

## Lambeth 2008 and its Aftermath

By Desmond Scotchmer



Canterbury Cathedral

Well, the Lambeth Conference has come and gone. If you were anything like me, you may have found it very difficult to get a sense of what was happening while it was on, and once it was over, to figure out what had actually happened. Now that the dust has settled, here are this observer's impressions of the event, and of the ramifications for the Anglican Church of Canada.

On the plus side, there was a widespread desire to hold the Communion together. The Conference ended with a new draft of the proposed Anglican Covenant (see PBSC

Newsletter, Easter, 2007) and an eloquent and earnest request for a moratorium on same-sex blessings from the Archbishop of Canterbury. Earlier drafts of the Anglican Covenant were promising, as they gave prominence to the foundational and normative role of the Book of Common Prayer, and to the classical tenets of the Anglican tradition. The plea from the Archbishop of Canterbury was welcome to all who subscribe to classical Anglicanism. On the negative side, fully one quarter of all Anglican bishops around the world boycotted the event. This

shows a high level of dissatisfaction with the status quo within the Anglican Communion, and its failure to uphold classical Anglican norms.

Looking ahead, the issue is, of course, whether the Anglican Church of Canada or the Episcopal Church in the US will want to be part of any future Anglican Communion. Signs from the U.S. are not promising. Signs from the Canadian Church are mixed.

One heartening sign was the endorsement on October 31, 2008 by the Canadian House of Bishops of the

– Continued on page 2

### INSIDE

4  
A Stand in the Face  
of Arrogance

5  
“Something Old and  
Ever New”

6  
A Flourishing Prayer  
Book Parish



Lambeth 2008—Continued from page 1

moratorium recommended by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The *Anglican Journal* reports that “a large majority” of bishops “could affirm a continued commitment” to the moratorium on the blessing of same-sex unions. This is a great step in the right direction. All traditionalists should applaud their courage, and pray that the commitment to remain a part of the worldwide Anglican Communion holds firm.

However, the article indicates that Archbishop Hiltz, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, also acknowledges that the stance of the House of Bishops “allows dioceses such as Montreal and Ottawa some wiggle room to continue what their bishops have described as ‘incremental’ and ‘experiential’ steps towards same sex blessings”.

And indeed, both the dioceses of Ottawa and Montreal have announced intentions of moving in the direction (the term “forward” is being used, though this writer thinks the word misapplied) of same sex blessings. All readers need to note that these announcements were made by the bishops of Ottawa and Montreal *before* the meeting of the House of Bishops, that is, before they had asked for their colleagues’ approval. While both bishops underscore the fact that they have not yet given approval to perform same-sex blessings, they have made it clear where they stand.

Bishop Clarke of Montreal stated that he is “not sure” if he can “manage to hold the moratorium”, an odd statement, given the control most bishops within the Anglican Church of Canada wield over their

clergy.

In their addresses to their respective Synods at the end of October, both Bishop Clarke and Bishop Chapman of Ottawa said they believed that their dioceses were “among those being called by God to speak with a prophetic voice”, to “challenge long-held assumptions and unseat prejudice”.

These statements belong to the world of polemic, not the world of open debate, and need further scrutiny, especially as the bishops were speaking in tandem. Many indeed are the voices that have proclaimed themselves “prophetic”; among them those of Mary Baker Eddy (the founder of Christian Science) and Joseph Smith (the founder of the Mormon Church), yet both stand outside orthodox Christianity. The Scriptures warn us repeatedly against false prophecy. Christians need to think long and hard before presuming to equate their notions with prophecy. As for the reference to “unseating prejudice”, its use here can only be seen as self-serving and deeply insulting to those who disagree with this course of action, implying as it does that they are benighted, bigoted, and homophobic.

Curiously enough, both bishops seemed to be reading from an identical text on this issue (check it out, on the diocesan websites), though to be sure, Bishop Clarke introduced his address by calling upon “God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer”, while the bishop of Ottawa contented himself with the orthodox, Creedal invocation of the Christian Trinity.

