

A Crisis in Koinonia: Biblical Perspectives for Anglicans

by David Short, Rector of St. John's Shaughnessy in Vancouver.
(First published in May 2004.)

<http://acl.asn.au/resources/a-crisis-in-koinonia/>

Dear Friends,

I am writing as a priest in the diocese of New Westminster which has been in crisis for more than two years. I have worked in this diocese in Vancouver for more than 10 years, after being ordained in Australia, and am rector of one of the protesting parishes of the Anglican Communion in New Westminster (ACiNW).



The crisis is, of course, much wider than our diocese, and much deeper than many are willing to admit. We have been very grateful for your prayers and support, often risking your own reputation for the gospel.

This critical time has very complex implications for the future and few seem able to agree on a way forward.

One of the most deeply troubling aspects of the present difficulties is that Scripture seems to have been marginalized. Much of the discussion at local and national levels has muted and even silenced the voice of God.

Yet God's word has much to say on the vital issue of 'communion.'

Over the past years we have been compelled to go back to the Scriptures because of the unprecedented nature of the crisis. I have been encouraged to write something of what we are learning. I am convinced that the best way for us to move forward is to go back to what God has revealed in his word.

I know you have many things to read. I ask your patience with this essay and offer it, praying that it might move our thinking back to God's word for the good of the gospel and the glory of Christ.

With all joy and peace in believing,

David Short.

A CRISIS IN KOINONIA: BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVES FOR ANGLICANS

Newspaper articles, prophecies of doom, and synod resolutions aside, Jesus is still building his church.

For Anglicans, in a denomination that now sanctions same sex unions, this now means changes in the shape of our relationships so they might help rather than hinder the mission of Christ. The new oppressive liberal orthodoxy in North America must choose between using the current denominational structures as instruments of coercion, or through an act of love, allow a realignment of relationships within different structural patterns. If those in power choose the first course of action, biblically orthodox Anglicans will be forced to choose between the gospel and Anglican structures. Either way the Anglican communion as we know it will cease to exist. And all this in a denomination supposedly known for its tolerance of diversity, its generosity of spirit, its comprehensiveness.

Tolerance of diversity and comprehensiveness without boundaries are not virtues, however. They are vices. Jesus prayed for unity, but a unity apart from, or in opposition to, or founded on anything but the truth is at best meaningless and at worst wicked.

The term highly favored by Anglicans since 1851 to describe our mutual relationships as being more than merely structural is *communion* (from the New Testament Greek word *koinonia*). It is an enormously hard working horse, harnessed to several weighty theological wagons: employed in the apostles' creed ('I believe in... the communion of saints'); and to describe the Lord's supper (holy communion); and, as well as the inner reality, fabric and superstructure of the world wide association of Anglican congregations (the global communion). The concept of communion has been pressed into heavier service over the last 20 years to describe the levels of disunity created by the ordination of women to the priesthood. The first resolution of the 1988 Lambeth conference of Anglican bishops recognized that differences of opinion on the consecration of women to the episcopate will result in 'impaired' communion. Its first resolution affirmed that the archbishop of Canterbury, in consultation with the primates, should create a commission to examine the issue under the rubric of 'maintaining the highest possible degree of communion' between provinces that differ. Resolution 18 on 'The Anglican Communion: Identity and Authority' refined this global consultation process. This new Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission, would 'undertake as a matter of urgency a further exploration of the meaning and nature of communion; with particular reference to the doctrine of the Trinity, the unity and order of the Church, and the unity and community of humanity.'

The ensuing commission, called the Eames commission (named after the Most Revd Robert Eames, archbishop of Armagh) met five times and released its report in 1994. The work continued with a second commission which met at the Virginia Theological seminary and published its report in 1997: the Virginia report. There is now a third commission studying the meaning and maintenance of communion named the Sykes commission (after the Right Revd Professor Sykes). Both the Eames and the Virginia

reports give considerable space to koinonia and its implications. Eames asserts that ‘The basis of the Christian Church is that spiritual reality of koinonia,’ 1 and the preface of the Virginia report affirms this: ‘At the heart and center of the Anglican pilgrimage lies the concept of communion.’ 2

