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The Tale of a Centenary: Edinburgh 1910 to Edinburgh 2010

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I What's so special about 2010?

Keeping anniversaries is a very human thing to do. The church calendar is bulging with them. We have personal anniversaries, too, such as birthdays, wedding anniversaries and other significant mileposts in our lives. In many cultures, some call for special recognition, especially centenaries, or multiples of centenaries. For instance, 2011 marks the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible, also known as the Authorised Version. In many countries, Bible Societies and churches this is an opportunity to draw special attention, well beyond the church itself, to God's Word and the gospel it declares.

However, some cultures are much more likely than others to observe anniversaries, or indeed to choose different events and historical markers to

commemorate. The year 2000 was an exception. All over the world, whether or not they acknowledged the Christ in whose honour the original date came into being, people marked the start of a new millennium. 'Big' anniversaries became global currency. It was in this context that the Ghanaian, John Pobee, came to Edinburgh to give a millennial lecture. 'What are you planning to do to mark the Edinburgh 1910 centenary?' he asked. As a result, by 2001 a council was formed, bringing together several church leaders, some mission agency leaders, and representatives of several academic institutions. The Scottish initiative 'Towards 2010' was born.

This was conceived initially as a purely domestic undertaking. That is, it would be based in Edinburgh, would draw in a largely Scottish clientele, and would primarily be for the benefit of Scottish churches and institutions. It was decided to establish an annual day conference, in turn revisiting each of the eight commissions which formed the basis of the Edinburgh 1910 gath-

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ering.¹ Speakers might be invited from different parts of the world, but their common brief would be to summarise and analyse the original commission report of the topic assigned them, reflect on how its findings might have played out in the decades since, and then explore how that theme should be engaged in a new century and within the context of a radically different world and world church.

II ...and why celebrate 1910?

The overarching question behind the question, as it were, was this: what really happened at Edinburgh 1910 and what was and is its real legacy, especially when stripped of the revisionist myths that have come to be associated with it in some quarters? Brian Stanley, formerly of the Henry Martyn Centre in Cambridge, and now Andrew Walls' successor in Edinburgh, has given us a superb historical study in *The World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910*.² This is invaluable in getting at the true story of 1910, neither editing out its flaws nor dismissing its real achievements.

It has often been said that the chief legacy of the 1910 conference was the birth of the ecumenical movement, culminating in the formation of the World

Council of Churches(WCC). This has been repeated so often that it is now widely assumed, and to challenge it is difficult. But careful study of the world missionary movement between 1910 and the WCC's inception in 1948 shows that there were many other out-workings of 1910's findings that had little to do with the powerful final call to unity as it later came to be understood. Further, with few exceptions the 1910 delegates actually strongly resisted the concept of any kind of structural unity, but were more concerned to develop good working relationships and the avoidance of competition in the mission fields. For almost all of them, plurality remained an acceptable fact, it was how that worked out in practice that was the concern.

It was in the aftermath of the Second World War that a number of world bodies came into being, among them the WCC, and this reflected the particular post-war context: the desire to find ways of developing interdependent relationships that would prevent such hostilities in the future, the need to stand together against Communism's expansion, the need for something to fill the vacuum left by the disintegration of European Empires, the model of increasing internationalism of some business and media conglomerates. So, the United Nations, the WCC, the World Evangelical Fellowship (now Alliance), and IFES (International Fellowship of International Students), among numerous other bodies, all established world structures within a few years of each other.

It is interesting that sixty years later, and with all the ambiguities of globalisation, many groups—including

1 The eight 1910 Commissions were: Carrying the gospel to all the non-Christian world; The Church in the mission field; Education in relation to the Christianisation of national life; The missionary message in relation to the non-Christian religions; The preparation of missionaries; The home base of missions; Missions and Governments; Cooperation and the promotion of unity.

2 Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2009.

parts of the world church—are negative towards centralised structures and wish to affirm local identity and sovereignty. Global structures need to have a very light touch, with plenty of space for local diversity, especially if they are to attract younger generations. It is yet to be seen how this will impact world Christian organisations with their roots in the 1940s and 1950s, and generated from the western world.

III Edinburgh—not the Centre of the World!