Bishop Chapman was reported (Friday, October 24) in the Ottawa

Citizen as saying: “We must ‘experience’ the issue as a church before clarity of heart and mind might be attained. For this reason, I hope to proceed, but slowly and cautiously.”

These words also need to be scrutinized. The Church has engaged in doctrinal and theological thinking since the earliest days, and most of that has been thinking both lofty and profound. Think of the Epistles to the Hebrews, to the Corinthians, think of the Nicene Creed, think of the great Patristic works, of the writings of St Augustine, or Thomas Aquinas. But that thinking has always been based on the revealed Word of God, it has been thinking “within the Scriptures”, within the tradition handed down. The Windsor Report, which has been endorsed by the worldwide primates of the Anglican Communion, and which echoes resolution 1.10, passed by a large majority at the 1998 Lambeth Conference, has made it clear that the blessing of same sex unions stands outside this tradition, and represents a significant departure from it. The notion that we must “experience” something before we can attain clarity about it is merely absurd, and smacks of the “Don’t knock it until you’ve tried it” mentality of the sixties (when I was growing up). So much was tried in the sixties – and so much of it was disastrous. Nor should it escape any impartial observer’s attention that such a rationale could be used for just about anything: starting, for instance, with polygamy, or euthanasia.

For some time now, there has been an attempt by those who are seeking to remake Anglicanism to

– Continued on page 3

Lambeth 2008— Continued from page 2

add an additional “leg” to the so-called “three-legged Anglican stool” of Scripture, Tradition, and Reason. This new leg is that of “experience”. It must be borne in mind that those who espouse this new way of thinking mean by “experience”, the experience of those who share the mindset of affluent, liberal-minded, left-leaning, middle class, white North America. If I read him correctly, the Bishop of Ottawa is now taking this a step further: even before same sex blessings have become a part of our experience we should make them so, because, until then, we can't have any clarity! This is nonsense.

It is also heterodox, and works against two thousand years of Christian orthodoxy.

Yet, Bishop Chapman, in an open letter published in the November edition of the diocesan paper *Crosstalk* - a letter breathtaking in its assertions that black is white - goes to great lengths to assert his orthodoxy in pursuing his intentions. He claims to be “heartbroken” that a substantial number of parishioners within his diocese are leaving his jurisdiction and placing themselves under the care of Bishop Donald Harvey, moderator of the Anglican Network in Canada, who in turn comes under the primatial authority of Gregory Venables, Primate of the Anglican Province of the Southern Cone. This move, the bishop of Ottawa claims, is “radical” and “incomprehensible”. Had Bishop Chapman read the Windsor Report, or followed the debate within the Anglican Communion over the past ten years, he might have found the

decision to leave his jurisdiction, in view of his stated determination to proceed with this course of action, a little easier to understand. He might also have understood that, in the view of the wider Anglican Communion, it is his views and actions that are so very radical.

But I suspect that the bishop knows this very well, and the letter is no more than a rhetorical device to soften up the diocese before he goes ahead.

So it needs to be repeated, long and loud, that the Anglican Primates throughout the world, and through them the Anglican Communion, have made it clear that the blessing of same sex unions stands outside Christian and Anglican orthodoxy, and represents a significant departure from it. Bishop's Chapman's assertions to the contrary do not change that one jot.

This issue brings into sharp focus the type of thinking prevalent among some circles in contemporary Canadian Anglicanism. It is a way of thinking that has drifted far, far from the mind of the early Church, of the Apostles and Evangelists. Never before has there been a more urgent need to return to a more serious way of thinking about the issues confronting the church, a way that is less influenced by our contemporary culture of self-indulgence, licence and entitlement, (which so often masquerades as “liberation”, or justice, or equality) and more respectful of Christian orthodoxy, and of the wider Christian community throughout the world. A way of thinking that acknowledges that what we want might not be best, a way of thinking that is humble

before the tradition handed down to us, a way of thinking that respects the plain meaning of Scripture.