Since 2002 the unilateral decisions and actions of one Canadian diocese and the General Convention of the Episcopal Church of the United States (ECUSA) to proceed with the blessing of same sex unions and to consecrate as bishop an openly practicing homosexual, have deeply wounded unity within Anglicanism and elevated the importance of understanding koinonia. The biblically orthodox primates of the global south, appalled by the arrogant disregard for the instruments of Anglican unity, 3 have sought to indicate the extremity of injury to their relationship with the offending bodies by variously declaring communion ‘impaired’ or ‘suspended’ or ‘broken’ or even ‘severed.’ This reveals the unprecedented damage to unity the blessing of same sex unions has inflicted — damage which is of such a different order than the ordination of women that the former archbishop of Canterbury Dr. George Carey, described the decision of the diocese of New Westminster in Canada as ‘schismatic’ a ‘clear undermining of the sanctity of marriage’ and ‘an ecumenical embarrassment’ as well. Archbishop Eames has been prevailed upon for a second time to chair an international commission of Anglican luminaries to cobble together a compromise structural solution. Others less sanguine are working for a global realignment based on what they discern to be the irreconcilable movement of two theological tectonic plates. My question concerns koinonia: can this horse do all the work we want it to, can it draw the various carts we assign to it? Are we in danger of crippling it? Do we have the right horse or is the horse a mule?

We need to turn to the New Testament to understand ‘communion’.

1. The New Testament Shape of Koinonia

The New Testament (NT) word for communion, koinonia and its cognates are translated in a variety of ways: ‘participation, fellowship, sharing, partakers, communion, partnership.’ Koinonia describes a particular kind of relationship between people created by their mutual fellowship with God through faith in Jesus Christ. There are three primary uses of koinonia in the NT, like a triangle which requires three sides, the three uses of koinonia must all be held together or you end up with something different: the horse becomes a mule.

a. Koinonia as fellowship with God

The first use of koinonia describes the living bond which unites Christians in the new life of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Although koinonia is used in a secular sense in the gospels, 4 it is a post-Easter reality. Both the Eames and Virginia reports are incorrect in suggesting that koinonia with God is an OT reality. 5 They also go further than the Scriptures in describing the inner relationships within the Trinity in terms of koinonia. What the writers of the epistles do assert is that through faith in the Jesus Christ revealed

in the gospel, Christian believers have *koinonia* with God. Indeed, we are explicitly told that we have fellowship with God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. The apostle John, writing in his first letter tells the readers that his purpose for writing is ‘so that you may have *fellowship* with us; and our *fellowship* is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.’ 6 (The italics are mine indicating where the *koino*- word appears in the original.) Peter uses the same term in 2 Peter 1:4 where those who have the promises of God ‘escape from the corruption that is in the world because of passion, and become partakers of the divine nature.’ When greeting the Corinthians the Apostle Paul states: ‘God is faithful, by whom you were called into the *fellowship* of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.’ 7 At the end of 2 Corinthians he prays: ‘The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the *fellowship* of the Holy Spirit be with you all.’ 8

This first use of *koinonia* is reflected in the remarkable way the NT writers speak of ‘having’ God. We are told that we ‘have’ the Father, 9 we ‘have’ the Son, 10 and that we ‘have’ the Holy Spirit. 11 This must not be taken to mean that we own God, but rather, that we participate in the real life of God through faith in the gospel. *Koinonia* is a basic NT description of the common relation Christians share with God, based on the irreducible content and shape of the common gospel—a *common* faith (Titus 1:4), a *common* salvation based on the faith once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3). It is in the first place a spiritual not a structural reality; one which is both smaller and larger than both congregations and denominations.

b. *Koinonia* as fellowship with others in God’s work

If the first use of *koinonia* in the NT is about participation in the person of God, the second is about participation in the activity of God in the world. *Koinonia* is not for the private enjoyment of Christians, but draws us into a common fellowship with God, a common faith, a common gospel, a common salvation, and this is inexorably expressed through the whole structure and pattern of life lived in obedience to Christ. The fundamental dynamic of having our lives conformed to the shape of Jesus Christ through suffering and glory is an expression of *koinonia*. The Apostle Paul writes that he wants to know Christ ‘and the power of his resurrection,’ and to ‘share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.’ 12 To the Corinthians he states ‘as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in our comfort.’ 13 It is the privilege of every believer to ‘have communion in Christ’s sufferings’ that we ‘may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.’ 14

Paul reveals how *koinonia* operates through the active engagement in Christian care and mutual gospel ministry. The Philippians had sent Epaphroditus to Paul in Rome with financial gifts and assurances of their prayers. In his subsequent letter, Paul told them that he was ‘thankful for your *partnership* in the gospel from the first day until now . . . for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel.’ (Phil. 1:5, 7). Having communion in the gospel is more than just sharing the same ‘faith outlook,’ or approving the same gospel. It means actively collaborating for the proclamation and spread of the gospel. *Koinonia* is therefore not geographically confined. Paul was hundreds of miles away from the Christian community

at Philippi, and yet the mutual effect of his suffering and their generosity, prayers and striving for the gospel is described in terms of koinonia. The koinonia which begins in our fellowship with God through Christ extends and multiplies with other believers as we seek the progress of the gospel. Even the financial support sent by the Philippians is called entering into '*partnership* with me in giving and receiving.' (Phil. 4:15).