John Pobee was not the only person who urged that a centenary celebration of Edinburgh 1910—whether by process or event—needed to be based in Edinburgh once again. Many churches and institutions, especially in sub-Saharan Africa and some parts of India, but also in East Asia and Latin America, trace their roots to the missionary service of Scottish women and men, and links remain strong to this day. Further, the veteran missiologist, Professor Andrew Walls, and the Centre for the Study of Christianity in the non-Western World, part of New College in the University of Edinburgh, drew (and draw) a significant number of Christian leaders and scholars to Edinburgh.

Many of them, too, believed it to be important that centenary celebrations should be located in the same place where the first great World Missionary Conference was held. For them, this was of both symbolic and historical importance. At the same time, a little later on, other voices from the global south, including Africa, urged that a centenary needed to be located in the

southern hemisphere, underlining the geographical shift of the worldwide church. This was one factor among others that in time would lead to the Lausanne and World Evangelical Alliance congress in Cape Town. It illustrates how superficial and patronising (albeit sometimes convenient) it is to speak of ‘the church of the global south’ as if it were one entity with one voice.

The annual conferences arranged by Towards 2010 attracted a small but enthusiastic following of around 80 people. Most of those who attended came from Scotland, or were internationals studying in Scotland at the time, while the greater majority of the speakers, generally scholars of international standing, came from various parts of the global south. This provided a salutary and often inspiring perspective, a vivid reminder that mission is no longer (as it was assumed in 1910) from the west to the rest, and a clear testimony to the stature of the church in many parts of the world today.

Of course, with a few exceptions these speakers were not evangelicals, and consequently operated from a variety of theological frameworks and with different understandings of contemporary mission. Nonetheless, there was considerable common ground, and generally respect when speaking of other traditions. Unlike 1910, Roman Catholics, Orthodox and Pentecostals shared the platform with Evangelicals and with Protestants of every hue. A slightly abridged version of the lectures is captured in *Edinburgh 2010: Mission Then and Now*.³

3 Edited by David Kerr and Ken Ross (Oxford: Regnum, 2009).

IV 'Towards 2010' evolves...

Quite early on, the lecture series attracted the attention of Jacques Matthey, then the senior staff person of the World Council of Churches' Commission for World Mission and Evangelism (CWME), and of Knud Jorgensen and Birger Nygaard of the Areopagos Foundation. Soon interest gathered momentum, and from a number of directions came the repeated suggestion of an international research project, along the lines of the 1910 eight commissions, but with fresh topics and with participation of all Christian traditions. By 2004, a slightly odd assortment of interested individuals—some academics, some representing a denomination or its mission board, some involved in global networks such as the WCC, WEA and Lausanne, a few Scottish leaders—met in Edinburgh to dream dreams, agree possibilities, and hammer out some preliminary plans. This group met again in 2005 and 2006, laying the groundwork for the nine study themes⁴ with both topics and explanatory texts to suggest questions that might be addressed, methodology to ensure international and multi-denominational engagement in each topic, and objectives and desired outcomes for the whole enterprise.

It is always easy to be wise after the

event, and in retrospect the informal way in which this evolved, dependent entirely on voluntary (and self-funding) engagement, with no precedent or blueprint to work from, led to some definite weaknesses. In particular, there were too few representatives in those formative stages from the global south. That might or might not have changed the list of chosen themes or recommended methodology. While CWME, Areopagos, and the Church of Scotland Board of Mission, each supplied some staff time, it was hard to press forward speedily enough. With no legal status under Scottish charity law, the group could not directly employ staff, and with no guaranteed funds in hand or way of predicting accurately what a realistic budget might look like, progress was difficult.

There was also some ambiguity as to whether the study process was primarily an academic project, or something closer to the 1910 commissions where a large proportion of the very numerous respondents were missionary practitioners or home staff of mission agencies. Moreover, in 1910 the extensive research had the specific goals of establishing data about the growth of the church worldwide, of identifying where pioneer work still needed to be done and the challenges standing in the way of gospel progress, and of agreeing strategy to move forward. But now, in 2010, if the study process were primarily academic, how would this serve and educate grass roots congregations?

