

Changing World, Changing Church: Stephen Bayne and “Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence”

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Following the Second World War, the Anglican Communion confronted a changing world, marked by a shift of power away from the historically preeminent churches, challenges to historic approaches to mission, and a global ecumenical movement. At the 1963 Anglican Congress, the Communion responded with “Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ,” a dramatic call for a new pattern of Anglicanism. The person at the center of this change was Stephen Bayne, an American bishop serving as the first Anglican Executive Officer. Bayne crafted a missiology that was both practical and contextual, stressing personal relationships over ecclesial bureaucracy, emphasizing a new model of mission in which all gave and received, and showing how a strengthened Anglican identity could strengthen ecumenism. As the Anglican Communion again faces a challenging world, Stephen Bayne and MRI are important reminders of how the church has confronted change in the past.

Before the Second World War, the Anglican Communion was a loose affiliation of churches around the world, linked by a common tie to the Archbishop of Canterbury, a once-a-decade Lambeth Conference of bishops, a single Congress for lay people and priests in 1908, and nebulous appeals to the authority of a common prayer book and episcopate. But the world began to change rapidly following the end of the war—former colonies became independent countries, technological advances came with startling rapidity, the world’s population grew quickly, and theologians began to grapple with the massive death

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and destruction of the war and the rise of a militantly atheistic superpower—and the Anglican Communion was buffeted by and swept up in these momentous changes. The Communion responded by dramatically reinventing itself, culminating in “Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ,” a manifesto approved by the 1963 Anglican Congress in Toronto that called for a new way of being Anglican in the world.

The person at the forefront of this change was an American bishop, Stephen Fielding Bayne, Jr., who was named the first Executive Officer of the Anglican Communion in 1959. Bayne was working in a particular context that was marked by a shift in power from the historically preeminent Church of England to the rapidly growing churches in the former colonies; challenges to the traditional definition of mission as a gift from the “older” churches to the “younger” churches overseen by individual mission agencies; and a growing global ecumenical movement that raised serious questions about Anglican identity, structures, and organization. In response, Bayne was instrumental in crafting a missiology that provided a new foundation for the Anglican Communion. His view of mission stressed personal relationships over ecclesial bureaucracy, emphasized that everyone gives and receives in mission, and that mission is from God and not the church. Bayne’s missiology also demonstrated how a stronger Anglican identity could strengthen the ecumenical movement. At a time of global ferment, Stephen Bayne thus played a critical role in developing a missiology that was practical and contextual in that it responded to the unique set of circumstances that characterized the time in which he lived. Though it eventually faded in significance, MRI was a major document that embodied “an extensive and . . . painful yet hopeful program of renewal” for the church.¹ Now, in a time of renewed ferment in the Anglican Communion, a close study of the particular theology developed by Stephen Bayne and the legacy of MRI is important, so that we may remember—and learn from—how the church has confronted change in the past.

Changing World, Changing Church

At the height of the British Empire, colonial missionaries, both British and American, had controlled overseas missions and churches,

¹ “Second Chance for Anglicanism,” *Christian Century* (August 28, 1963): 1045.

creating the impression—and fact—that “native Churches were in ‘leading strings’ firmly under the direction of their missionary nannies.”² But in the period of decolonialism following the Second World War, the dominant role historically accorded the Church of England in the Anglican Communion began to fade. One contemporary observer called the Church of England “old, established, and a trifle condescending” and concluded that the British needed “to be told that they could no longer cultivate their English cabbage patch as if other Churches did not exist.”³ *Time* magazine called the Church of England a “relic of history” and concluded Anglicanism was “prospering almost everywhere except in England.”⁴

At the same time, former colonial churches were growing as independent provinces of the Anglican Communion. In part, this was seen in the growing role of the American Episcopal Church vis à vis the Church of England. This shift was sustained by the American church’s financial resources and the country’s emergence as a superpower in the postwar era. By Lambeth 1958, some British missionary leaders were predicting that the American church would soon become the senior partner in mission efforts.⁵ The growing prominence of the Episcopal Church was reflected in the 1960 report from the Committee of Conference on Overseas Missions chaired by Connecticut Bishop Walter H. Gray that called for increased overseas missions commitments by the Episcopal Church and more cooperation with other Anglican churches. But Gray “saw the Anglican Communion as an extension of the Episcopal Church. In this he was not wholly dissimilar to the British view of the Anglican Communion, except that the Episcopal Church, U.S.A., was now the ‘mother church.’”⁶

But the larger shift was the growth of churches in countries that were in the process of gaining their independence, part of the dramatic growth in all forms of Christianity in the developing world during this

² Kevin Ward, “The Development of Anglicanism as a Global Communion,” in *Anglicanism: A Global Communion*, ed. Andrew Wingate, Kevin Ward, Carrie Pemberton, and Wilson Sitshebo (New York: Church Publishing, 1998), 18.

