



ANGLICAN INDIGENOUS NETWORK

RECORD OF GATHERING HELD AT COLLARY CENTRE, SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA 18-25 MAY 2011

A list of delegates is attached as Appendix 1.

The program for the week is attached as Appendix 2.

The Gathering opened with a Choral Eucharist at St James' Church in Sydney City, followed by a Reception hosted by the AIN Secretary-General, Malcolm Naea Chun (Appendices 3 and 4).

The Gathering formally began with a welcome from the Secretary-General, and delegates were welcomed to Australia by Brian Kirk, Chair of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council (NATSIAC), and Archdeacon in the Diocese of Armidale, New South Wales.

Greetings were received from the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Secretary General of the Anglican Consultative Council, Canon Kenneth Kearon.

Delegates introduced themselves and spoke about their ministries.

Salu Blanco and Shannon Smith shared their Morning Dreaming.

Malcolm Naea Chun presented his last Address as Secretary-General of AIN (Appendix 5). "Is there still a passion in AIN?"

Reports from AIN member countries were presented – Canada, Hawai'i, Aotearoa, Australia, the United States of America (Appendices 6,7,8, 9,10).

Donna reported that staff had also met and spoken about keeping communication going back and forth with a commitment and passion to do that. What is going on? What is happening? Everyone needs to become more informed and to link into more effective forms of communication.

The evening program was a reflection about the recent natural disasters in Aotearoa, Australia and the US, followed by a Healing Service (Appendix 11).

Following the Friday Morning Dreamtime of Wayne Connolly and Elemo Tapim, three guests, Archdeacon Malcolm Karipa from the Sydney Maori Mission, the Bishop of North Sydney, Glenn Davies and Christopher Brookes, Communications and Fundraising Manager, Anglican Board of Mission – Australia, were welcomed.

Malcolm Karipa spoke about the 25 years of ministry in the Diocese of Sydney, the only self-reliant Maori Mission in either New Zealand or Australia. He thanked AIN for the opportunity to spend time at the Gathering and to share details of maintaining a challenging and exciting ministry.

Brian Kirk introduced Bishop Glenn Davies who spoke about challenges of working with both white, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in his work as Co-Chair of the General Synod's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ministry Task Force which had been established to;

- facilitate better understanding of the proposed NATSIAC Canon and to consider suggested improvements to the Canon that may arise from the current consultations initiated by NATSIAC; and
- make recommendations concerning ways in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ministries might be developed, supported, made more effective and given greater profile and be celebrated in the Anglican Church of Australia.

Gloria Shipp acknowledged the traditional owners of the land on which AIN was gathered; and then introduced Christopher Brookes, whose ministry embraces relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Islander Anglican people – a task which ABM has maintained since its establishment in 1850.

Malcolm then welcomed retired Aboriginal Bishop, Arthur Malcolm, a Life Member of NATSIAC; and read his letter of commendation of Bishop Malcolm for the Award of the Order of Australia which was received in 2004. He invited Bishop Malcolm to offer some reflections on his 20 years of ministry with NATSIAC and the AIN.

He spoke of his life as a young man at Yarrabah in north Queensland and his call to training for ministry with the Church Army in 1952. God had plans!

He met his future wife, Coleen, who was a fellow trainee. After almost 20 years with the Church Army, he was ordained deacon and priest in 1978, and continued ministering in Yarrabah and beyond. He was consecrated as an Assistant Bishop in the Diocese of North Queensland in 1985 and became known around Australia by Aboriginal people as “our Bishop”.

He had enjoyed meeting Indigenous colleagues in Canada, America and New Zealand and has enjoyed being part of AIN with “all my friends”.

Kahuwhariki Miller, a journalist with the Aotearoa delegation, photographed the AIN delegates, guests and staff.



The focus groups, Clergy, Elders, Theologians, Women and Young Adults met and began discussions about their ministries and their relations with AIN.

The venue for the next AIN was raised. Aotearoa indicated that 2013 was a very busy year and it would be preferable if another country could host then. Washington DC was suggested and Donna Bomberry asked the USA delegation to think about that. The USA response was that time would be needed to think about it and the approximate costs. Recent costs had been about US\$35 000 in Canada and Australia and in Hawai'i the facilities had been \$ 8 000.

The Evening Dreaming was led by Young Adults who asked that there be more looking into dreams for the future; coming to AIN required some understanding of the structure of AIN; and some mentoring; the church needed more exposure with young adults.

There also needed to be a transition from AIN to a beginning of an AIN for Young Adults (reference Jesus talking about being fishers of people and going out to bring other people in - if you want a future you have to invest in it).