Traditionalist Anglicans might wish to consider two more things, while pondering the state of the Anglican Church of Canada. The same article that reported the House of Bishop's October 31 discussions also reported that Archbishop Hiltz now acknowledges that blessing same sex unions represents a change of doctrine. This is an important point, as it is one that has been evaded before. The other is that a motion in the Diocese of Ontario to support same sex blessings was ruled *ultra vires*, that is, outside the jurisdiction of the Diocese. If it is *ultra vires* in Ontario, why would it not be *ultra vires* elsewhere?

One final point needs to be emphasized. In his letter on this issue published in the diocesan paper, the Bishop of Ottawa states: “[same sex] blessings, while controversial, pale in comparison to the most grievous of errors: dividing Christ's body, the Church.” The bishop has talked of the need for clarity, and indeed, this statement cries out for it. The Anglican Primates around the world have made it consistently clear that it is the actions of the diocese of Ottawa, and Montreal (and New Westminster) – and their bishops – that are dividing the Body of Christ. The eyes of Anglicans around the world will be watching what happens here in Canada over the next while.

# A Stand in the Face of Arrogance

By the Revd. Gordon Maitland

If ever there was a reason for the Prayer Book Societies of the Anglican Communion to be present this past summer at the Lambeth Conference, it was to take a stand in the face of those who arrogantly dismiss the *Book of Common Prayer* (and the Prayer Book Societies which uphold it) as being beneath notice. If there was any doubt as to the dismissive attitude of those who are contemptuous of the *Book of Common Prayer*, one need only read what is said about the various Prayer Book Societies in the latest book about the history of Anglican liturgy – *The Oxford Guide to the Book of Common Prayer: A Worldwide Survey*, eds. Charles Hefling & Cynthia Shattuck (Oxford University Press, 2006).

*The Oxford Guide*, despite its title, deals not only with a history of the *Book of Common Prayer*, but also the many and diverse Books of Alternative Services and other contemporary liturgical resources which are to be found throughout the Anglican Communion. This weighty tome includes essays by all the “usual suspects” among prominent Anglican liturgists. It is the first serious and scholarly book about the Prayer Book to mention the worship of the so-called Continuing Anglican Churches and the first to mention the Prayer Book Societies of the Anglican Communion. The latter are mentioned in a chapter entitled “Preserving the Classical Prayer Books” by the (now retired) liberal evangelical Church of England bishop Colin Buchanan. In this chapter, dripping with sarcasm and

condescension, bishop Buchanan writes, “*On a priori* grounds [a strong reaction to liturgical change] might be expected to come in its most vocal form among the most private, the most insecure, and the most traditionalist parts of the Anglican Communion ...” (p.264). When writing about the formation of the Prayer Book Society in the United States, the bishop writes, “History suggests that paranoia and shrillness set in early, and that the ‘liberal’ majority, satisfied in conscience that they had done all that could reasonably be done to include the minority, then turned relatively deaf ears to their cries. A Prayer Book Society, formed to oppose the trends, gave regular expression to this last-ditch anguish, though without disturbing the policy behind the 1979 Book of Common Prayer.” (p.264).

It is at this point that bishop Buchanan goes on to write about the Canadian Prayer Book Society:

As the experiments were drawn into the moves leading towards the 1985 *Book of Alternative Services* ... so a fear arose in some quarters that the liturgical tradition of this or that parish would be imperiled. However, as the book proved indeed to contain just what its title stated – legal alternatives to Prayer Book services – and as it was introduced with some sensitivity, most of the possible anger was easily siphoned off. A Prayer Book Society came into existence, but it has not been well supported nor has it had

reason to allege persecution or other action from the authorities against continuing users of the 1962 Prayer Book. (p.264).