In many places, academy and pew are two separate worlds. Evangelicals might deplore that separation, but often are no better than anybody else at bringing them together. Was it possi-

⁴ Foundations for mission; Christian mission among other faiths; Mission and postmodernities; Mission and power; Forms of missionary engagement; Theological education and formation; Christian communities in contemporary contexts; Mission and unity—ecclesiology and mission; Mission spirituality and authentic discipleship.

ble to bridge that chasm? Was it possible to have a study process that satisfied the expectations of the academy but also stimulated more effective missionary engagement in the everyday life of ordinary Christians? That tension was never fully resolved, although in the end most of the convenors co-ordinating groups working on one of the themes were not professional academics.

The University of Edinburgh's New College, the locus of its theological studies, was interested in an academic research project, especially a global one, and agreed to be the legal employer of an executive director, provided that the committee could guarantee funds for his salary. The WCC through CWME were particularly key in this, although it is important to stress (as indeed CWME are sensitive to stress) that at no point was the project a WCC project. They were simply one player among many, and CWME staff were very careful not to exercise more influence than anybody else. It is important to spell this out because some people wrongly assume that Edinburgh 2010 was a WCC event, in contrast to Cape Town being a Lausanne and WEA event. As it happens, both WEA and Lausanne were involved in the process from the beginning. In 2007, Daryl Balia of South Africa was appointed by the University as project director. That same year, the original committee altered shape somewhat and became a formal Council.

V ...and evolves some more

The Council was still drawn mainly from the north, and strongly European, but there were representatives also from

Latin America (Ruth Padilla de Boorst, Latin American Theological Fraternity), Africa (John Kafwanka, from the Anglican Communion; Ganoune Diop, Seventh Day Adventists; Joseph Otubu, African Independent Churches; Femi Adeleye, International Fellowship of Evangelical Students; Des van der Water, Council for World Mission), Asia (Julie Ma, Asian Pentecostal Society) and North America (Blair Carlson, Lausanne). Most of the denominational representatives were from or based in Europe, and perhaps more than was entirely helpful were based in Geneva simply because their offices were there. The mission agencies which had been so prominent in 1910 were largely ignored, in favour of specifically denominational church structures, and that may have been one area where WCC assumptions prevailed.

But what was unique (and I use the word advisedly) was that everybody, of whichever denomination or tradition or network, sat around the table on equal terms: Roman Catholics, Orthodox, mainline Protestants, Anglicans, Pentecostals, Evangelicals, Independents. In that sense it was profoundly ecumenical in the very best sense of the word, and despite real differences of history or conviction, warm personal friendships developed, accompanied by respect and the dismantling of some unhelpful stereotypes.

The Council confirmed tentative ideas, already floated, for a conference as a culmination of the study process, to be held in Edinburgh as close as possible to the 1910 dates, with a closing celebration in the Assembly Hall where the original missionary conference had met and made history. It was initially hoped that the conference could draw

1,200 delegates from around the world, with allocations made to each community represented in the Council in proportion to its constituency's approximate numbers worldwide. Each delegation should include women as well as men, youth as well as older leaders, academics and practitioners, and as strong a group from the global south as possible.

Sadly, in 2009, in the light of the financial crisis worldwide (making it almost impossible for stakeholders to raise sufficient money for their assigned number of delegates), and with complications in practical logistics in Edinburgh, the Council reluctantly scaled down the conference to a quarter of its original numbers. Inevitably, it is not possible to represent every permutation of the worldwide church among a mere 300, and in the event some constituencies were absent, causing aggravation to some delegates.

The expense of gathering the Council together meant that it met only annually, that is, three times before June 2010, which again in retrospect was probably insufficient for such a complicated undertaking. Further, it was essential for local people to carry forward quite a lot of the practical arrangements; realities on the ground meant that local decisions and actions sometimes had to overturn the Council's wishes. That caused some strain, and tested relationships.

But the truth was that without considerable voluntary service from Scottish Christians, and several local committees taking responsibility for particular matters such as music and worship, relationships with local churches, and the detailed planning of the final

celebration, it would not have been possible to mount a conference at all. At the same time, the interests and expectations of University, Scottish churches, international Council members and fundraisers were sometimes in conflict with one another rather than always complementary.

