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TRANSFORMATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION THEORY AND THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN IN THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA: THE CANARIES IN THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION

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**TRANSFORMATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION THEORY AND THE
ORDINATION OF WOMEN IN THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA:
THE CANARIES IN THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION**

(Spine title: Conflict Resolution Theory and the Ordination of Women)
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by

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of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

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**TRANSFORMATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION THEORY AND THE
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Abstract

Since 1878, the Anglican Communion has struggled with the tensions of conflict and the prospect of division. Not a federation of churches, or a church itself, the Anglican Communion is a family of autonomous churches in communion. Schism and division have become increasingly critical issues. An examination of the transformational conflict resolution theory of Robert Bush, Joseph Folger and John Paul Lederach provides a framework for reviewing the process used by the Anglican Church of Canada as it debated and decided the ordination of women in the 1970s.

The review suggests insights into the issues currently facing the Anglican Communion. It also proposes a potential outcome which could include movement toward the development of a theological articulation of the concepts of unity, plurality and diversity which addresses relationship with the Other, the concept of love of neighbour and the role of conflict within that framework. Such a theological justification may be essential to a reconciliation process within the Anglican Communion.

KEY WORDS:

Conflict resolution, ordination of women, Anglican Church of Canada, Anglican Communion, diversity, transformation, reconciliation, mediation.

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Chapter One – Concepts of Unity

Introduction

Paul Avis has written that “Theology that is doing its job will be subversive of forms of belief and practice that can be shown to be ecclesiastical expressions of obscurantism, self-interest, prejudice, exploitation or oppression. It will disturb stereotyped assumptions about what the Bible teaches and what earlier Christians have believed. It will be subversive of the patronizing attitude to the past and the complacent attitude to the present that go hand in hand.”¹ Avis includes “penetrating” and “foundational” as other characteristics for practical theology. However, there is something about the word subversive that is mischievous and creative, enabling critique but not dismissal. It suggests the possibility of the fresh insight or things looked at another way and from a different perspective. If theologians are encouraged to be subversive, they will pay attention to the world which surrounds them, looking for the old and new connections of ideas. They will be like the Fool in the monarch’s court, providing the possibility of wisdom in unexpected ways, turning things upside down and inside out.

But there is also another way of doing theology that is just as important and is the responsibility of each Christian. Paul Lederach, a scholar and practitioner in conflict transformation, suggests that our sense of vocation is “the deep voice within us” that is calling us to understand who we are. This deep voice gives a sense of direction on our life’s journey. Lederach calls people who are guided by that sense of vocation, “voicewalkers”. He says:

It is not so much what they do as who they are that makes a difference. They listen in a way that their own agenda does not seem to be in the way. They respond more from love than fear. They laugh at themselves.

¹ Paul Avis, Truth Beyond Words: Problems and Prospects for Anglican-Roman Catholic Unity (Cambridge: Cowley, 1985) 129.

They cry with others' pain, but never take over their journey. They know when to say no and have the courage to do it. They work hard but are rarely too busy. Their life speaks.²

The General Thanksgiving reminds us that it is not only with our lips but also in our lives that we are to show praise. Theology, which is in reality talking about our experience of God, if it is doing its job well, should perhaps include Avis' "voicewalker" as an additional element. Grounded in the foundations of the Christian Church, guided by the Holy Spirit, and searching ahead for the signs of Life, theologians who are voicewalkers can stand on the edge. With God's help, they provide ideas, concepts and challenges that will enable the Church to be God's witness on what Miroslav Volf calls, "the way to its eschatological future."³ This thesis is offered within this context of searching, seeing and speaking.

This thesis will argue that the ordination of women has been, and continues to be, a challenge to the traditions of the Anglican Church, its hierarchy and power structures. It has provided a challenge as well to the individual beliefs of both men and women throughout the Anglican Communion. It is only one of many significant disagreements within the history of the Christian Church but because it speaks to the female-male relationship it has, perhaps, and until the current issues regarding the ordination and same sex blessings of male and female homosexuals, generated the most turbulence in recent times. It is often sited, along with revisions to the Book of Common Prayer, with what some call the *drift of core doctrine and now the ordination of men and women who are homosexuals*, as evidence of the syncretism of the Anglican Church and the influence of worldly culture.

² John Paul Lederach, The Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Building Peace (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005) 168.

³ Miroslav Volf, After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 1998) 203.

Some have seen women's ordination as evidence of a feminist influence. Among many, Pope Paul VI said in 1976, "The priestly office cannot become the goal of social advancement; no merely human progress of society or of the individual, can of itself give access to it: it is of another order."⁴ The implication of this is that women desired ordination much as they wished to move into other professions and job opportunities. Others, such as Archbishop Malone, of Australia, are quoted as suggesting that the ordination of women would be "the death knell of the appeal of the Church to man."⁵ A recent study, researching women's ministry in the United States and looking at Protestant churches and the timing of their first ordinations of women, suggested that "While these groups did not have to ordain women for fear of legal sanctions, it seems safe to assert that the moral pressure placed on them by the institutionalization of gender equality in secular society played a part in the shifts in their ordination policies. In terms of their own religious principles of equality and justice, perhaps they had been caught with their platitudes down."⁶ The author also suggests that "The major factor distinguishing various churches' acceptance or rejection of women's ordination appears to be their response to secular humanism and its emphasis on the intrinsic value of the individual, whether male or female."⁷

Of course, there are other arguments to be considered. In this work, I will suggest that the manner in which the question of women's ordination was considered, the arguments and processes used, and the resolutions designed, up to and including the ordination of women to the episcopate, demonstrate both fundamental successes and failures on the part of the modern Anglican

⁴ Pope Paul VI, "Inter Insigniores", in Women Priests: Obstacle to Unity? Documents and Correspondence, Rome and Canterbury 1975-86 (London Catholic Truth Society, 1986) 18

⁵ Jonathan Petre, By Sex Divided: The Church of England and Women Priests (London: Harper Collins, 1994) 42.

⁶ Edward C. Lehman Jr., Women's Path Into Ministry: Six Major Studies (Duke Divinity School: Pulpit and Pew Research Report, 2002) 5.

⁷ Lehman 2.

Church and the Anglican Communion. Studying both may provide opportunities for new insights that may prove useful on our journey.

John Macquarrie suggested in 1993 that “Anglicanism is in a state of disarray.” and he drew attention to the need to “reconstruct the via media”, not as an unhealthy compromise or synthesis of ideas but as “a path of reconciliation”⁸ as set out by the earliest history of the Anglican Church. The roots of Anglicanism began with Christian determination to bring diverse groups together in unity. Paul Avis has suggested that “Anglicanism has an inbuilt pluralism, an inherent openness to diverse sources of theological reflection.”⁹ Twenty years earlier John Macquarrie had said, “Theology is a dialectical science, so that every minority view has its elements of truth and justification. The majority view needs the constant stimulation and correction of the minority view if it is to remain alive and seek deeper truth. A measure of pluralism is today an acceptable and healthy state of affairs within the church. But sheer pluralism would mean the dissolution of the church.”¹⁰ The Anglican Communion and its national churches appear to be at a critical point in their journey together. The time has come to articulate what Avis calls “a theological justification”¹¹ for plurality and comprehensiveness within the Anglican Church and the Anglican Communion.

The issue of women’s ordination first came to the Anglican Communion in 1930, a communion already tenuous and diverse, still unsure of itself or its role, worried about its ability to withstand serious disagreement. Today, many believe that conflict currently threatens to alter or destroy the Anglican Communion. I will suggest that women’s ordination can focus our attention on two important issues that shape the nature of discussions about unity. These

⁸ Alister E. McGrath, The Renewal of Anglicanism (Harrisburg: Morehouse, 1993) 1-2.

⁹ Paul Avis, Truth Beyond Words: Problems and Prospects for Anglican-Roman Catholic Unity (Cambridge: Cowley, 1985) 84.

¹⁰ John A. Macquarrie, “An Address to the Eleventh Lambeth Conference, 1978”, James B. Simpson and Edward M. Story, Discerning God’s Will: The Complete Eyewitness Report of the Eleventh Lambeth Conference, (Nashville: Thomas Wilson, 1979) 265.

¹¹ Avis 118.

are; the concept of “other” as an expression of the two great commandments and the implications for relationship, and our understanding of the place and nature of conflict and its effects on unity.

Confusing reconciliation with appeasement and tolerance with the avoidance of conflict should be a concern for the Anglican Communion. These are important theological issues. As well, an appeal to unity through a guarantor of “clarifying belief” may be a wound fatal to the Spirit of unity itself. There is a need to understand the nature of conflict and its relationship to unity. Fundamental errors may be in danger of being replayed within the context of other more current disagreements and resolutions being discussed may not be helpful in addressing the longer term and essential issues of repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation. As Stephen Sykes has said, decision-making is an ongoing process in the Church and much can be gained from a review before the next decisions are made. “Decision-making is not, therefore, a matter of balancing one authority against another nor of holding authorities in tension, as Anglican writing has sometimes suggested. There is only one source of authority which is the freedom and love of the Triune God”.¹² The task always facing the Church is to discern where freedom and love are leading and who is actually doing the leading.

In keeping with these constructive goals, I will explore the concept of unity and the relationship of conflict to unity, continuity and change, provide a brief overview of the process leading to the ordination of women in Canada and critique current thinking regarding the resolution of conflicts currently central to the Anglican Communion.¹³

¹² Stephen Sykes, *The Integrity of Anglicanism* (Oxford: Mowbray, 1978) 98.

¹³ Note: Throughout this thesis the term ‘province’ within the Anglican Communion is intended to be interchangeable with ‘national church’

Ways of Seeing

We live in a quantum world that continues to operate with a 19th century mechanical and scientific worldview, more suited to industrial smokestacks and foundries than computers and the internet. In the quantum world we understand that life's elements exist invisibly to us while the mechanical and scientific worldview would have us believe that rationality is what is right before our eyes. What we see, is. Everything can be reduced to basic elements and things exist or they do not. The eye and reason become the arbiter of reality. The mechanical world we have constructed is dualistic in its approach and hierarchical in its structure. The world is divided by differences and categories and considers itself rational above all things. Science requires belief because it is both rational and objective. Christoph Cardinal Schonborn, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Vienna, calls the orientation of the western world to rationality and secularity "scientism": "The unlimited application of the 'scientific mentality' is scientism, the philosophical claim that the scientific method and scientific explanations can grasp all of reality. For many, scientism is accompanied by agnosticism or atheism. "¹⁴

On the other hand, the quantum world is made up of bosons and fermions and both of these, Danah Zohar suggests, "arise out of a common, quantum substrate (the vacuum) and are engaged in a virtually creative dialogue whose roots can be traced back to the very heart of reality creation."¹⁵ The quantum world speaks of a world of difference and opposites that come together to form new creations and greater complexities. It moves to what Zohar calls "greater, ordered coherence." Difference is not seen in this world as the enemy, the

¹⁴ Cardinal Christoph Schonborn, "Does Science Make Belief in God Obsolete?" The John Templeton Foundation, 11 May, 2008 <<http://www.templeton.org/belief/essays/cardinal.pdf>. >

¹⁵ Danah Zohar, in collaboration with I.N. Marshall, The Quantum Self: A Revolutionary View of Human Nature and Consciousness Rooted in the New Physics (London: Bloomsbury, 1990) 219.

stranger, that which does not fit or is outside the norm, but rather as an opportunity for new creative relationships in an ongoing newly shaped unity.

Margaret Wheatly articulates these relationships elegantly: 'In the quantum world, relationship is the key determiner of everything. Subatomic particles come into form and are observed only as they are in relationship to something else. They do not exist as independent "things". There are no basic building blocks. These unseen connections between what were previously thought to be separate entities are the fundamental ingredient of all creation.'¹⁶

Stuart A. Kauffman also captures this new framework:

If no natural law suffices to describe the evolution of the biosphere, of technological evolution, of human history, what replaces it? In its place is a wondrous radical creativity without a supernatural Creator. Look out your window at the life teeming about you. All that has been going on is that the sun has been shining on the earth for some 5 billion years. Life is about 3.8 billion years old. The vast tangled bank of life, as Darwin phrased it, arose all on its own. This web of life, the most complex system we know of in the universe, breaks no law of physics, yet is partially lawless, ceaselessly creative. So, too, are human history and human lives. This creativity is stunning, awesome, and worthy of reverence. One view of God is that God is our chosen name for the ceaseless creativity in the natural universe, biosphere, and human cultures.¹⁷

Kauffman breaks the golden calf of the patriarchal, omnipotent and judgmental figure who controls mechanistic unity and offers us an insight into a very different God. Though we may not agree with Kauffman that God "is ceaseless creativity", we may be willing to say that God is much more than we can ever imagine or describe with words. As a warning against idolatry, Buddhists suggest that the finger that points at the moon is not the moon and it is always

¹⁶ Margaret Wheatly, Leadership and the New Science: Discovering Order in a Chaotic World 2nd Edition (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 1999) 11.

¹⁷ Stuart A. Kauffman, "Breaking the Galilean Spell" Excerpted from the Preface and First Chapter of Reinventing the Sacred: A New View of Science, Reason and Religion. Reprinted by permission of the publisher, 13 May, 2008
<http://www.edge.org/3rd_culture/kauffman08_index.html>

important to remember that God is never simply the words we use. Kauffman's description uses the language of another paradigm, another metaphor, as an opportunity to explore the nature of God.

The concept of unity, which emerges from this new worldview, based on "nature's infinite creativity" as Kauffman calls it, is not one ordered by categories and sameness but one that delights in biocomplexity and difference. This new way of looking at the world can provide insights into our concept of the nature and characteristics of unity and oneness with the Other. It can challenge our more static understandings. The question of unity is one that continues to puzzle us. In a mechanical worldview, the elimination of difference or at least the separation of differences into categories or hierarchies is seen as important. The unity comes from the arrangement of the separate. The alike are aligned. The different are aligned separately. There is always a norm against which likeness and similarity are measured. However, unity in the quantum world will always include the individual within a context, a relationship between various Others or a particular Other. The relationship is not static and may not rely on similarity or sameness. An individual without a context does not exist. The dance between two or more creates what is.

Our concepts of unity are essential to our worldview. Whether consciously or unconsciously, we see ourselves in relation to Others. Though Western men and women value their individuality and separateness, even opposition to others is a form of relationship, acknowledgement of the fact that the Other exists in time and space as Not Like Me/Us. James Alison, using René Girard's mimetic theory, suggests that the " theory proposes a way of understanding humans which is simultaneously personal and social, since it treats persons as absolutely dependent on the other, who is previous to it." ¹⁸ For Alison, human beings learn their sense of personhood by reference to others: "How do you

¹⁸ James Alison, Raising Abel: The Recovery of the Eschatological Imagination (New York: Crossroad, 1996) 18.

desire? The reply is: I desire in imitation of somebody. For something to have value or interest for me, someone, another, has to have given it value or interest.”¹⁹ and “ I take it from Girard that we always learn to see through the eyes of another.”²⁰ In another work, he sums up his earlier position: “What we see is given value by them and the one seeing is moved by that desire; and knows and loves with that desire.”²¹ In this way, our becoming is a combination of what we love and desire, as well as those things that we fear. Our worldview is the unity that best expresses and protects this balance and makes us feel safe.

It is important for us to be related in this way as a means of providing a framework for living and decision-making. This means that a discussion of our concepts of unity will uncover our views of the Other, the One Not Like Me/Us. The place of the One Not Like Me/Us will, I wish to suggest, reveal the God in whom we believe, the nature of the God we worship and the God who gives our lives meaning. Our explanation of the world to ourselves and the Other holds within it our explanation of God, who or what we most desire, and provides clues as to what that God is like. The question of unity may seem to be a function of faith, traditions and doctrines but more than anything it is the framework for our lives and describes how we live our lives. Which things, people and ideas are comfortable for us and which are ‘Other’ to us?

In short, what I would call the mechanistic worldview will tend to see unity in terms of those who are for us and against us, those who are in and those out of communion, those who are like us and those who are not. What I have called ‘the quantum worldview’ on the other hand, will see the whole range of Others as potential relationships that provide opportunities for new creations, of new possibilities for an understanding of what unity might become. Unity raises the question of what we do with that which is Not Like Me/Us.

¹⁹ Alison 18.

²⁰ James Alison, On Being Liked (New York: Crossroad, 2003) 1.

Psychologist and author Jerome Kagan suggests that we require coherence in our thinking and understanding of the world. We do not like uncertainty. The world has to make sense but that “separateness, not community, has become a fact because local coherence is defeating the beautiful idea of a community of eight billion brothers and sisters.”²² In the face of global pressures and instant information, a sense of coherence is more easily found close to home. Hence we have the attraction of our nation or our group. However, he goes on to add, there is personal comfort in the idea that we possess the truth more than others and that it is difficult to part with this kind of security. “Although a tolerant attitude toward each group’s ideology is necessary in a diverse society, it deprives each person of the moral smugness that accompanies the conviction that self’s values are more true, or more moral, than those of another.”²³

However, this desire for coherence is now matched by the growth of individualism, which separates people from their own local and social community. Ironically, using Kagan’s thinking, even the local community and family may now be the source of too much diversity for the individually minded modern and this insecurity may be causing them to seek greater coherence by strengthening their own sense of worthiness over others who may be different. “The western celebration of personal freedom to enhance self, unconstrained by any ethic other than not harming another without provocation, has slowly eroded the force social categories used to exert, as ocean waves, over time, reduce five hundred pound boulders to a pebble.”²⁴

Sir Jonathan Sacks, Chief Rabbi of the Commonwealth, suggests that members of modern society no longer view themselves as responsible and capable of agency and choice, but as victims who are at the mercy of fate, living in a

²¹ Alison 1.

²² Jerome Kagan, An Argument For Mind (New Haven: Yale University, 2006) 98.

²³ Kagan 99.