Even putting aside for a moment the risible assertions that the BAS was introduced with “sensitivity” and that the PBSC has no “reason to allege persecution or other action from the authorities against continuing users of the 1962 Prayer Book”, one can easily sense the overall dismissive tone the author has regarding the PBSC. This tone is carried right through to the end of the article where, in the penultimate paragraph of the chapter, the bishop says of those who are members of the Prayer Book Societies:

The literary sallies of the ageing or anachronistic few have no confident next generation of Anglicans coming up behind them to sustain the conflict. As the 1988 Lambeth Conference said of the 1662 Prayer Book in its obituary notice: ‘if we do not dwell on its strengths today, it is because we judge its era is slipping irretrievably into the past ...’ (p.267)

If there was no other reason for the Prayer Book Societies to be present at the 2008 Lambeth Conference, it was to prove these kinds of arrogant pronouncements to be unfounded. Our physical presence (and relative youth) were a demonstration to those with ears to hear and eyes to see that there are Anglicans who continue to derive spiritual sustenance and comfort from the *Book of Common Prayer* in its

– Continued on page 5

## “Something Old and Ever New”

*This article, by the Revd. Craig O'Brien of the American Prayer Book Society, is reprinted from our Lambeth Conference website, at [www.prayerbookatlambeth.org](http://www.prayerbookatlambeth.org).*

Bishop David Njovu was one of the youngest bishops of the Anglican Communion to attend the fourteenth Lambeth Conference in Canterbury. Njovu, a Zambian by birth, was consecrated Bishop of Lusaka, capital of that nation and a diocese in the Province of Central Africa, in 2004 at the age of 42.

Prior to his elevation to the episcopate, Njovu had been Dean of the Cathedral in Lusaka, and before that, an assisting priest in the mother church of the diocese. In fact, Bishop Njovu is a son of this cathedral church, where he grew up in the Spirit, and where his vocation to the Apostolic Ministry was planted, fed and watered.

Before being sent to seminary in neighbouring Zimbabwe, Njovu recalls being formed in orthodox belief, as Rowan Williams has said, “as a landscape to inhabit with constant amazement and delight”, in the sense of “why orthodox belief is truth that makes us happy”. The topography of this spiritual and ecclesial landscape was provided for Njovu by the pattern of penitential

adoration found in the classic Book of Common Prayer, in this case, that of the 1954 South African revision, which was used in the Cathedral during his boyhood and youth, and later as a priest, throughout the forty days of Lent.

For Bishop Njovu--the young African Christian; the Catholic Anglican in the mission heritage of Central Africa; the ordinand, then deacon and priest; the husband of Norren and father of four; and now the Father in God of the Diocese of Lusaka – the classic Prayer Book and formularies are a necessary anchor for Anglicans of the present to the Apostolic Faith and Order that has been handed on to us, and to the reality of that truth of the Gospel “that makes us happy”.

Amid the tumults and controversies of this Lambeth Conference, when asked about the usefulness of the Prayer Book and formularies to his ministry now in Central Africa, the Bishop responded that those of his laity and clergy who from the 1980’s were not exposed to the classic formularies are often in danger of lacking “any firm foundation” in the faith. There is, he says, “a direct connection between the abandonment of the classic Prayer Book in the Communion and



Bishop David Njovu  
*“There is a direct connection between the abandonment of the classic Prayer Book in the Anglican Communion and the controversies we now face”*

the controversies we now face”.

In the past two years of his still young episcopate, Bishop Njovu, working with the Prayer Book Society of the U.S.A., has seen through a reprint of the 1954 South African Prayer Book for distribution among his clergy and catechists, together with continuing education in its content and use. Increasing numbers of clergy are now using the Prayer Book for the Divine Office in their parish churches and missions.

Bishop David Njovu: A young Bishop in a young Church, seeking with his flock and for his flock to build upon the firm foundations of something old, and ever new.

