

Compass Points: Volume 8:1 (Easter 2005)

CUAC Triennial Conference: Report of the General Secretary

by Don Thompson

**Report of the General Secretary
Triennial Meeting
York St John College, UK
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Dear Trustees, Delegates, Chaplains, Theological College Heads, Students, and Guests:

I want to report on the past three years of our association, the Colleges and Universities of the Anglican Communion (CUAC) since our previous Triennial in Japan.

State of the Association

I think our organization has made significant headway in what I would characterize as a period of moving beyond our "adolescence", into a period we might characterize as our "young adulthood". In 1993 at Canterbury, CUAC was, not surprisingly, founded on some lofty ideals. These had to do with the hope of achieving many faculty and student exchanges, international student service-learning projects, and the hopes of national and international conferences.

These hopes were enabled by the initial largess of CUAC's birthing mother, the Episcopal Church (US) and its Association of Episcopal Colleges. That is where the funds and travel scholarships came from.

But as the Association has grown over the last four Triennial conferences, the actual costs of operation of this association have become more evident. Meanwhile, our only long-term source of income are Annual Dues. And only some parts of the world can bear significant contribution levels, while others must support more modestly.

If CUAC creates programs or exchanges beyond its basic communications network and Triennial Conferences, these too cost money. This has required that we sort out our priorities amongst the many lofty goals we dreamt in 1993, and confine ourselves to things that we must do to enable our common life together. That is our "young-adulthood".

What Then, is CUAC?

In terms of Stephen Syke's paper which we heard late last week, the Anglican Communion consists of several styles of association which can be characterized as those of family, autonomy, and society. He suggested that we have been moving in the Communion from the former to the latter, except that we probably retain aspects of all of these styles as we move along.

And that makes us beg the question of who are we as CUAC, and what is the nature of this Anglican colleges and universities?

Gerald Pillay pointed out this morning that in the Communion many of us are in a phase of post-Constantinian Christianity. It is true that the United States and United Kingdom, we still show some semblance of a Christian nation. But Japan, Korea, China, and India have long since adjusted to being part of the Anglican Communion with a very small Christian minority. This means that when we talk of our colleges relationship to the church, both "the Church" and its social relationships are very different. So that is not what we have in common, but rather how to be a living faith community in higher education is what we have in common.

This means I believe a more mature definition of CUAC is that it is simply a web of relationships of Anglican and Christian colleges around the world which support and collaborate with each other, and which enables it to achieve certain programs and projects in common. While the web of relationships is international, the source of those relationships are local and national in the particular colleges in which they are found.

What enables CUAC institutions to collaborate is sometimes the sharing of a particular type of society, and at other times the sharing of academic disciplines and programs. There is the further opportunity for international and cross-cultural contact which recognizes that we face different realities. I hope that this Triennial, with its theme "learning through each others' living", is an example of precisely that.

But what CUAC does will often be more important locally. I think the best example of this currently is the India Chapter which has begun regular meetings and also looking for programs which can be shared in common. The India Chapter contributed the printing of all the brochures for this conference, and also may well provide the actual publishing of our Journal program prologue. You will also know that the Chapter is planning a cross-cultural program for the Christmas break on the study of the tsunami communities that were devastated last December, and how communities and society have responded to such a devastating challenge.

Resources

One of our key resources is the new CUAC web site, it's Discussion Group and Exchange Mart capability, as well as all the opportunity that the e-mail communication gives us. The Episcopal Church has given us a large and free presents on their web site which enables us to develop all sorts of wonderful Internet capabilities. Most CUAC member institutions have full profiles on the web site and these profiles also relate to clarify the "Exchange Mart" ,which will enable institutions to post needs which they think others might help them realize, and also offer resources and capacities which might be of use to others.

But like so much of the web site it is only of value in so much as it is use. While we can solicit material from you all for submissions for our E-mail newsletter "the Communicator", we actually need you to give us this material. This is also true of our published newsletter "Compass Points", as well as our Journal "Prologue". Please start using this wonderful medium of listening ,communication ,and response which is the essence of what CUAC is supposed to do!