The appointment of Jasmin Adam from Germany as Communications Officer marked a big step forward, and made possible the development of the website and multiple dimensions of international engagement. In early 2009, Kirsteen Kim took on responsibility for taking the study process into a higher gear, to ensure that each theme would have at least one competent report prepared for circulation in advance of the June 2010 conference.

In some cases, theological institutions in different parts of the world hosted a conference on a particular study theme, but on the whole it proved difficult or even impossible for them to develop a consultation that embraced respondents from all over the world and from all traditions of the church. That does not mean that their findings were not valuable, but it was less than had been envisaged. Positively, it made it possible for some regional conferences (for instance in Latin America and India) to operate in languages other than English, and to consider themes in a highly contextual way. Some conferences were also held on a confessional basis.

VI Countdown for the Study Process

By the end of 2008, in an attempt to bring some coherence out of the many

different ways in which different bodies had picked up a theme (or all of them!), two convenors were appointed for each theme, normally a man and a woman, and usually from different church traditions and different parts of the world. Their task, with the help of a core group of respondents, was then to assemble papers written for conferences or submissions by interested individuals, stimulate discussion mostly by email, and then to produce a 10,000 word summary report of all the data gathered for their theme. These reports were then published in the volume *Edinburgh 2010: Witnessing to Christ Today*⁵ and circulated in advance to all delegates to the conference. Further materials were available on the website.

There was considerable freedom for each group to develop its work as it wished, and to tackle its topic in whatever way suited best its participating group. This meant that the scope and structure of the reports varies considerably. Most groups worked hard to involve participants from different traditions and different parts of the world, though some achieved that better than others. There were of course the perennial barriers of language, which made it impossible for some to join in even if potentially capable of bringing valuable contributions. That was especially the case perhaps for East Asians and some Latin Americans. Stakeholders passed along recommendations of people to invite, but who knows everyone on a world stage who could contribute?

Most of the work had to be done by email, and as a means of discourse quite apart from internet practicalities, that suits some cultures far better than others. Despite all this it is doubtful that there has ever been quite such a multi-traditional, international consultation within the world church before. Certainly for many respondents it was the first time they had been involved in something so completely beyond the boundaries of their own tradition or region.

VI The Conference

The conference was held at Pollock Halls, part of the University of Edinburgh, and right at the foot of the stunning (extinct!) volcanic rock of Arthur's Seat. Not quite 300 delegates came from 77 nationalities, with 62 mother tongues. They represented 115 denominations, and 202 organisations. This diversity is a creditable achievement within such a small total. Men outnumbered women two to one, which is of course not reflective of world church membership (Cape Town did not succeed here either!). Nearly two thirds were ordained, with a very strong contingent of senior church leaders including bishops and archbishops and metropolitans, making for some very colourful apparel! It also indicated how significant some denominations regarded the occasion, not necessarily so much because of the centenary of 1910 but because of the extraordinarily ecumenical nature of the gathering. This may well prove to be one of the things Edinburgh 2010 is most remembered for in the future.

Each day John Bell of the Iona Community led plenary acts of worship,

⁵ Edited by Daryl Balia and Kirsteen Kim (Oxford: Regnum, 2010).

drawing music from many traditions and from many corners of the world. There were small group Bible studies on two occasions, but these were poorly attended. Roman Catholics and Orthodox held their own services before breakfast each morning. There were optional late night prayers for all. There was a genuine attempt to integrate worship and authentic spirituality with the more theoretical business of the conference, and probably for many of the delegates it was the first taste of something so multi-traditional.

Much of each of the three full days was taken up with presentations from each of the thematic groups. Delegates opted for three out of the nine topics, with three running in parallel at any one time, and convenors built on what had been already circulated in their published papers. Convenors were asked to include plenty of time for group and plenary interaction, and also to consider how a number of transversal themes might intersect with their topic. These seven transversals⁶ were regarded as pertinent to all nine themes, and were intended as critiquing perspectives on them all.