²⁴ Kagan 146.

“culture of tragedy” rather than a “culture of hope.”²⁵ This enables people to move towards the safety of like-minded fellow-victims who can bond together to seek recognition as a group. The power of the group replaces the responsibility of the individual. The unintended consequences of this become the emphasis on power in place of shared public values and a further retreat from difference.

People need to have a coherent worldview to provide a sense of security. The paradox is that security can only be maintained if we are prepared to make the coherence transitional. Stability and change must support one another. Writer, educator and activist Parker J. Palmer suggests that “the great danger in our utopian dreams of community is that they lead us to favour association with people just like ourselves. Here we confront the third myth of community, that it will be an extension and expansion of our own egos, a confirmation of our own partial view of reality.”²⁶ The greater the diversity, and the less experience of living within diverse communities or families, the person retreats to the support of the like minded, wherever they may be found. The Internet now provides an immediate source of people to exchange like-minded views, without the problems brought about by actually having to learn to live with their differences. The growing toxicity of blogs perhaps demonstrates an increasing frustration with the accessibility of differing opinions on a twenty-four hour basis, and an inability to control challenges to individual worldviews.

To live with diversity assumes a certain kind of security, of confidence in the face of ambiguity and the unknown. It implies an assumption that different perspectives will bring new knowledge as a result of the risk taken in encountering them. It assumes and trusts that coherence will emerge. Parker J. Palmer comments: “In a true community, we will not choose our companions, for our choices are always limited by self-serving motives. Instead, our

²⁵ Jonathan Sacks, The Home We Build Together: Recreating Society (London: Continuum, 2007) 57.

²⁶ Parker J. Palmer, The Promise of Paradox: A Celebration of Contradictions in the Christian Life (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008) 82.

companions will be given to us by grace, and often they will be persons who will upset our view of self and world. In fact, we might define true community as that place where the person you least want to live with always lives!"²⁷

Anglicanism has experience of diversity and tolerance forged in the bitter confrontations of the reformation and enlightenment. Paul Avis writes of the contribution Anglicanism can make, "As John Macquarrie has observed in Their Lord and Ours (ed. M Santer), the possibility of radical dissent is the mark of a mature and adult society."²⁸ In this thesis, the argument will be that the way forward for the Anglican Communion may be to develop and articulate a true theology of the Other which can sustain the diversity most recently reflected in the ordination of women.

Choosing the Other

The difference between these two approaches to unity, one static and dualistic, requiring coherence for security, and the other open and creative, assuming that coherence will emerge, is a simple matter of choice. We choose which way we want to live. If loving our neighbour is to choose our approach to the Other, the different, it is much like turning towards rather than away from the Other. Consequently our approach to what we may describe as unity, will involve turning towards those who are Not Like Me/ Us or excluding them. Using Miroslav Volf's structural elements to describe the moment of embrace, we open the arms, we wait, we close the arms and we open again.²⁹ Such is the nature of a creative and dynamic interaction.

²⁷ Palmer 83.

²⁸ Paul Avis, Truth Beyond Words: Problems and Prospects for Anglican-Roman Catholic Unity (Cambridge: Cowley, 1985) 77.

²⁹ Miroslav Volf, Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness and Reconciliation (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996) 141.

In the dense and profound exploration of the individual and the concept of rejection, Karl Barth suggests: "the elect man is chosen in order that the circle of election – that is, the circle of those who recognize and confess Jesus Christ in the world – should not remain stationary or fixed, but open up and enlarge itself and therefore grow and expand and extend – the task not to shut but to open, not to exclude but to include, not to say no but yes to the surrounding world. The concern of the elect is always the concern of reconciliation."³⁰ For Christians then, according to Barth, there must always be inclusion of the Other as a response to God. There are those who choose against inclusion, those who wish to reject and who reject the Other. Judas, one of Jesus' close circle is an example of one who chose to exclude. In speaking of the relevance of saving grace for Judas, Barth says of him, "Yes, it has reference to him, the rejected, who in face of it can only confess his unworthiness of it; to him, whose rejection rests on and works itself out in the fact that he has no wish to be loved in this way, that he is an enemy even of the grace of God."³¹ Judas' choice is to reject God as Other, as God is revealed in Jesus Christ. The God revealed to Judas in Jesus was not the God in whom he wished to believe. He turned away. In Barth's words, "he isolates himself from God"³² and though God is for him, he is against God.

Ivan Illich, philosopher and activist, and a Roman Catholic priest who left the church in the 1970s, wrote passionately about the effect of modern society and its institutions on the individual.

I believe that sin is something which did not exist as a human option, as an individual option, as a day to day option before Christ gave us the freedom of seeing in each other persons redeemed to be like him. By opening this new possibility of love, this new way of facing each other, this radical foolishness, as I called it earlier, a new form of betrayal also became possible. Your dignity now depends on me and remains

³⁰ Karl Barth, "The Election of the Individual", Church Dogmatics II/2 eds. G.w Bromiley and T.F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1957) 419

³¹ Barth 476.

³² Barth 449.

potential so long as I do not bring it into act in our encounter. This denial of your dignity is what sin is.³³

For Illich, to refuse the call of another, to be indifferent or cold to what is revealed of God in the Other, is to refuse God. Rowan Williams, in a lecture to celebrate Michael Ramsey has said, "Of course Christian commitment is a free choice to walk with Jesus Christ; there is nothing automatic about it and Ramsey would certainly have agreed that there are no such things as hereditary Christians. The seriousness of what is involved in walking with Christ makes it clear that we are not dealing with anything less than a sober self-location within a community of others who have likewise brought themselves to decision."³⁴ To say yes to Christ, is to say yes to the Not Like Me/Us, the Other. "Anyone who says, "I love God," and hates his brother, is a liar, since a man who does not love his brother that he can see cannot love God, whom he has never seen."³⁵

The question of the love of God is played out within the context of relationships. Three modern theologians, John Zizioulas, Elizabeth Johnson and Miroslav Volf provide extraordinary insights into the importance of relationship as fundamental to human existence. Exploration of their thinking will provide a useful base for further understanding the connection between unity and the Other.

Zizioulas suggests that "there is a pathology built into the very roots of our existence, inherited through our birth, and that is the *"fear of the other."*³⁶ This fear, Zizioulas says, is the "essence of sin". It is possible for men and women to freely choose self over other, and in so doing, to make an enemy and threat of

³³ David Cayley, The Rivers North of the Future -The Testament of Ivan Illich as told to David Cayley (Toronto: Anansi, 2005) 62.

³⁴ Rowan Williams, "The Lutheran Catholic" The Ramsey Lecture, 23 November, 2004. January 11, 2008 <<http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/1042>>.

³⁵ 1 John 4: 20

³⁶ John Zizioulas, Communion and Otherness: Further Studies in Personhood and the Church Edited by Paul Mc Partlan (London: T&T Clark, 2006) 1.

the person who is outside the self, who is different. The implication of this for the concept of unity is profound. "When the fear of the other is shown to be the fear of Otherness, we come to the point of identifying difference with division. This complicates and obscures human thinking and human behaviour to an alarming degree. The moral consequences in this case are very serious. We divide our lives and human beings according to difference."³⁷ According to Zizioulas, "When difference becomes division, communion is nothing but an arrangement for peaceful co-existence."³⁸ Perhaps the most sobering theological statement of Zizioulas is that, "Death exists because communion and Otherness cannot coincide in creation,"³⁹ and that when diversity is used to separate us, it leads to isolation, which is death. For Zizioulas this is not merely a moral problem, for it is built into creation and therefore requires, as he suggests, a new birth. It is an ontological problem and only God can save us.

Colin Gunton supports this idea when he suggests that "reconciliation is a restoration, and not the gift of new being; the reintegration of the disintegrated, the restoration by the Spirit of a directedness to the other rather than to the self. The need for reconciliation, the redirection to community, is also the reason why ecclesiology must be at the centre of our understanding of the human condition."⁴⁰ Rejection of the other is a rejection of God who has freely created from nothing. It is a rejection of relationship. For those who are Christians, the Other turned from provides, in fact, according to Zizioulas, a challenge to repentance, to turn around. Love is not the abandoning of self, but abandoning the focus on self, to include the Other.

The implication for the church is that the Church itself must reflect "the communion and Otherness that exists in the triune God."⁴¹ Here we see, as we

³⁷ Zizioulas 2.

³⁸ Zizioulas 3.

³⁹ Zizioulas 3.

⁴⁰ Colin E. Gunton, The One, The Three and The Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity – The Bampton Lectures 1992 (Cambridge:Cambridge University, 1993) 217 Note 5.

⁴¹ Zizioulas 4-5.

articulate the names of relationship the Church has given, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the relatedness of "persons" who are different. Zizioulas maintains that "communion does not threaten otherness; it generates it,"⁴² and illustrates how this is expressed within the Trinity itself. Unity requires otherness so that without difference there can be no unity. Zizioulas's position, based on his Trinitarian theology, claims that we cannot comment on the worthiness of the other or discriminate in terms of our relationship. "When the Holy Spirit blows, he creates not good individual Christians, individual saints, but an event of communion which transforms everything the Spirit touches into a relational being."⁴³ The Eucharist becomes the point at which exclusion is excluded and that is why schism is seen, to Zizioulas, as an act of exclusion, the ultimate act of freedom to reject God by rejecting the Other, to refuse to be in relationship with the Not Like Me/Us.

Elizabeth A. Johnson suggests that speech about God functions as a symbol of God, pointing to God through the images we choose. When God is portrayed as male and the persons of the Trinity are described only in masculine terms, it shapes the thinking of men and women, potentially shaping their relationships to one another and the world. "The symbol of God functions. Neither abstract in content nor neutral in its effect, speaking about God sums up, unifies and expresses a faith community's sense of ultimate mystery, the worldview and expectation of order devolving from this, and the concomitant orientation of human life and devotion."⁴⁴ Until recently, in the language used daily to explain the mysteries of the faith, liturgy, teaching and preaching, God was viewed as male, or, as Johnson suggests, "more like a man than a woman."⁴⁵ While everyone might politely agree that God is Spirit and beyond our knowledge and description, official doctrines still exclude women and those characteristics of

⁴² Zizioulas 5.

⁴³ Zizioulas 6.

⁴⁴ Elizabeth A. Johnson, She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse (New York: Crossroad, 1992) 4.

⁴⁵ Johnson 5.

God which are reflected and creative within women. "Upon examination it becomes clear," says Johnson, "that this exclusive speech about God serves in manifold ways to support an imaginative and structural world that excludes or subordinates women."⁴⁶ Johnson also sees this as having a direct effect on unity. As she writes, "While the solitary God of classical theism is associated with a bare, static, monolithic kind of unity, a unity of divine nature, the triune symbol calls for a differentiated unity of variety or manifoldness in which there is distinction, inner richness, and complexity. How to envision such a oneness?"⁴⁷

In her critique of Zizioulas and Johnson, Patricia A. Fox suggests that "Women have always been the other in a male dominated society. Women have not been the subjects within the Church, and that has worked powerfully against the humanity of women as well as that of men and children."⁴⁸ Again the issues of difference have been used to separate and isolate. For Fox, the critical times in which we are living call us to a new articulation of the importance of relationship and she sees Zizioulas and Johnson as reflecting this discussion. "Only in these times has it become apparent that if humanity is to have any future at all, women and men must heed the imperative to be in relation, in communion, with one another and with everything in the universe."⁴⁹

Miroslav Volf is another articulate voice exploring concepts of relationship, which he also links to the model reflected within the Trinity. "First, complete openness entails complete self-giving. The Son gives himself to the Father from whom he receives his whole being; and he gives himself to humanity to whom he mediates the Father. Second, the complete openness entails complete presence of the other in self. Properly understood, the twin ideas of 'giving of the self to the other', and of 'the presence of the other in the self' are both

⁴⁶ Johnson 5.

⁴⁷ Johnson 220.

⁴⁸ Patricia A. Fox, God as Communion: John Zizioulas, Elizabeth Johnson and the Retrieval of the Symbol of the Triune God (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2001) 19.

⁴⁹ Fox 249.

profound and significant.”⁵⁰ Volf suggests that the role of theology is to facilitate “a non final reconciliation in the midst of the struggle against oppression.”⁵¹ Reconciliation, as an event or potentiality, will always be non-final because final reconciliation rests in God, who is perfect love. Any attempt to bring about final reconciliation is, what Volf calls, the grand narrative, “that feeds nostalgia for the whole and the one.”⁵² Oppression of the Other, in an attempt to bring about unity or oneness, is an attempt to create a false unity or a oneness which cannot last. “Reconciliation with the other will succeed only if the self, guided by the narrative of the triune God, is ready to receive the other into itself, and undertake a re-adjustment of its identity in light of the other’s alterity.”⁵³ It is only as we acquire insight into ourselves and the Other that the possibility of reconciliation becomes imaginable.

In Volf’s view, permanent dissent will always exist because the potential for difference cannot be eliminated this side of the Kingdom of God. Consensus is always being developed. It is for this reason that acceptance of the Other, the one who is Not like Me/Us, is essential. In order to make the move from exclusion to embrace of the other, Volf suggests that the boundary of forgiveness must be crossed. We become “personal microcosms of the eschatological new creation.”⁵⁴ Volf extends this concept of “other” to the relationships between women and men. He says that “If God is God rather than simply a patriarch of some social group’s cultural ideals, and if human beings, their undeniable cultural creativity notwithstanding, are creatures of that God, then the decisive question will be how the nature of God ought to inform relations between men and women as well as their construction of ‘femininity’ and ‘masculinity’.”⁵⁵ On the question of language of the Trinity he says,

⁵⁰ Miroslav Volf, Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness and Reconciliation (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996) 178.

⁵¹ Volf 109-110.

⁵² Volf 106.

⁵³ Volf 110.

⁵⁴ Volf 130.

⁵⁵ Volf 169

“Whether we use masculine or feminine metaphors for God, God models our common humanity, not our gender specificity.”⁵⁶ For Volf, the doctrine of the Trinity is a model that expresses an approach to the mystery of God, a way of speaking about God using our experience to give words to the unfathomable. But the words and language can never be or adequately describe God; otherwise, the doctrine of the Trinity itself becomes an idol to be worshipped.

In summation so far, rather than static likeness or sameness, unity may be more properly viewed then as ordered coherence in continuously evolving creative relationships rather than static adherence to norms and categories. This approach requires relationship and difference. Relationship is basic to Christian belief and is reflected most clearly in the articulation of the Trinity. The pattern of our lives, furthermore, will reflect our own personal concept of unity, whether static or creative. It will reveal who is our neighbour and who is not, and in so doing, will reveal the nature of the God we worship as well. Because we are free to choose, we are able to choose our concept of unity and, as we do so, we choose the God we worship. Like Judas, we can exercise our freedom by turning away from the source of otherness or by embracing otherness. By reflecting on our concepts of the Trinity, we can elicit insights into our concepts of God.

Finally, Rowan Williams reminds us of Michael Ramsey’s understanding of the “unity of the Church in the act of God rather than unity as a goal for human negotiation.”⁵⁷ Ramsey himself has said, “Unity, therefore, exists already, not in what Christians say or think, but in what God is doing in the one race day by day. And the outward recovery of unity comes not from improvised policies, but from faith in the treasure which is in the Church already.”⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Volf 172.

⁵⁷ Williams, “The Ramsey Lecture”

⁵⁸ Arthur Michael Ramsey, The Gospel and the Catholic Church (London: Longmans 1964) 175.

Chapter Two – Conflict, Unity and the Other

Introduction

Let us now move to the role of conflict within our concept of unity. Again, the opportunity for choice will always be presented through conflict. Conflict is neither good nor bad and is always neutral. Fundamentally, conflict is the recognition of difference. Conflict occurs when an individual or substance discovers, senses or experiences something that is not itself, or like itself, or seems to threaten the 'unity' or identity of self that it has enjoyed. It is at that precise moment that choice will emerge and the choice will be the answer to the question, "How shall I respond?" To use Volf's terminology, "Do I exclude or embrace?" Is my concept of 'unity' enhanced by or threatened by something that is not myself? We can think of conflict as the Other, arriving on our doorstep and asking for hospitality. Our choices will be, to open to the possibility of that which is different or, to remain closed and reject.

This paradigm enables us to see conflict not as the cause of the disintegration of unity, but as the opportunity for choice. It is the choice we make concerning the nature and maintenance of our unity that can spell the end to relationships or the beginning of a more creative unity which can incorporate the new and always the different Other. Conflict offers us a choice to make about whether we will entertain change and a new way of looking at our world. Within the Anglican Church, this is the difference between what McAdoo calls tradition and traditionalism. "Traditionalism is substituted for tradition. As I have put it elsewhere, 'The former means the deadhand, the latter means a lifeline. The one is a stance of adherence, the other is a living process of transmission.'⁵⁹ Clearly, McAdoo's vision of unity is one that continues to expand and is not

⁵⁹ H.R. McAdoo, Anglican Tradition and the Ordination of Women (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 1997) 123-4.

trapped in a mechanistic worldview. It sees the conflict presented by diversity as opportunity for growth. "The reality is that the history of the Church shows tradition to be open both to deliberate selectivity and to the evolving process of change."⁶⁰

Conflict Theory

To view conflict as opportunity opens up the possibility of agency and transformation. Rather than seeing conflict as the end of something, we can view it as a potential for beginning. John Paul Lederach is a teacher and practitioner in conflict resolution theory and practice and a Distinguished Scholar with the Conflict Transformation Program at Eastern Mennonite University. He has worked in international peace building and negotiations, putting together peace agreements and processes. He speaks of "peace as embedded in justice."⁶¹ He considers himself more "driven by the impulses of a conflict transformation practitioner than an academic researcher."⁶² For Lederach, "conflict is normal in human relations and is the engine of change."⁶³ He proposes the following definition of conflict transformation: "Conflict transformation is to envision and respond to the ebb and flow of social conflict as life-giving opportunities for creating constructive change processes that reduce violence, increase justice in direct interaction and social structures and respond to real life problems in human relationships."⁶⁴ To be willing to resolve conflict, according to Lederach, is to be willing to imagine, to have a vision of healthy relationships and communities, and to be willing to create something new that will include self and the Other. He sees reconciliation as "first and last

⁶⁰ McAdoo 122.

