

FOUR SABBATICAL SCHOLARS AT DURHAM, CAMBRIDGE AND OXFORD

Interweavings January 2017, by the Rt Revd Dr Graham Kings.

Introduction

The first four sabbaticals in our Mission Theology in the Anglican Communion project have been very stimulating for all concerned. Last term Lydia Mwaniki and Lily Zareef were in Durham, and Hilary Garang was in Cambridge: this term Muthuraj Swamy is in Oxford. In this Interweavings article, we shall be considering the background and focus of each of these scholars.

1. The Revd Dr Lydia Mwaniki (November 2016 at St John's College, Durham)

Lydia is the Director of Theology, Gender and Family Life at the All Africa Conference of Churches, based in Nairobi, Kenya: she is also the Continental Editor for Africa of the Mission Theology project. She studied at St Andrew's College, Kabare, Kenya, during the late 1980s when I was the Vice Principal (I had the joy of preaching at her wedding) and then at St Paul's United Theological College (now University) Limuru, Kenya. Her Masters and PhD were taken at the University of Natal.

She flew into a cold Heathrow, London, from Nairobi an hour before Lily Zareef flew in from Cairo. Georgie Morgan, my Executive Assistant, met them and they both stayed at our house in Bermondsey for a weekend, which included fireworks night, 5th November. Then they travelled on to Durham by train.

Professor David Wilkinson, Principal of St John's College, Durham, had kindly offered the sabbatical to Lydia and welcomed her warmly, as did the staff and students of the College, and of Cranmer Hall, the theological college at St John's.

Lydia gave a Mission Theology seminar paper in the Department of Theology and Religion of the University, entitled '[Gender issues in African Development](#)'. This was part of the programme of the new Michael Ramsey Centre for Anglican Studies, which is directed by Professor Michael Snape, the Michael Ramsey Professor of Anglican Studies. The seminar room was full to overflowing and the discussion was incisive.

She also gave the same paper in the Faculty of Divinity, University of Cambridge, in the series chaired by the Revd Jesse Zink, Director of the Cambridge Centre for Christianity Worldwide (previously known as the Henry Martyn Centre) and at Lambeth Palace.

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Lydia stayed for two nights at Lambeth Palace and gave lectures to the Community of St Anselm on contextual bible studies.

Lydia comments on her experience: "My Sabbatical gave me a deeper experience and understanding of the Fellowship of the Anglican Communion. My comfort among other Anglicans was so real. I never at any one time felt a stranger among other Anglicans in St. Chad's or at St. John's."

2. Lily Zareef (November 2016 at St Chad's College, Durham)

Lily is the lecturer in Ethics and Church History, and manager of the Cairo branch of

the Alexandria School of Theology, Egypt. We met during our Mission Theology conference in Cairo in April. She studied economics at university and then theology at the Alexandria School of Theology and is applying for a PhD.

Dr Margaret Masson, the new Principal of St Chad's College, Durham, had kindly offered her a sabbatical and welcomed her, together with the staff and students. One Monday evening, Lily took part in 'Perspectives' (a regular panel discussion evening) at St Chad's College and spoke on the subject of the Arab Spring.

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When she and Lydia stayed for their final couple of days at our house in London she visited the Anglican Alliance at the Anglican Communion Office and took part in a Skype conference with others in the Alliance, before having lunch with the Revd John Kafwanka, Director of Mission at the ACO.

That evening she spoke on 'Whatever happened to the Arab Spring?' at the informal 'Beer and Theology' group, which I chair every six weeks at the Angel Pub in Bermondsey.

Lily said of her sabbatical: "It has been an informative and rich learning experience in many ways that can't be attained by staying in your home country; I appreciate this opportunity and value it very much. Some people say that by reading thousands of books you are living thousands lives; I would say traveling to other countries does that for you."

3. The Rt Revd Hilary Garang (late September to mid-December, Ridley Hall, Cambridge)

Hilary is Bishop of Malakal in South Sudan. He studied at Bishop Gwynne College, when it was a Mundri, and also for a year in Hamburg, where he learnt German and focused on Bonhoeffer. He is also a fine artist. We met during my first visit to Sudan in 2009, when I was Bishop of Sherborne in the Diocese of Salisbury. The Diocese's link with Sudan and South Sudan has lasted 43 years. We met again at the inauguration of South Sudan in July 2011 and he invited me to lead a clergy refresher course in Malakal, on the Nile in the north of South Sudan, in February 2012. Videos of worship and mission during that time may be seen [here](#) and photos [here](#).

Tragically, Malakal is now flattened. The Dinka-Nuer civil war in South Sudan destroyed the town including the Cathedral. Hilary is studying at the Uganda Christian University, Mukono, near Kampala, Uganda and visits his flock regularly in the refugee camps in Juba and Ethiopia.

