

STUDY OF THE WINDSOR REPORT
(Inductive Small Group or Self-Guided Study)
by The Rev. Sandra DePriest

Section I. Overview

This section by section study of the Windsor Report is intended for individual or small group study. It is important that each person have access to a copy of the Windsor Report (W.R.) and a Bible.

The Body of the Report itself is 60 pages. There are another 32 pages of appendices. The entire document may be printed from the Stand Firm web site (standfirminfaith.com) or read online.

1. Review the Table of Contents and the named parts or divisions of the W.R. List the main sections:

- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.

Note the four appendixes and the topical index at the end.

Appendix one:

Appendix two:

Appendix three:

Appendix four:

2. Read the Foreword by The Most Rev. Dr. Robin Eames.

- a. What is the question he is addressing?
- b. What does he say has prompted this report?
- c. What comparison is made between the current issues and the issue of women's ordination?
- d. What is the name of the Commission writing the Report?
- e. When and by whom was the Commission established?
- f. What does Archbishop Eames see as the mandate of the Commission?

g. One of the most frequently quoted phrases of the W.R. is that “it is not a judgment but part of a process.” What might be intended by describing the W.R. as a process, not a judgment?

h. Read para. 2 of Archbishop Eames’ Forward on p. 6. In your opinion, is a compromise being suggested by this paragraph?

i. Read the 4th paragraph of Archbishop Eames’ Forward on p. 6. What is viewed as the potential outcome of the failure of this process?

j. According to the Report, how do the current difficulties impact the mission of the church?

(a) Do you agree or disagree with the potential impact?

(b) What additional impact, if any, could the current difficulties have?

Section II. The Mandate of the Commission

1. Review the “Mandate” for the Lambeth Commission on p. 8 of the W.R.

a. Identify a list of mandates to the Commission from these four paragraphs. There are at least 8.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

b. What is specifically excluded from the mandate?

2. (Optional Background Research) Section IV of the Report of the Lambeth Conference of 1998 may be found at <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/lambeth/index.html>.

Section IV relates to the issues of unity. What are the issues raised in Section IV of the Windsor Report to which the W.R. refers in para. 3, p. 8 under the Mandate of the Commission?

3. Para. 4 of the Mandate references certain communiqués and pastoral letters expressing the views of the Primates since 2000. There are two primary statements, one in May, 2003, prior to General Convention 2003, and one in October, 2003, between General Convention 2003 and the consecration of Gene Robinson as Bishop of New Hampshire. Review the communiques and pastoral letters of the Primates of the Anglican Communion since 2000. These may be found on line at <http://www.anglicancommunion.org>, by clicking on “Primate’s Meetings.” The relevant portions of the May meeting are set forth, along with the entire October report.

Familiarize yourself with the views expressed.

May, 2003: “Human Sexuality: We take seriously the duty laid upon us by the Lambeth Conference 1998 to monitor ongoing discussion of this matter and encourage continued study and reflection in the context of common prayer and worship. We are grateful to the Archbishop of the West Indies, Drexel Gomez, for taking forward our discussion on matters of sexuality by introducing the booklet "True Union in the Body?", which fruitfully illuminated our study. We are also grateful to Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold for drawing our attention to the Report of the Theology Committee of the House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church (USA) on this issue. We commend the study of both documents.

The question of public rites for the blessing of same sex unions is still a cause of potentially divisive controversy. The Archbishop of Canterbury spoke for us all when he said that it is through liturgy that we express what we believe, and that there is no theological consensus about same sex unions. Therefore, we as a body cannot support the authorisation of such rites.

This is distinct from the duty of pastoral care that is laid upon all Christians to respond with love and understanding to people of all sexual orientations. As recognised in the booklet "True Union", it is necessary to maintain a breadth of private response to situations of individual pastoral care.”

October, 2003:

A Statement by the Primates of the Anglican Communion meeting in Lambeth Palace

The Primates of the Anglican Communion and the Moderators of the United Churches, meeting together at Lambeth Palace on the 15th and 16th October, 2003, wish to express our gratitude to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, for calling us together in response to recent events in the Diocese of New Westminster, Canada, and the Episcopal Church (USA), and welcoming us into his home so that we might take counsel together,

and to seek to discern, in an atmosphere of common prayer and worship, the will and guidance of the Holy Spirit for the common life of the thirty-eight provinces which constitute our Communion.

At a time of tension, we have struggled at great cost with the issues before us, but have also been renewed and strengthened in our Communion with one another through our worship and study of the Bible. This has led us into a deeper commitment to work together, and we affirm our pride in the Anglican inheritance of faith and order and our firm desire to remain part of a Communion, where what we hold in common is much greater than that which divides us in proclaiming Good News to the world.

At this time we feel the profound pain and uncertainty shared by others about our Christian discipleship in the light of controversial decisions by the Diocese of New Westminster to authorise a Public Rite of Blessing for those in committed same sex relationships, and by the 74th General Convention of the Episcopal Church (USA) to confirm the election of a priest in a committed same sex relationship to the office and work of a Bishop.