⁶¹ John Paul Lederach, The Little Book of Conflict Transformation (Intercourse: Good Books, 2003) 4.

⁶² John Paul Lederach, "Civil Society and Reconciliation", Turbulent Peace: The Challenges of Managing International Conflict, ed. Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela Aall (Washington: United States Institute of Peace, 2001) 842.

⁶³ John Paul Lederach, The Little Book of Conflict Transformation (Intercourse: Good Books, 2003) 4

⁶⁴ Lederach 14.

about people and their relationships. Hence reconciliation is never about returning to a former state, though there is often great longing to do so. It is about building relationships, and relationships are about real people in real situations who must find a way forward together. To be more precise, reconciliation is made up of processes that build relationships in a context of interdependence.”⁶⁵

Most importantly, Lederach suggests that Truth, Mercy, Justice and Peace must all be part of the journey to reconciliation. He speaks of the centrality and insights provided by verse 10 of Psalm 85 to the peace process of Nicaragua. The psalm includes the four voices as they meet together. “Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.”⁶⁶ Truth will exist as people come forward and speak honestly about their actions and the impact of their actions on themselves and the other. Mercy is the search for a changed future that comes from an understanding of the truth and a desire to rebuild relationships. Justice seeks accountability, responsibility, fairness and some form of reparation. Finally, Peace creates the space for relationships to be rebuilt, moving at a pace that will sustain interdependence and co-operation. Peace is relational.⁶⁷ To eliminate any of the four strands will undermine reconciliation and pose a threat to long term interdependence. “ Reconciliation suggests that the place where these four are held together is a dynamic process and space, where they are recognized as different and interdependent social energies.”⁶⁸ Truth without mercy becomes negativism and creates hopelessness for change. Mercy without truth promotes lack of accountability

⁶⁵ John Paul Lederach, “Civil Society and Reconciliation,” Turbulent Peace: The Challenges of Managing International Conflict, ed. Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela Aall (Washington: United States Institute of Peace, 2001) 842.

⁶⁶ Psalm 85:10

⁶⁷ Lederach 850-854.

⁶⁸ Lederach 854.

and leaves us open to manipulation. Justice without mercy is cruel. Peace without justice is hypocrisy and requires no change. All four must be present.⁶⁹

Two other practitioners, Bush and Folger, offer the idea that through conflict transformation processes like mediation, " people find ways to avoid succumbing to conflict's most destructive pressures: to act from weakness rather than strength and to dehumanise rather than acknowledge each other. Overcoming these pressures involves making difficult moral choices and making these choices transforms people – changes them for the better."⁷⁰

For Folger and Bush, the key to this transformative perspective of conflict will always be *choice*. We choose our perspectives and our reactions. Even if we are part of a group or community, we are held responsible as individuals for participating in those group and community activities or consenting to group actions, explicitly or implicitly. We can choose how we will deal with the Other. As well, transformative models assume that individuals are capable of moral insight and development and that change is possible.

Mediation, as one of a spectrum of conflict resolution tools, and conflict resolution theories themselves, usually fall into two main categories, problem solving or transformational, but can be somewhere in the middle, depending on the orientation to conflict. On one extreme of conflict resolution, simple discussion and dialogue can bring resolution. However, unresolved, denied, ignored and buried, conflict continues to grow and rarely goes away on its own. It can be transferred from generation to generation with deadly consequences. Early interventions propose ways of preventing escalation of conflict with the inevitable damage this brings. Ideally, relationships are improved, maintained or

⁶⁹ The importance of Lederach's work is that it provides an application of strictly theological concepts in a secular context. It's corollary should also be true. The conflict transformational concepts based on these theological concepts, should be uniquely valid within the ecclesiastical world.

⁷⁰ Robert A. Bush and Joseph P. Folger, The Promise of Mediation: Responding to Conflict Through Empowerment and Recognition (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1994) xv.

at least not further damaged through the process. Above all, any threat to the unity of group or person is successfully resolved with mutually satisfying results.

Conflict can be approached through problem solving or transformation, but conflict resolution based on problem-solving approaches will see the “problem” as key and relationships as important to, but not the focus of, the process. A solution of some kind is seen as the successful resolution, regardless of the relationships. Parties will feel that most of their needs are met.

Transformational approaches however, will focus on relationships, the empowerment of the individuals, and, as Bush and Folger describe it, will bring about “the restoration to individuals of a sense of their own value and strength and their own capacity to handle life’s problems.”⁷¹ It also involves, “the evocation in individuals of acknowledgement and empathy for the situation and problems of others.”⁷² Here, the resolution of the particular issue at hand takes second place to the challenge for each individual to both develop insight into self and Other. This enables people to “agree to disagree” for instance, to develop a longer term strategy for problem resolution, or to decide how they will, among themselves and for themselves, resolve the issues between them.

More recent studies in mediation theory have proposed insight mediation as another theory of practice. Picard and Melchin suggest that “mediation seeks to change the way participants relate to the problem and to each other. What they discover in the process are new pieces of information about each other and new ways of ‘seeing’ the issue and the other person.”⁷³

This transformational model, with relationships as the focus, fits well within the concept of loving the neighbour. As illustrated within the parables of the

⁷¹ Bush and Folger 2.

⁷² Bush and Folger 2.

⁷³ Cheryl A Picard and Kenneth R. Melchin, “Insight Mediation: A Learning-Centred Mediation Model”, *Negotiation Journal*, January 2007 Vol. 23:1, 35-53.

Prodigal Son and the and Good Samaritan, it is most consistent with maintaining and building relationships as the choice when confronted with conflict, regardless of the problems which we give the power to separate us. The choice to see conflict as opportunity enables individuals to develop insight into themselves and the Other, the ability of each to choose to undertake two separate but related actions. Barth suggests in his comment " I make a distinction but also a connexion," ⁷⁴ the necessity of acknowledging the difference between self and Other. This is followed by then choosing to make a connection with the Other as well. This connection enables the individual to begin to acknowledge the nature of the differences and " hence what the other comes to see in me is something new and strange and different."⁷⁵ Bush and Folger suggest that "the hallmark of recognition is the letting go of one's focus on self and becoming interested in the perspective of the other party as such, concerned about the situation of the other as a fellow human being, not as an instrument of fulfilling one's needs."⁷⁶

In a conflict resolution process, parties are asked to describe the current situation and experience from their own perspective and to speak only for themselves. This enables each party to practice listening to the Other, understanding the feelings, threats, concerns and interests that each brings to the conflict. In a transformational model of conflict resolution there may appear to be lack of focus and chaos as the conversation wanders back and forth between parties. The focus is not on problem solution but on the underlying concerns and values that make the parties feel threatened by one another.

This first stage is absolutely critical in establishing the importance of the individual and the possibility of different perspectives to the process. It is not a

⁷⁴ Barth, Karl. Church Dogmatics, eds. G.W. Bromiley and T.F.Torrance translated (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1960) III/2 244.

⁷⁵ Barth 256.

⁷⁶ Robert A. Bush and Joseph P. Folger, The Promise of Mediation: Responding to Conflict Through Empowerment and Recognition (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1994) 97.

question of justification of points of view as much as actually exploring with people who they are and why they believe what and as they do. In fact, just such an approach to conflict can be seen in recent developments within Anglicanism. Though translated from the individual to a more explicitly corporate level of dialogue and transformation, the Indaba Process used at the 2008 Lambeth Conference and the Listening Process, put in place by the Anglican Communion, are examples of the application of some of the aspects of transformational mediation. The Listening process is described as an “open commitment to engage actively in the world and thought of the person or people to whom you are listening and a corresponding commitment on the part of the other person or people to enter into yours. It does not presume agreement or disagreement; it presumes a striving for empathy”⁷⁷ Indaba is a Zulu word meaning purposeful discussion and is a process of listening without debate but as an effort to build relationships through the conversation.

In reviewing academic and clinical literature on the resolution of conflict, it is clear that the long term resolution of conflict can be achieved only if relationship issues are addressed. According to Lederach, Bush and Folger, reconciliation must always be the goal of conflict transformation unless we are willing to live in a state of permanent and simmering conflict with others, use the powers of coercion to bring about the façade of agreement or isolate ourselves more and more from people with whom we disagree. People are often reluctant to consider reconciliation because they associate it with weakness or a settlement that will be achieved at the expense of truth, mercy, and justice. We often confuse reconciliation with that kind of peace, or the absence of conflict, brought about by the coercion of the need to love or forgive our neighbour, without the hard work of seeking truth, justice, mercy and peace together.

⁷⁷ Anglican Communion Office, “The Listening Process: What is the Listening Process?” 30 October, 2008 <<http://www.anglicancommunion.org/listening/whatis.cfm?>>

In a mechanistic worldview, many might argue that unity does mean the absence of conflict and argue as well that conflict itself is a divisive force. This might suggest that individual choice can be limited to the group joined, and that the nature of the group will dictate the response to the Other. Parker J. Palmer suggests that this power, when delegated to the group to choose new members, is an attempt to "control the degree of dissonance within."⁷⁸ This delegation of the individual choice to embrace or exclude is the power we give away to the group to carry out on our behalf. When this particular argument is used by the Church, reconciliation is pursued as a goal for which mercy, truth and justice as experienced by individuals can be sacrificed. Unity of belief is held out as proof of communion.

But if conflict is, in fact, the normal expression of diversity and the engine of creativity and growth, it can only be viewed as a necessary and ordinary outcome of unity, not a determinant of unity. The true determinant of unity then will be the manner in which the conflict is addressed, processed and whether or not a path to reconciliation is followed. These qualities would give evidence to whether or not true "unity in diversity" has been the foundation out of which the conflict has emerged. Only a healthy unity will allow a focus on the transformation of conflict into a higher and more complex level of relationship. Positive transformation of relationships, a higher level of complexity and new vision of unity will be the outcomes only when there is the power of love between self and Other.

Particular conflicts can make visible other unresolved conflicts and relationship problems that are pre-existing. It is possible to start a discussion about who takes out the family garbage and discover that there are issues concerning power, money and in-laws, dating back many years. However, what is truly uncovered is a relationship problem and it would be inaccurate to say that the conflict about any one of these issues caused the relationship problems. The

⁷⁸ Palmer 82

relationship came first. The particular conflicts came as the usual guests to the party.

Summary

The first two fundamental principles that emerge from this short review suggest that relationship between self and Other is essential to who we are as individuals and who we are called to be as Christians. To love God is to love neighbour. For Volf and Zizioulas, “the person is itself only when it stands in a relation.”⁷⁹ Being in relationship with the other is essential to healthy development. It moves us from individualism to personhood. It is not loss of person or submerging of person with the other, but the communion of difference, the opening of space in the self for the other. Diversity or uniqueness is the basis of the communion of persons. As John Cowburn has said, “I love another person as he exists in himself, not made but found by me”.⁸⁰

The third fundamental principle is that relationships between self and Other, are the reflections of the individual choice of each self. Illich suggests that each individual must accept the invitation, given by the Holy Spirit, to choose. Because we are free individuals, it will be our choice with whom to form relationships. It would seem to follow that unity or disunity cannot be a corporate choice. Unity cannot be declared by a corporate body because it cannot replace or represent the responsibility of each individual to choose to include or exclude the Other.

The fourth principle is that conflict, as neutral, is a potential engine for change and growth and not the cause of disunity. Avoiding, denying or suppressing

⁷⁹ Miroslav Volf, After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 1998) 82.

⁸⁰ John Cowburn, SJ, The Person and Love: Philosophy and Theology of Love (New York: Alba House, 1967) 171.

conflict will not create or maintain unity. Conflict transformation assumes that relationships are central and that no solution will provide long term resolution and maintenance of relationships unless it leads to reconciliation of relationships. This does not mean the elimination of diversity but the experience of building a new relationship in which that diversity can be expressed.

Finally, this means that issues of Truth, Mercy, Justice, and Peace must be addressed to the satisfaction of all. The unity experienced in this reconciliation will not be about returning to a former state, but, as Lederach suggests, will be the building of new and interdependent relationships.

Chapter Three - Conflict and the Ordination of Women

The Challenges

With the five principles from the summary of Chapter Three in mind, it is possible to review the question of ordination of women in the Anglican Church. These ordinations have sidelined, perhaps permanently, thoughts of reconciliation with the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches and given a different flavour to ecumenical discussions. It has drastically changed the visible traditions of the Church and overturned thousands of years of practice and belief. Over thirty years since the first sanctioned ordination and the issue of whether or not women can and should be ordained may appear to be settled on the surface. However, the issue of the ordination of women as bishops and the ordination of homosexual men and women as both priests and bishops have uncovered fault lines within the Anglican Communion and between national churches and their dioceses. It would appear that very fundamental issues might not have been resolved. It will be important to identify these issues and reflect on their importance.

Reviewing the Anglican landscape, women priests and bishops are becoming more common. In British seminaries, women are 50%⁸¹ or more of the students. Though public clamour about women's ordination had subsided until recently, there has of late been a reinvesting of energy into the question. The ordination of women as priests is now commonly articulated as the beginning of the end for some Anglicans and has forced opposition into the open. As noted earlier, it is linked to issues of changes to the prayer book, doctrine drift, and ordination of homosexuals as evidence of secularization within the Anglican Church.

⁸¹ Church of England, "Manchester Report", GS 1685, 01 May, 2008
<<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/info/paperswomenbishopsdebate/womenbishopsreport>>

When an issue, thought to be resolved, turns up again in discussion as an ongoing problem, however, it becomes the canary in the coal mine. This is always the sign that an issue has not been properly resolved and points to the need to examine the relationship issues involved. In partnerships, domestic disputes, foreign policies and war, this return to an earlier and basic conflict warns that it remains unresolved and that true reconciliation has not been accomplished at a fundamental and necessary level. There may have been peace but there has been no reconciliation.

Behind the question of ordination of women may be other significant issues of unhappiness relating to the quality of experience of Anglican women who have been ordained and the quality of experience of Anglican parishes themselves. Lehman's 2002 study provides useful insights and provides hope that, where there is still discrimination and women find glass ceilings, "the core ideology involves values that contradict the policies of exclusion. Those values include the concepts of justice, equality, freedom and other-centred love."⁸² Further research might shed light on how successful the actual outcome of ordination has been and where there are possibilities for further growth and development. Though important, these issues cannot be addressed within the scope of this work. Our focus will be the manner in which the conflict was handled. It is the manner in which the conflict was dealt with which is of interest here.

Measuring the quality of the resolution of the conflict inherent in the ordination of women as unsuccessful or successful may provide an opportunity for the Anglican Communion, and each National Anglican Church within it, to learn more about what it may mean to actually practice diversity within community. The discussion may sharpen insights into the nature of unity. In reviewing the conflict resolution process used in handling the issue of the ordination of women, and by reviewing the amount and quality of transformation that has

⁸² Lehman 37.

occurred, Anglicans can determine when they have been successful in developing true reconciliation and peace, and where, with many others, they have cried "Peace! Peace!" where there is no peace.

The Anglican Communion

The 2004 Windsor Report highlights the ordination of women as an example of how well the Anglican Communion can succeed at "mutual discernment".⁸³ It outlines what it considers to be the important steps along the way. It concludes the section by suggesting that:

Anglicans can understand from this story that decision-making in the communion on serious and contentious issues has been, and can be, carried out without division, despite a measure of impairment. We need to note that the Instruments of Unity, i.e. the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lambeth Conference, the Anglican Consultative Council and the Primate's Meeting, were all involved in the decision-making process. Provincial autonomy was framed by Anglican interdependence on matters of deep theological concern to the whole community.⁸⁴

However, not everyone agrees with the retelling of the story as an example of the Communion's finest hours. Ellen Wondra calls this section of the Windsor Report a "caricature" and says, "There is nothing of the intensity and vitriol of a very public controversy both within the various provinces and at the level of the Communion itself. There is nothing of the dire threats of schism and the breaking apart of the Communion, or of the schisms that take place, or of the extra-canonical actions of various bishops, many of which still exist today."⁸⁵ She is concerned that this retelling of the story of women's ordination as a basis for drawing conclusions about strengthening the Instruments of Unity will be misleading and pose further problems for communion.

⁸³ Anglican Communion Office, "Windsor Report", 14

<<http://anglicancommunion.org/Windsor2004/downloads/Windsor2004full.pdf>>

⁸⁴ Windsor 14 -16.

⁸⁵ Ellen K. Wondra, "The Highest Degree of Communion Possible: Initial Reflections on the Windsor Report 2004" *Anglican Theological Review*, Spring 2005 87:193-206.

The fact that women's ordination continues to be a signal of division suggests that, on both or all sides of the question, when decisions to ordain women were made by Anglican Churches within the Anglican Communion, people may not have paid adequate attention to all issues and interests of importance to the Other. Reasons why it truly posed a problem for the Anglican Communion may not have been thoroughly understood or articulated. In 1992, Graham Leonard⁸⁶ suggested that reliance on the determination of doctrine by legislative votes in the Church of England and other parts of the Communion, while opposing and rejecting the magisterium as a means of defining doctrine, was one of the four ways in which the essential tension or dialectic of comprehensiveness in the Anglican Church had been weakened. For Leonard, the other essential issues included the loss of the Book of Common Prayer as a pattern of common worship and standard, the ordination of women and the undermining of the authority of scripture.