It had originally been proposed that each delegate would spend all three days working on just one theme, but the logistics of the conference site made it impossible to have nine parallel tracks running at the same time. This was a disappointment to some,

who claimed that there was not time to deal with any topic in depth. It is certainly true that a purely academic conference would probably limit itself to only one or two of these very large topics, and that not everybody with something valuable to contribute had space and time to do so. For other delegates, it was a warmly appreciated advantage that they could taste at least some of the scope of several themes.

Apart from mealtimes there was little free time, but many delegates enjoyed the Pilgrimage organised by Jet den Hollander, one of the Council. Although confined to the Pollock Halls site, it was remarkably effective. Delegates moved from stopping point to stopping point, at each one presented with strong visual material relating to someone from church and mission history, and with the invitation to pause and give thanks, to reflect on the person's ministry, and to pray. These figures were drawn from many different traditions of the church, and many different parts of the world, and amongst some well-known figures were some of those who do not appear in standard church history books but who might well appear in a heavenly update of Hebrews 11.

After joining local congregations for morning services, the conference closed with a memorable final celebration held in the Assembly Hall where all the 1910 plenary sessions took place. Many friends from local churches, some local civic dignitaries, and representatives of other faiths, joined the delegates for a three hour finale, with the closing address being given by Archbishop John Sentamu of the Anglican Communion.

In the course of this service, dele-

⁶ These were: Women and mission; Youth and mission; Healing and reconciliation; Bible and mission—mission in the Bible; Contextualisation, inculturation and dialogue of world-views; Subaltern voices; Ecological perspectives on mission.

gates were invited to stand and affirm, paragraph by paragraph, the 'Common Call'. The full text of this may be found in the Appendix. Each paragraph had its roots in one of the nine study themes. The whole conference had been invited to comment and request modifications the previous day, and while some requests or suggestions were left on the cutting room floor (especially some of the more bizarre ones!), the final document was very widely accepted.

In fact, in an extraordinary way, while leaders of all the traditions gave their full blessing to the document, some evangelicals might be surprised at how hearteningly orthodox the statements are. Others will want to argue that there are many omissions, and that is true, along with the fact that each paragraph is very slight by virtue of its brevity. Nonetheless, and despite the fact that this is in no way a binding document formally adopted by denominations as a kind of twenty first century creed, it is extraordinary to have significant agreement across such diverse confessions and traditions. In a world where different traditions are too often seen only to be damning one another, it may be salutary to ponder whether there are constructive conversations we can and should have with those different from ourselves.

VII More Publications

As in 1910, 2010 has generated many books, and it is expected that there will finally be at least twenty (published almost entirely by Regnum, Oxford) springing directly out of the Edinburgh study process and conference. They

gather together papers and reflections from many traditions and many corners of the world church, and as such are an important resource, whether or not you happen to agree with the assumptions behind each author or their findings. Probably most will struggle to find wide currency beyond institutional libraries, though they deserve a wider readership. Whether or not the University of Edinburgh regard the finished project as satisfying their academic criteria, they are not saying! But one part of the project which certainly meets with their approval is the superb *Atlas of Global Christianity*.

The *Atlas*, edited by Todd Johnson and Kenneth Ross, and published by the Edinburgh University Press, is a huge work in every sense of the term, and its production was certainly inspired by the centenary of 1910. Part of the objective of the 1910 conference, including the work of its commissions, was to ascertain the state of world Christianity at that time, to gather as much data as possible from as many places as possible, and to use that as the basis for formulating strategies for taking forward the grand calling of the church in its mission to the whole world.

In many respects, the *Atlas* is thus absolutely in tune with the spirit of 1910, indeed far more so than some elements of the study process and the conference. Sadly, the *Atlas* is eye-wateringly expensive, and will mostly be in the reach only of institutions and the wealthiest of individuals. However, it is of wonderfully high quality, and will be a definitive and unique resource and reference work for decades to come. It is a truly impressive volume.

Apart from maps and statistics, it has articles relating to all major traditions of the world church, articles by regions of the world, articles on other world religions, data regarding missionary personnel, and (do I hear evangelicals cheering?) a fine extended section on evangelism since 1910. In my view, the *Atlas* will be one of the most significant legacies of Edinburgh 2010.

VIII Was it worthwhile?

