

Some of you may have heard of the committee known as the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) – many more of you, I am sure, have not! The ACC is one of the four *Instruments of Communion* within the Anglican Church (the other three being the Lambeth Conference, the Primates' Meeting, and the person of the Archbishop of Canterbury him or herself). The role of the ACC is to facilitate the co-operative work of the churches of the Anglican Communion, exchange information between the Provinces and churches, and help to co-ordinate common action. It advises on the organisation and structures of the Communion, and seeks to develop common policies with respect to the world mission of the Church, including ecumenical matters.

The ACC meets every two or three years and its present policy is to meet in different parts of the world. Since it began there have been fifteen meetings of the Council. The sixteenth meeting is currently taking place in Lusaka, Zambia between 8-19 April 2016. I would ask you to pray for that group as it meets to discuss various issues.

There has naturally been much discussion around the number of serious issues that face us in the world currently. The challenges presented by the migration of peoples, violence in all its forms, climate change, evangelism and discipleship, and income inequality emerged as the major themes. Those themes were seen as calls to Anglicans to preach the good news and work for the coming of the kingdom of God in their contexts.

One of the interesting things to come out of the meeting is a recognition that churches need to focus more on adult education and faith formation – what the Bishop of Chelmsford, the Rt Revd Stephen Cottrell, calls “adult Sunday School”. He suggested that churches should “renegotiate the Sunday contract” to include adult Sunday schools and eating together. The bishop made his comment during a plenary discussion on discipleship. Churches, he said, should be “schools for discipleship” – and he had noted that this different “expectation” of what it meant to go to Church was evident in churches he had visited in the Anglican Church of Kenya and the (American) Episcopal Church.

“It amazes me that in England we go to all this effort to get people to church and then we let them go after an hour” spending more time “trying to persuade them to come back later,” he said. “Why don’t we renegotiate the Sunday contract? What if we did Sunday differently like in Kenya? That might be best way of discipling people of God in the world.”

I believe we could benefit from a similar discussion in our own parish – how could we best organise ourselves so that we have opportunity to think theologically and reflect on our faith other than just in our worship together...

May Anselm, George, and all the Saints walk with you this joyful Eastertide... *Sam*