I have said that CUAC has had to be more realistic about its resources, particularly financial resources. But when I taught theology in my academic teaching, I always tried to remind students that the primary resource of the church, the whole people of God, is the resource of people. In the church, two plus two equals five, or six, or seven.! This is what our association can effectively be for its membership and for the church - a symbiosis of relationships.

As two our financial sources, we must simply live within our means. While I think this year we will be in nearly a break -even position in our budget, the costs of this conference will likely cause us a deficit of \$10-\$15,000. USD as a result of our under subscribed in the International Travel Scholarship Fund. For this Triennial ,most of the contributions came from the United States, and frankly, as a Canadian , I think this over reliance on the Americans is wrong - we should be able to do better. I think we should start to make yearly contributions to the Travel Scholarship Fund so that will be adequate funds in the bank when we actually organize the next Triennial.

Exchanges

There continue to be wonderful accounts of exchanges that have been made possible by particular institutions, such as Lady Doak College, Poole Gaukin University, Bishop Moore College, Renison College, and University of the South. Just as I know many of those possibilities were the result of contacts made at previous Triennials, so I hope some will have been given birth on this Triennial. Exchanges can realize many purposes, from faculty development to sabbatical coverage, from expansion of mission to exploration to different pedagogies and program.

The Theological Stream

Back in the founding Conference of 1993, a significant number of delegates came from the theological colleges, for they said "Aren't we also colleges of the Communion"? Although the answer clearly was "yes", we still ended up focusing only on colleges and universities of higher education.

Now, thanks to a grant from the Parish of Trinity Wall Street, we have contacted all 315 colleges and programs as to their interests in forming a "theological stream" of CUAC. They are interested. On our web site, we are posting profiles of all those colleges who have so responded, and we are setting up some of the mechanisms of networking, Exchange Marts, and Discussion Groups that we use on our own site.

I will be seeking further funding for another two to three years of this service to the theological colleges, in the hope that it will enable them to envisage forming an association similar and parallel to

ours, which might also begin by a inaugural Conference, as we ourselves did in 1993.

The Next Triennial

Having almost completed to this Triennial, it is time to think ahead to the next. This will put us in 2008, which is the year of the next Lambeth Conference of the Anglican Communion. So that we are not be in conflict with that, as we happened to be this year with the Anglican Consultative Council, I am recommending that we meet earlier in April, May or June of that year.

As to location, because so many parts of our world are affected now by the growing financial, social, and educational impact of East Asia, I have approached Chung Chi College in Hong Kong as the possible site for the next Triennial. They have indicated their interest, and we will negotiate that possibility.

They have good facilities, including a large Guest House, which could handle all our delegates. I am recommending that we consider a slightly shorter conference, three to four days, but likely followed by some trips either for nearby tourist visits and/or also for an introduction to higher education in China. Gerald Pillay this morning suggested we look not to the west and north, but instead to the south and east. This time I think we should look east. We should began our planning soon, with a joint Trustees and Local Planning Committee.

This Triennial

The theme of this Triennial Was "Learning through Each Other's Living" ,which urged us to a new level of awareness of each other. I think we have benefited tremendously in that awareness by having amongst us not only Presidents and Deans, but also Chaplains, Students and Faculty. This has given us a better awareness of the horizon of the student ,who really should be the ultimate focus of our work.

In this Triennial, I want to express our particular appreciation to our Chaplains from both York and Canterbury who have contributed so much to both the worship and the spirit of this conference. They have been delightful..

Our deepest thanks to Dame Janet Trotter, the Chair of the UK Planning Committee, and our two principles Michael Wright and Dianne Willcocks of Canterbury and York, who took on the immense task of facilitating a large international conference. They and their staff have been skilled, gracious and wonderfully hospitable..

My thanks also true the Chair of the Board of Trustees, Gail Cuthbert-Brandt, and all of the Trustees, who provide me with so much insight and support in the day-to-day operation of CUAC. My relationships with them enable me to feel supported and advised regardless at the distance I am from them or from you.

