

Report on the Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans meeting 26 April 2012

This was an evening meeting, open to all at which about 300 people attended, at Emmanuel Church, Westminster, as part of the week's conference of the Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans (the rest of the conference was for delegates only). I am not a member of FCA but received a warm welcome.

The Bishop of London, Richard Chartres welcomed people to London.

The Archbishop of Kenya, the Most Revd Eliud Wabukiala, who is also Chairman of the Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans (FCA) UK Panel of Bishops and Chairman of the GAFCON (Global Anglican Future Conference) Primates Council spoke.

Attached is a transcript of what he said. It is also available on the Anglican Mainstream website:

<http://www.anglican-mainstream.net/2012/05/01/standing-together-archbishop-eliud-wabukiala-of-kenya-at-fca-meeting-london-april-26/>

The Revd Paul Perkin, Chairman of the Fellowship of Confessing FCA UK and Ireland said that any Church of England minister who, despite repeated efforts is denied orthodox episcopal oversight, and who is able to sign up to the Jerusalem Declaration [click here for the text of the Jerusalem Declaration, this link opens a 1 page PDF document] and can now come under the Anglican Mission in England (AMiE) under one of their panel of bishops and thereby remain within the Anglican family. Bishop John Ellison, Chairman of FCA UK Panel of Bishops said that this had come after four years of asking the Church of England authorities for orthodox oversight and being refused, AMiE had been established to offer that oversight.

Archbishop of Sydney, Peter Jensen then gave a sermon on "The Issues that Face Us". An audio file of his sermon is available on the GAFCON website:
<http://gafcon.org/media/audio/the-issues-that-face-us/>

He said that we are in danger of the loss of the Gospel in the western nations because we have become liberal and have forgotten and ignored the Bible. The issues that face us are:

i.) A desperate need.

St Paul wrote that "in Adam all die": the human race is condemned. The reality of judgment can lead to the eternal exclusion of the presence of God that we call hell. A preacher or father who will not preach on hell and judgment is failing and destroying the lives of those for whom they are responsible. The seriousness of this situation can be seen by what God did to redeem the situation by sending his Son to die for us Those of us who are parents, would we sacrifice our children? That helps us to realise the cost so that there may be a Gospel. St Paul went on "...in Christ all shall be made alive". That the Son of God loved me and gave himself for me is the central truth of the whole universe and that message needs to go out to all the world.

ii.) An unclear gospel

Scripture says "there is one mediator between God and man", but many say Jesus is "a" mediator. To be a Gospel person you have to say that the other prophets are wrong and there

is only one way to be saved. Many church leaders won't say that Jesus died on the cross as my substitute to pay the price for my sin – they empty the cross from all its power. They refuse to take sin seriously. Since the Gospel is the means by which you are saved, an unclear Gospel means that there can even be churchgoers who are not saved.

iii.) A compromised Church

In a compromised Church the Bible gets a look in, but they believe the bits they want to believe but not the bits they don't like, and they endorse behaviours that are condemned in Scripture. Their new gospel for 'liberation' is a gospel for freedom to sin, not freedom from sin. Those who stand up for the old Gospel are labelled as extremist and are isolated.

However, there is now the Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans, which is a worldwide fellowship, a spiritual, not political, movement, centred on the Jerusalem Declaration, which is classic Anglicanism, who will stand with you.

“Standing Together” Archbishop Eliud Wabukala of Kenya, at FCA Meeting London April 26

May 1st, 2012 Posted in [Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans \(FCA\)](#) | Comments Off

FCA London 2012: Archbishop Eliud Wabukala – Chairman’s Address at "A Celebration of Anglican Unity". Thursday 26th April 2012



Standing Together

Praise the Lord! I am so pleased that you as members of the Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans in the United Kingdom and Ireland have been able to join us this evening. As leaders from some thirty different countries we have been meeting this week to discern God’s will at this time of continuing crisis in the Anglican Communion. Gathering here in London, we have been much aware that, whatever our present difficulties, many of us trace back our gospel inheritance to the British Isles and you have a special and honoured place in our affections.

This evening I want to encourage you to stand firm in the faith we have received as those who have been brought together by the gospel and are passionate to see our Anglican Communion drawing fruitfully on its Reformation inheritance to bear witness to Jesus Christ as the unique Saviour and only Lord around the globe. There are institutional implications to the stand we are taking, but at its heart, this is a spiritual crisis.

Here, as in much of the West and now in Africa too, you are coming under growing pressure to compromise the gospel. I recognise that you are living in a culture where it is increasingly difficult to sustain a consistent Christian witness. Sometimes laws are interpreted to inhibit Christian witness and popular opinion is often hostile to the Christian values and beliefs which have provided the historic foundation of your society. A Jesus who is just a guide and teacher along with others is deemed acceptable, but not a Jesus who is Lord, and a Jesus who is not Lord is not the Jesus of the Bible, the one who is Alpha and Omega, the crucified and risen Lord of all creation to whom be praise and glory forever!

In such times the Church should be, in the words of the Apostle Paul, a ‘pillar and bulwark of the truth’, (1 Timothy 3:15) but as we have heard this week, the Church of England and the other Anglican Churches of the British Isles are in spiritual crisis themselves. We have been saddened to hear this week of the all too familiar pattern of orthodox and evangelical laity, ordinands and clergy being marginalised and their witness chilled by church hierarchies that bend to the prevailing culture.