Many Anglicans, bishops, clergy and lay, throughout the Anglican Communion, believe now and did then, that the synodical process is guided by the Holy Spirit and is to be the chief decision-making body for each autonomous province or national church within the Anglican Communion. They believe that the winners and losers of a democratic voting process in various synods are in fact, by that process, guided by the Holy Spirit and implicitly reconciled or would find reconciliation. This may be the fiction of the western democratic ideal, that, after a campaign to win, both sides shake hands and forget what's gone before. Feelings of disappointment, anger, hurt, coercion and revenge may then be temporarily buried under a layer of enforced civility or perhaps what some called "putting difference aside", or "forgiveness". Conscience clauses and episcopal oversight were offered as a way to buy time for change of heart.

⁸⁶ Graham Leonard, "Foreward" , Aidan Nichols, The Panther and the Hind: A Theological History of Anglicanism (Edinburgh:T&T Clark, 1993) xi-xii.

However, things said in the heat of a battle to win are not really forgotten unless some attempt is made to confront their harm and deal with consequences. It may be as well that the Anglican Communion assumed and merely awkwardly tolerated the different and historic traditions within the Anglican Communion without actually articulating a coherent concept of unity which grounded this tension within the Gospel. An agreed to statement of the how and why it was possible to hold the tension of these sometimes opposites within the Anglican Communion had not been developed and accepted by all. For example, Graham Leonard had suggested much earlier that the comprehensiveness within Anglicanism posed an opportunity for critical dialogue between the traditions that could benefit the Universal Church⁸⁷.

Michael Ramsey saw the need for Christians to see the Catholic Church as it is, with all its wounds and disunity. “ Looking at it now, with its inconsistencies and its perversions and its want of perfection, we must ask what is the real meaning of it just as it is. As the eye gazes upon it, it sees – the Passion of Jesus Christ.”⁸⁸ The Anglican Church, in its own struggle with catholic and evangelical traditions even now seems caught in debates that Ramsey called “often wearisome and fruitless”⁸⁹ when he was talking about wider reunion. He called for a new way of approaching the issues.

The 2004 Windsor Report suggests Instruments of Unity and Bonds of Affection have been the uniting factors within the Anglican Communion. However, Pierre Whalon suggests that the real issue within the Communion is an issue of ecclesiology.⁹⁰ He adds that this articulation of an Anglican ecclesiology is difficult to make visible. It can be an “unspoken organizing principle” he says, or an ideology and not a genuine teaching, but fundamentally ecclesiology is also

⁸⁷ Nichols x.

⁸⁸ Ramsey 5.

⁸⁹ Ramsey 8.

⁹⁰ Pierre W. Whalon, “Peering Past Lambeth”, Anglicans Online Essays August 17, 2008 <<http://www.anglicansonline.org/resources/essays/whalon/PeeringPastLambeth.html>>.

the organic form of the Mystery of God and as such cannot be articulated with too much definiteness lest it create an institution rather than a living organism. This remains an important issue for the Anglican Communion and for individual Anglican Churches. There are ongoing and larger questions regarding change and continuity and the place of both within the Anglican framework of scripture, tradition, reason and experience that need to be discussed openly and continuously. Current conflicts within the Anglican Communion, precipitated most visibly by the ordination of women, have simply brought to the surface long simmering debates about which tradition is closer to God and God's truth.

There are troubling questions of reconciliation and forgiveness within the Anglican community that cannot be ignored. The world cries out for new models filled with hope and new ways of building relationships, and surely this provides the Church with an opportunity to bring new witness. At the individual and parish level, people search for expressions of faith that will bring meaning to the rest of their lives and to the relationships with those around them. These include conflicts within families, communities, churches and nations. Finally, unresolved conflict continues to surface and impairs all future relationships and potential relationships. Yet relationships with the Other, rather than sameness, are the basis of unity and oneness.

What are the important signs of healthy resolution of conflict? These would include: willingness of parties to engage in successful resolution, exploration of common interests and areas of disagreement, focus on a common vision or intention that can provide a framework and shape potential agreements, and finally, acceptance and understanding that the parties are equal and have equal access to power. Ideally, people can be, if they are willing, transformed, changed by conflict. Desmond Tutu, in speaking of South Africa's work of reconciliation, has said, "In the act of forgiveness we are declaring our faith in the future of a relationship and in the capacity of the wrongdoer to make a new beginning on a new course that will be different from the one that caused us

wrong.⁹¹ We could expect some aspects of forgiveness to be apparent. We would look for Lederach's definition of reconciliation as based on Truth, Mercy, Justice and Peace meeting together.

Using the ordination of women as an example, how has the Anglican Communion failed and where has it been successful? In order for conflicts to be successfully resolved there must be willingness to resolve and that willingness has only been partially reflected. In establishing separate parishes or dioceses for instance, the churches have maintained the position that the ordination of women is outside the requirements of the faith and is an issue for the conscience of each person to determine. Different traditions should be able to determine their own behaviour and to define truth. This separate but equal philosophy has disguised a lack of engagement between men and women and ultimately has been a misuse of the concept of diversity. There is no longer a challenge here to engage with "The Other", simply a live and let live policy in the hope that agreement would emerge over time if everyone played nicely together. If not, tolerance was the next best approach. Who has offered reconciliation?

There has been no acknowledgement of transgression or harm done in the church's history of leaving women outside its traditions, allowing them room in the kitchen, but ignoring other gifts and charisms. Unlike slavery or even the residential schools issue, the ordination of women, while welcomed by many has also been granted reluctantly and grudgingly and has been seen more in terms of power sharing than reconciliation of alienated partners. There has been no request for and no offering of forgiveness, no call for reconciliation between men and women within Anglicanism, no building of a new kind of unity together.

⁹¹ Desmond Tutu, No Future Without Forgiveness (New York: Random House, 1999) 273.

The ordination of women has not been effectively used as an opportunity to wrestle with underlying issues of tradition and traditionalism, faith and fundamentalism. In the healthy resolution of conflict, these basic underlying issues must be discovered and mutual responsibility for accepting and dealing with them assumed willingly as the work of reparation. What were and are the common visions that have provided the framework for the agreements that have been accomplished? How have they shaped the outcomes and the settlements, the various motions that have been passed by various Synods, both local and national? Do they still function?

Today, what is the quality of the relationships between the opponents of women's ordination and the Anglican Church and the women priests and bishops who call it home? How has the quality changed and what changed it? How has the process used to resolve the conflict inherent in the ordination of women influenced the quality of the outcome? Though this thesis cannot hope to bring answers to all these questions, it can attempt to establish a context for further work and describe why further research is and will be important.

If we examine the issue of the ordination of women from a conflict resolution perspective, and using a transformational model, we would ask the parties in conflict to educate one another about the important issues and interests raised through this conflict. The purpose of this would be to identify who they are as people and what they care about and to begin to see and understand the Other as unique but also like them, an individual in relationship and subject to his or her own fears and beliefs about change. Most of all, we would seek to confirm what Rowan Williams identifies in Michael Ramsey's writings about unity and the Church: "The association of human beings together by faith in Jesus Christ is not an afterthought to the proclamation of the good news of salvation. What

the proclamation does is to create relations between human beings comparable to those of ethnic solidarity.”⁹²

In exploring the issues, we would undoubtedly discover that the conflict presented by the ordination of women was more than an issue of sexual equality motivated by a changing culture challenging the traditional Church. In fact, the ordination of women involved individual, corporate and cultural beliefs about issues of ecclesiology, communion and unity, authority, anthropology, culture, and the Anglican criteria of tradition, faith, reason and scripture and how they are viewed by different traditions within the Anglican Church. It was a complex issue, and the temptation was to become positional, that is, to avoid the complexities of choosing a response that saw opportunity in diversity and choose an either or, right or wrong and mechanical decision, a decision that attempted to end the conflict or avoid the conflict. What was needed was an approach that used the conflict, the issue of difference, as an opportunity to embrace the Other. Using Lederach’s outline of the path to reconciliation, such an approach would look for opportunities to discover Truth, Mercy, Justice and Peace.

One of the first challenges to be overcome in the resolution of conflict is to enable people to become unhooked from their “positions” and to be able to identify and articulate the complex reasons that linger, subtly, behind and beneath them. For instance, a conflict may exist about who gets the single remaining orange. Each party takes a position that they are entitled to the orange for various reasons they assume are unassailable and obvious. When interests are explored, we may determine that there are a mix of interests, shared interests or opposing interests in the orange. Identifying the interests is critical to developing options for resolution that may satisfy parties. It is only when our main interests are addressed that we believe that a conflict has been successfully resolved. We find then that the interests may be shared. One

⁹² Williams

wants the rind for carrot cake, another the juice. One may want the orange to sell while the other to give away. One may be afraid that there will be no more oranges, while the other is aware that more are in the refrigerator.⁹³

If parties stay positional, they have nowhere to move, no understanding to gain and conflict inevitably escalates into a question of who has, or knows someone influential who has, the power to make their position successful. This amounts to a refusal to engage with the Other, a refusal to accept difference as acceptable. They look first to persuasion, then coercion, or perhaps the possibility of arbitration, that is, someone else who will decide in their favour and lend their power to the cause.

To return to the example of the orange, transformational conflict resolution would assume that the relationship between parties (their unity) was the context within which the discussion occurs and would fashion a process whereby the discussion of interests in the orange allowed for increased understanding of each other and their needs and goals. A successful resolution would have meant the parties would be positively changed by the encounter and more options for resolution could be entertained within this positive framework. From a theological point of view, this holds open options of reconciliation, forgiveness and reparation if required. It could mean that no agreement was reached, but at least in transformational models of conflict resolution, parties become more aware of the effects of their actions on others and the potential of mistaken assumptions and beliefs for escalating and compounding conflict and damaging relationships. Within a Christian context, we might call this period one of 'discernment', used to see where the Holy Spirit is moving, even if the way forward is not immediately clear.

⁹³ Note: This example is frequently used by Roger Fisher and William Ury to demonstrate the difference between interests and positions which is a fundamental element in principled negotiation. A detailed exploration of this topic can be found in their book. Roger Fisher and William Ury, Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1991)

This can be contrasted with the problem solving approach or negotiated approach that would look for a mutually satisfying agreement without regard to the current or ongoing relationships. There are significant dangers within the problem solving approach which focuses only on a resolution of the problem. There is the probability of unhealthy compromise, unequal balances of power and influence and the ignoring of fundamental interests and issues that will sabotage agreement in the long term, all risked in order to 'resolve' a conflict. If underlying interests are not addressed, or remain hidden, even from the parties involved, conflicts will resurface. Problem solving works best in situations where the relationships are healthy and there is a history of satisfactory resolutions which have provided a history of growth and development. Without the history of relationships and with no attention to the development of empathy, problem solving or negotiation centres on mutual self-interest as the key to resolution.

Exploration of the issues identified through the ordination of women, in a transformational approach, would have explored individual and church approaches to all of the issues suggested previously. For instance, in discussion regarding the ordination of women by national churches within the Anglican Communion, the record shows much concern about the effect of such ordinations on the unity of the Churches around the world and the fear that unity would be jeopardised. It was positioned by some as "a yes to unity is a no to ordinations", until such time as all Churches in the Communion, or a majority at least, were in agreement. Waiting for such consensus, given the underlying unaddressed issues percolating underneath the Communion's network, would have been impossible. John Macquarrie wished aloud at the 1978 Lambeth Conference for a substantial consensus of Anglican Churches in the Communion.⁹⁴ There was great fear of the impact of women's ordination on the discussions with ecumenical partners.

⁹⁴ James B. Simpson and Edward M. Story, Discerning God's Will: The Complete Eyewitness Report of the Eleventh Lambeth Conference (New York: Thomas Nelson, 1979) 265.

These earlier and more complex issues, related to the Anglican Communion, had been identified and discussed as early as the Lambeth Conference of 1948. They were fundamental fault lines running around the world and which threatened the Communion. "The Meaning and Unity of the Anglican Communion", presented to the post war Conference, "though actually never approved by the Conference, ... has increasingly influenced Anglican thinking. The question it addressed was: Is Anglicanism based on a sufficiently coherent form of authority to form the nucleus of a world-wide fellowship of Churches, or does its comprehensiveness conceal internal divisions that may cause its disruption?"⁹⁵ John Howe, first Secretary of the Anglican Consultative Council 1971-1982 has suggested; "Anglicanism has a built-in capacity, within limits, for comprehensiveness. The limits are the bounds of Anglicanism, but within those there is no imposed rigidity. But there are dangers that comprehensiveness, developed for whatever reason, can produce excessive diversity which within the one Communion is a hindrance to witness to the gospel; and also hinders acceptance by other Christians that Anglicanism as a whole can be taken seriously. Diversity has to be viewed sympathetically."⁹⁶

In his discussion of the nature of Anglicanism, Howe quotes Bishop Stephen Bayne, first Executive Officer of the Anglican Communion: "A second great condition of Anglican action is that we shall travel light – that we shall remember that we are a pilgrim people, and that a pilgrim people carries with him only those things that are essential for his life. It is a characteristic mark of the Anglican tradition, at our best, that we recognize how few and how important the essentials are."⁹⁷ In recalling the four essential elements of the Chicago Lambeth Quadrilateral, Howe says that, in his experience, though there are many differences throughout the communion, "they are never more than

⁹⁵ John Howe, Anglicanism and the Universal Church: Highways and Hedges 1958-84 with an overview by Colin Craston (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1990) 221.

⁹⁶ Howe 38.

⁹⁷ Howe 31.

secondary”.⁹⁸ It is important however to remember that, at some point, the secondary differences develop and harden into their own traditions and assume their own power.

“Anglicanism is a glorious accident of history – a serendipity. It emerged from the world of political compromise of the sixteenth century, in which nations that had been broken and bruised by the turmoil of the Reformation sought to restore order to their churches, while responding to the genuine pressures which had unleashed such a wave of unrest.”⁹⁹ What is implicit in this thought of Alister McGrath’s, echoing earlier claims of John Macquarrie in 1978, as well as Leonard and Ramsey as quoted above, is that Anglicanism encourages an honest balance of diversity within a certain amount of agreement. The pragmatism of the Anglican tradition, however, helps to generate an ongoing tension within the Anglican Communion. To quote Macquarrie again, consensus “cannot mean everyone thinking alike. Theology is a dialectical science, so that every minority view has its elements of truth and justification. The majority view needs the constant stimulation and correction of the minority view if it is to remain alive and seek deeper truth. A measure of pluralism is today an acceptable and healthy state of affairs within the church. But sheer pluralism would mean the dissolution of the church. The liberty of pluralism is possible only because there are wide areas of agreement.”¹⁰⁰ Within both of these approaches is the acknowledgement of dialogue and discussion, remembering always the fundamental elements Anglicans believe together.

In a transformational model, the interests behind the ordination of women and the impact on the unity of the Communion could have been explored more fully, addressing the underlying questions of diversity and the nature of Anglicanism and causing the Communion to explore the deeper and more significant issues and remind itself of those fundamental points of agreement. Instead, the idea of

⁹⁸ Howe 31.

⁹⁹ Alister E. McGrath, The Renewal of Anglicanism (Harrisburg: Morehouse, 1993) 11.

diversity within union was not addressed directly as the problem, but as its symptom; the ordination of women became a lightning rod for anxiety about other issues, while an opportunity to explore the nature of unity and relationship was not identified. Each 'side' believed that the right outcome would restore unity.

Miranda K. Hassett has recently suggested that "Anglicanism possesses a dual character as both a tradition and a polity."¹⁰¹ Many who may believe that the Book of Common Prayer was the essential element uniting the Anglican Communion at one time believe that the liturgical adaptations of national churches are more evidence of a cultural concession. Certainly, liturgical adaptation increased the possibilities and the reflection of diversities. Concerned by the changes in the American Anglican tradition, and unable to find unity over against or in the midst of various cultures, "Evangelicals began to seek more actively to change the Episcopal Church's direction in order to restore the Church to Anglican orthodoxy as they understood it - or, failing that, to establish an alternative, orthodox Anglican province in the United States."¹⁰²

What began most obviously with the changes in Anglican worship, was followed by the ordination of women as priests, as bishops and finally the possibility of the ordaining of homosexual men and women as priests and bishops and the blessing of same sex unions. In the belief of many, diversity has strayed far from the "orthodox" idea of what is truly Anglican. There is no longer any "unity in basic theological positions" and no shared identification with Anglicans in other parts of the world.

This of course raises the crucial question of authority within the Anglican Church and Communion. Many fear that the changes have gone too far, are

¹⁰⁰ Simpson and Story 266-7.

¹⁰¹ Miranda K. Hassett Anglican Communion in Crisis: How Episcopal Dissidents and Their African Allies Are Reshaping Anglicanism (Princeton: Princeton University, 2007) 25.

¹⁰² Hassett 37.

too fundamental and cannot be stopped. If unity is reflected by similar beliefs, by what is orthodox and who is orthodox, then who decides what is orthodox and not becomes critically important. There is a growing move to a literal reading of the scripture as a source of authority. There is talk of needing a consensus fidelium as Anglicans and as members of the Catholic tradition. As Craston suggests “without consensus on its ecclesiology, the Anglican Communion will not maintain its unity in diversity.”¹⁰³ He asks, “But with the strains of diversities and questions on the limits of comprehensiveness are there any new instruments the Communion may discover to preserve its identity and strengthen its unity?”¹⁰⁴ Shared history, ethos, liturgy, ministry and a focus on Canterbury within what Craston called “bonds of affection that carried a commitment to stay together” no longer seem to be enough.

Allan L. Hayes has suggested that the Anglican experience in Canada can be useful. “There are strengths in being a church that so regularly reviews, reconstructs and changes. One is that it more easily represents the Spirit, who blows free like the wind. It also more easily preserves itself from becoming an idol to members. An unchanging church would seem to point to itself as eternal rather than to the Other as eternal.”¹⁰⁵ The late Edward W. Scott, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, illustrates the difference in controlling and keeping order, “I am driven therefore, to ask questions about the nature and purpose of authority as revealed in scripture, particularly as it is revealed in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. Is authority used to control or liberate?”¹⁰⁶ McAdoo says that ‘the primary purpose of authority is to maintain the church in the truth,’ and further, “that authority does not create truth but witnesses to the

¹⁰³ Howe 242.