From an evangelical perspective, what were some of the weaknesses of the Edinburgh 2010 project? First, there was a disappointingly sparse reference to Scripture in some of the nine theme reports, and clearly sociology or church tradition is often more influential than biblical revelation in forming principles of defining mission. (Before we cast stones, how much is evangelical understanding, praxis and strategy in mission derived from the behavioural sciences and/or the business world rather than Scripture?)

Secondly, probably in an attempt to be eirenical and ecumenical and inclusive, some of the deep fault-lines that exist between different parts of the world church simply did not surface to be debated openly and honestly. (Did Cape Town open up some of the profound tensions among evangelicals in relation to theology, praxis and strategy, or were we too concerned to provide a united front?)

Thirdly, for reasons already described above, the project was still largely driven from the west and north; it is easier said than done to escape from history and habit and money, as indeed Cape Town also demonstrated, despite all attempts to the contrary.

Fourthly, the words 'evangelism' and 'missionary' were largely absent, although 'missio Dei' or 'the mission of the church' was acceptable, and of course some evangelicals involved in either study process or event wrote and spoke of both evangelism and missionaries. The concept of 'unreached peoples', where by definition the church does not yet exist, or of 'cross-cultural mission', did not seem to appear on the radar screen of many delegates. In some cases, for instance for Orthodox, there is the historic commitment to territoriality, and any other Christian initiative is *de facto* proselytism with strongly negative connotations. For some, inevitably in such a wide cross-section of church traditions, it was wrong to seek the conversion of anyone from another faith, though most would still claim it was our duty to 'witness to Christ' in a very fuzzy manner.

Our forebears in 1910, with very few exceptions, would have found this beyond their understanding—even if sometimes their view of mission was flawed by imperialistic assumptions and cultural superiority, their objective was the conversion of those among whom they laboured. They knew very well that all religions are not the same, and were unapologetic about claiming the uniqueness of Christ. Yet even in 1910, the cracks were already beginning to show.

Fifthly, there was little recognition of the role of mission agencies today, unless they were specifically the mission agencies within a denominational structure. Evangelicals, too, can have plenty of sterile disputes about the comparative roles of church and so-called para-church, but we also know

that a great deal of contemporary mission is carried out through interdenominational agencies and independent groups not under the direct jurisdiction of any denomination.

Further, much discipling is done by individual believers in the course of their daily life and relationships. Perhaps that is especially true of women, whether in relation to their children or to their neighbours. There was one bitter swipe from one plenary speaker against tele-evangelists, and sadly the implication remains that this is what all evangelicals look like and how they engage in mission. Who does what and how, and controlled by whom, remains a subject of disagreement.

Perhaps the connection between this and point four above is the assumption in some quarters that mission is only what a local church does, and only what it does locally, where mission is identified primarily with the congregation's internal life and not with outreach. While it is undoubtedly biblical that a local Christian community is to bear witness to Christ through all it is and does, its worship, its catechesis, its body life, mission also requires an intentional reaching out beyond itself to those outside. That witness beyond itself must include witness of word, life and character, the proclamation and demonstration of the truths, the facts, the demands, of the biblical revelation and supremely the revelation in Jesus Christ.

And following on, sixthly, for some undoubtedly the whole enterprise was more about ecumenism than about mission. As an ecumenical gathering, it was arguably indeed unique, and we should not immediately write that off as irrelevant. But, as the celebration of

the centenary of 1910 with its focus on world mission, it would have been good to have world mission more consistently at the heart of 2010.

IX Past history or future legacy?

Will any of the efforts relating to 2010 actually make any difference to the cause of the gospel around the world—to the effective discipling of men and women and children, of individuals and communities? Will there be transformed and transformative communities of believers as a result? Time will tell. Actually, that is what we have to say about Tokyo and Cape Town, too, not just about Edinburgh. Certainly, friendships and connections were made which would not otherwise have come into being. Books will remain, capturing thoughts, longings, visions from around the world. The *Atlas* will be a powerful resource for decades.

Edinburgh 2010, like other events held during the year, was a vivid expression of the phenomenal growth of the world church in the past century, in the grace of God. Many delegates came from places where a hundred years ago there was no known Christian witness, or maybe just an infant church. Unlike some other events Edinburgh also brought together those from very ancient churches as well as from the younger churches, in equal partnership, and explored commonalities as well as diversity. These things, I think, will remain.