So this evening, my dear brothers and sisters, on behalf of our global fellowship, I want to encourage you to stand firm. This may or may not mean a change in church structures, depending on your circumstances, but this quality of resilient courage is vital in the spiritual crisis we face. I want to remind you of the words of the Apostle Paul as he draws to the conclusion of his first letter to the Corinthians in chapter 16, verses 13 & 14. He gives a series of short, sharp encouragements:

Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong.

Do everything in love.

‘Be on your guard’; we must be alert lest our comfort and security becomes more important than pleasing the Lord. Unless we pay careful attention to the Scriptures and make them central to our life together, we shall lose our sensitivity to what pleases the Lord. We are given a sense of taste so that we will swallow the good and spit out the bad. Unless our taste is trained by the Word of God, we are in danger of swallowing the bad and spitting out the good. This discernment that springs from a wholehearted love of the Lord and his Word is so important. Remember that the Risen Christ challenges the complacency of the Laodiceans by warning them that because they are neither hot nor cold, he will ‘spit them out of his mouth (Revelation 3:16).

We need to be on guard so that we can ‘stand firm in the faith’. This is not a faith we have designed or chosen to fit with our life style preferences. It is the faith, the faith revealed by the God who has spoken to us through his Son and graciously given us the inspired Scriptures. Standing firm requires effort. It can be costly because it calls for resistance and once we surrender to the current of popular opinion it becomes increasingly difficult to resist.

I want to urge you to see that there is no middle ground. If you do not face any immediate threats in your particular circumstances, it is tempting to think that you can opt out and keep these difficult things at arm’s length, but I want to remind you that we are a Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans and we need each other. We should not exist in isolation, but even if we try to do so, the fact remains that we all witness in a context and in the British Isles the gap between the worldview of the Scriptures and the worldview of modern secular humanism is becoming more and more clear. One or other of those narratives will frame your thinking and your action.

It is easy to state the problem, but how do we act as ‘men (and women of course) of courage?’ We know what physical courage looks like, and sometimes that is indeed called for, but what does this courage look like in the spiritual battle we are called to fight?

It will show itself in persistence. When things are breaking down, it is usually just a minority who are willing to recognise the problem and they will face opposition. When we were preparing for GAFCON at Jerusalem in 2008, the movement was belittled and opposed, even by some who shared our core doctrinal commitments, but we persevered and by God’s grace we were privileged to be part of an historic moment in the reshaping of our Communion for the twenty-first century.

The story of the ACNA has been one of persevering faith from small beginnings despite relentless litigation in North America. Here in the British Isles there is a reluctance to go to law against those who are seen as dissidents in the Church (although I do not think you can assume that will always be the case), but a different sort of persistence has been necessary in the face of institutional inertia and the habit of inconclusive conversation. In June last year the Anglican Mission in England was formed and I ordained three courageous young men from Southwark Diocese in the Kenyan bush, but this was a last resort after four years of discussion with senior Anglican leaders in England failed to find a way in which those genuinely in need of effective orthodox oversight in the Church of England could receive it.

This courage to persist can be tested by the temptation to despair. Physical courage is normally something of the moment – a particular threat that has to be faced at a particular moment – but the courage we are called to exercise is to commit ourselves to the long haul in a spiritual struggle which manifests itself not only in outward circumstances, but also within our own hearts.

I expect all of us know that there are times when we are tempted to give up. This temptation is subtle because it doesn't look like a temptation – we face discouragement and weariness to the extent that facts present themselves to us in such a way that it begins to look obvious that we should simply give up. Things seem to be beyond our capacities. But if so, we should be encouraged that even the Apostle Paul has been in that place. In 2 Corinthians 1:8,9 he says that he and his companions 'were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life. Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead.'

The task God has given us for the reform and renewal of the Communion is a truly monumental task. The pressures in your context will be experienced in different ways from those in America or Africa, but it is the same spiritual battle and perhaps more is at stake here, especially in the Church of England as the historic mother church of the Communion. At times you may feel that you have completely exhausted your own abilities and energy, but praise the Lord that we know and trust in the God who does indeed raise the dead. If we will allow these experiences to throw us back on the all sufficient grace of God, then this Fellowship in which we share will be strong, an unstoppable force which will achieve all that awaits us in the Lord's purposes.

Although we stand firm we are not reactionary. We are not trying to turn the clock back, nor do we have any desire to be judgemental as we speak in the name of the one who was the friend of sinners. What motivates our action is love. Let me remind you of how Paul finishes his list of exhortations in 1 Corinthians 16:14; he says 'do everything in love'. We stand firm because we love the Lord Jesus Christ and we love one another as those who are fellow heirs with Christ. So in that love of God, we want to share with you, the Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans in the UK and Ireland, so that it may be clear to everyone that we are one in Christ, proclaiming the gospel fearlessly as we stand shoulder to shoulder and trust God for the fruit – and to be with us whatever the consequences. This love we have is not just the assent of our minds, but the passion of our hearts for the glory of God and the reconciliation of a lost humanity. Our Fellowship exists that we as Anglicans may bear clear and confident witness to the God who 'so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. not perish'. (John 3:16)

May the Lord strengthen you with all the riches of his grace and equip you for every good work as you trust in him. Amen

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