¹⁰⁴ Howe 238.

¹⁰⁵ Alan L. Hayes, Anglicans in Canada: Controversies and Identities in Historical Perspective (Chicago: University of Illinois, 2004) 204.

¹⁰⁶ Edward W. Scott, “The Authority of Love”, Authority in the Anglican Communion, ed Stephen W. Sykes, (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1987) 66-68.

truth, guards it and proclaims it.”¹⁰⁷ There is both internal authority and legislative authority. For Anglicans this entails using the criteria of scripture, tradition and reason which, as McAdoo suggests implies “freedom which accepts authority and rejects authoritarianism.”¹⁰⁸

It may be that Anglicans confuse power and authority, assuming that authority is given in order that power will be needed to maintain the truth. But again, we return back to the question of what truth? In The Gift of Authority, the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission of 1999, the Commission wrote:

The exercise of authority in the Church is to be recognized and accepted as an instrument of the Spirit of God for the healing of humanity. The exercise of authority must always respect conscience because the divine work of salvation affirms human freedom. In freely accepting the way of salvation offered through baptism, the Christian disciple also freely takes on the discipline of being a member of the Body of Christ. Because the Church of God is recognized as the community where the divine means of salvation are at work, the demands of discipleship for the well-being of the entire Christian community cannot be refused. There is also a discipline required in the exercise of authority. Those called to such a ministry must themselves submit to the discipline of Christ, observe the requirements of collegiality and the common good, and duly respect the consciences of those they are called to serve.¹⁰⁹

The question of diversity, conscience and healing are important issues related to the agreements made for those opposed to the ordination of women. Methods were needed to keep people within the Anglican Church, regardless of the diversity of opinions. But, is the search for episcopal oversight, or the development of separate dioceses and national churches, an expression of diversity or division? What kind of unity does it reflect?

¹⁰⁷ H.R.McAdoo, “The Influence of the Seventeenth Century on Contemporary Understanding of the Purpose and Functioning of Authority in the Church,” Christian Authority: Essays in Honour of Henry Chadwick, ed. G.R.Evans (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988) 251-277.

¹⁰⁸ Evans 255.

Current Instruments of Unity

The Anglican Communion is now exploring the role of a covenant as a means of uniting the national Churches. It is, however, not clear whether the Covenant is to keep people out or to keep people in. Some see it as the authority with which diversity can be controlled and unity maintained but this raises important issues regarding, as John E. Skinner maintains, the abilities of human communities “open to each other, seeking reconciliation with each other, and also communities which respond to the transcendent reality which discloses itself but can never be captured or entombed.” He warns of the appeal of ideologies, masquerading as communities. “When social structures, secular or religious, make exclusive claims to be the possessors of value and worth (redemption) they become alien to the human moral struggle of those excluded and oppressed by such structures. They become quasi-objective substitutes for reality and they maintain their position through the use of coercive power.”¹¹⁰

To return to an earlier point made by Folger and Bush, it is through transformational processes for resolving conflicts that, “people find ways to avoid succumbing to conflict’s most destructive pressures: to act from weakness rather than strength and to dehumanise rather than acknowledge each other. Overcoming these pressures involves making difficult moral choices and making these choices transforms people – changes them for the better.”¹¹¹ The interests and issues within authority and the Anglican Communion go to the heart of relationships between individuals and yet these were not explored in the discussions of ordination and they are still with us.

¹⁰⁹ Anglican Consultative Council and the Pontifical council for Promoting Christian Unity, The Gift of Authority: Authority in the Church III An Agreed Statement by the Anglican – Roman Catholic International Commission - ARCIC (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1999) 35-36.

¹¹⁰ John E. Skinner, “Ideology, Authority and Faith”, Authority in the Anglican Communion, ed. Stephen W. Sykes (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1987) 33.

¹¹¹ Bush and Folger xv.

The ordination of women was not a neutral issue. It was a challenge to Anglican views of ministry, the episcopate and the individual and corporate power of men within the Church and society. The argument put forward in this paper is simply that a transformational model of conflict resolution would have enabled individuals and the Church to explore these deeper issues which lay behind the positions of yes and no. Such a model is consistent with Christian Baptism and belief. Yet, the "yes and no" positions themselves became the focus of the individual Anglican Churches and the Communion and all were asked to line up, in the old mechanical world view, on the side of yes or no. Unity became the prize for the right answer rather than the context in which the issue was discussed and decided. The Anglican Churches chose to see the resolution of the conflict as the route to unity, rather than unity as the de facto manner in which to search for resolution together.

Why does this matter? It matters because the manner in which the issue was discussed, debated and decided did not model an adequate concept of unity or fulfil the commandment to love the neighbour. It did not transform relationships and expand knowledge of the Other. It did not explore underlying interests and fears. It was viewed as a problem to be solved, not an opportunity to be explored. It skipped over the process of relationship tending and moved to voting and synodical democratic processes in order to resolve the problem and not tend the relationships. The ordination of women had compromises and agreements attached to it that had nothing to do with building, transforming and maintaining relationships and unity. They were compromises and appeasements that were thought necessary to hold people within the church. Division and diversity were confused. Depending on which way the vote went, people threatened to leave.

The ordination of women was the first expression of diversity to openly challenge the Anglican Churches' and Communion's concept of unity in the

twentieth century. These issues will be explored in a more detailed analysis of the actual history of women's ordination in Canada. What we will see is that critical issues were again buried, that they therefore continue to haunt the Anglican Communion, and that they have actually compounded over time. The threat of schism hangs in the air again, only this time because of other more current issues that stem from the same inability to view conflicts as healthy opportunities to choose to be open to the Other. There is a legacy of hurt, frustration and anger.

On one side we have Churches claiming the rights of independence and autonomy and on the other those who feel that unity should be imposed by clear guidelines and orthodoxy. As Miranda Hassett comments, "Diversity globalism, the vision of celebrating difference within community so often invoked at Lambeth 1998, has taken a beating and faces stiff competition from the accountability globalist vision, in which the orthodox South demands Northern conformity to particular moral rules - a vision bearing implications of inevitable conflict and irreconcilable differences."¹¹²

The history of the Anglican Communion needs to be distinguished from the Church of England and the Anglican Churches of the Communion. Though of a common heritage, today, there is indeed less clarity about what keeps them together. As the bonds of affection become weakened in times of frustration and discord, finding or rediscovering reasons for staying together becomes important. It is also in times of stress that the power of each additional stressor becomes magnified. Each new issue can become another example of bad faith. What drives the members of a church to consider separation from their fellow sisters and brothers in Christ? Let us consider for the moment that unity for the person might express a three-fold tension holding together an inner belief system about self, a comfortable role in a society, and meaning to life. King, Brown and Smith suggest:

At critical junctures, we undertake the major kind of working through that characterizes the resolution stage of a turning point. This is where we gain new insights into our worlds and where we acquire meaning about who we are and what is important to us. Turning points therefore are times when life challenges spur us to make meaning and give purpose to our lives. Turning points have been defined as periods or points in time when a person undergoes a major transformation in commitments to important relationships, involvement in significant life roles such as job and marriage, and/or views about the self. It is remarkable that this definition parallels the three paths to meaning in life shown in our study – belonging, doing and understanding.¹¹³

Any challenge to any one of these elements is a threat to coherence of the person. These are similar to what Oliver O'Donovan might call "structures of communication", within which individuals find "realization of individual powers within social forms". He describes the difficulty that loss of such structures can bring: "But we can be deprived of the structures of communication within which we have learned to act and so we find ourselves hurled into a vacuum in which we do not know how to realize ourselves effectively."¹¹⁴ Tradition, once safely established, enables us to feel secure and at home. Challenges to tradition, to what we know, threaten to push us into a vacuum of the unknown. However, such will always be the choice offered by the Other. The Anglican Communion seems to have reached its own turning point.

The ordination of women as priests and bishops presents a direct challenge to all three of the elements of unity within personal and institutional life; belonging, doing and understanding. On a fundamental level it challenges personal orientation to the cultural roles that society assigns to men and women. It challenges personal orientation to the way we view others and ourselves and who we are. Secondly, it challenges roles within society and the very organization of society itself. This presents the frame within which we live and

¹¹² Hassett 257.

¹¹³ Gillian A. King, et al., "Turning Points: Emotionally Compelling Life Experiences", *Resilience: Learning From People With Disabilities and The Turning Points in Their Lives*, ed. Gillian A. King, Elizabeth G. Brown and Linda K. Smith (Westport: Praeger, 2003) 76.

find meaning. Finally, at a theological level, it challenges our belief system, how we talk about God and how we view our place in the universe.

Again, the ordination of women is not the first issue to threaten to divide the church, but it is a modern example within the Church of the ability to make choices and therefore it models how it resolves its own conflicts. For this generation of Anglicans, changes to the prayer book and the ordination of women were the first opportunities to see how the Anglican Churches dealt with conflict. Paul Avis suggests that it is this capacity and willingness to wrestle with and risk opposition, the vacuum that O'Donovan describes, that enables traditions to remain life giving and capable of nurturing the Faith. "Once again, a dialectical pattern is beginning to emerge: tradition and criticism, tenacity and pluralism, orthodoxy and innovation, coherence and openness. All openness is heuristic; all closure is provisional; without stability we cannot survive; without innovation we cannot progress. Reality is open, continuous and interrelated, but our knowledge of it is limited, discontinuous and marked by relative closure."¹¹⁵ He warns of the "rationalist fallacy of conservatives: theology grows but does not essentially change" and "the rationalist fallacy of liberals: there is continual movement, but it is meaningless flux which does not bring us any nearer the truth."

As stated earlier, to accept his approach would be to suggest that the genius of the Anglican tradition may be its potential ability to tolerate the tension that conflict brings and the growth it produces. Perhaps the Anglican Communion could see this as a grace given and in understanding, articulating and prizing it, offer it to the whole Church and the world, as our witness to the possibilities of reconciliation. This suggests that the choices brought to us by the Other provide opportunities to see where the Holy Spirit leads the Church next. This is a much

¹¹⁴ Oliver O'Donovan, The Ways of Judgement: The Bampton Lectures 2003 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005) 68.

¹¹⁵ Paul Avis, Authority, Leadership and Conflict in the Church (London: Mowbray, 1992) 94.

more faithful approach than seeking for the security that a legalistic approach can bring.

Another influential voice, Ivan Illich, has suggested that the Church historically has dealt with the ambiguity and uncertainty that surrounds the nature of lived faith, not by facing it as unavoidable and necessary, but by institutionalizing and regulating Christian life. He calls it a perversion of the best becoming the worst.

And it is part of this hypothesis that the Church's attempt to give this worldly power, social visibility, and permanence to the performance of ortho-doxy, right faith, and to the performance of Christian charity, is not un-Christian. As I understand the Gospel, with many others, it is part of the kenosis, the humiliation, the condescension of God in becoming man and founding or generating the mystical body which the Church understands itself to be, that this mystical body would itself be something ambiguous. It would be, on the one hand, a source of continued Christian life, through which individuals acting alone and together would be able to live the life of faith and charity, and, on the other hand, a source of the perversion of this life through institutionalization, which makes charity and true faith obligatory.¹¹⁶

For Illich, the Church took away individual response to the neighbour and made it an efficiently corporate responsibility. It is Illich's belief that it was from this "worldliness" that the modern western world itself has developed and that modern institutions are a perversion of Christianity and are not evil but sinful. Illich links this characteristic of the church to modern secular institutions. He suggests that this worldliness of the church "has become the seed from which modern service organizations have grown"¹¹⁷. For him they are "the attempt to provide by human means what only God calling through the beaten-up Jew could give to the Samaritan, the invitation to act in charity."¹¹⁸ It is the Church itself that he holds responsible for this perversion of the best because it refused to acknowledge its shadow. This approach has interesting implications for the

¹¹⁶ Cayley 179.

¹¹⁷ Cayley 179.

concepts of personal responsibility for relationship and approaches to the Other.

Illich maintains that the Incarnation had a shadow side. Everything changes at the moment of Incarnation because what had been hidden is now revealed in Jesus Christ. It becomes possible to see what is possible, including the shadow. Horizons have changed. There are now choices, to respond to the free gift, or to choose not to respond.

“Before I was limited by the people into which I was born and the family in which I was raised. Now I can choose whom I will love and where I will love. And this deeply threatens the traditional basis for ethics, which was always an ethnos, an historically given ‘we’ which precedes any pronouncement of the word ‘I’. The opening of this new horizon is also accompanied by a second danger: institutionalization. There is an attempt to try to manage and, eventually, to legislate this new love, to create an institution that will guarantee it, insure it and protect it by criminalizing its opposite.”¹¹⁹

This is the corruption of Christianity and is the basis for the modern western world according to Illich.

To return to the argument of this thesis, it is only and always the Other who brings conflict, or more accurately, the moment of conflict, the moment of choice. Our response to the Other will require us to make a choice to be open or to refuse. The manner in which we resolve the conflict with the Other reveals the substance of our faith. Illich nicely illustrates this in the story of the Samaritan that Jesus tells in response to the question, “Who is my neighbour?”

¹¹⁸ Cayley 180.

¹¹⁹ Cayley 47.

According to Illich, the Samaritan “commits a kind of treason by caring for his enemy.” But the importance of the story is not as an “ought to do” but in the Samaritan’s freedom of choice. “In so doing, he exercises a freedom of choice which has often been overlooked.” He understands the response of Jesus to be “My neighbour is who I choose, not who I have to choose. There is no way of categorizing who my neighbour ought to be.”¹²⁰ He further suggests that “Jesus taught the Pharisees that the relationship which he had come to announce to them as most completely human is not one that is expected, required or owed. It can only be a free creation between two people, and one which cannot happen unless something comes to me through the other, by the other, in his bodily presence.”¹²¹

In Illich’s view, the response to the neighbour answers a call. The possibilities brought about by the Incarnation allow for an expanded concept of love. Sin becomes the refusal to “honour that relationship which came into existence between the Samaritan and the Jew, which comes into existence through the exercise of freedom and which constitutes an ‘ought’ because I feel called by you, called to you, called to this tie between human beings, or between beings and God.”¹²² Illich goes on to suggest that the Christian Church in the first thousand years institutionalized sin and made it the breaking of a law, a norm against which I must confess to a priest. Illich believed that “It is not in any sense offensive of a law. It is always an offence against a person. It is an infidelity.”¹²³

Zizioulas makes a similar point. “Sin reveals itself not in the form of a juridical relationship between God and man, but mainly as a perversion of personhood, leading through man’s idolatrous introversion towards being created alone, to the opening up of the abyss of nothingness, that is, to the division between the

¹²⁰ Cayley 51.

¹²¹ Cayley 51.

¹²² Cayley 189.

¹²³ Cayley 189.

two natures, divine and human which were meant to be in communion, and hence to death because of the incapacity of nature to refer itself to God in its integrity.”¹²⁴

It is through relationships that we experience and are called by God and to be careless of relationships and to use them to serve our own needs, even our own salvation, robs them and us of the gift of Love which they bring. According to Zizioulas, “in love, relation generates otherness, it does not threaten it.”¹²⁵

Using this framework, including the transformation resolution model, we will now move to a more detailed review of the Canadian Anglican ordination process, resolutions and look for insights into the nature of conflict and Christian faith and review the implications for the current discussion regarding a Covenant within the Anglican Communion.

¹²⁴ Zizioulas 237.

¹²⁵ Zizioulas 55.

Chapter Four - The Ordination of Women

Anglican Church of Canada

The Church is wounded and suffers. It fragments and is fragmented. It has much to be forgiven and, as Illich suggests, it has a history of ignoring its shadow side and avoiding the confession of its own sins. For various reasons, cultural, historical, psychological and others, certainly the church's nurturing of women's spirituality has been a corruption of the Gospel. Wendy Fletcher-Marsh illustrates the influence Christian thinkers have had on Christianity through the centuries, "affirming the inferiority and subordinate position of women,"¹²⁶ through a tangled mix of culture and theology.

Paul Avis suggests that the church needs to undergo a massive repentance for making and allowing others to make women "icons of the erotic." He says, "Since in the patriarchal culture that is only now beginning to be superseded, women have been made the repositories of negative emotions that that attitude generates and their personhood has been defaced by destructive projections which have rendered them 'icons of the erotic', the Church has a massive task of repentant rethinking and practical reparation thrust upon it."¹²⁷ This will mean more than ordaining women as an act of contrition and assimilating them into the life of the church.

Alan L. Hayes has suggested that the history of women within the Anglican Church of Canada has been similar to the history of Canadian women in

¹²⁶ Wendy Fletcher-Marsh, Beyond the Walled Garden: Anglican Women and the Priesthood (Dundas: Artemis, 1995) 123 see Note 24 for a quick outline of examples including: Clement: ("Let us set our womenfolk on the road to goodness by teaching them to display submissiveness. Every women should be overwhelmed with shame at the thought that she is a woman.") The Council of Macon of 534, John Knox, Martin Luther and Samuel Butler and others.

¹²⁷ Avis 14.

general with a movement from social and community involvement in the late 19th century to voting status in the early 20th century. It is interesting to note that the earliest attempts of women to organize through cities and dioceses to jointly perform church work were criticized on religious grounds. Hayes cites an 1827 letter to a current newspaper that “complained that societies of women were contrary to apostolic precept and calculated to subvert the social order.”¹²⁸ It was generally believed that women’s efforts outside the home came at the loss to their own families and as Hayes suggests: “Husbands also sometimes resented wives’ fervent attention to ministries outside the home. It was common among Canadian Anglican leaders to believe that women who felt called to recognized Church ministries and leadership should remain unmarried.”¹²⁹ Nevertheless, subject to both restrictions, both sisterhoods and deaconesses were established by Canadian bishops in 1886 as opportunities for women to train in specific ministries.