Saturday Morning Dreamtime stories were shared by Maria Gebadi and Jim Leftwich and these were followed by a Theological Education presentation by Lala Leftwich, Chris McLeod and Gloria Shipp, each of whom spoke about their varying experiences and their hopes and visions.

Sarah Eagleheart was invited to speak about the World Council of Churches' Faith and Order and Mission and Evangelism gathering of Indigenous people held in Bolivia in January 2011 (<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/news/news-management/eng/a/article/1634/indigenous-theologians-me.html>). An Official Statement had not yet been circulated and it was suggested that when it was posted on the WCC website AIN delegates should consider whether it was appropriate to support the statement.

AIN 2013

Malcolm suggested that the AIN Secretariat host the 2013 Gathering and suggested venues in USA and Hawaii be considered. He also suggested that each of the member delegations commit to a minimum contribution of US\$3 000.

Stipendiary and non-stipendiary ministries

Wayne Connolly, Rose Elu and Elemo Tapim introduced this session. Most Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clergy do not receive stipends, they support themselves. They minister in remote areas and often the only way to travel is to fly. Families help out. What do we do? Who is responsible? The congregations are small and usually have no money.

After much discussion Bishop Gray said the issue was now on the table and AIN had to do something about it. What are our expectations? We need to really take hold of this.

Robert Kereopa said that he was developing a document for the clergy group to discuss - it called for specific action by the Anglican Consultative Council, National Churches and Dioceses.

Frank Oberley bid farewell as he was leaving next morning. Evening Dreaming was led by the clergy.

On Sunday delegates travelled to West Head in Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park where there is an Aboriginal heritage walk with rock engravings and paintings. The Eucharist for the Fifth Sunday of Easter was celebrated in the bush (Appendix 12).



The service was followed by a barbecue and time for exploring and relaxing together.



The evening was a celebration and sharing of gifts - a quiet relaxed time and everyone was happy.

Bishop Leftwich closed the day with a blessing.

Monday Morning Dreaming was shared by Rose Elu and Gloria Shipp.

Gabrielle Russell-Mundine and Graeme Mundine were welcomed and invited to speak about their ministries with the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ecumenical Commission of the National Council of Churches in Australia.

Gabrielle is the Project Officer and Graeme was formerly the Executive Secretary – he recently was appointed Executive Officer for Aboriginal Catholic Ministry in the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney.

Gabrielle said one of the major projects of NATSIEC is the **Make Indigenous Poverty History** campaign. Another was the visit last year of the World Council of Churches team to see first hand the situation following the Federal Government's Intervention to address child abuse in the Northern Territory (see the WCC Living Letters Statement at <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/unity-mission-evangelism-and-spirituality/just-and-inclusive-communities/indigenous-people/advocacy/living-letters-visit-to-australia.html>)

Graeme quoted Bishop James Leftwich: "We who used to be the mission field are now the mission force."

He also congratulated the Anglican Indigenous Bishops for their leadership and pastoral ministries and lamented the lack of Indigenous Bishops in the Roman Catholic and other churches: "Having our own Bishops is so important."

Both spoke about the current discussion in Australia about the proposal for Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and the need for church people to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people be heard in the consultation process and also about the time lines which seemed far too short for careful response and debate (see Appendix 13 for a Proposal for Action in the Anglican Church of Australia).

Donna Bomberry invited everyone to share the Canadian tradition of eating bread and cheese on 23 May prior to what used to be known as Empire Day!

Delegates met again in Focus Groups and re-convened for a plenary discussion about issues of communication and governance within the AIN Secretariat.

Donna introduced the topic and asked how far along delegations were at setting future priorities and engaging in regular communication with the AIN Secretariat and nominating a delegate for the governing board to support the AIN Secretary General. She said communication between AIN Gatherings would continue to be by email or teleconference, and she could organise the discussions as to what the Board activities would entail – Tom Van Culin asked what, other than agenda and delegations for AIN conferences, would be involved?

The structure of AIN, including by-laws, and terms of appointment for Secretary General were suggested.

A complicated, lively, passionate and wide-ranging conversation occurred!

Appointment of Governing Board

Bishop Gray, speaking on behalf of Aotearoa, appointed Charles Hemana

The Australian delegation appointed Rose Elu and Chris McLeod

The Canadian delegation appointed Yolanda Bird

Hawaii: Kalani Holokai said the delegates would like to discuss with the other members of Commission on Native Hawaiian Ministries

The US delegation wished to discuss with the Episcopal Executive Council's Committee on Indigenous Ministry.

It was agreed 15 September would be the deadline for nomination for the Governing Board.

Robert Kereopa asked about a list of outcomes from each conference. Donna said that each conference should have a plan of action, with date of completion being part of it.

