

Every Christian has a vital role to play in sharing their faith with others, Anglican Bishops from across the world have heard.



The first official Call discussed by the Lambeth Conference urges every Christian to pray that through their example at least one person could come to faith in Jesus Christ every year.

It also calls for dioceses to find creative ways to revitalise churches and plant new congregations to share the faith and for every church to be "renewed by the wonder and power of the good news of Christ".

And, crucially, the Call speaks of the need for churches around the world facing persecution to be supported in their witness, so that that they may be protected and stand firm in their faith.

Around 650 bishops from the Anglican Communion are meeting in Canterbury for only the 15th such global gathering in 155 years.

There are no resolutions at the 2022 Lambeth Conference. Instead bishops have been meeting to discuss the first of a series of "Lambeth Calls" designed to foster action by churches and Christians around the world long after the bishops have been meeting.

The first Call considers the subject of Mission and Evangelism "meaning reaching out to others and making new disciples of Jesus Christ."

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Addressing a plenary session ahead of the Call meeting, the Archbishop of York Stephen Cottrell said evangelism could be defined as “one beggar telling another beggar how to get bread”.

He told the Conference: “With my whole heart, my hope for the Anglican Communion and the call I hope we make today is that the local church, the local gathered and sent out community of women and men who follow Jesus will be a place where people - the thousands and thousands of people growing up in our world today who do not yet know Christ - can learn about and receive from Him and follow in His way.”

He added: “Evangelism itself, the actual business of bringing people to faith, that is the work of the Holy Spirit.”

“God is the evangelist. God is the one who brings people to faith in Christ and it is our responsibility as the evangelising Church to participate with God in God's work of bringing people to faith in Christ and to help everyone understand that they have a part to play and that they called to be witnesses to Christ.”

The text of the Call quotes the German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who was martyred during the Second World War.

Bonhoeffer summarised evangelism saying: “God loves human beings. God loves the world. Not an ideal human, but human beings as they are; not an ideal world, but the real world.”

“God calls every person through his great love, therefore it matters that those who have never heard this good news can hear it in a way they understand, so that they can respond to it.”



464 bishops responded to the Call with the following options:Â

- 'This Call speaks for me. I add my voice to it and commit myself to take the action I can to implement it' â **66%**
- 'This Call requires further discernment. I commit my voice to the ongoing process' â **33%**
- 'This Call does not speak for me. I do not add my voice to this Call' - **1%**

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The Call on Mission and Evangelism makes 10 specific requests.

- Each diocese and every church to seek fervently to be renewed by the wonder and power of the good news of Christ.
- Each diocese and every church to commit to prayer, listening and discernment, in the power of the Holy Spirit, to discern how to bear faithful witness to Christ and authentically proclaim the gospel. This to include praying for the
- Holy Spirit to work in hearts and minds so that the message of the gospel would be received and bear fruit
- In obedience to Christ's Â own charge, every church to commit itself to actions which purposefully present the good news of Christ so that all might hear the call of Christ and follow Him.Â
- Every Christian joyfully to understand that they are a witness to Jesus Christ praying that through this at least one other person each year might come to faith and grow as a disciple.Â
- That we pray for each other in this ministry and commit to listen to, learn from and find encouragement together in this Call.Â
- For Bishops to be equipped and enabled to lead in this evangelism. Following the apostolic example we are to lead God's church in God's world in bold proclamation.Â
- For each diocese to cherish, train and send evangelists.Â

- For each diocese to make a fresh and creative commitment revitalize churches and to plant new congregations in contextually appropriate ways, to reach those who have not yet heard the Gospel.Â
  - For the churches that are persecuted to be supported in their witness, that they may be protected and stand firm in their faith.Â
  - We call on the Secretary General to support and monitor progress in these areas with the help of the Commission on Evangelism and Discipleship, and to report back to the next ACC.
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