This Conference has made clear that part of the way Christ "gifts" to us all, is through the gift of him we find in each other. May that be the "Learning" we have found in this Conference's "Living."

(The Rev. Dr.) Don Thompson

CUAC 2005 Conference Speakers

A number of outstanding individuals will be contributing to the Conference. This unique constellation of the brilliant individuals, both lay and clergy, from all over the world, will provide insights into the life of the Anglican Communion from very different perspectives. Their addresses promise to be enlightening. The list of speakers includes individuals with an outstanding range of experience and background, from an Anglican Bishop in Pakistan to a Harvard Professor. And they will be glad to share their insight, experience and wisdom in the informal discussions between the conference events!



Bishop Stephen Sykes of St. John's College, Durham, UK, one of the Communion's leading theologians, will commence the program with an examination of the role of Anglican colleges and universities in the light of current Communion relationships (tensions) and issues.



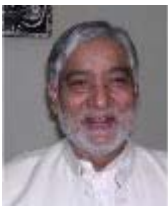
Bishop John Sentamu of the Diocese of Birmingham, originally from Uganda, will bring the welcome from the Communion and the Church of England.



Dr. Nicholas Sagovsky, (Canon Theologian of Westminster Abbey, UK, member of the Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission, and also of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission) will give a key address on modern culture and Christian faith, a field of much debate in the Communion.



Dr. Linda Chisholm of the International Partnership for Leadership and Service Learning, New York, USA, will make a presentation on service and community learning.



Bishop Mano Rumlshah of the Diocese of Peshwar, Pakistan, (former Secretary General of the United Society for the Propagation of Gospel-USPG) will challenge us to see our global relationships as forms of active living and faith relationships.



Dr. Sabina Alkire, an economist working out of the Global Equity project at Harvard University, will introduce the whole framework of global development and international relations as the effective arena for global reconciliation.



The final day will include summarizing the challenges CUAC colleges face in the field of international higher education by Dr. Gerald Pillay of Hope Liverpool University College, UK. Previously, from both South Africa and Australia).



Bishop Henry Parsley of the Diocese of Alabama, US, will conclude the Conference with his reflections on the current challenges and opportunities in the life of the Anglican

CUAC: Calamities Challenge Colleges



Tsunami Devastation in Sri Lanka, December 2004

Most of the world and the churches of the Anglican Communion have been painfully aware of the devastating earthquake and tsunami in South Asia on December 26. Sri Lanka and Indonesia were the worst affected countries, but parts of India - Tamilnadu, Andhra, Kerala, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands - were all affected.

In Tamil Nadu, Lady Doak College students and staff have been collecting new clothes and other items, and went and distributed them in the Kanyakumari region. Dr R K Jacob, Principal of St John's College in Tirunelveli reported that his faculty and non teaching staff have contributed a day's salary to help the victims in the worst affected areas as well. Many CUAC colleges around the world have announced projects of gathering support to send to various relief agencies in Sri Lanka and India.

But there have been other challenges as well. Hurricane Ivan hit Jamaica September 10-11, and badly damaged the Church Teachers' College Mandeville. The roofs of all but two halls of residence were ripped off. The Home Economics Centre was completely destroyed and all its equipment wrecked.

Trinity College of Quezon City in the Philippines narrowly escaped danger when typhoon Yoyong hit on Dec. 2. Students rallied to collect clothing, bedding, and food for the devastated areas of Quezon province.

Meanwhile Cuttigneron College in Liberia is just finishing its first semester back at the campus in Succoco, which had been badly damaged and pillaged during the civil war there last year. Most of the college buildings have had to be re-roofed, and much of the college re-equipped with basic educational and lab equipment.

CUAC itself does not have the resources to respond in help to these disasters, but the various provinces of the Anglican Communion have been very effective in providing help to the areas devastated. The Episcopal Church's Relief and Development Fund has raised over \$2.1 million in donations to further its relief efforts in Sri Lanka, India, Indonesia, and Thailand. The Episcopal Church in the US gave substantial help to Cuttigneron to get return to its campus.



Plundered library, Cuttington College, Liberia