A Stand– Continued from page 4

various national editions. The fact that the proposed Anglican Covenant and the GAFCON Jerusalem Statement both make reference to the BCP as one of Anglicanism’s foundational texts, and the fact that the Archbishop of Canterbury spoke publicly and favourably of the BCP at the Lambeth Conference are evidence

that people like bishop Colin Buchanan are mistaken if they think that support for the BCP is confined to the “ageing and anachronistic few”.

The PBSC will continue to need your prayers and support, both moral and financial, if it is to expose the hubris of those who would just as soon write off the *Book of Common Prayer* as a relic of past and forgotten

Anglican verities. It is only through the vigorous and courageous witness of every PBSC member that we can stand in the face of arrogance.

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## A Flourishing Prayer Book Parish

By Joan Doig

All Saints' Church, Saskatoon, is an island dedicated to the Book of Common Prayer in a diocese whose parishes use the Book of Alternative Services for almost all their worship. Though originally founded by an older evangelical parish, for half a century the parish has cherished the Anglo-Catholic tradition under successive rectors: Frs. Hugh Stiff, Allan Challacombe, John Marlor, and Richard Spencer. On Sunday, October 19th, Bishop Rodney Andrews – who has always given the parish every encouragement to maintain its style of worship – inducted Fr. Daniel Hughes as rector. Fr. Dan began his ministry in the Church Army and for a time served as a prison chaplain. Most

recently he has had charge of a multi-point rural parish covering churches in four communities, while at the same time serving as Archdeacon of the diocese's eastern region. Fr. Dan has now succeeded Fr. Richard as Archdeacon of Saskatoon, and he follows his predecessors in devotion to traditional BCP worship and in preaching thoughtful sermons, their teaching firmly based on Scripture.

Canon Robert Greene, who preached an inspiring and amusing sermon at Fr. Dan's induction, commented a number of times on the beauty of All Saints' interior. Like many built in the nineteen-fifties, the church has soaring wooden beams

rising from low masonry walls to meet in the centre, on the lines of England's traditional early medieval wooden cruck buildings, or like the ribs of an upturned boat. The effect is elegant, yet simple and unpretentious, calling to mind the meaning of the term 'nave'. The windows are of plain glass, but even so they attract vandals from



Left to right: Revd. Canon Robert Greene, Bishop Rodney Andrews, Revd. Dan Hughes

time to time. The church has a full set of vestments for all seasons and beautiful new silver for the altar, unfortunately new because thieves broke in and took all the earlier silver, along with computers from the office. Improved security measures should discourage losses in the future.

Though it didn't deter the thieves, All Saints has an atmosphere of reverence usually found only in much older churches. It feels like a place of prayer and devotion. No doubt the glow of the sanctuary lamp, the small shrines by the walls, the rack of votive candles, the flowers by the altar, and the three huge crosses on the wall above it work together to help create

this atmosphere. A visitor understands immediately that the people who worship here love and honour All Saints as the house of God and remember Jesus' words, "It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer."

The parish has an early service and a solemn Eucharist every Sunday, a mid-week service,

Evensong once a month except in summer, and celebrations on special festivals. The congregation sings enthusiastically from the Book of Common Praise (1938) – that familiar blue book – and the parish seems to attract musicians. Its small pipe organ, which has recently received expert attention, is a proud possession. One fine organist has succeeded another for many years, and though

the present organist and music director must soon leave, the choir has a number of distinguished musicians who are bound to attract a worthy successor.