How does the Anglican Consultative Council address our resolutions? (see Appendix 14 for the ACC Resolution 14.19). It is up to us to act them out and to show leadership in our churches. When we gather again we can ask what has been accomplished, who is affected. Be consistent and persistent until matter is raised - Communication, Communication Communication.

Tom expressed his hope that there was some sort of resource document from the past.

Malcolm indicated that all of these things are on the website www.ain.anglicancommunion.org.

A list of names of ACC participants from AIN countries is attached as Appendix 15.

Tom raised the possibility of establishing a maintenance fund, for example US\$200 a year from each member country, although maybe \$500 was more realistic.

Malcolm estimated at least \$15,000 was needed to maintain the Secretariat, as well as a passion from all members who would be responsive to communications – action must be two ways. (It was noted that Aotearoa and Canada had contributed significant funding to maintain the Secretariat in past years.)

Bishop Gray announced that Aotearoa would host the next AIN Gathering after all, and it would be in February or March of 2013, possibly in Christchurch and maybe commencing in Auckland/Bay of Islands for a celebration of Waitangi Day.

The Evening dreaming was offered by Cornelia Eaton who shared the stories of the Women's Focus Group in a poem.

Lala Leftwich and Chris McLeod offered the Morning Dreaming on the final day of the Gathering.

Bishop Leftwich presented copies of **Rainbow Spirit Theology**, to which he had contributed, to each delegation.

Focus Group Reports were presented (see Appendix 16) and discussed.

Donna asked how we felt about the experience. She had heard a sense of commitment and a desire to return. There was a sense of AIN continuing. Collegiality, sharing a common story and history, joys and pains, men and women together, respect for young people and elders in community. Celebrate parts of our lives that are difficult. Make journey over and around these and along the clear paths. Offer hope and not hopelessness. Share the joy in the Gospel message that we all carry.

She appreciated the dreaming and stories. We all have busy lives until we come and sit down together. We have much to talk and celebrate. Listen to one another. We all share the same ministry. Encourage and support one another. AIN gives a break from the everyday to reflect and contemplate.

Donna shares the stories she has heard. She sees our faces. Beautiful people, Easter people. We love our people. We love being Indigenous and the challenge of that. We love the challenge of sharing with our children. Who we are ought not be foreign to our children, we must pass on the stories of who they are. They can carry that with them into the future. Donna carries us all with her. When we meet again we will hear more stories.

We are called to be the future of AIN. This needs all of us to walk together and share and support each other. Pray about how our lives and hopes and dreams are put into other people's hands. We thank God we have this ministry and our life. Let us be a prayerful community.

Resolutions

The delegates of this AIN Gathering

1. Ask the AIN Secretariat to convey the request from the AIN 12th Gathering to the Anglican Consultative Council that an additional Mark of Mission "To encourage development of Indigenous leadership within the Anglican Communion", be added to the current Five Marks of Mission. [Reference attachment to be developed outlining AIN's reasons]

2. Request that the Secretary-General of AIN and Australian AIN members from the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council refer this following Statement and its calls for action to

- The Anglican Church of Australia
- The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council
- All dioceses of the Anglican Church of Australia

[Reference the Report from the Clergy Focus Group at AIN 2011, 18-25 May, Sydney, Australia]

The delegates at the 12th Gathering of the Anglican Indigenous Network, held 18-25 May 2011, in Sydney, Australia, believe the Anglican Church of Australia is called to demonstrate just and moral leadership for Indigenous issues.

Unless the Church is transformed how can it seek to transform society?

The proposed referendum regarding the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Australia is a case in point where the Church is called to demonstrate moral and just leadership.

The Anglican Indigenous Network expresses concern that the potential dis-establishment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander bishops in Australia be addressed.

We endorse NATSIAC as the Indigenous authority for the Anglican Church of Australia, and we respectfully encourage the Anglican Church of Australia to recognise and enable this Indigenous authority for all matters related to Indigenous mission and ministry in the Church.

Given the crises in our communities and to ensure the survival of Anglicanism in our communities we call, within the next year, for the election and consecration of an Aboriginal bishop with full Episcopal authority and generous funding support to grow and strengthen Aboriginal church communities.

We offer one of our members, Bishop Mark MacDonald, the National Indigenous Anglican Bishop in Canada, as a spokesperson of the Anglican Indigenous Network, to discuss these issues with the Anglican Church of Australia, including the members of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council.

3. Requests that the Secretary-General of AIN and Australian AIN members from the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council provide a report on progress by 30 November 2011 and a further report six months prior to the next AIN Gathering.

The 2011 Gathering concluded with Evening Dreaming blessing and prayer for safe travels.