

Message from Bishop Rachel

2 August 2022

'Bishops are ordained to be shepherds of Christ's flock and guardians of the faith of the apostles, proclaiming the gospel of God's kingdom and leading his people in mission. Obedient to the call of Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit, they are to gather God's people and celebrate with them the sacraments of the new covenant. Thus formed into a single communion of faith and love, the Church in each place and time is united with the Church in every place and time.' (From the service of consecration)

Last week, [Bishop Robert wrote about the Lambeth Conference](#) and now we are here in Canterbury, alongside the Bishops from our partner dioceses.

There are about 700 Bishops from all over the world, plus about 500 spouses and ecumenical guests, and it is a privilege to encounter one another and hear about contexts very different from our own, with challenges we can only begin to imagine. One of the first Bishops I met from South Sudan said, 'I was born in war, I grew up in war, I married in war and I will probably die in war. 98% of my diocese cannot read or write and if I die, who will explain the scriptures to them?'

We are immersing ourselves in the First Letter of Peter, praying for God to be at work in us and between us as we reflect on what it means to be God's Church for God's world amid mess, anxiety and injustice.

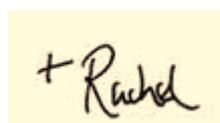
You can get an overview of each day's programme and content from the links at the bottom of this post, which are updated each day.

It is both wonderful and exhausting as we engage with a full programme in venues spread out across the campus (we are getting our steps in each day); and each day there are many words (and in different languages) as we worship together, listen to keynote addresses on different topics, engage in Bible study and story-sharing, and come together around tables to discuss a number of 'Calls'. The hope is that we will hear our different perspectives on the chosen subject (shaped by our contexts and varying resources) as well as identify the common resonances. There are of course some tensions, gaps and differences between us, yet so far the overall atmosphere is one of joy and thankfulness as we seek to be people of hope and embody our calling as Bishops.

Please continue to pray for us as we pray for you.

'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead ...'

(1 Peter 1: 3-5)

A handwritten signature in black ink on a yellow rectangular background. The signature reads "+ Rachel".