³ Peter Whiteley, *Frontier Mission: An Account of the Toronto Congress 1963* (New York: Seabury Press, 1963), 7, 61.

⁴ “Anglicans: Empty Pews, Full Spirit,” *Time* (August 16, 1963).

⁵ Ian T. Douglas, *Fling Out the Banner! The National Church Ideal and the Foreign Mission of the Episcopal Church* (New York: Church Hymnal Corporation, 1996), 239.

⁶ Douglas, *Fling Out the Banner*, 253.

period. Observers spoke of “older” and “younger” churches in the Communion and noted the energy in the newer churches: “The emergence of a new sense of dignity and national aspiration, which came with the breakdown of the colonial system, has made the paternalistic view of missionary work insufferable to the younger churches. . . . The peoples of the younger provinces . . . do not want to be patronized.”⁷ Bayne detected a “new self-consciousness and confident assertiveness of the indigenous peoples of the world, no longer willing to accept their sometime role as wards of the West.”⁸ Slowly, Anglican leaders began to realize the significance of the growing heterogeneity of their Communion. Ohio Bishop Nelson Burroughs said about the 1963 Congress, “For the first time it dawned on us that the Anglican Communion is no longer an English church.”⁹ Even as they recognized the significance, few knew how to respond to it. Bayne said a common response among members of “older” churches was to think that “the world was comfortable once, but it is not comfortable anymore; that our amiable security is threatened by people who will not any longer stay content with what they once had; that we had better dig a hole and crawl into it and pull it in after us and hope that somehow, some miracle will take away the ache of the times.”¹⁰

Historically, overseas mission by the Church of England had been conducted by individual mission-sending agencies, such as the Church Missionary Society or the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. More missionaries in the United States were sent by the national church structures, but there were also several independent agencies. While many of these organizations had deep historical roots—the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge dated to 1698—the result was that there was no central planning, and mission efforts were the subject of only “sporadic and casual discussion.”¹¹ Moreover, the multiple agencies sometimes competed among one

⁷ John Heuss, *The Implications of the Toronto Manifesto: The Thirty-ninth Hale Memorial Sermon* (Evanston, Ill.: Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, 1965), 21.

⁸ Stephen F. Bayne, Jr., “The Anglican Communion and the World Mission of the Church,” *The Episcopal Overseas Mission Review* III, no. 3 (1958): 1.

⁹ Quoted in R. David Cox, “A Vision to Fulfill: ‘Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence’ in the Anglican Communion” (S.T.M. thesis, Yale Divinity School, 1987), 126.

¹⁰ Stephen F. Bayne, Jr., “Following is Mission,” address at 60th General Convention, 1961, in Stephen F. Bayne, Jr., *An Anglican Turning Point* (Austin, Tex.: Church Historical Society, 1964), 211.

¹¹ Heuss, *The Implications of the Toronto Manifesto*, 5.

another for territory and the churches they established were often seen less as Anglican than as belonging to a particular mission agency.¹² By the time of the Toronto Congress, when there were about a dozen independent mission boards in the Church of England, people had begun to see them as a hindrance to unified mission.¹³ Because the missionary societies were voluntary, the majority of churchgoers could easily ignore foreign mission, with the result that many Anglicans displayed a “shocking lack of enthusiasm for mission.”¹⁴

The American and British missionaries sent to the colonies had generally operated from a particular mindset that emphasized “good schools, good hospitals and right-ordered worship” in the overseas churches.¹⁵ For these missionaries, mission consisted of what they could produce, measure, and report back to their sending churches. But, Bayne noted in a 1961 speech, that was no longer an option for Anglicans: “I go in the Orient or to Africa, and look at the great benefactions of time past when it was possible for great hospitals and universities and school systems to be built out of the munificence of churches. That kind of thing cannot happen any more in many parts of the world. We cannot give these things . . . we cannot overawe and impress with riches.”¹⁶

Moreover, church missionaries had often gone hand-in-hand with cultural imperialism and privilege.¹⁷ Bayne highlighted this in Toronto: “Christians in the older churches simply do not understand the enormous cultural prestige, in time past, which enveloped the missionary, whether he wanted it so or not. . . . [The missionary] did not scheme and plot to win national or cultural prestige. It was thrust on him by the history within which he lived.”¹⁸ Missionaries, in a common stereotyped view mentioned by Bayne, were marked by a cultural exclusivity: they lived “in a kind of compound, a kind of Little America out of which [they] reached to do something to those

¹² Howard A. Johnson, *Global Odyssey: An Episcopalian's Encounter with the Anglican Communion in Eighty Countries* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), 381.