A measure of the parish's appeal is the number of clergy who worship in the church. Fr. John was rector for thirty years and then stayed in the parish until his untimely death some years after his retirement. Archdeacon Spencer will return in the New Year, Archdeacon Geoff Huggill is a longstanding parishioner, and more recently Fr. Walter Hannam, who teaches Systematic Theology at the College of Emmanuel and St. Chad,

– Continued on page 7

**A Flourishing Parish**—Continued from page 6

not only has taken services but has encouraged students from the College to serve as crucifers, acolytes, and sub-deacons. The College contingent adds immeasurably to the parish, particularly because the students' youthfulness offsets the age of many others – some old enough to remember fondly Fr. Stiff, who moved to Toronto in the early sixties. Like the clergy, laypeople are faithful to All Saints, and now that it's the only BCP parish in Saskatoon, they come from all parts of the city. Seminarians must of course move on, but they carry with them all they have learned, and in the fullness of time, we can hope, may establish their own Prayer Book parishes. Some of the students who attend are recipients of PBSC bursaries, and knowing them well, members of the parish are keenly aware of how desperately students need such financial help.

The PBSC has a loyal branch at All Saints – the only one in the entire province, which has three dioceses. Officially, and with Bishop Rod's approval, the branch encompasses the whole diocese, but its strength and its meetings are at All Saints, where its most active members worship. In one respect the branch is young, dating to a visit from former chairman Michael Edward in 2004, when he inspired a number of parishioners to join what soon became an established group, able to host a successful Annual General Meeting in 2005. On the other hand, the branch contains a good number of elderly people, and most of those attending branch meetings are over fifty. This is largely a matter of demographics. In the 1960's, those who are now elderly parishioners tended to have large families, so Sunday school classes and the A.Y.P.A.

flourished, but most of those young people headed out of the province when Alberta was booming, and now the youngest members of the parish are in their teens and twenties. They provide a strong nucleus for growth, however, being regular in attendance at services and keen to learn and help at the altar. Fr. Dan has plans for confirmation classes in the New Year, and perhaps out of those classes may emerge a younger PBSC branch. The Niagara Branch in Ontario, with its superbly competent teen-aged chairman, provides a model for achieving growth, and the good advice of past Niagara Branch president Walter Raybould on how to attract young people is both heard and heeded.

The plea by Michael Edward, our past national Chairman, that PBSC members educate themselves in their faith, has directed the branch towards education rather than fundraising, though it has used collections at meetings to buy teaching materials and to contribute to parish causes such as assistance to the Diocese of Masasi in Tanzania. In addition, all are encouraged to answer PBSC appeals and contribute directly to the national body. Meetings are always study sessions, and a number of members have provided studies of the more important books of the Old Testament. However, rather than burden the same people with the labour of similar presentations year after year, the branch executive decided to devote funds towards a parish TV and to use educational DVDs, at first those made by National Council member Pat Bryan for the *Parish Alive!* programme, then Dr. Michael Green's series *Reality*, and for the present season *Jesus, the New Way*, by the Bishop of Durham, Tom Wright. The

PBSC Toronto Branch kindly sent us enough excellent PBSC pamphlets on the Prayer Book to provide both a package for each delegate attending this year's diocesan synod, and another package for each member of the branch to study. Authors of these pamphlets include Bishop Anthony Burton (a former neighbour in the diocese to the north), Carolyn Westin, Drs. Robert Crouse and Jim Packer, and the Revd. Ed Hird.

Even with so much to be thankful for, neither the parish nor the PBSC branch can be complacent. The parish has long wished to attract more aboriginal members, since many who must have grown up on Anglican reservations live in the surrounding community. For a time, efforts to attract aboriginal children to Sunday school seemed promising, but the parish's hope that the parents would come to services with their children has so far gone unrealized. Nevertheless, the hook to pull this flock into the fold is available if the parish can learn how to use it.

Like many successful parishes, All Saints is a friendly community in which all are known by their first names, and the coffee hour after service tends to be prolonged until a patient warden has to start stacking the chairs as a hint! Differences of opinion are held on a wide range of topics, but all of us are committed Anglicans, and the things holding us together are more important than those that divide us. We see with sorrow that division and separation are affecting Prayer Book parishes in other dioceses, and we recognized that although we at All Saints walk together and hope to do so into the future, we have to walk warily, holding fast to the foundation documents of the Anglican Church – Scripture and the Prayer Book.

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