These actions threaten the unity of our own Communion as well as our relationships with other parts of Christ's Church, our mission and witness, and our relations with other faiths, in a world already confused in areas of sexuality, morality and theology, and polarised Christian opinion.

As Primates of our Communion seeking to exercise the "enhanced responsibility" entrusted to us by successive Lambeth Conferences, we re-affirm our common understanding of the centrality and authority of Scripture in determining the basis of our faith. Whilst we acknowledge a legitimate diversity of interpretation that arises in the Church, this diversity does not mean that some of us take the authority of Scripture more lightly than others. Nevertheless, each province needs to be aware of the possible effects of its interpretation of Scripture on the life of other provinces in the Communion. We commit ourselves afresh to mutual respect whilst seeking from the Lord a correct discernment of how God's Word speaks to us in our contemporary world.

We also re-affirm the resolutions made by the bishops of the Anglican Communion gathered at the Lambeth Conference in 1998 on issues of human sexuality as having moral force and commanding the respect of the Communion as its present position on these issues. We commend the report of that Conference in its entirety to all members of the Anglican Communion, valuing especially its emphasis on the need "to listen to the experience of homosexual persons, and...to assure them that they are loved by God and that all baptised, believing and faithful persons, regardless of sexual orientation, are full members of the Body of Christ"; and its acknowledgement of the need for ongoing study on questions of human sexuality.

Therefore, as a body we deeply regret the actions of the Diocese of New Westminster and the Episcopal Church (USA) which appear to a number of provinces to have short-circuited that process, and could be perceived to alter unilaterally the teaching of the Anglican Communion on this issue. They do not. Whilst we recognise the juridical autonomy of each province in our Communion, the mutual interdependence of the provinces means that none has authority unilaterally to substitute an alternative teaching as if it were the teaching of the entire Anglican Communion.

To this extent, therefore, we must make clear that recent actions in New Westminster and in the Episcopal Church (USA) do not express the mind of our Communion as a whole, and these decisions jeopardise our sacramental fellowship with each other. We have a particular concern for those who in all conscience feel bound to dissent from the teaching and practice of their province in such matters. Whilst we reaffirm the teaching of successive Lambeth Conferences that bishops must respect the autonomy and territorial integrity of dioceses and provinces other than their own, we call on the provinces concerned to make adequate provision for episcopal oversight of

dissenting minorities within their own area of pastoral care in consultation with the Archbishop of Canterbury on behalf of the Primates.

The Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church (USA) has explained to us the constitutional framework within which the election and confirmation of a new bishop in the Episcopal Church (USA) takes place. As Primates, it is not for us to pass judgement on the constitutional processes of another province. We recognise the sensitive balance between provincial autonomy and the expression of critical opinion by others on the internal actions of a province. Nevertheless, many Primates have pointed to the grave difficulties that this election has raised and will continue to raise. In most of our provinces the election of Canon Gene Robinson would not have been possible since his chosen lifestyle would give rise to a canonical impediment to his consecration as a bishop.

If his consecration proceeds, we recognise that we have reached a crucial and critical point in the life of the Anglican Communion and we have had to conclude that the future of the Communion itself will be put in jeopardy. In this case, the ministry of this one bishop will not be recognised by most of the Anglican world, and many provinces are likely to consider themselves to be out of Communion with the Episcopal Church (USA). This will tear the fabric of our Communion at its deepest level, and may lead to further division on this and further issues as provinces have to decide in consequence whether they can remain in communion with provinces that choose not to break communion with the Episcopal Church (USA).

Similar considerations apply to the situation pertaining in the Diocese of New Westminster.

We have noted that the Lambeth Conference 1998 requested the Archbishop of Canterbury to establish a commission to consider his own role in maintaining communion within and between provinces when grave difficulties arise. We ask him now to establish such a commission, but that its remit be extended to include urgent and deep theological and legal reflection on the way in which the dangers we have identified at this meeting will have to be addressed. We request that such a commission complete its work, at least in relation to the issues raised at this meeting, within twelve months.

We urge our provinces not to act precipitately on these wider questions, but take time to share in this process of reflection and to consider their own constitutional requirements as individual provinces face up to potential realignments.

Questions of the parity of our canon law, and the nature of the relationship between the laws of our provinces with one another have also been raised. We encourage the Network of Legal Advisers established by the Anglican Consultative Council, meeting in Hong Kong in 2002, to bring to completion the work which they have already begun on this question.

It is clear that recent controversies have opened debates within the life of our Communion which will not be resolved until there has been a lengthy process of prayer, reflection and substantial work in and alongside the Commission which we have recommended. We pray that God will equip our Communion to be equal to the task and challenges which lie before it.

"Now I appeal to the elders of your community, as a fellow elder and a witness to Christ's sufferings, and as one who has shared in the glory to be revealed: look after the flock of God whose shepherd you are." (1 Peter 5.1,2a)

4. Based upon what you know or have read, what work was undertaken on issues of communion by the Lambeth Conferences of 1988 and 1998?

THE REPORT

Section A. The Purposes and Benefits of Communion

Note: This section will be one of the more time consuming ones because of all of the references to Scripture. Do not miss the richness of these verses. Even before you read the Scripture that is referenced, pray that for the Holy Spirit to speak to you and teach you through the Word of God.