This second use of koinonia speaks of the mutual unity between believers expressed through Christian living and Christian mission. It binds us together in the gospel enterprise. Based on biblically revealed doctrine, faith and witness, the manifestation of koinonia is inclusionary, embracing and collaborating with other believers with diverse styles, gifts, contributions and backgrounds. It creates generosity of heart and hand to others in one's fellowship and impels us to see beyond geographic, cultural, social, and tribal barriers. Gentiles now have communion in the riches of the gospel. 15 Paul refers to Titus as 'my *partner* and fellow worker in your service,' 16 and appeals to Philemon to receive Onesimus on the basis of koinonia. 17 Among the distinctive marks of the presence of the Holy Spirit in a Christian community in Acts is the attendant devotion to *koinonia*, 18 which functions both as a source and result of mission.

c. The boundaries of Koinonia

Recent Anglican statements have a fair grasp of the first two ways koinonia is used in the NT. However, there is a third use of the term which has been entirely ignored. The NT writers place definite boundaries and limitations on koinonia. Without them 'communion' is deformed, reduced to little more than a vague positive sentiment toward those who use the same words we do. Paul, for example, writing about the Lord's Supper, makes it clear that there are certain actions and relations that are incompatible with communion. 'The cup of blessing which we bless,' he asks:

is it not a *participation* in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a *participation* in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake (*metecho*) of the one bread. Consider the people of Israel; are not those who eat the sacrifices *partners* in the altar? What do I imply then? That food offered to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? No, I imply that what pagans sacrifice they offer to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be *partners* with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake (*metecho*) of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. (1 Cor. 10:16-21).

In this short passage, Paul uses koinonia four times along with the word 'partake.'¹⁹ His point is plain. We can have communion with Christ, expressed in partaking of the bread and wine, and we can have communion with demons, but we cannot have both at the same time. It is not that it is merely against the apostle's desire, it is something which 'cannot' take place.

In Ephesians 5 Paul uses the images of light and darkness to refer to life lived in submission to or in disobedience to the revelation of God. In the context of articulating the implications of the gospel for Christian sexual morality the apostle writes: '*Take no*

part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.’ 20 It is a double imperative: negatively to ‘not have *communion*’ with the works of darkness, and positively, to expose them. Similarly, when giving instructions regarding the implications of the gospel for church order in 1 Timothy Paul says ‘Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, nor *participate* in another man’s sins; keep yourself pure.’ 21

Having *koinonia* in another’s sins, or in the unfruitful works of darkness, is the exact opposite of having communion in the gospel. It is as though there are two competing missions: one which promotes the spread of the gospel and one which promotes the spread of sin and the works of darkness. There is no room for spiritual neutrality since the warnings about *koinonia* indicate that there is something deeper than just engaging in certain behaviors. To have *koinonia*, either in the gospel or in sin involves the reciprocity of relations, recognition and approval.

To put it another way, we cannot separate the horizontal and the vertical elements of *koinonia*. We either approve, recognize and promote the gospel or the works of darkness. Choosing the second makes the first impossible. This is why the apostle John warns that ‘if we say we have *fellowship* with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not live according to the truth; but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. 22 He may well be echoing the teaching of Jesus. When Peter said at the last supper, ‘you shall never wash my feet,’ Jesus replied, ‘if I do not wash you, you have no part in me.’ 23

Koinonia with God entirely shapes our *koinonia* with others, and the conduct of our relations with others affects our communion with God. So precious is communion that it must be preserved and protected, not just from partnership with sin but from the effects of false teaching. ‘Any one who goes ahead and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God,’ warns the apostle John, adding that ‘he who abides in the doctrine has both the Father and the Son. If any one comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into the house or give him any greeting; for he who greets him shares his wicked work.’ 24

He specifically instructs us how we should relate towards those who depart from Christ’s teaching. We cannot offer hospitality or even a platform for ministry to them, even though they claim to represent Christ. To do so, is to participate in their mission.

