

## Summer 2008



INDABA GROUP #1



WOMEN BISHOPS – LAMBETH 2008

So – what did you do over the summer? When asked that question I am not sure where to begin as the summer of 2008 will be remembered as a unique privilege filled with challenge, awe and joy. My summer was dominated by attending the Lambeth Conference 2008. Once every 10 years the Archbishop of Canterbury extends an invitation to bishops of the Anglican Communion and their spouses to join him in Canterbury, England for several weeks of consultation, discussion and fellowship. This year it was held from July 16<sup>th</sup> to August 3<sup>rd</sup> at the University of Kent overlooking Canterbury Cathedral.

Above are two photo glimpses of that time. One is of my Indaba group, about 40 bishops from around the Anglican Communion, that met daily for discussion across a wide variety of topics. We were diverse in every way – theologically, geographically, and linguistically – Brazil, Phillipines, UK, USA, Pakistan, North India, Canada, Australia, Sudan! We did not agree on everything but we listened and heard the deep faith that each of us seeks to live daily. We hold each other in prayer for our future together.

The other photo is of the 18 women bishops who were present at Lambeth this time. Still a small group out of some 680 bishops! Some of us met with women clergy in the UK at a small conference prior to Lambeth to share in the challenges that women face in leadership across the Communion. Coming from Canada, where the leadership of women in ministry is now over 30 years old and well-accepted, it was eye-opening to hear of the continuing strength of the opposition to it and the difficulties that women continue to face. It was humbling to be told how much a sign of hope the women bishops are to those still struggling, so wearing our ‘purple shirts’ became very important!

These are just two small glimpses of Lambeth and there is much more to share – about challenges and hopes for our beloved Anglican Church. I would be happy to come and speak to parish or deanery gatherings in the coming months. Please call Heather Bennett ([hbennett@toronto.anglican.ca](mailto:hbennett@toronto.anglican.ca)) to arrange a suitable time!

Please pray for Archbishop Rowan Williams and Anglicans around the world – we all face challenges in our ministries and we need each other for mutual support and strength.

Blessings to all as we enter the busy fall season of parish activities and planning.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Linda J. Nichols". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.