A detailed analysis of the historical roots of women’s participation in the Anglican Church of Canada is beyond the focus of this thesis but there is much more to be added about the history of women within the Canadian Church and the growing acceptance of women’s call to ministry as priests. Understanding that this history exists is important in order to confront the suggestion that women’s ordination to the priesthood was simply a reaction to the feminist cultural pressures of the 1970s. This implication of women’s ordination as a result of syncretism is not found within the Canadian Church alone but is a universal argument put forward as the impetus for women’s ordination. What is truly remarkable however is the extent to which women’s ministries had quietly developed within the Church so that the questions of ordination seemed the appropriate next step. It is too easy for modern critics to forget the manner in which church life and social life were combined in 19th century Canada and that religious interests often drove social developments.

¹²⁸ Hayes 168.

¹²⁹ Hayes 170.

As Hayes suggests, "Nineteenth-century feminist leaders were usually influenced by the Church. Temperance workers, abolitionists, nursing sisters, missionaries, preachers, social activists and leaders of Christian women's organizations all claimed the leading of the Gospel."¹³⁰ As in all issues of changing cultures, traditions and Christian application of the Gospel, what one party called the work of the Holy Spirit within a culture, others called syncretism. Scripture was used to defend both ends of the spectrum. Those who wished to keep women subjugated to men's leadership and authority quoted scripture and tradition to do so. Those who believed in "the equality of women and men in Christ through baptism and that the Bible and tradition were full of examples of things done for the first time"¹³¹ quoted scripture and tradition as well.

Wendy-Fletcher Marsh identifies the period 1920-1967 as the first stage of the ordination of women as an issue within the Anglican Communion.¹³² This is supported by Michael McFarlene Marrett in The Lambeth Conferences and Women Priests. These conferences, begun in 1867, were opportunities for bishops from all the national churches to come together to discuss issues of importance but resolutions were not binding on national churches. The Lambeth Conferences to this day have no executive or legislative authority but are considered to be one of the Instruments of Unity.

Resolution 46, passed at the Lambeth Conference of 1920, indicates that "women should be admitted to those councils of the church to which laymen are admitted, and on equal terms. Diocesan, provincial or national synods may decide when and how this principle is to be brought into effect." Resolution 54 recommended a "careful inquiry into the position and recognition of women workers in the church, the conditions of their employment and the remuneration of those who receive salaries."¹³³ Marrett also points out that the statement

¹³⁰ Hayes 197.

¹³¹ Hayes 197.

¹³² Fletcher-Marsh 29.

¹³³ McFarlene Marrett 101.

made in 1920 that "deaconesses are in Holy Orders" was withdrawn in 1930 and that the Order of Deaconess was recommended instead. Another commission of the Convocations of Canterbury and York stated in 1935 that "no compelling reasons were found for or against the ordination of women," but at the same time "affirmed that the male priesthood is 'for the Church today'."

By the time the next Lambeth Conference met, in 1948, the Bishop of Hong Kong had already ordained Li Tim Oi in 1944 and the General Synod of the Church in China sent a "proposed canon" ¹³⁴ suggesting a twenty year experiment in the ordination of women. The provisions for such ordination were that the candidate be 30 years old and unmarried, intending to remain unmarried. If she were to "later find herself called to the vocation of marriage," she was to surrender her license to her bishop. The Conference replied that this kind of experiment would be too disruptive to "the internal and external relations of the Anglican Communion" and it was rejected. 1968 and 1978 become the key Lambeth Conferences for the support of Anglican activity in Canada, which ended in the ordination of the first women priests in November 1976.

The Lambeth Conference of 1968 asked all the national churches to study the issue of ordination and report their findings to the new Anglican Consultative Council that would hold its first meeting in 1971. Lambeth could find no "conclusive theological arguments for or against the ordination of women to the priesthood" ¹³⁵ and recommended that any national church considering ordinations should ask for advice from the new Anglican Consultative Council.

The Anglican Church in Canada worked its way slowly through reports, commissions, discussion and debates to its final conclusion. In 1955 it developed and circulated a report that did not call for ordination but for full participation in church life, including decision-making bodies. General Synods of

¹³⁴ Fletcher-Marsh 38.

¹³⁵ Fletcher-Marsh 40.

1962 and 1965 examined the status of Deaconesses, the training of women and women's work as well as reiterating the imbalance in the decision-making bodies of the Church. A 1965 Commission on Women's Work was established which reported in 1967 that at that point 21 out of 28 dioceses still did not allow women to serve as church wardens.¹³⁶ The Council on Full-Time Workers prepared and circulated a report called, Sociological Analysis of Women Workers in the Church in which they indicated that women with a full time ministry in the parish, outside of ordination, which was not yet considered an option, were marginalized and misused, subject to poor wages, lack of status, non-supportive rectors and little recognition in the parish.¹³⁷

It is in this context of these reports and discussions that the question of women's ordination was considered and decided. Fletcher-Marsh says that the process used by the Anglican Church of Canada to make the decision was brief. Formal discussion began in 1969 and was completed in 1975.¹³⁸ She gives full responsibility to the Primate and House of Bishops of the Canadian Church for the historic decision and radical change of Anglican Christian tradition, carried out in such a way that no revolt or schism occurred. If the ultimate goal was the full inclusion of women into the Canadian Anglican Community, the process can be extended by at least 140 years, beginning with the early parish and joint meetings of women and culminating in the possibility of a woman's call to priesthood.

It is important to understand the steps involved in the approach between 1968 and 1976. Immediately after Lambeth 1968 the Canadian Bishops asked for a Commission on Women. In 1969 the Commission asked the Primate to initiate a study on the ordination of women and to report to General Synod 1971. In 1969 women were received into the diaconate with the same qualifications and commitments as men. The Reverend Mary Mills was ordained the first female

¹³⁶ Fletcher-Marsh 69.

¹³⁷ Fletcher-Marsh 70.

deacon by the Right Reverend George Luxton, Bishop of Huron, on December 12, 1969.

The House of Bishops developed a sub-committee on which Edward Scott of Kootenay served. Its role was to examine "Wider Ordained Ministry". This group was asked by the Primate to consider the ordination of women to the priesthood along with his other new task force, The Primate's Task Force on the Ordination of Women to the Priesthood, which was made up of both lay and clergy.

According to Fletcher-Marsh the objections to women's ordination were divided into "theological and other", with "other" including sociological, psychological, ecumenical, practical and pastoral. The Primate's Task Force consulted widely and ecumenically and its report was received and discussed at General Synod in 1973. In the intervening years however, it produced study guides that dioceses and parishes could use to explore the issues themselves.

A new Primate, Edward Ted Scott, continued his discussion and work on the ordination issue. The Anglican Consultative Council had produced a report entitled The Time is Now, and, though indicating that the Communion was divided on the subject, the Anglican Consultative Council also indicated that there were no fundamental objections to the ordination of women and that national churches should do what they believed best. Fletcher-Marsh draws attention to the Anglican Communion's approach to this issue in 1971 and suggests that "we see a respect for the other which is so profound that unity in diversity held even in the midst of extremely divided opinion."¹³⁹

The report of the Primate's Task Force was divided into two separate majority and minority reports. All but one member supported the ordination of women. The majority report covered the three key issues of scripture, tradition and other considerations. Fundamentally it argued against a literal interpretation of the

¹³⁸ Fletcher-Marsh 73

¹³⁹ Fletcher-Marsh 80.

bible, that Article 21 of the Thirty-Nine Articles supported an argument that tradition was alterable in this case and that there were sufficient grounds to ordain women. Chief among these was the “formation of a community based on mutual discipleship,”¹⁴⁰ which includes an “invitation to mutuality and inclusivity.” The “other considerations” against ordination were considered to hold little weight. The Task Force also suggested that women’s ordination did not “lay at the heart of what divided the churches,” as they had been divided long before this question had been considered. As well, there was no body in place to assist in making a universal decision and the Anglican Communion had already given its recommendation that each province pursue its own course.

Finally, it addressed the threats of possible division within the Canadian Church by suggesting that such an attitude would prevent the church from participating in any divisive issue and that it would be incapable of responding to the call of the Holy Spirit if it failed to act on anything once faced with the threat of division. Each woman should be able to decide for herself what risks she was prepared to take regarding possible conflict because of her own ordination. Pastoral support would be provided.

According to Fletcher-Marsh, the Minority Report had four key points.¹⁴¹ First, women could not represent a male Christ. Second, women could not have headship over a man. Third, there is no precedent for such ordinations in the Anglican tradition. Fourth, ecumenical relations with the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches would suffer.

The role and leadership of the Primate Ted Scott became extremely important in moving things forward. Fletcher-Marsh describes an oral interview with Scott which outlines his thinking.

¹⁴⁰ Fletcher-Marsh 83.

¹⁴¹ Fletcher-Marsh 84-85.

Primate Scott observed that in the educational process whereby the church discussed this issue, the arguments against the ordination of women were put to rest one by one. The one argument which could not be put to rest was the argument that a woman was simply incapable of being a priest by virtue of her femaleness. There was no argument which could change this prejudice. The next question then became, 'Is that a view that we want our church to promote? The answer to that question was 'No'.¹⁴²

The Bishops continued to discuss the issue and ultimately a decision to develop a conscience clause was made. The author of the minority report called the Task Force process into question suggesting that it had not been representative enough. After many amendments were put forward and discussed, General Synod of 1973 agreed to the ordination of women and that implementation would take place after the House of Bishops worked out the details. A report looking at the scriptural, historical, theological, ecclesiological, sociological and constitutional concerns was prepared by the House of Bishops and circulated to the Canadian Church for study and discussion prior to General Synod 1975.

Six areas of concern were identified by the Bishops. These included authority, collegiality, acceptance or reception, sacrifice, deployment and the "perceived involvement by all bodies of ecclesiastical authority." The vote at General Synod 1975 was to be by secret ballot and a reaffirmation of the 1973 resolution was to be made. Fletcher-Marsh comments that, "All bishops felt strongly about trusting the guidance of the Holy Spirit and letting the chips fall where they might."¹⁴³

The conscience clause is credited by Fletcher-Marsh with both inestimable value in getting the ordination of women approved and as a problem because it seemed to limit the movement of the Holy Spirit. The first resolution states:

¹⁴² Fletcher-Marsh 88.

¹⁴³ Fletcher-Marsh 96.

That no bishops, priest, deacon or lay person including postulants for ordination in the Anglican Church of Canada should be penalized in any manner, nor suffer any canonical disabilities, nor be forced into positions which violate or coerce his or her conscience as a result of General Synod's action in affirming the principle of the ordination of women to the priesthood, and requests that those in authority in this matter, to act upon the principle set out above.¹⁴⁴

By the fall of 1975, 200 clergy, less than 10% of the active clergy of the time, published A Manifesto on the Ordination of Women to the Priesthood from Concerned Clergy of the Anglican Church of Canada. Because of their fundamental disagreement with the ordination of women, these priests advised that they would withhold their support for women priests and use the conscience clause. The Primate responded, says Fletcher-Marsh, with "pastoral concern and conciliation but it was made clear that the author's conviction was that what was being done was the right path of action."¹⁴⁵

Fletcher-Marsh suggests that the Canadian, and the Canadian Anglican, never make decisions "after aggressive lobbying" and have not "historically embraced aggressive lobbying activity as part of its political milieu."¹⁴⁶ This observation is important when the approaches to decisions are compared with both the United States and Great Britain. She credits the Church's decision to ordain women, without schism to this quiet and persistent diplomacy.

One of the final pieces of the ordination implementation was, what Fletcher-Marsh calls, "a masterpiece in progressive compromise."¹⁴⁷ The House of Bishops agreed to support ordination in spite of the lack of unanimity among them. They also asked the Primate to inform other Primates within the Anglican Communion of their decision, to gather their responses, and, if they were not "overwhelmingly negative," bishops would be free to ordain women after

¹⁴⁴ Fletcher-Marsh 97.

¹⁴⁵ Fletcher-Marsh 99.

¹⁴⁶ Fletcher-Marsh 102.

¹⁴⁷ Fletcher-Marsh 105.

November 01, 1976. They also would be taking the case to the Lambeth Conference 1978 and would then proceed to full implementation.

Scott asked the Primates of the Anglican Communion two questions. Did they agree that each Province, given the actions of the Lambeth Conference of 1968 and the ACC, have the authority to act in terms of its own canons? Would they personally recommend to their own Province the validity and regularity of those ordained, recognizing as well that recognition and permission to exercise ministry in other Provinces required the permission of the Province, Diocese, House of Bishops or Bishop concerned? The results were not "overwhelmingly negative".

On May 29, 1975, the House of Bishops affirmed the ordination of women, the implementation of the conscience clause and confirmed that the women's ordination service would be the Prayer Book Ordinal. There would be no special services. The conscience clause now read:

That the Conscience Clause passed by General Synod be reaffirmed with the understanding that this in effect, recognizes the tolerability of living with an anomaly, and removes any question of the integrity of those who while in opposition to the ordination of women to the presbyterate and unable to recognize the reality of such ordinations, are yet able to remain within the communion of the Anglican Church of Canada even as it respects the integrity of Bishops who ordain women to the presbyterate and the canonical rights and integrity of the women so ordained.¹⁴⁸

Ordinations took place on November 30, 1976. The Conscience Clause was revoked in 1986.

The rather exhaustive review of the steps towards the resolution to this conflict is to enable the identification of the resolution processes and format that were used. Was the long-term stated goal of inclusivity and community achieved?

Was conflict viewed as a choice, as an opportunity to turn to the Other? Was there openness to the Other? Was there an identified movement of the Holy Spirit? How useful was the Conscience Clause in creating and nurturing the separateness of the Other? Was this unity in faith, in spite of diversity of belief? Were relationships the first priority? Did the process enable repentance, reconciliation and forgiveness? The following observations will attempt to address these questions.

The resolution process, looking backward in time, would appear to have been more focused on problem resolution than what we could call today, transformation. Yet, it would be hard to deny that over the period of years since women and their supporters began to identify their charisms, organize their arguments and the actual ordinations, people changed their opinions. Motions that were turned away eventually passed. The concerns expressed became heard. This was not an academic or intellectual debate. Real people, who happened to be women, believed that they were called by God to exercise a priestly ministry. Other individuals saw this as a challenge to their church, their worldview and their faith. Over time, more and more people came to make room in themselves for these women who so obviously presented a different kind of priesthood and they responded to them and welcomed them. Some threatened to leave the Anglican Church of Canada and there were threats to the Anglican Communion. These were not dismissed as unimportant, but were simply placed by Bishops like Ted Scott, alongside an equally compelling case for women's vocation to the priesthood.

In Fletcher-Marsh's description of the process, Scott and other bishops were concerned about the effect of ordinations on clergy and other national churches and other Communion. They worried about the pastoral needs of women who were ordained and whether or not their ministries would be recognized. The

¹⁴⁸ Fletcher-Marsh 108.

conscience clause was itself an attempt to be responsive to men who did not feel they could accept the validity of women's ministry.

It would be unfair to say that the problem solving decisions of Synods and Commissions were the only vehicles that led to ordination but they were certainly part of the ongoing discernment and were the chief public points of decision-making. In retrospect, they provided time for clear articulation of issues, clarification, education and the elucidation of the Holy Spirit, always mysterious and with her own sense of timing.

The longer term goal of inclusiveness and community may be something yet to be achieved, though Fletcher-Marsh does speak of the mutuality and inclusivity that ordination itself reflected. However, there are individuals, parishes, and perhaps dioceses as yet unidentified, who have had the same simmering anger about women's ordination for some time and who have placed it with other issues which trouble them. Some are already seeking separation and some have left the Church entirely.

An in-depth study of women's ministry in Canada would need to be undertaken to identify issues of importance to women priests and bishops and to document their experience over time and how included they truly feel. There are questions to ask about whether women's ministry has transformed ministry in general in the Anglican Church of Canada or whether it has simply put a female face on a masculine institution. Has the uniqueness of women's ministry been brought to the Church and been quietly assimilated into some kind of unified comprehensive ministry? Has it been set alongside men's ministry as different but equal, or has it in fact created something new that expresses the charisms of both men and women? Is it diverse, divisive or neutral? What new tradition has evolved and how is it linked in time to our earliest Christian roots? This is a project for another time.

Openness to the Other as articulated today, and articulated within this document, is dependent on yesterday. It is the product of new insights in psychology, sociology, science, cosmology and theology, to name only some of the influences, but it is built on the ideas and insights of yesterday. Education, globalization and electronic communication have offered us opportunities to find new ways of looking at each other and ourselves. Openness to the Other is being re-expressed by theologians like Johnson, Alison, Zizioulas and Volf, in fresh and exciting ways which can cause us to rethink our perspectives and freshen our commitments. The Gospel is being spoken now in the words, concepts and language that we use daily. But along with these influences, our understandings of how the Gospel challenges us to new growth have evolved as well. Slavery, racism and discrimination of any kind against the Other, including women, are understood by us now to be a failure to live the Gospel. It may have been impossible for people to articulate, in the 1970s, the theological concepts as they are expressed today. For many, they simply lived them and articulation has followed as people reflected on those experiences and in their reflection saw their application in other areas. The reflections and experiences of women of course have now been added to these insights.

The challenge of women to the Church is women's uniqueness. Women are not men. Without the otherness of women, there would have been no conflict about women's ordination. Without the openness of many Anglicans to women as "other to be embraced," even if this was not identified as such, there would be no ordained women. To express it in this manner however, is to try to use today's words and concepts to describe an action that was at the time simply a response to the mysterious call of the Holy Spirit, much as Illich's view of the parable of the Good Samaritan. It is telling the story about what happened in today's language and in the telling finding a new understanding.