2. Summary and Implications

There are therefore three vital aspects to *koinonia* in the NT: fellowship with God, active fellowship with other believers in the work of God, and the avoidance fellowship with the works of darkness. The NT does not speak of levels of communion or of ‘the highest possible communion’ but simply of having or not having communion. It is shocking that both the Eames and Virginia reports entirely disregard the third use of *koinonia*. This is a serious flaw that generates a deformed *koinonia*, losing its distinctive Christian NT shape, reduced to a mysterious magic wand automatically uniting all who are under its wave whether they know it or like it or not. What the reports seem to fear above all else is a

declaration by some Anglicans of being ‘out of communion’ with others. Hence Eames states that, ‘to take the step of declaring that communion is broken, or to describe the position as no longer being ‘in communion’, would be to do less than justice to the concept of communion as we now understand and experience it.’ 25

This is not the NT view of koinonia.

For biblically orthodox Anglicans, the decision to sanction any behavior the bible reveals to be contrary to God’s will, be it idolatry, adultery, theft or homosexual conduct, is not only an impediment to communion but to inheriting the kingdom of heaven. 26 There can be no ‘reception period’ as there was for the ordination of women, because blessing same sex unions is a first order issue. It denies, disfigures and falsifies the biblically revealed structure of the gospel. Biblical revisionists preach a different gospel, engage in a different mission and promote a competing koinonia.

Officially constitutionalizing what the NT teaches as sinful creates a division and disunity of considerable complexity within Anglicanism. Anglican polity by design and inclination traditionally gives wide room for disagreement. The ‘comprehensiveness’ embraces different views on non-essentials reflecting a right humility and charity. Clergy and congregations could faithfully follow Christ even with bishops and other congregations with whom they disagreed because the basis for belonging to the denomination was not the theological convictions of any individual bishop or congregation but the biblical faith enshrined in the creeds and expressed in the Book of Common Prayer. 27 However, when an official body, such as a diocese intentionally constitutionalises what Scripture describes as sin, it creates a fork in the road. It is no longer possible for biblically orthodox Anglicans, lay, ordained or consecrated, to have communion with that body, since the platform for belonging and associating has changed from the historic revealed faith to something which officially approves, recognizes and promotes sin. To remain in structural fellowship with any body that formally promotes and recognizes what God’s word condemns as sin is to have communion with the unfruitful works of darkness. In biblical terms, any body that promotes or legitimizes same sex unions has effectively removed itself from the fellowship of the gospel, and the catholic and apostolic faith.

This explains why African and Asian primates have declared communion ‘severed’ and why they are calling for a realignment. This has profound implications for global Anglicanism. I wish to highlight three.

a. Structures

Koinonia is largely responsible for generating denominations. Local congregations are the primary vehicle for expressing true koinonia, yet as Anglican theologian John Woodhouse writes: ‘The denomination (an association between churches) arises out of the Spirit of fellowship between believers beyond their own congregation, and its purpose is to express and facilitate the fellowship of the Spirit beyond the local congregation.’ 28

It is wise, necessary and helpful for associations of congregations to develop structures to foster their collaboration in the ministry of the gospel. The benefits are obvious; establishing a platform for mutual recognition and ministry, combining resources to train gospel ministers, deploying and resourcing mission enterprises, administering nurture, accountability and support. At best, structures support local congregations by promoting gospel initiative and facilitating koinonia.

Sadly, denominational structures that may originally have been created to protect and promote gospel ministry and koinonia gradually become mistaken for koinonia itself. The unity created by true communion and expressed through structures becomes confused. Then the structures themselves are seen as the basis for unity. Symptoms showing that this disease has begun to take hold include: a creeping clericalism, a fussy fastidiousness for ritual, a fervor for externals, a readiness to hinder gospel initiatives for the sake of organizational tranquility, a centralization of control and power, an identification of 'church' with the denomination or diocese, an elevation of tradition to challenge the word of God, an insistence on the independence of dioceses but the dependence of parishes, a gradual drawing of denominational distinctives into what is considered essential, and an understanding that parishes exist for the good of the diocese rather than the opposite. This reversal is clearly evident in the Eames report which claims of structures that 'all the various elements of visible communion are gifts of the risen Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to the Church.' 29

However, we must ask what happens when structures are being used to support what they were created to oppose, and to oppose what they were created to support? What if, instead of expressing and facilitating koinonia, they become instruments to coerce compliance in the works of darkness? What do biblically orthodox Anglicans do when their diocese and bishop promote, vote and proceed with something contrary to the revealed will of God? The apostle Paul tells us:

