

*Communiqué from the International Anglican Liturgical Consultation
Dublin 2013*

A meeting of the International Anglican Liturgical Consultation (IALC) was held in Dublin from 28th July to 3rd August 2013. The hospitality of the Church of Ireland and the local organising group was very much appreciated. The Anglican Communion Office was represented by Alyson Barnett-Cowan of the Department of Unity, Faith, and Order. Members were present from the Anglican Churches in Southern Africa, Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia, Australia, Canada, England, Hong Kong, Ireland, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, Scotland, South Sudan, and the United States of America,

As a meeting of IALC members, rather than a full Consultation, representation from around the Anglican Communion was limited by the unavailability of bursary funds to subsidise attendance by representatives from many provinces, although letters of invitation were issued to all Primates inviting them to send appropriate people from their provinces, and some were able to do so.

Daily Office prayer and daily Eucharist celebrations with preaching were prepared and led by teams from various provinces or regions of the Communion.

The theme of the meeting was "Rites of Healing and Reconciliation." There was opportunity for representatives to compare recent and forthcoming revisions of authorised or commended liturgies in these areas. Papers were presented and discussed on the following topics:

Phillip Tovey "From Visitation to Ministry: Changing approaches in Anglican Provinces to the Ministry to the Sick"

Lizette Larson-Miller "Ecclesial Rites with the Dying: Palliative Spirituality Shaping Ritual and Prayer"

Colin Buchanan "Confession and Absolution in the Anglican Formularies: An Examination of the Reformation and Seventeenth-Century Texts"

Tomas Maddela "Private Auricular and General Public Confessions: Unravelling Some Issues"

Terry Brown "Rites of Reconciliation in Post-Conflict Situations: The Anglican Church of Melanesia and the Solomon Islands 'Ethnic Tension' Crisis, 1999-2013"

From discussion, several areas emerged as warranting further work and perhaps forthcoming Consultations which would produce agreed statements to assist provinces in their continuing work in the area of rites of healing and reconciliation.

1. *Ministry of healing and other ministry with the sick and dying.* While there are close relationships both historical and theological between this ministry and rites of confession and reconciliation, we think that both are sufficiently important that they need separate, but not independent, examination.
2. *Theological issues about sin and forgiveness,* as they underpin liturgical rites and sacramental theology. This work will need to take into account foundational theological study being done elsewhere in the Communion and with our ecumenical partners, such as the Anglican-Orthodox work on the theology of the human person.

3. *Distinguishing the contrasts and commonalities between three key categories of rites of "reconciliation":* individual ("auricular") confession and absolution; corporate or general acts of penitence, confession and absolution within the worshipping community, including confession of corporate and structural sin; and special occasions of reconciliation following national or local, inter-ethnic conflict and/or abuse of human rights.
4. *Liturgical practices*, both historical and contemporary, in the three categories noted above. This area of exploration will include the forms of texts (lament, blessing, commissioning alongside confession and absolution), the use of gesture, posture, space and ritual action, the role of music and silence, the forms taken by "amendment of life" (penance), and insights from anthropology and ritual theory.

We noted that around the Communion there are many and varied occasions when services of "reconciliation" are held, especially after times of community brokenness or long-term conflict. We decided that in order to serve the Communion best, we would make a priority of work in the area of sin and forgiveness, repentance and reconciliation, while not losing sight of the connections between forgiveness and healing, and therefore keeping on our agenda for the longer term ministries with the sick and dying.

The Meeting also gave time to considering the place of the IALC in the life of the Anglican Communion. We noted the following:

1. The IALC is described in its Guidelines as an official Network of the Communion. We agreed to relate to the Communion through the office of Unity, Faith, and Order. Our Guidelines do not need to be changed to allow this to happen.
2. In its earlier years, the IALC has had the benefit of input from many exceptional liturgical scholars and teachers. Due to reductions in the funding of academic programmes in many provinces, and shifts in theological schools' and seminaries' priorities, fewer professional liturgical scholars are able to attend IALC meetings. We highly value the input from those who are still involved in teaching liturgy and engaging in research and writing on liturgical topics around the Communion.
3. We also value the participation of "pastoral liturgists," those Anglicans who put good liturgical theology into practice in local contexts, and those who have a role in developing new or revised resources or Prayer Books in their own provinces.
4. We need to increase the involvement of theological students and emerging liturgists.
5. We also need to have involvement of representatives from additional provinces of the Communion, especially less well funded provinces.
6. Sharing resources between provinces is important in the life of the IALC. We do it informally and collegially as well as by the collection of Prayer Books and other materials held in several places around the Communion.
7. The relationships developed between us in the course of successive meetings and consultations are extremely important to us in maintaining our Network. Relationships are the basis of the effective sharing of good liturgical study and practice around the Communion.