The ordination of women may have been identified first as a problem to be resolved and not articulated as a problem of relationships. The choice was not

seen as inclusion of women as an expression of diversity and as an expression of unity as expressed earlier. It was expressed more as an issue of justice. The element of choice provided by the conflict was in the wrestling with the questions of equality and justice. This may explain why the other issues that we now see as critical to reconciliation did not occur. Truth telling, mercy, and peace were not addressed. Repentance and forgiveness may have been assumed in the very fact that women were ordained. There were, however, issues that went unresolved in ecclesiology that the latest conflicts may be enabling us to see. There are certainly lingering issues between men and women in the church which still need to be addressed.

Heribert Mühlen has suggested that “charismatic impulses are never coercive,”¹⁴⁹ and that the Holy Spirit will always “serve the building up of the Church and the world.” He also suggests that impatience does not come from God and that “God does not drive us like a belligerent to renew the Church, but guides us amiably,” and that “relaxed activity is a sign of love.”¹⁵⁰ Even this short review, built on the extraordinary work of Fletcher-Marsh in her detailed analysis, demonstrates the time required for change to occur. The slow, painful, thoughtful and inclusive process that was used to achieve ordination holds a powerful lesson in these times of instant gratification.

What applies perhaps most helpfully to the issue of the ordination of women in the Anglican Church of Canada is Mühlen’s belief about how change occurs and how it is evaluated. “It is often possible only subsequently to say whether words or actions were born of love, that is, of love for the Church. But hostile confrontation, correction of others in *anger* never comes from the Holy Spirit.”¹⁵¹ Certainly, the approach taken by the Anglican Church of Canada, as modelled in Archbishop Ted Scott’s leadership, exemplified this kind of authority of

¹⁴⁹ Heribert Mühlen, *A Charismatic Theology: Initiation in the Spirit*, trans. Edward Quinn and Thomas Linton-Matthias-Grunewald Verlag (London: Burns and Oates, 1978) 179.

¹⁵⁰ Mühlen 186.

¹⁵¹ Mühlen 187.

servanthood and love. Perhaps more time will be needed to discern the shape of ministry in the Anglicanism of the future. The signs appear hopeful however.

Finally, the conscience clause was intended to ensure diversity of belief and to enable people to remain within the Anglican Church of Canada without coercion. For Anglicans, this is an important part of their historical ethos. As Fletcher-Marsh has suggested, it has presented advantages and disadvantages. It enabled ordination but it limited the work of the Holy Spirit. More than that, in offering freedom to individuals to choose not to embrace women's ministry or to gradually move towards acceptance, it also sent the message that unity could only be sustained by division and separation. This lesson in unity has come back to haunt the Anglican Church of Canada in recent years. But this is the distorted and mirrored reflection of unity in diversity. The mechanistic worldview, separate but equal, as discussed earlier, suggests that divisions, when lined up side by side in the same place, can create unity. But, as expressed earlier, this is not unity.

If there is no relationship between the Others, the ones who are different and diverse, there is no unity. If there is no relationship, there is only death. Perhaps this is why the issues of flying bishops, separate dioceses and episcopal oversight, are still so troubling today. They create a kind of apartheid; their effect is to generate no go zones where the Other can be ignored. This is not to say that there could be no differences of opinion on women's ministry, but supports to maintain and build relationships between men and women, in spite of differences, should be part of the reconciliation. It is within relationships that diversity exists. To simply legalize division is to institutionalize death rather than to foster true communion.

This of course does not mean legislation of belief and practice, since to force relationships in that way is futile. What may be truly needed is time for people to discern. The conscience clause in Canada gave time for people to make their

choices even though they had no power to change where the Church felt it was being called. This may be where true reconciliation was needed and found wanting. At the end of such a process, people may have still turned away but a process of true reconciliation, as provided in conflict transformation, did not occur. Perhaps the most difficult, courageous and important act in the ordination story in Canada was Ted Scott's offering of choice to individuals by identifying the kind of view he wanted the church to promote.

The Episcopal Church of the United States

This very brief overview is offered to demonstrate the similarities and differences in approach to the issue of ordination of women in the United States.

Hewitt and Hiatt suggest that interest in the ordination of women in the United States was heightened during and following the great wars. "Perhaps women gain confidence in their ability to participate more fully in society because of the massive societal breakdown in periods of war."¹⁵² Yet Mary S. Donovan indicates that there was "no widespread public agitation for women's ordination prior to 1960s."¹⁵³ In 1958, Episcopal Theological Seminary had begun to admit women and non-postulants as candidates¹⁵⁴ for the Bachelor of Divinity degree, but the Episcopal Church was still separated into male and female areas of work and decision-making. According to Donovan, this began to change as the feminist movement began to challenge women to re-examine their lives.

By 1967 the General Convention enabled women to serve as deputies. By 1970, women deaconesses had the same status as male deacons. An early

¹⁵² Emily C. Hewitt and Suzanne R. Hiatt, Women Priests Yes or No? (New York: Seabury, 1973) 11.

¹⁵³ Mary S. Donovan, Women Priests in the Episcopal Church (Cincinnati: Forward Movement, 1988) 5.

¹⁵⁴ Hewitt, Hiatt 13.

resolution which would allow women to seek and accept ordering as deacons, priests and bishops was narrowly defeated. In 1973, the ordination of women was again raised. That vote was defeated as well. It is at this point that Donovan suggests two groups with two different strategies emerged. The first group became determined to master a political strategy that could win at the next General Convention. The second group "came to the conclusion that 'the democratic process, the political dynamics, and the legal guidelines' were 'out of step with the divine imperative which says, 'now is the time'. The latter group began to explore the possibility of ordaining women without General Convention action."¹⁵⁵

On July 29, 1974, 11 women deacons were ordained. This and the additional ordinations of 1975 drew national attention and publicity to the issue of ordination of women. Though opposed at the time, the House of Bishops supported these ordinations in principle later in the fall of 1975. Change to the canons occurred in January 1977 and all the women ordained previously regularized their ordinations.

A group called the Fellowship of Concerned Churchmen continued its opposition to the ordination of women, suggesting that it would consider an alternative ecclesiastical organization. Prayer Book revision, ordination of women, ordination of homosexuals and funding decisions of the Episcopal church were given as reasons for their dissatisfaction.¹⁵⁶ Donovan reports that the alternative new church founded as a result attracted one half of one per cent of Episcopalians and by 1988 had split into at least 5 separate churches. Many Episcopalian/Anglican churches, not in the Anglican Communion, were established in protest to a variety of changes to Church traditions with which they disagreed, sometimes including the ordination of women.

¹⁵⁵ Donovan 7.

¹⁵⁶ Donovan 10.

The 1977 General Convention was concerned about the divisions within the Episcopal Church. The Presiding Bishop admitted that he was unable to accept the ordination of women himself. Efforts at reconciliation followed and the willingness to listen, learn and be sensitive to others was articulated through pastoral letters and other documents. They believed that by accepting the "individual's right of conscientious disagreement, the unity of the Episcopal Church would be preserved."¹⁵⁷

The 1987 House of Bishops resolution approved the report on the ordination of women bishops by a considerable majority and Donovan cites this as proof that women priests have been fully accepted within the Episcopalian Church and are currently widely deployed throughout the United States.

The history of women's ordination in the Episcopal Church of the United States would appear to be very different from that of the Canadian Anglican Church. It is important to ask the same questions however. Was the long-term stated goal of inclusivity and community achieved? Was conflict viewed as a choice, as an opportunity to turn to the Other? Was there openness to the Other? Was there an identified movement of the Holy Spirit? How useful was a Conscience Clause in creating, nurturing, the separateness of the Other? Was this unity in faith, in spite of diversity of belief? Were relationships the first priority? Did the process enable repentance, reconciliation and forgiveness?

There are larger questions to ask as well. If Fletcher-Marsh indicated that Episcopal leadership and commitment assisted the resolution in Canada, what was the effect on leadership of a Presiding Bishop who was unable to agree with such a fundamental decision himself yet was leading the process? Donovan describes this as an opportunity to actually see and understand the need for diversity.

¹⁵⁷ Donovan 11.

The two Episcopalian approaches to achieving the ordination of women, political strategy and public disobedience, are two strategies not used or identified in the Canadian experience. They both provide opportunities to learn what may be the most successful long-term strategy, both for the national churches and the Anglican Communion. To this task we now turn in a concluding discussion.

Central Themes

It is important to try to draw together the three central themes of this work. The first theme is that the words we use to describe relationship, unity and conflict are important. They will indicate how we will interact with others, particularly when we perceive ourselves to be in disagreement. Ultimately, they will reveal our theology, how we perceive God. The second theme explored the idea of conflict as a means to building and transforming relationships, understanding that reconciliation, including truth, mercy, justice and peace, can only be achieved and relationships sustained when relationships are considered primary. Finally, after reviewing the history of the ordination of women in the Anglican Church of Canada, the themes of relationship and conflict resolution were used to assess the process. As a result, several principles can be identified through the experience of the ordination of women in Canada and current thinking on relationships and conflict.

1. The Other must exist in order for freedom to exist.¹⁵⁸
2. Unity is relationship expressed as openness to the Other.
3. Otherness cannot be secondary to unity.¹⁵⁹
4. Freedom is the choice to be made, to say yes or no to the Other.
5. Conflict is that moment within which individuals make choices for or against the Other.

¹⁵⁸ Zizioulas 19.

6. The conflict moment is itself a gift bringing an opportunity for choice.
7. The process of resolving the choices presented by the Other's claim reveals the God in whom we believe, but not necessarily God.
8. A model of conflict transformation that supports the development of relationship as a first priority and problem-solving as a secondary issue is most consistent with loving my neighbour.
9. Being open to the Other is to Love my neighbour.
10. To love my neighbour is to love God, whom I cannot see but who is in my neighbour.
11. To love God, who is Other to us, is to love my neighbour.
12. There can be no reconciliation without truth, mercy, justice and peace.¹⁶⁰
13. Individuals can choose not to reconcile.
14. Individuals can choose not to be open to the Other.

These principles provide simply another way, or framework, to articulate the experience of living the Gospel in our relationships with one another and resolving the inevitable conflicts that arise from our differences while remaining committed to each other. The principles assume however that relationships create the unity among us. Baptism in Christ implies a yes to the Other. This is to say then that the attitudes, shared worship, or the content of our faith are not the basis of our communion but may be reflections of it. We are known by our love. Commitment to relationship comes first as an individual choice. In Jonathan Sacks' view, "We are what we choose to be."¹⁶¹ The possibility of choice is initiated by the Holy Spirit, as an act of communion, but it requires a personal response from each individual. Illich illustrates this choice in his reading of the Good Samaritan. Relationship comes from a choice to turn to the Other. It is not a choice to turn to the other only if there is agreement in what we believe or how we worship. This is a fundamental point to understand if we are looking for reconciliation. Otherwise we are simply looking to be right.

¹⁵⁹ Zizioulas 38.

¹⁶⁰ Lederach 850-854

Current conflicts in the Anglican Communion are said to be a threat to its existence. Actions of the Episcopal Church in the United States and the Anglican Church of Canada regarding the blessing of same sex marriages, and the ordination of homosexuals, have precipitated the most recent frustration and anger. Ordination of women to the Episcopate may be another divisive issue. Looming on the horizon is lay presidency at the Eucharist. In the background there are issues concerning the Book of Common Prayer, the 39 Articles and the perceived changes to core doctrine. What then can hold us together?

Insights and Proposals

Before looking at the current documents and processes developed by the Anglican Communion to deal with the immediate problems, we can return to the ordination of Women in the Anglican Church of Canada and propose some guidelines. Ordinations in 1976 followed at least 140 years of discernment and the growing articulation of the theological issues involved. Discussion and study happened at the national, diocesan and Anglican Communion level. There were surprises and prophetic actions. Approval appeared to come from the Anglican Consultative Council and Archbishop Ted Scott clearly consulted other Primates. Threats and acts of protest developed and pastoral concern was expressed for men and women who were touched by these ordinations. Eventually the Anglican Church of Canada withdrew the conscience clause and the church moved forward.

The issue has resurfaced again, now tied to other issues of concern for some dioceses and individuals and there are separations and threats to unity. Questions may still remain as to whether there has been true reconciliation in terms of men and women and the ordination of women, or if there has simply

been assimilation. Would reconciliation, viewed as Lederach describes it, have been possible in 1976? What can be learned from this experience that may help with the next potentially divisive issue? The following guidelines are offered.

1. National Churches should continue to develop actions and positions on the basis of sound theological study which includes pastoral and scriptural consultation and insight, and actively seek consensus to move forward on issues among and between their own dioceses, as part of their ongoing discernment process. Transformation of relationships and reconciliation should be part of the study and discernment process, and, using Lederach's framework, should address justice, truth, mercy and peace.
2. This theological discussion and discernment process should include the issues, interests and perspectives of all people within the National Church who are touched by the issue, action or position under consideration.
3. Theological discussion and discernment should include the issues, interests and perspectives of other Anglican Churches in the Anglican Communion.
4. Such discernment and theological discussion must involve bishops, clergy and laity at national, diocesan and parish levels.
5. Appropriate time should be acknowledged and set aside for such a study, consultation and discernment process. These processes cannot be avoided, but they cannot be rushed. However, time should not be used as a way to avoid or deflect inevitable conflicts.
6. A possible threat to the unity of the Anglican Communion should not result in a study, consultation and discernment process being used as a way to avoid conflict or to postpone an action.

7. National Churches need to determine, as part of their study, consultation and discernment process, whether or not an action or position being contemplated will be viewed as a threat to unity within the Anglican Communion and whether or not they are called to risk such an outcome as a response to God's call through the Holy Spirit. Depending on the response to this question, the National Church, in humility, should be prepared to speak its truth to the Anglican Communion.
8. Through the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lambeth Conferences, the Anglican Consultative Conference and the Primates Council, National Churches should regularly communicate issues and actions which they believe are or may be of future interest to the Anglican Communion.
9. Every effort should be made, by the National Primate and all bishops, to remain open to the issues, interests and perspectives of other members of the Anglican Communion and to engage in continued dialogue regarding issues and areas of disagreement, articulating as clearly as possible the issues, interests and perspective of the national Church they serve. They should make every effort to communicate these issues, interests and perspectives to their national, diocesan and parish churches with maximum empathy and understanding.
10. Laity, clergy and bishops should commit themselves to the path of continuous reconciliation, within their parish, diocese, national church and the Anglican Communion.
11. Threats to unity or the breaking off of relationship, either within a national Anglican Church or within the Anglican Communion, should not be considered a sufficient reason to avoid an action, to avoid taking a position or to avoid undertaking a theological study, consultation and discernment

process. Threats to unity are indicators of relationship problems at a far deeper level than the presenting issues in disagreement.

12. Every effort should be made to find truth, mercy, justice and peace with those with whom we are in relationship.

Part Five – Conclusions - Next Steps for the Anglican Communion

A Review of Reports and Documents

The Anglican Communion has released several documents in the last few years, all wrestling with the current conflicts and their threats to unity. Three approaches to the problems facing the Communion will be considered here and critique offered based on concepts of unity, conflict and the guidelines developed above.

The Kuala Lumpur Report, Communion, Conflict and Hope, was released in 2008 and is the third in a series produced by the Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission of the Anglican Communion. These reports were commissioned by Archbishop George Carey to identify “what nurtures or inhibits the common life of the Anglican Communion.”¹⁶² It is useful to see that, in the Forward written by Bishop Stephen Sykes, communion “provides the context in which conflicts can be resolved; it is not a consequence of agreements reached over disputed areas of faith and understanding.”¹⁶³ He further suggests that communion, as the Commission envisages it, is not one built on anxiety or fear. “The sort of communion that this report anticipates is one that is grounded in the assurance of Christ’s risen presence, which enables his people to live in love and peace with all, encouraging them to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with God.”¹⁶⁴ Nor is it built on “the alliance of like-minded believers,”¹⁶⁵ for Sykes suggests that “Communion transcends and can

¹⁶² Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission, The Kuala Lumpur Report: Communion, Conflict and Hope (London: Anglican Communion Office, 2008) 5. http://www.anglicancommunion.org/ministry/theological/iatdc/docs/communion_conflict_&_hope.pdf 5.

¹⁶³ IATDC 5.

¹⁶⁴ IATDC 6.

¹⁶⁵ IATDC 8.

therefore transform differences: networks of conviction tend merely to reinforce them. Living in a Communion which justly embraces and celebrates people of differing cultures and world-views makes a fresh apprehension of Christian truth possible.”¹⁶⁶ This view of communion speaks of a dynamic Anglican tradition that can rediscover “its calling through the way it responds to the message of Christ in changing conditions.”¹⁶⁷ The Commission believes that dispersed authority needs to be understood in a new way, that it must include the concept of mutual accountability, and that such a dispersed authority must be tried more seriously by the member churches,¹⁶⁸ as opposed to simply defaulting to a centralized authority. It also draws attention to the ways in which Anglicanism has been willing to face new situations, and it is interesting that the ordination of women is offered as an example. The Commission suggests that Anglicanism “is acknowledging that ministry is not determined by gender – and also recognizing that different parts of the Communion make such an acknowledgement in different ways and in different times.” On an issue that still threatens to divide the Communion, the Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission sees it as an example of hopeful diversity.

In terms of ecclesiology, the report suggests that there is a “certain ambivalence woven into the fabric of Anglican ecclesiology” which tries to deal with the divine character of the church and the messy empirical reality of the actual church community.”¹⁶⁹ They identify the fact that the move to synodical authority across the Communion influences Anglican conceptions of authority. The report suggests that “conflicts arise because of real differences about our faithfulness to our Christian vocation. Conflict always involves suffering, puzzlement and distress. When harnessed creatively, it can however be a gift from God.”¹⁷⁰ It suggests that “the experience of conflict can offer an opportunity for Christians

¹⁶⁶ IATDC 8.

¹⁶⁷ IATDC 9.

¹⁶⁸ IATDC 16.

¹⁶⁹ IATDC 23.