I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people — not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat. 30

Clearly, if revisionist bishops and dioceses continue calling themselves 'Anglican' it is a delusion to describe the global Anglican body a 'communion.' It will be something else. Without a structural realignment Anglicanism will become a federation of irreconcilable congregations, or two or more competing communions. This will require overlapping or parallel jurisdiction by bishops, with neither jurisdiction fully able to recognize the legitimacy or integrity of the other. This has been loudly reviled as 'schism.' On the contrary. We should remember that old saying: 'Schismaticus est qui separationem causat, non qui separat' [The schismatic is the one who causes the separation, not the one who separates]. 31

It would be a mistake however to think that a structural solution will heal all our ills. At the risk of oversimplifying, what lies beneath the rift within Anglicanism are two different religions: two different Gods, two different views of the fall, sin, salvation, humanity, the cross of Christ, the resurrection of Christ, the work of the Holy Spirit, the coming judgment and the mission of the church. Blessing same sex unions is one manifestation of a deeper conflict in the divergent movement of two irreconcilable theological tectonic plates. Liberals speak of the authority within Anglicanism in terms of the three legged stool: Scripture, tradition and reason (with the recent addition of experience as a fourth leg). This is ‘quite extraordinary folly,’ as Dr. Robert Crouse points out. ‘For Anglicans, as for Christians generally, the ultimate authority is the Word of God . . . What constitutes Anglicanism as a distinctive form of Christianity is a certain way of reading, understanding, and living in obedience to that Word.’ 32

For realignment to proceed there needs to be some willingness on both sides, as both sides stand to lose a great deal. It is vital for biblically orthodox Anglicans to receive international recognition and for congregations to retain the right to decide which communion they affiliate with and to own and dispose of the properties they have paid for and now steward. Biblically orthodox Anglicans need to beware of a narrow monochromatic uniformity (as if that were possible). Instead they must seek to build a generous, diverse platform that will serve the gospel by serving congregations and preserving NT koinonia. This entails contending for the faith once for all delivered to the saints, with a generosity of spirit and the hospitality, grace and kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Some have used the language of a marital separation leading to divorce, with the consequent division of assets. This will be viciously opposed by those who have elevated structures to the place of the gospel. Regrettably, the same biblically revisionist bishops and bodies of authority in the USA and Canada who have demonstrated a zeal for altering fundamental doctrines, have also demonstrated an irresistible intransigence to any form of structural change. Litigation, the assertion of diocesan property rights, threats to clergy licenses by liberal bishops are thinly veiled exercises of coercive power, censorship and control. A realigned Anglicanism must reverse this centralization of control by empowering congregations to decide ministry succession, how and where ministers are trained, and for there to be an amicable property settlement. Certainly congregations cannot accept the spiritual oversight of a bishop who is out of communion with the catholic and apostolic faith.

b. Money

One of the most prominent expressions of koinonia in the NT is the willingness to share financial resources. The early church is marked by this fellowship in finances first within their congregation and then beyond. 33 Giving money is more than a calculated act of charity, it is a demonstration of spiritual partnership, of koinonia. Paul calls the collection of money for the saints in Jerusalem from Christians in Achaia and Macedonia ‘the koinonia,’ 34 explaining that ‘Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make some *contribution* for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem; they were pleased to do it, and

indeed they are in debt to them, for if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought also to be of service to them in material blessings.’ 35

There are two simple implications for biblically orthodox Anglicans.

The first is that they cannot contribute financially to bodies that approve the blessing of same sex unions. If same sex behavior is contrary to God’s will, and if we are warned not to have koinonia with the unfruitful works of darkness, and if contributing finances is a key expression of koinonia, it is impossible to see how funds given by orthodox congregations can be paid to revisionist bodies for revisionist projects.

The second implication is more difficult. The Anglican leaders who have been clearest and most outspoken for biblical orthodoxy are almost all from the global south. The differences in wealth and possessions between congregations in North America and those in Africa and Asia are staggering. Yet at great personal cost, in the face of tremendous opposition and suffering, bishops and primates from the global south have given extraordinary time and energy to love, care for, visit, defend, protect and inspire biblically orthodox Anglicans in North America. In return they have been vilified, dismissed and accused of being ignorant. They have demonstrated themselves cheerful victims of astonishing prejudice, discrimination and intolerance by biblically revisionist leaders in the USA and Canada. Their care is a demonstration of true koinonia. A realignment of Anglicanism will require biblically orthodox Anglicans in North America to submit to the wisdom of global south leaders and to give generous, sacrificial financial support.