Some evangelicals (and indeed some of many other traditions, too) will no doubt say that involvement in such an enterprise is at best a waste of time

and at worst a betrayal of the gospel. I would have to disagree strongly, though I do not think it would have been a suitable arena for everyone. At no point was I required to surrender my evangelical beliefs. There were many occasions, especially within the Council and committees, where it was fully possible to find deep consensus around biblical fundamentals, transcending traditions and tribes, and a great desire to see the Lord glorified and honoured.

In these early years of the twenty first century, for some Christians in acutely minority situations, surrounded by another religion or aggressive secularism, the need to find common ground with others claiming the name of Christ, and some measure of respect, support and solidarity, is par-

ticularly urgent. For all of us, the Lord's prayer that we should be united and at one, reflecting the unity within the Trinity itself, in order that the world might believe, is as crucial as it has ever been. Evangelicals have historically been fragmented even among themselves, and we need to repent deeply over that. Christian disunity remains a huge stumbling block to the unbelieving world, destroying the credibility of our message and claims. If we are truly committed to the Lord and his clear word, and to the cause of the gospel, how can we shut our eyes to our costly disobedience?

So now, where will the Lord lead his people for the future? Whatever that future holds, may the glory of the Lord increasingly fill the whole earth as the waters cover the sea.

Appendix

Edinburgh 2010: The Common Call

We believe the church, as a sign and symbol of the kingdom of God, is called to witness to Christ today by sharing in God's mission of love through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

1. Trusting in the Triune God, we are called to incarnate and proclaim the good news of salvation for a fallen world, of life in abundance, and of liberation for all poor and oppressed in such a way that we are a living demonstration of the love, righteousness and justice that God intends for the whole world.
2. Remembering Christ's sacrifice on the Cross and his resurrection for our salvation, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we are called to authentic, respectful, and humble witness among people of other faiths to the uniqueness of Christ, which is marked with bold confidence in the gospel message, and which builds friendship, seeks reconciliation and practises hospitality.
3. Knowing the Holy Spirit who blows over the world at will, reconnecting creation and bringing authentic life, we are called to become communities of compassion and healing, where young people are actively participating in mission, and women and men share power and responsibility fairly, where there is new zeal for justice, peace and the protection of creation, and bold and creative liturgy reflecting the beauties of creator and creation.

4. Disturbed by the asymmetries of power that divide and trouble us, we are called to repentance, to critical reflection on and accountable uses of structures of power, and to seeking practical ways to live as members of One Body in full awareness that God resists the proud, Christ welcomes and empowers the poor and afflicted, and the power of the Holy Spirit is manifested in our vulnerability.
5. Affirming the importance of the biblical foundations of our missional engagement and valuing the witness of the Apostles and martyrs, we are called to rejoice in the expressions of the gospel in many nations all over the world, in the renewal experienced through movements of migration, and in the way God is continually using children and young people in furthering the kingdom.
6. Recognising the need to shape a new generation of leaders with authenticity to minister to a world of diversities in the twenty-first century, we are called to work together in new forms of theological education which draw on one another's unique charisms, challenge each other to grow in faith and understanding, share resources more equitably worldwide, involve the entire human being and the whole people of God, and respect the wisdom of our elders while also fostering the participation of children.
7. Hearing the call of Jesus to make disciples of all—poor, wealthy, marginalised, ignored, powerful, young, and old—we are called to communities of faith receiving from one another in our witness by word and action, in streets, offices, homes and schools, bringing reconciliation, showing love, demonstrating grace and speaking out truth.
8. Recalling Christ, the host at the banquet, and committed to the unity for which he lived and prayed, we are called to ongoing co-operation and to work towards a common vision, while welcoming one another in our diversity, affirming our membership through baptism in the One Body of Christ, and recognising our need for mutuality, partnership and networking in mission, so that the world might believe.
9. Remembering Jesus' way of witness and service, we believe we are called by God to follow it joyfully, inspired, anointed and empowered by the Holy Spirit, nurtured by Christian disciplines in community, to bring God's transforming and reconciling love to the whole creation.