

# Oxford/K and K Summit – 2017

## South Africa summit to explore discipleship



*From left, Fr Tefo Motaung, Fr Elias Tsabeng, Revd Heather Steenkamp and Maranda St John Nicolle in Kimberley and Kuruman.  
Photo: Catharine Morris*

WHAT does it mean to be a disciple of Christ? And how do people in very different contexts walk together as partners in the gospel?

These are the questions that over fifty people from our diocese and our link diocese of Kimberley and Kuruman will be discussing together at a summit in Kimberley, South Africa, from 14-18 September. The summit brings together representatives of linked parishes, young people, and people with leadership roles within the link and within the two dioceses, including both diocesan bishops.

Participants will engage together in prayer and Bible study. They'll visit different parishes for Sunday worship and explore the history of Kimberley so as to better understand the context of the Kimberley and Kuruman Diocese today. And they'll discuss a series of questions relating to mission: Why and how do we cherish God's creation? What are the things in our church life that engage – or don't engage – young people? How do we discuss and respond to inequalities that distort right relationships in our families, church and society?

Our prayer is that the time together will deepen both diocese's understanding and love of God and each other, help us to grow as disciples of Christ, and make our partnership both deeper and wider.

# A report from Huhudi



Small groups of people from the Diocese of Oxford have been arriving in South Africa ahead of a Summit between the linked dioceses. They have been spending time with their link churches. Breyan and Janet Knowles from St John the Baptist in Moultsford travelled to Huhudi last week to share services and time with friends at St Philip's, their link, as well as visiting local schools and hospitals. They also visited a church in Dithakwaneng which is part of St Philip's.

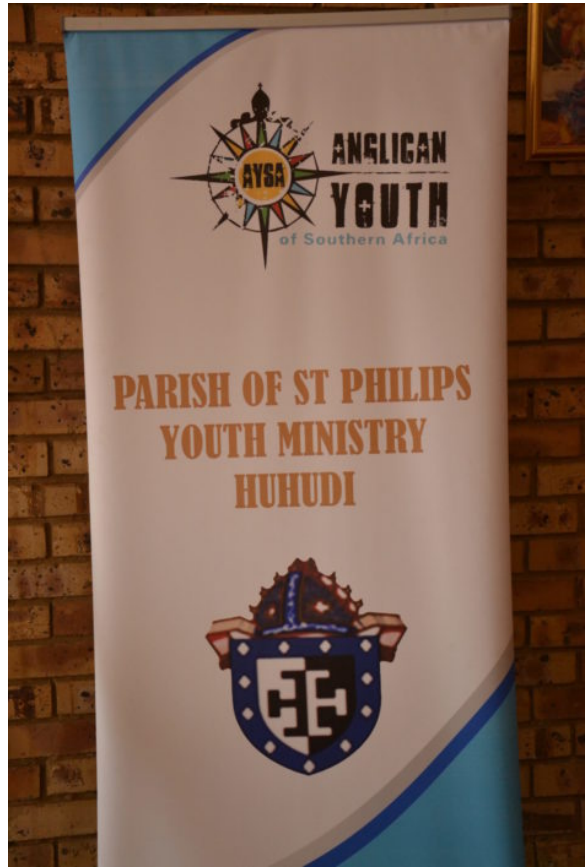
St John's and St Philip's say their partnership is about spiritual growth and growing together as two parishes. They have shared materials and ideas over the past year. Breyan and Janet also met members of the youth ministry team at St Philip's and heard how they'd spent a busy year doing outreach and campaigning work. The youth group (which takes members aged from 18 to 35) had provided a soup kitchen for young children in the parish and had organised a march in the town to raise awareness of issues such as child abuse and violence against women. One of the youth members of the church will be at the summit in Kimberley along with youth workers from both dioceses.

Diocesan youth advisor, Ian McDonald who will be at the summit said:

“Young people are a key part of church wherever church is, not to involve them is to miss out part of the body: their questions help and challenge us. One of the things I am excited about is that we don't have a set list of common themes that we are going to explore, we will see what emerges in conversation and discussion. The issues and the opportunities we have

in common will be a fruitful piece of learning, the things that are very different will also lead to some opportunities to see things with fresh eyes.”







# Bishop of Oxford joins link summit in South Africa



THE Bishop of Oxford has joined over 50 people from the Diocese of Oxford and our link diocese of Kimberley and Kuruman for a four-day summit. It's being held in Kimberley, South Africa, and brings together representatives of linked parishes, young people, and people with leadership roles within the link and within the two dioceses, including both diocesan bishops.

Participants will engage together in prayer and Bible study. They'll visit different parishes for Sunday worship and explore the

history of Kimberley so as to better understand the context of the Kimberley and Kuruman diocese today. And they'll discuss a series of questions relating to mission: Why and how do we cherish God's creation? What are the things in our church life that engage – or don't engage – young people? How do we discuss and respond to inequalities that distort right relationships in our families, church and society?

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15TH SEPTEMBER 2017/



# Summit Report



A summit between the linked dioceses of Oxford and Kimberley & Kuruman in South Africa has ended with both dioceses committing to expand their work together.

During the 5 day conference, held in Kimberley, around 50 representatives from churches in

England and South Africa met to share worship, reflect on Scripture and discuss how the two dioceses could work more closely in mission "journeying together within the Body of Christ" This involved discussion both about key mission issues and about how best to take the link forward and strengthen it in the future. Currently there are 9 official links, some of which have been running for over two decades. They all work in slightly different ways but have a common theme of working as equal partners and journeying together in faith.

The four mission themes were discipleship, care for creation, advocacy on inequality, and the role of young people in the church. For the first three, speakers from both South Africa and the UK offered presentations; the session on young people's role involved about 60 young people, who shared their hopes and concerns. Conversations about the future followed, which resulted in ideas about how churches in each diocese can take the work forward in their own context and support the work of their link partners. Representatives in the care for creation discussions, for example, identified environmental objectives they'd like to achieve by the end of the year with delegates from K&K proposing to create guidelines on key topics like energy use, include sessions on the environment at major diocesan events, and identify areas where they could advocate, such as pushing for a ban on plastic bags. The Oxford group plans to present material from the summit to their parishes, identify champions for key issues, explore ways of influencing wider church policy on the environment, and lobby MPs and local councils. Delegates from both dioceses will be joining an online group to keep each other updated on their progress.

Delegates talked about the depth of friendship at the summit and many commented that the length of the time together, coupled with the variety of discussions, worship, and activities, offered a great opportunity to pick up where they'd left off with their link partners, as well as to build relationships with people they hadn't previously known. One described it as being "spiritually one in God".

Canon Carol Starkey, chair of the Kimberley and Kuruman link committee, said:

“I think delegates got a better understanding of not only the link or other links but also personal interaction.”

**In his closing speech to the summit, Bishop Steven said:**

“The link has my full support and I will bless it and be the bishop for the link. It needs cherishing, nurturing and taking forward and I will commit to doing that. We are the yeast for this link – we can do a power of good as we release the power of what we learn together.”

**Bishop Ossie, who oversees the Diocese of Kimberley and Kuruman said:**

“For a glorious few days we were on really, really, really holy ground as we looked back a little, but mainly cast our view forward as we contemplated possibilities for our future partnership. We received new energy for our care of creation, a new awareness of our calling to fight injustice and inequality, to seek fresh ways in our proclamation and nurturing the next generation. We pray for a continued sense of the transforming power of God as we descend to the plain – to the coalface. Together we can do so much more as we encourage one another.”

**25TH SEPTEMBER 2017/**

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