c. Mission

The NT reveals that there is a living and indispensable link between koinonia and mission. The events of the last few years have exposed two different missions, two different koinonias under the umbrella of Anglicanism. The issue of the blessing of same sex unions is symptomatic of the two missions. Liberals believe it is a gospel issue for them to affirm, approve and consecrate same sex behavior as part of their mission: evangelicals believe it is a gospel issue for them to proclaim forgiveness and freedom in Christ from all sin, including homosexual conduct. Moral neutrality on issues which the Scripture reveals with clarity is cowardly, self-deceiving and disobedient. The desire to avoid conflict and confrontation is good and godly but not if it means calling evil good and good evil, putting darkness for light and light for darkness. 36

There are now two competing unities in Anglicanism: one regards Scripture as God’s sovereign word written, the other as the repository of the symbols of our faith; one names Christ as the unique and only savior of the world—meaning there is salvation in no-one else, the other sees Christ as the unique savior for them only. One sees mission primarily in terms of the proclamation of the gospel, of conversion to Christ from sin through repentance and faith, of lifelong growing discipleship, of presenting people mature in Christ for the last judgment. The other sees mission in terms of extending the church (meaning ‘denomination’), of making the world a better place, of providing religious

services, of helping people connect with their inherent spirituality, of affirming people in their lifestyle preferences, of boldly reflecting the cultural *zeitgeist* of tolerance, pluralism and inclusivity. Liberals see the evangelical gospel as simplistic and fundamentalistic, evangelicals see the liberal gospel as compromising and antibiblical.

The two missions are irreconcilable. There is no basis for *koinonia* between them. You cannot throw a blanket of structural communion over two different gospels. In Matthew 28 the risen Jesus asserted that all authority in heaven and earth had been given to him. 'Therefore,' he went on, 'go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'³⁷ Mission involves making disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Holy Trinity. It demands relations with the community of believers through baptism and obedience to everything Jesus commanded.

For the sake of the gospel, for the sake of *koinonia*, it is time for Anglicans to realign. Jesus is still building his church.

David Short – May 2004.

Footnotes

1 The Eames Commission: The Official Reports (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1994). p. 21.

2 The Virginia Report: The Report of the Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission (London: Partnership House, 1997).

3 There are four such 'instruments:' the Anglican Consultative Council, the global primates meeting, the Lambeth conferences for bishops from every Anglican province, and the Archbishop of Canterbury.

4 e.g. Luke 5:10.

5 Eames, p.14, Virginia, 2.3.

6 1 John 1:3.

7 1 Cor.1:9. The writer to the Hebrews uses a slightly weaker synonym for *koinonia* in Heb. 3:14 when he says: 'For we share in Christ, if only we hold our first confidence firm to the end.'

8 2 Cor.13:14.

9 1 John 2:23, 2John 9.

10 1 John 5:12, 2John 9.

11 Jude 19, Rom. 8:9.

12 Phil. 3:10.

13 2 Cor. 1:7.

14 1 Pet. 4:13. See also Heb. 10:33, 1 Pet. 5:1, Rev. 1:9.

15 Rom. 11:17.

16 2 Cor. 8:23.

17 Philemon 17.

18 Acts 2:42.

19 Metecho — virtually synonymous with koinonia.

20 Eph. 5:11.

21 1 Tim. 5:22.

22 1 John 1:6,7.

23 John 13:8.

24 2 John 9-11, notice 'have God.'

25 Eames, p. 23.

26 1 Cor. 6:9-11.

27 Perhaps more helpful is the Lambeth-Quadrilateral insisting on the Scriptures, the creeds, the apostolic ministry and the sacraments as the basis for unity.

28 John Woodhouse, 'Christian Unity and Denominations': Matthias Media website 2004.

29 Eames, p. 17.

30 1 Cor. 5:9-11.

31 J. C. Ryle, *Charges and Addresses* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1978) p. 69. Quoted in J. I. Packer, *Faithfulness and Holiness: The Witness of J. C. Ryle* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2002) p. 50.

32 Dr. Robert Crouse, *The Essence of Anglicanism*; <http://www.anglicanessentials.org/>. Crouse adds, 'nothing of it should be attributed, as is sometimes done, to Richard Hooker, who thinks quite otherwise.'

33 Acts 2:44, 4:32.

34 2 Cor. 9:13.

35 Rom. 15:26, 27.

36 Isa. 5:20.

37 Matt. 28:18-20.