The communion we have been given in Christ: Biblical Foundations

1. Read para. 1. This paragraph, and the paragraphs following, will reveal God's glorious plan for the rescue of the whole created order. Make notes here regarding God's plan.
2. Read paragraph 2 of the W.R. on p. 11. Read Eph. 2:1-10.
 - (a) Who is the instrument of salvation identified?
 - (b) Who is "the ruler of the kingdom of the air who is now at work in those who are disobedient"? (See Jn. 12:31; Jn. 14:30, 16:11.)
 - (c) According to verses of Eph. 2:1-9, how do we receive salvation? What, if anything, can we do to earn it?
 - (d) Read Eph. 2:10. What has God in Jesus Christ prepared for us to do? Are these works a requirement for our salvation?
3. Read Eph. 2:11-22. Whom has God brought together in Christ? What is the foundation of God's household?
4. Read. Eph. 3:8-21. What does Paul see as the instrument through which the wisdom of God should be made known?
5. Read. Eph. 1:9-10 together with 22-23 and 4:1-16.
 - (a) How does Paul describe a life "worthy of the calling you have received?"
 - (b) What is the objective toward which the body of Christ is being "built up"? (v. 13, 15-16)

- (c) What are the dangers to be overcome? (v. 14)
- (d) What does “speaking the truth in love” mean to you?
6. Read Eph. 4:17-6:20 in the following Sections.
- (a) Eph. 4:17-32.
- i. What are some of the ways in which Paul distinguishes “the old self” from “the new self.”
 - ii. What does it mean in v. 30 to grieve the Holy Spirit?
 - iii. What are some of the behaviors that Paul calls us to alter?
- (b) Read Eph. 5.
- i. What is the “life of love” described by Paul?
 - ii. What is to be the role of “obscenity, foolish talk or coarse talking” for Christians? (v. 4)
 - iii. What are some ways to connect v. 1 and 18b-21 with the verses in the middle (vs. 3-18)?
 - iv. Read Ch. 5:22-33. Why do you believe these verses were included by the Lambeth Commission in its Scripture references in the W.R.?
7. Read para. 3 of Section A, p. 11, on “unity, community and radical holiness.
- i. What is the purpose of the “unity, community and radical holiness” to which we are called?
 - ii. What is the Gospel and what is the fruit of the Gospel according to para. 3?
 - iii. How is unity of Christ’s body brought into being? And, how is this unity sustained and maintained and enabled?
 - iv. What is it that renders “unity and communion” meaningless? Put in your own words how unity, communion and holiness are related?

8. Read paragraph 4 on p. 12 of the W.R.

i. Read 1 Cor. 1:1-3. The root for the Greek verb for sanctified is “hagiazō,” to set apart, and is the same as the root for “holy,” “hagios.” What does it mean to be holy or set apart?

ii. Read 1 Cor. 1:4-8. What is the fruit of the grace we are given in Christ Jesus? What does it mean to be kept strong so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ? What is the “day of our Lord”? (1 Cor. 5:4-5; Phil. 1:6 and 9-11; 1 Th. 5:2; Amos 5:18. These passages may give fresh meaning to the prayer, “world without end.”

iii. Read 1 Cor. 5. What is Paul’s pastoral and reconciling intent? What does Paul possibly mean by v. 3? Do you detect any maliciousness?

iv. What distinction or contrast is Paul making in 1 Cor. 5:9-13? Who are the “people of this world”?

v. Read 1 Cor. 12-13. Re-read 1 Cor. 12:3. Ask yourself whether you can call Jesus, “Lord.” If you cannot do so, I invite you to pray to receive Jesus as your Lord. Next, ask yourself whether you can use the Lord’s name in vain? If you can do so, unbothered, confess it and pray for Jesus Christ to come and dwell within you.

vi. Based upon Paul’s word, translate into your own words what it means to live as the Body of Christ, united in diversity, with agape love.

vii. Read 1 Cor. 12:7-31. What are your unique Spiritual gifts? How do you use your gifts for the common good?

viii. Reread 1 Cor. 12:12-26. How are the parts of the body to relate to one another? As you continue your study of the Windsor Report, keep in mind the question, “How have we failed in this?”

ix. Read 1 Cor. 13. What is the relationship of love to the other Spiritual gifts? As you continue your study of the Windsor Report, keep in mind the question, “How have we failed in this?”

x. Do Paul’s actions and judgment in 1 Cor. 5 reflect a lack of love? Why or why not?

- xi. Do you share Paul's goal of 1 Cor. 2:2? Why or why not?
9. Read para. 5 on p. 12 of the W.R.
- i. What are the “different interpretations of holiness” and “different interpretations of the range of appropriate diversity within our union and communion,” at issue?
 - ii. What is the source and purpose of our unity?
 - iii. What does the W.R. say is our grace given and grace full mission from God, in the power of the Holy Spirit?
 - iv. Ask yourself whether or not you believe that Jesus is Lord such that you can declare it to others. If not, invite Jesus to be Lord in your life.
 - v. How are “communion with God” and communion with one another both a gift and a “divine expectation?”