation. It also has helped bring an end to a legacy of Western dominance and an elitist attitude toward other parts of the world and their cultures. Unity has become possible across profound diversity of cultures and continents. *Indaba* provides a social framework for a process of authentic communication to take place.²⁷

The evaluation of the journeys was combined with the theology and distilled into process guides that are available to use by anyone.²⁸ The examples of the effectiveness of Indaba range from peace building in Kenya at local and national level, the development of effective relationships in South Africa, challenging racism in the USA, transforming conflict over the umbrella movement in Hong Kong and enabling victims of rape as an act of war find their voice in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Indaba has been hardest to understand in places where the culture of community has been eroded. When this is matched by an understanding of church as institution to be protected Indaba is hard to understand. Bishop Titre Ande can say from a Congolese perspective that:

A synod as council will allow friendly discussions as brothers and sisters in Christ, as people are used to it in their villages and societies. There will be freedom of opinion that leads to consensus. Secondly, the same council will lead and govern the church. Therefore, the Bible-based decisions of the council will be 'final', depriving the leader of the right of veto.²⁹

However, in the Church of England there is a lingering assumption that bishops are consecrated to lead the church and teach the faith. There are strong voices who demand that bishops should isolate themselves from the storms of ideologies and have confidence in their hermeneutical abilities. Such a view leads to an understanding of the 'Shared Conversations' as a perfect storm of cultural misunderstandings that if not checked threatens standard doctrine.

The Church of England first experimented with empowering authority when it reached deadlock over women bishops. A day of General Synod was set aside for facilitated mutual listening that enabled a way forwards. Continuing Indaba people analysed the results of the

²⁷ Paula D. Nesbitt *Indaba! – A way of Listening, Engaging, and Understanding across the Anglican Communion*, (Church Publishing, NY) 2017, 227.

²⁸ 'Continuing Indaba Guides' on 'Continuing Indaba Resources'

<http://www.anglicancommunion.org/mission/reconciliation/continuing-indaba.aspx>

²⁹ Titre Ande, *Leadership & Authority: Bula Matari and Life-Community Ecclesiology in Congo* (Regnum Books: Oxford) 2010, 152.

See also Mkunga H. P. Mtingele *Leadership and Conflict in African Churches: The Anglican Experience* (Lang, NY) 2015.

listening, taking care to discover mood and to analyse every contribution recorded in the sessions. The result was striking. Almost all the groups said that synodical process had led them into a polarised place. 75% said that a different process was needed to enable a change in attitude. What was desired was a process founded on establishing relationships involving people changing the language they use and building trust so people can be honest. They wanted to escape the focus on mediation outcomes – outcomes that focus on defining boundaries between those with conflicting agendas – and desired mission outcomes – outcomes that would be effective in proclaiming the gospel.

It was hoped that the Shared Conversations might deliver on this and the accompanying literature made a case for missional outcomes asking LGBT Christians about the gospel we have to share in contemporary society.³⁰ It appears that strong voices in the House of Bishops returned to mediation outcomes. They appointed a group of bishops to give a ‘clear assertion of where the church now finds itself.’³¹ They relied on a straw poll approach to establish that law change was not possible and established the rules for ongoing mediation. When the report was put to General Synod the House of Clergy refused to ‘take note’. The motives of those who voted in defiance of the House of Bishops were mixed, but among the voices were many who had expected a more realistic representation of the Shared Conversations. The Archbishops responded with a call for ‘radical inclusion’ and a return to empowering process.³² They said ‘We need to work together - not just the bishops but the whole Church, not excluding anyone – to move forward with confidence.’ There was recognition of the complexity of process.

Continuing Indaba can help. The Church of England has to follow the example of Paul in divesting itself of the idea of ‘Mother church’ or even ‘Elder Sister church’ and learn from African and Asian insights. It is unique in the Anglican Communion, but so is every other province. It also must take seriously the cultural reality that deference to authority is no longer acceptable in England. This means that radical inclusion starts with the design of process where those talked about must take a lead. The terms for listening have to be set by those who are sharing their vulnerability. Then a commitment has to be made to follow up the listening, however uncomfortable that might be. Knowing what is being said by the community of God is not the taking of straw polls; it is about discerning afresh the mind of God in this age and context.³³

Indaba and the Anglican Communion

In the Anglican Communion cross provincial meetings that have consciously embraced Indaba methodology have been effective in maintaining unity and channelling energy into

³⁰ Philip Groves ‘A Search for Good Disagreement’ in *Grace and Disagreement* (Church House Publishing, London) 2014, 52-71. <https://churchofengland.org/media/2165248/grace2.pdf>

³¹ ‘Marriage and Same Sex Relationships after the Shared Conversations A Report from the House of Bishops’ GS 2055 <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/3863472/gs-2055-marriage-and-same-sex-relationships-after-the-shared-conversations-report-from-the-house-of-bishops.pdf>

³² ‘Letter from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York following General Synod’ 16 February 2017 <https://www.churchofengland.org/media-centre/news/2017/02/letter-from-the-archbishops-of-canterbury-and-york-following-general-synod.aspx>

³³ The Virginia Report, Para 3.11

mission. The latest example is the meeting of the Primates of Oceania.³⁴ They owned Indaba by accessing cultural streams from their own traditions using the word of Samoan origin *talanoa* to describe the ‘robust conversation over time’. It enabled them to say that in ‘a climate where “me first” or “we first” dominates, we affirm: “we together.”’ Unlike the communiqués of other Anglican bodies they were able to articulate the implications of being disciples of Jesus in a world devastated by climate change, facing the mass movements of people and cultures of violence. They did not minimise their own divisions, but found that through the Holy Spirit they could find a way to be with one another conscious that over 1000 languages are spoken in their region.

The Dublin Primates’ Meeting took the form of an Indaba. It was the only Primates Meeting in recent years to escape the pointless discussion of exclusion. Despite the boycott, the Meeting was able to gather support for campaigns against gender based violence that have placed the Anglican Communion at the front of campaigns such as Side by Side³⁵ and organising the ‘Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict’ headlined by Angelina Jolie and William Hague.³⁶ It shows what can be done by a global Communion committed to mission.

The Primates gathered, prayed and studied. Together they offered the Anglican Communion a workable Covenant that if taken seriously could offer the basis for genuine, biblical, empowering authority:

In our common life in Christ we are passionately committed to journeying together in honest conversation. In faith, hope, and love we seek to build our Communion and further the reign of God.³⁷

³⁴ ‘We together – in Christ’ 6 March 2017 <http://www.anglicanprimate.org.au/news/we-together-in-christ/>

³⁵ ‘Side By Side’ <http://sidebysidegender.org/assets/gbv/>

³⁶ ‘Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict’ June 2014 <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/sexual-violence-in-conflict>

³⁷ ‘Towards an Understanding of the Purpose and Scope of the Primates’ Meeting A Working Document Approved by the Primates Meeting’ 29 January, 2011 http://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/68360/prim_scpurpose.pdf