



LAMBETH CALL: DISCIPLESHIP

1 Introduction

- 1.1 A disciple is a learner. In the Call that follows the Bishops assembled at the Lambeth Conference invite all Anglicans, female and male, young and old, to become learners in the liberating way of Christ in every aspect of their lives. The Bishops are issuing this Call because 1 Peter calls all God's people to such disciplined and whole-of-life discipleship:

be serious and discipline yourselves for the sake of your prayers. Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaining. Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. (1 Peter 4.7-10)

- 1.2 This is a demanding call because we are being asked to control the impulses of our hearts and our attitudes and behaviours along with the pressures that come upon us from society. But the letter shows that we can and should depend on God's help:

Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.' (1 Peter 4.11)

This Call, then, is for all Anglicans in every aspect of their lives to learn *and to learn again* to love and serve in the way of Christ 'with the strength that God supplies'.

2 Declaration

- 2.1 Jesus Christ taught his disciples to "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19). The size and extent of the Anglican Communion today shows that Anglicans and Episcopalians around the world have been doing this throughout their history with enthusiasm and commitment.
- 2.2 Some have commented that while Christian commitment 'is a mile wide it is only an inch deep.' For example, some have seen discipleship as a male preserve and missed the opportunity to enrich the Anglican Communion by including women. Also in many places Christian commitment has been seen as nominal. To address this a Season of Intentional Discipleship and Disciple-Making (Jesus shaped life) was launched at the Anglican Consultative Council in Lusaka in 2016:
- In light of the Gospel and theological imperative to make disciples, [we] recognize the need for every province, diocese and parish in the Anglican Communion to adopt a clear focus on intentional discipleship and to produce resources to equip and enable the whole church to be effective in making new disciples of Jesus Christ. (ACC-16 Resolution 16.01).*
- 2.3 This was re-affirmed in 2019 at ACC-17 in Hong Kong. The Season will run until ACC-19 in 2026. Up to now well over 100 dioceses and many of the 42 provinces of the Anglican Communion have formally adopted Intentional Discipleship as a key priority and/or have hosted consultations and workshops on this subject. This takes place especially through small groups.
- 2.4 Many other Churches around the world are also responding to the need to deepen discipleship. The Arusha Call to Discipleship of 2018 '(R. Jukko and J. Keum, Moving in the Spirit, WCC 2019), to which Anglicans contributed, expressed this powerfully when

it declared that 'We are called by our baptism to transforming discipleship: a Christ-connected way of life in a world where many face despair, rejection, loneliness, and worthlessness.' Pope Francis has also called on all God's people to become missionary disciples and has placed this call at the heart of his ministry (Evangelii Gaudium, 2017).

- 2.5 As Anglicans have entered into their Season of Intentional Discipleship they have found that the Five Marks of Mission provides a creative and unifying set of signposts for learning the liberating way of Christ. The Declaration that follows therefore invites Anglicans to be through to live and share a Jesus shaped life guided by these.

3 Affirmation

We the Bishops assembled at the Lambeth Conference, in this Season of Intentional Discipleship, commit ourselves to learn and *learn again* the liberating way of Christ in every aspect of our lives, with the strength that God supplies;

4 Specific Requests (The Calls)

- 4.1 We also call on all Anglicans to learn *and learn again* the liberating way of Christ in every aspect of their lives, with the strength that God supplies. So we call on Anglicans to be guided by the Five Marks of Mission to
- **Tell** – to proclaim the Good News of God's Kingdom through our worship and in daily life;
 - **Teach – to teach, baptise and nurture new believers through our local churches;**
 - **Tend** – to respond to human need by loving service in whatever ways we can;
 - **Transform** – to work to transform unjust structures of society, challenging violence of every kind and pursuing peace and reconciliation;
 - **Treasure** – to strive to safeguard the integrity of Creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth;
- 4.2 We call on all those who lead churches to enable our gatherings for worship, alongside small groups, to be the place where we intentionally learn these things – gatherings where we are formed and transformed in our hearts, minds and spirits for Christ's liberating and whole-of-life discipleship;
- 4.3 We call on our churches to work intentionally and creatively with young people so that they can enable this learning and transformation to take place for themselves and for the whole church;
- 4.4 We call on our seminaries, theological colleges and training programmes to give this learning about discipleship a central place in their programmes, so that all ordained and lay ministers, female and male, young and old, may be equipped to enable those they serve to learn these things;
- 4.5 We call on the Secretary General of the Anglican Communion to support and monitor progress in these areas with the help of the Commission for Evangelism and Discipleship and report back to the next ACC and to the next Lambeth Conference.