



Continuing **Indaba**

What is Indaba? Following is an excerpt from the September issue of Inspires, the Diocese of Gloucester Newsletter. It describes what Indaba is, how it came into being, and its hope for the future.

Trying to avoid some past quarrelsome occasions, those planning the 2008 International Lambeth Conference of Anglican Bishops decided to abandon the usual decision making processes and to adopt the African approach of indaba. It's an approach involving talking things through slowly, with an emphasis on relationship building among the participants, working toward a situation where people really understand each other's point of view and learn to respect one another. On a good day it leads to consensus.

Meeting in small groups at Lambeth enabled the bishops to share in an indaba-like experience and a conference that was thought likely to end in division held together in a remarkable way. There were those who predicted then the break up of the Anglican Communion. Since 2008, despite some challenges, we are still together. But the tensions are still there and they do threaten unity, so the Archbishop of Canterbury has been keen to see the indaba process go on.

The chosen way is, as a pilot scheme, to have five triangular groups - three dioceses from different parts of the world in each group - engage in on-going indaba, meetings where worship, prayer, fellowship, Bible study, theological conversation and exploration of each other's culture, builds relationships of trust where sensitive issues can be handled creatively and unity enhanced. This is where our existing triad relationship came in. Because of this relationship, the Archbishop asked us to be one of the five initial indaba groups. Working with facilitators, we are trying to find a model that can be used across the world.

It is a fairly intensive exercise, so within a period of 18 months the three teams have to meet three times, once in each diocese. We need to be in each of the dioceses in order to discover the local culture and experience life as it is "on the ground." So teams of eight, including laity and clergy, bringing a variety of viewpoints and skills, met in Tanzania in June, will meet in California in November, and will meet in Gloucestershire in February. We meet for five or six days, and it is intensive work, but it is also a huge privilege and broadens our understanding both of the nature of the Church and of God's world.

It is very important, for the holding together in unity of the world-wide Anglican Communion does demonstrate to the world the Christians, diverse in their theology and culture, can live in harmony. That, in a divided and broken world, is a message worth hearing and a model to follow well beyond the confines of the Church. "Blessed are the peace-makers," says Jesus, and this on one way of being on board his work of healing and reconciliation.

The teams and conversations

Three teams of eight members from each diocese travel and experience each others culture. With that experience, the members then gather around and hold conversations regarding the experiences they have had and how it relates to four question areas. Each question is answered from two members from each diocese, then there is a general discussion. The questions follow from the aim of the project: to deepen the unity of the Church, to resource and sustain our mission, and to explore how to combat poverty. The group aims to create a multi-generational church which proclaims the gospel within our contemporary culture. This is accomplished through dialogue and understanding. The four conversations are: **unity of the Church, combatting poverty, building a multi-generational church, and resourcing and sustaining mission.**

Members from the Diocese of Gloucester include: Rt. Rev. Michael Perham, Ven. Robert Springett, Andy Macaulay, Rev. Jacqueline Rodwell, Rev. Debbie Forman, Rev. Paul Williams, Anne Davies, Rev. Rosie Woodall, Helen Liley.

Members from the Diocese of Western Tanganyika include: Rt. Rev. Sadock Makaya, Editha Makaya, Cornelius Nkala, Gervas Ntahamba, Zilpa Kisonzela, Ada Konakuze, Hudson Nkotagu, Rev. Ephraim Ntikabuze, Rev. Emmanuel Bwatta.

Members from the Diocese of El Camino Real include: Rt. Rev. Mary Gray-Reeves, Anel Aguayo, Bill Shreve, Robin Denney, Sue Ramar, Rev. Ken Wratten, Rev. Rob Sommer, Albert Alvarez, Jo Johnson, Rev. Mary Morrison, Rev. Can. Jesus Reyes, Rev. Can. Brian Nordwick



The experience

The upcoming Indaba visit will be one filled with many opportunities for our guests from the two other dioceses to see the great variety that our diocese offers. After arriving on November 3, the guests will be taken to their host families. From there the teams will meet us and be part of the 31st annual El Camino Real convention in Salinas. From there a welcome dinner and then off to local parishes to see and worship together with members of El Camino Real. Then, up north to the Norther part of the diocese to visit local leaders in technology and begin our indaba discussions. Then off to the woods and the beach communities where we will continue and have more Bible study and continue conversations. Then, traveling down south, we will continue the conversations and Bible study as we investigate farming and the agricultural business.

From north to south seeing the lives of members of El Camino Real, worshipping, studying, and meeting the teams will be on the move. All of this begins Thursday, November 3 and continues through November 12th. Please extend a warm west coast welcome to our guests. In addition, please keep the members above in your prayers and extend a warm welcome to our guests as we walk the way along the King's highway...together.

