

It was my privilege to attend the 18th meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council held in Accra, Ghana this past February, along with our Primate Linda Nicholls, The Right Rev. Riscylla Shaw, area Bishop of Trent-Durham, Diocese of Toronto and Dr. Anita Gittens, Diocese of Toronto. Having no idea what to expect, I armed myself with my laptop which held all of the reports, my passport, vaccinations and was off.

The agenda and our days were centred around the [Five Marks of Mission](#): Tell, Teach, Tend, Transform and Treasure. You can see the full Agenda [here](#). We spent our days in assigned table groups, beginning each day with worship and bible study and then moving into discussion on various topics. My table included Bishop William Bahemuka, Diocese of Boga in Congo; Archbishop Jackson Ole Sapit, Primate of Kenya; Mr. Carlos Romero from Argentina; Bishop Stephen Diseko, Diocese of Matlosane, South Africa; Ms. Amie Byers from Scotland and Mr. Glenn Moore from Ireland. Each of us coming from a particular context, our conversations were very interesting. Both Bishops William and Archbishop Jackson lead in contexts that are often violent and directly impacted by global warming. The province of Kenya under Archbishop Jackson has a particular focus on tree planting with awards for most green Diocese and the goal of planting 15 million trees by the end of 2026. Bishop William spoke about the difficulty of travelling around his Diocese and country because of safety concerns and both of these Bishops often have people arriving at their doors having fled violence in their villages. I spoke to the work of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples here that is ongoing. And there were



important experiences shared from each of the members of our table too.

The stories that were told from our contexts, helped us each to have a deeper understanding of the Anglican church globally. And while the discussion about same-gender marriage continues to arise, it is clear that there is more to each of us and the work that we are doing in our countries, with God's help. This is the gift of meetings such as these and why I think it is important for us to take the time to meet in person. We need to meet one another, to hear the stories that are particular to each of our churches, to hear what we hold in common and what we can learn from each other.

I would be lying if I told you that I saw much of Accra. I did not. Most of our days were spent in a conference room in a hotel that could have been a conference room in any part of

the world. However we did spend one day in Cape Coast, where we toured a slave castle, attended a service of reconciliation and then sat in witness to the Archbishop of Canterbury meeting the King of that area.

Touring the Castle was a profound experience. Ghana has a troubling history with slave trade. People were captured all over Africa and walked to Cape Coast, held in the castle, sorted and then sent off in ships as slaves. The Anglican church played a role, hosting a chapel and services in the castle directly above the men's cell. It was devastating to stand in the cells, to hear the stories and to learn once more about the implications of our church in this terrible history.

You can see pictures of our day in Cape Coast [here](#)

We closed our time in Accra with a [celebration dinner](#) held on the grounds of the Anglican Cathedral. We were treated to a feast, dancing and incredible music and then a final [worship on Sunday](#).

I am grateful to have been given this opportunity to attend and participate in the Anglican Consultative Council meeting, it's clear that there is much work to be done for us in each of the places that God has given us responsibility, and look forward to ACC 19 in Ireland.