The Revd Ian Woodward, chair of the Salisbury-Sudans Partnership which had co-sponsored his air fare, met Hilary at Heathrow and took him to a meeting at the Foreign Office before he travelled to Cambridge. At the end of his visit, Hilary also had time with friends in the Diocese of Salisbury.

Canon Andrew Norman, then the Principal of Ridley Hall, Cambridge, who had kindly offered the sabbatical, warmly welcomed Hilary with the staff and students. When I was an ordinand at Ridley Hall in the late 1970s, Canon Beniah Poggo, Principal of Bishop Gwynne College, Sudan, was on sabbatical and it was a joy for me to go back and hear Hilary give a lecture to the whole college on 29th November, entitled '[Second Revival In Episcopal Church Among the Dinka in South Sudan: 1970-2010.](#)'

The lecture was chaired by Dr Eva

John, Director of Pastoral Studies, who had served as a mission partner in Khartoum for five years and co-wrote the fine feasibility study on turning Bishop Gwynne College, now in Juba, into an Anglican University.

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The next morning Hilary and I met with the Revd Dr John Binns, Vicar of Great St Mary's, the University Church. John had recently finished writing a book on Ethiopian Christianity and he and Hilary discussed the Anglican Southern Sudanese refugees in Gambella, Ethiopia.

Hilary spent a day with us in Bermondsey before his flight back home to Kampala, and we walked to Tower Bridge along the Thames, comparing it to the Nile.

Bishop Hilary comments on his sabbatical: “I have been befitted and renewed to continue my ministry with a new fresh mind and spirit. I did a great amount of research on the work of the missionaries in Sudan and how God used them to bring light and freedom to us. This is research which I would not have had access to in Sudan itself.”

4. Dr Muthuraj Swamy (January to March 2017 Wycliffe Hall, Oxford,)

Muthuraj is Associate Professor of Religion and Chair of the Faculty of Theology at United Biblical Seminary, Pune, India. He is also the Asian Continental Editor of the Mission Theology project. He studied at the United Theological College, Bangalore, for his Bachelors and Masters degrees and at the University of Edinburgh for his PhD. His dissertation was published by Bloomsbury Press entitled ['The Problem with Interreligious Dialogue - Plurality, Conflict and Elitism in Hindu-Christian-Muslim Relations.'](#) Bloomsbury have

commissioned another book from him and so have Palgrave MacMillan.

His gave a paper at our Mission Theology conference in Bangalore in October 2016 and we visited Lambeth Palace Library and Westminster Abbey when he stayed with us for two days at the start of his sabbatical. On the 6th January, he gave a paper on 'Inter Faith Dialogue: is it worth it?' which was appropriate for the Feast of the Epiphany, at the Beer and Theology discussion at the Angel Pub.

The Revd Dr Michael Lloyd, Principal of Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, had kindly offered him the sabbatical and warmly welcomed him with the Revd Dr Andrew Atherstone, tutor in History and Doctrine. Muthuraj will be giving a seminar paper entitled 'Indian Christian Reactions to Anti-Conversion: An Overview and Some Proposals' at Durham University on 22nd February and at Lambeth Palace on 16th March. He also will be lecturing for the Community of St Anselm, speaking at a lunchtime meeting for the Church Mission Society in Oxford and visiting Ripon College, Cuddesdon, near Oxford.

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Four weeks into his Sabbatical, Muthuraj comments: “At the beginning of the sabbatical in the first week of January, it was wonderful to spend a couple of days with Bishop Graham in London. It was one of the most enriching experiences for me to visit Lambeth Palace and Westminster Abbey with him and attend prayer and Eucharist. At the Wycliffe Hall, I am having a good time - good interactions everyday with faculty members, staff, students and

visitors, and a bit of going around Oxford, and attending different Anglican churches every week to explore the diversity.”

Conclusion

The papers produced during these sabbaticals have been published on our site. They may also contribute to books in our forthcoming SPCK series, ‘Anglican Theologies: African, Asian, Middle Eastern and Latin American’, together with the papers produced by the other two parts of our programme: the global conferences (Cairo and Bangalore in 2016 and Jerusalem, Recife and Fiji in 2017) and the UK Seminars (2 a term each in Durham and Lambeth Palace).

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It has been an energising privilege and joy to spend time, at home and at different colleges and universities, with our first four sabbatical scholars, Lydia, Lily, Hilary and Muthuraj; I have learnt enormously from their lives, contexts, thinking and vibrant faith. I am very grateful to David Wilkinson, Margaret Masson, Andrew Norman and Michael Lloyd for their generosity in offering these sabbaticals and have been encouraged by their comments concerning the positive impact and influence the scholars have had in the universities in raising the horizons of theologians to offerings from the wider world.

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