¹⁷⁰ IATDC 28.

in the midst of their disagreement to discover the love for the Other that is at the heart of Christ's sacrifice and which characterises our vocation in Christ."¹⁷¹ It acknowledges our temptation "to grasp at the resolution of conflict by deployment of power and manipulation. This is not the way of Christ."¹⁷² Finally, the report adds that the Church is a pilgrimage and a school for Christian virtues where "Forgiving is both a gift and a habit of life learned in the community."¹⁷³

In terms of disagreement, the report has many suggestions. These include the development of a "theological vocabulary of disagreement,"¹⁷⁴ and nurturing of communion "through open and persistent conversation where there is mutual trust and forbearance, always thinking the best of the other, always hoping and praying for new ways of sharing in the riches of the Gospel."¹⁷⁵ The report suggests as well that "Conflict resolution and the kinds of sanctions exercised in the church are thus primarily persuasive rather than those of a coercive and judicial kind."¹⁷⁶

This report has all the qualities that can provide an exciting and facilitative approach to the Anglican Communion. Its vision of communion is open and welcoming. As its title proclaims, the Kuala-Lumpur report is both hopeful, and yet combines hope with a realistic sense of the problems and realities of life in relationship. The concept of the Other is understood and assumed. The ideas of reconciliation are highlighted. The fact of unity is fundamental, not contingent.

The second approach to consider is the conference format for the Lambeth Conference held July 16 – August 03, 2008. What is noteworthy is the process used including the indaba and bible study. Both of these were opportunities for individuals to build relationships, without focusing on the solving of problems. It

¹⁷¹ IATDC 29.

¹⁷² IATDC 29.

¹⁷³ IATDC 29.

¹⁷⁴ IATDC 48.

¹⁷⁵ IATDC 47.

¹⁷⁶ IATDC 46.

was a classic transformational approach to a conference that many worried would be divisive and positional. The Archbishop of Canterbury, in his Presidential address, called for “transformed relationships, which are about more than having warm feelings toward one another, but about new habits of respect, patience and understanding that are fleshed out in specific ways and changed habits.”¹⁷⁷

As mentioned previously, Indaba is a Zulu word which means a discussion by equal partners on the shared concerns of common life. It includes listening to one another with the purpose of addressing issues that are involved in community. Bible study, worship, and all aspects of Conference life were intended to build relationships and not to problem solve or enter into debates. In the Indaba process there were no votes, motions or amendments to motions. Consensus was developed on each group’s main issues in discussion and this was carried forward to the recorders. These comments later formed the basis of the Lambeth Conference proceedings.

This entire approach amounts to a transformational conflict resolution format as described earlier. It may have been a gamble that, from this approach, enough momentum of empathy and good will would be developed to hold the Communion together while other conflict resolution activities took place, such as the continuing development of an Anglican Covenant. To those who understood conflict resolution, however, it was a bold and insightful move. To those who saw communion as relationship first and problems second, it would make sense. To those who came looking for problem-solving, winners and losers, political style debates, synodical authority or decisions, it must have looked like an unfocused session meant to keep people talking in order to make time pass. Over 200 bishops stayed away in protest, unaware perhaps of the approach to be used. It remains to be seen whether the relationships built and nurtured

¹⁷⁷ “Lambeth Indaba: Capturing Conversations and Reflections from the Lambeth Conference 2008 – Equipping Bishops for Mission and Strengthening Anglican Identity”, 03 August 2008

during the conference assist in the problems still to be addressed. The Lambeth Conferences were not intended to be sources of judicial authority, and this approach reflected its collegial nature.

One observation that might be made concerning the 2008 Lambeth Conference, therefore, is that in order for this process to work most effectively it requires that people understand the format, the reasoning and how it is part of a conflict resolution process. It is, however, not at all clear that these issues were addressed with bishops in advance, or that their agreement to the innovative format was sought.

Another transformational approach worthy of mention is the “Listening Process” used by the Anglican Communion in order to listen to gay and lesbian people “to hear what they have to say, how they feel and how they understand the gospel.”¹⁷⁸ That process emphasizes respect and is not a debate or concerned with persuading people about right and wrong. It involves understanding how others see the world and the gospel. It is not about agreement.

The format of the Listening Process is to offer an opportunity for the transformation of the listeners. Like the Indaba process, here again, the format does not appear to have been identified as part of a conflict resolution process or strategy and, as such, people’s expectation for its usefulness in the Communion may have been limited. Again, people did not understand or agree to its use as a way to help resolve issues, and therefore the value of the process may not have been clear.

05 February, 2009 <http://www.lambethconference.org/reflections/document.cfm> 3

¹⁷⁸ Anglican Communion, “The Listening Process: What is the Listening Process” –10/30/2008 <<http://www.anglicancommunion.org/listening/whatis.cfm?>>

What is interesting, however, is how, informally at least, the Anglican Communion and the Lambeth Conference both used conflict resolution strategies without identifying them as such, or articulating them as part of a larger strategy of reconciliation. Again, this may have kept people from understanding the need for their agreement and participation in such strategies, and, also, the nature of the commitment that was required. The oversight may simply reflect different views and expectations of conflict resolution and reconciliation. However, it may also indicate that conflict resolution and reconciliation are not well understood within a theological framework within the Communion.

Finally, a brief review of and comments on the St. Andrew's Draft for an Anglican Covenant are important, as they are illustrative of and influenced by the observations made above. Rabbi Jonathan Sacks addressed the issue of covenant in his presentation to the Lambeth Conference on July 29, 2008.¹⁷⁹ He made four critical statements about covenant. "In a covenant, two or more individuals, each respecting the dignity and integrity of the other, come together in a bond of love and trust, to share their interests, sometimes even to share their lives, by pledging their faithfulness to one another, to do together what neither can achieve alone." He added that a covenant is a relationship. It has the power to transform and is a bond of love and trust. "Covenant is what allows us to face the future without fear, because we know we are not alone." Covenant, Sacks said, "is the redemption of solitude." There are covenants of fate, for those who have a common enemy, and covenants of faith, which are held by people who share dreams, ideals and aspirations. "They come together to create something new."

The distinctions that Sacks makes are important. The difference between a covenant of fate, and a covenant of faith as he describes them, are critical.

¹⁷⁹ Jonathan Sacks, "The Relationship Between the People and God", 05 February 2009 <<http://www.chief Rabbi.org/speeches/lambethconference28july08.pdf>>

Whereas the Report from Kuala Lumpur was filled with hope and opportunity, and a vision of the Anglican Communion and its great diversity, and so appears as a covenant of faith, An Anglican Covenant: The St. Andrew's Draft appears more like the covenant of fate, as described by Sacks. It is a covenant made against the enemies of unity. "Recognizing the wonder, beauty and challenge of maintaining communion in this family of churches and the need for mutual commitment and discipline as a witness to God's promise in a world and time of instability, conflict and fragmentation, we covenant together as churches of this Anglican Communion to be faithful to God's promises through the historic faith we confess, the way we live together and the focus of our mission."¹⁸⁰ This draft focuses on the problems of conflict and fragmentation, and implies that mutual commitment and "discipline are needed". The Draft is framed as a protection against disintegration of the Communion. Further it is described as a covenant which will renew commitment to one another and our "common understanding of the faith as we received it in a solemn way."¹⁸¹

How was it received "in a solemn way"? What does that mean? Who decides what the common understanding might be and is there agreement? Sacks suggests that "covenant is about the values we share and the identity we construct together"¹⁸² and is entered into by "altruistic individuals seeking the same common good." A covenant that expresses relationship would not have required "common understanding of the faith as we received it in a solemn way" as the real foundation of the process. The addition implies that the relationship is dependent in some way on an agreement or common understanding that is not articulated but assumed. Agreements, including covenants, made as a result of the fear of what might happen can restrict parties, engender appeasement or cause parties to bury conflicts. Covenants made as a result of

¹⁸⁰ "An Introduction to the Anglican Covenant (St. Andrew's Draft)" Covenant Design Group, London, February , 2008 Anglican Communion. 12 March, 2009
http://www.anglicancommunion.org/commission/covenant/st_andrews/intro_text.cfm.

¹⁸¹ Introduction Sec. 5.

¹⁸² Sacks, *Home We Build Together* 234.

fear will also prevent risk taking as an attempt to limit conflict and dissonance, yet conflict is the engine of creativity and change.

Each Church of the Communion commits itself, within this draft covenant, to our inheritance of faith, our Anglican Vocation, and our unity and common life. Section 3.2.5 is a proposed agreement for each church of the Communion. Each must be willing, when either it, or any other national church, or any instrument of Communion, expresses a view that any action, local or national, threatens the unity of the Communion, to do the following: undertake wide consultation, accept the legitimacy of communion-wide evaluation, be ready to participate in mediated conversation, be willing to receive a request to adopt a particular course of action which will carry moral not judicial authority, and agree that if the request is not adopted, the church will have relinquished “the force and meaning of the covenant’s purpose.” Finally each church is to seek the highest possible degree of communion.

These are not facilitative approaches to creativity, risk taking and the nudges of the Holy Spirit, but rather an approach to indirectly colonize national churches within structure and systems. No theological language is used here to describe the process of refinement of ideas and the maintenance of unity. The word “reconciliation” does not appear. It assumes that if the structure is right, unity or reconciliation will follow. The Anglican Covenant: The St. Andrew’s Draft appears to be a mix of contractual and covenantal elements which, rather than enhance unity, attempts to prevent disunity. In the words of the Kuala-Lumpur document, it does not transform differences as much as to prevent them from emerging.

In the fractured and messy Communion that Anglicans inhabit together, once again, it is vital to insist that unity is a choice of relationship and to ask what structures will assist to nurture the relationships when differences become obvious. The structures presented in the draft reflect the framework of fear

mentioned earlier and they appear coercive. They might stop or slow down activities, but would they help nurture relationships?

Perhaps the most troubling aspect of the proposed covenant is its description of unity. "However, since Communion is founded on the mutual recognition that each Church sees in the other evidence of our Communion in Christ, we recognize that it cannot be sustained in extreme circumstances where a Church or Province acts in a way which rejects the interdependence of the Communion's life."¹⁸³ This suggests that communion, or unity, will be based on each Church believing that the other Church believes as they do, and, if it looks like they don't, communion can be ended, or can be assumed to be ended.

This approach certainly does not consider unity as openness to the Other. In the Lambeth Commentary, it is suggested that "not only is the content of our faith the basis of our communion, but the concrete instances by which we remain faithful to one to another within that faith manifests its meaning."¹⁸⁴ Again, this appears to be a very linear approach to unity, suggesting that if the beliefs are correct, the right relationships follow. If the beliefs are wrong, communion is broken. Because we know that perceptions about what other people believe and think can be misheard, misrepresented, misunderstood, and subject to personal bias on the part of others, this kind of wording within the draft covenant lends itself to misunderstandings and further conflict. It requires proof of unity or proof of communion and is not in the spirit of diversity but rather reflects a mechanical worldview that is linear and divisive. There is no opportunity presented here for transformation or reconciliation. It seems to assume that in unity, with a covenant, there will no longer be conflicts between churches. Covenants, however, will not stop conflicts. Conflicts, as mentioned before, are neutral. The Kuala Lumpur report supported this idea, but it has been lost from The Anglican Covenant: The St. Andrew's Draft.

¹⁸³ Clause 3.2.5 Commentary to the St. Andrew's draft
¹⁸⁴ Commentary p.9

It is worrying as well that the Anglican Churches of the Communion can include national churches, local churches and dioceses. This approach is certain to increase conflicts within national churches and dioceses. If there is unity between dioceses, local churches and their national church, their unity within the Communion should be assumed. If there is not unity within the national church, diocese and local church, they should be reconciled first and the Anglican Communion should be supporting efforts at reconciliation.

Overall, if we are to use Lederach's approach to peacebuilding and reconciliation, there needs to be a vision of what can be created that is new and inspiring. Nothing in the covenant would facilitate creativity and innovation. Section 3.2.5 of the Draft Covenant would act to stifle the new. It could well be, for instance, that the Canadian ordination of women would not have made it past this process. Fears of the loss of unity would be further enhanced by the framework procedures for the resolution of disagreements because their implied focus is the prevention of the loss of unity, not how to support change and growth and the continuing witness to the gospel of each national church. Since the ordination of women was without any doubt a risk to unity, this framework would not have brought about enough consensus or common mind. Churches which believed they were prophetically called, in spite of a lack of consensus, would have been deleted from the covenant and relationship.

Individuals like Ted Scott understood the importance of the Communion relationships. He did not ask permission from other Primates, but enabled them to support the diversity of the Anglican Church of Canada. By demonstrating that he understood that they might or might not have been able to agree with Canada's actions, which is in fact a way of honouring their uniqueness, he honoured their responsibility for their own choices and signalled that Canada must make its own choice as well. After the discussion, study and discernment, this is the facilitative approach, not exclusion from the Anglican Communion.

The St. Andrew's Draft Covenant does not seem to encourage this openness to one another. It has its gaze set on common beliefs and actions. This document, even in its revised edition, raises very real questions about whether it can foster deeper relationships and illuminate the quality of relationships. It talks about the expectations of individual churches, but what will it be offering in return? How will it support and encourage relationships? What will they look like? How will they be different? Sacks suggests that, "In an act of covenant, both parties agree to respect one another's integrity as free agents. The key element in covenant is neither power, nor the past, but a verbal declaration, a mutually binding promise."¹⁸⁵

Fortunately, the communiqué released following the Anglican Primates meeting in February 2009, addresses some of the contractual nature of The Anglican Covenant: The St. Andrew's Draft and confirms that the next version will have a more relational basis and tone. The Primates suggest that it should be about "invitation and reconciliation in order to lead to the deepening of our koinonia in Christ, and which entails both freedom and accountability."¹⁸⁶

The communiqué also asks the Archbishop of Canterbury "to initiate a professionally mediated conversation which engages all parties at the earliest opportunity." These conversations are aimed at reconciliation "with these dear sisters and brothers for whom we understand membership of the Anglican Communion is profoundly important. We recognise that these processes cannot be rushed, but neither should they be postponed."¹⁸⁷ This is the clearest reference to a conflict resolution strategy yet made publicly, and is arguably one of the more hopeful signs of progress and life in these debates. For, as

¹⁸⁵ Sacks 109.

¹⁸⁶ Primates Meeting Communiqué, Anglican Communion News Service 5/2/2009 <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/acns/news.cfm/2009/2/5/ACNS4574> 3.

¹⁸⁷ Communiqué 3

Paul Lederach says, relationships are vital. "Think, feel and follow relationships. Relationships are at the heart of social change. Relationships require that we understand how and where things connect and how this web of connections occupies the social space where processes of change are birthed and hope to live."¹⁸⁸

Final Conclusions

The Anglican Communion is at a turning point. A return to Graham Leonard, once an Anglican Bishop and now a Roman Catholic as a result of the Church of England's decision to ordain women, seems appropriate. He once believed that it was possible for the comprehensiveness of the Church of England to be viewed in a creative way. To apply his thinking to the current situation, the differing traditions in the Anglican Communion, which are represented in all of the national churches of the Communion, need to come together in a creative dialogue. Their aim would be "discovering by the guidance of the Holy Spirit what in each tradition witnesses to an essential element of scriptural and catholic truth, what in each tradition is lacking and in what way each tradition, because it has to some degree developed in isolation, has become distorted."¹⁸⁹ He believed that it was no longer possible for this dialogue to occur because of the developments listed earlier: undermining of the authority of scripture, loss of the Book of Common Prayer as a uniting element, the ordination of women and the power given to synodical authority.

If the parties to the future mediation within the Anglican Communion see the process as problem solving, it will be doomed to failure. What Leonard called for was a kind of transformation which would require change in every one and every tradition, not necessarily a change in what people believed but in how they held that belief alongside Others. Leonard came to believe that it was

¹⁸⁸ Lederach, *Moral Imagination* 86.

impossible for that to happen. He has in fact put his finger on what may be the underlying conflict within the Anglican Church world wide, in the Communion, and in each national church and diocese. Unless the different traditions find ways to say yes to each other, instead of assuming that they alone are closest to God, no covenant will keep the Anglican Communion together. It is fundamentally a failure of relationship at a critical level. A willingness to enter into this conversation would move the Anglican Churches from the separate but equal divisions which surface when stimulated by something like the ordination of women. Failure to deal with this issue and to become reconciled at the deepest level, leaves the church weakened and unwilling to consider any innovation of the Spirit, lest it destroy the delicate arrangements and subtle agreements that are claimed as its unity. The "unity" is a façade. It masks the real conflicts that have been avoided. It poisons the atmosphere for transformation and the discussion of problems. It is unity based on division of theological territory and that unity is threatened whenever that particular territory is threatened.

The comprehensiveness of the Anglican Church is still its strength and a witness to the world. The next step in the development is to not just say that we are unity in diversity, but to understand what that means and to have the courage to examine our fundamental differences. This means to move, not from a place of fear, a belief that disagreement can separate, but from a place of security in relationships from and within which diversity can be explored. The relationships are as a result of Baptism in Christ, love for one another and turning to the Other as neighbour. Conflict resolution practices and theological insights into the nature of relationship and conflict, grounded in the deepest fabric of Christian theology, may offer support and assistance. The Holy Spirit will guide, yet each person will have to choose how to respond to the call of relationship. As Sacks says, "We will be what we choose to be," as individuals, churches and as the Anglican Communion.

The ordination of women in the Anglican Church of Canada offered the most obvious opportunity to respond to the call of the Other. As Volf has suggested, men and women are Other to each Other. It may be that men and women are on the way to reconciliation and to creating a new future together within the Church. However, the conflict created by the ordination of women was the canary that could help us understand how broken the relationships were then and still are. To learn from that experience, not just as a lesson in structural procedure, but as a teaching for us of important things about how relationships that enable positive change to take place can be fostered, is to grasp an opportunity that presents itself today.

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