¹³ Cecil Northcott, “Rebirth of a Church?” *Christian Century* (September 4, 1963): 1071.

¹⁴ Heuss, *The Implications of the Toronto Manifesto*, 18.

¹⁵ Douglas, *Fling Out the Banner*, 139.

¹⁶ Stephen F. Bayne, Jr., “Four Notes of Mission,” address at annual meeting of Overseas Mission Society, 1961, in *An Anglican Turning Point*, 205.

¹⁷ Ward, “The Development of Anglicanism as a Global Communion,” 14.

¹⁸ *Anglican Congress 1963: Report of Proceedings*, ed. E. R. Fairweather (New York: Seabury Press, 1963), 188.

natives.”¹⁹ But beyond missionaries, Bayne also connected the church more generally with cultural dominance when he recalled the views of his former parishioners as representative of those of many Anglicans: “Many people . . . had the feeling that the Church was an association of people, a kind of memorial association for a deceased clergyman named Christ, whose ideals were important and who was an early supporter of the ‘American Way of Life.’”²⁰ As more and more countries became independent, this close connection between religious and cultural views became less and less tenable.

While power in the Anglican Communion was shifting to the south and east and challenging traditional definitions of mission, religious leaders around the world were responding to the destruction caused by the Second World War with a growing drive toward ecumenism and Christian unity. *The New York Times* called the “world-wide drive for Christian unity . . . one of the most important religious manifestations of our time.”²¹ Many Anglican leaders welcomed this trend—Archbishop of Canterbury Michael Ramsey was a co-president of the World Council of Churches—but ecumenism still raised serious questions about what Anglicans were to be, if they were to be at all. One observer worried that just as Anglicanism was blossoming worldwide, “the sincere concern for ecumenicity . . . threatens to whittle down various national sections of the Anglican Communion and greatly alter its historic form.”²² The formation of the Church of South India, which united several Protestant denominations with Anglicans in 1947, was an early example in this period of what ecumenism could produce. The Anglican Church in the region had been subsumed into a larger body and that weighed heavily on the minds of many Anglican leaders, including Bayne.²³ Beyond South India, there were discussions at various levels of seriousness in Nigeria, the Philippines, Pakistan, and elsewhere about the formation of united churches that would do away, it was feared, with Anglicanism’s unique heritage.

Ecumenism posed a particular challenge to Anglicanism because being Anglican has historically been difficult to define. Unlike other churches, there was no common confession to which all Anglicans subscribed and no central organization to which all were obedient,

¹⁹ Bayne, “Four Notes of Mission,” 200.

²⁰ *Anglican Congress 1963*, 130.

²¹ Editorial, “An Anglican Manifesto,” *The New York Times*, August 20, 1963, 31.

²² Heuss, *The Implications of the Toronto Manifesto*, 7.

²³ See, for example, Bayne, “The Anglican Communion and the World Mission of the Church.”

meaning the Communion lacked any clear grounds for association. Bayne himself had strong advice for those who wanted to define what the Anglican Communion is: "Don't! That way lies madness. . . . I have tried it. Take it from me, it cannot be defined."²⁴ If identity wasn't problem enough, Anglicans were also thinking about how to organize themselves. Historically, bishops had met at Lambeth Conference and that had seemed to be sufficient for the needs of a highly decentralized Communion. But as the world grew more complex, so too did the Anglican Communion. One observer commented that until Bayne's appointment there had never been "anything but the most sporadic and casual discussion or concern about the single missionary effort of the Anglican Communion as a whole. . . . I do not believe that we can afford the old-fashioned, unplanned and uncoordinated missionary outreach of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries."²⁵ It was common to conclude that the existing governance tools the Communion had were no longer sufficient: "A Lambeth Conference held once a decade is not frequent enough in a world where you have to run twice as fast just to stand in the same place."²⁶

Anglican leaders were aware of the challenge posed by what Bayne called "the swiftly changing" nature of the world.²⁷ The result was "a desperately difficult time for Anglicanism," as one cleric noted in Toronto,²⁸ while others said the church was dying. Anglicans seemed like "one, big, and far from happy" family, commented *Time* magazine.²⁹ Depending on who was writing, Anglicans were consigned to a period of "agony" or "anguish."³⁰

The Genesis of "Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence"

Anglican leaders convened two gatherings of lay people and clergy in the postwar period, in addition to the Lambeth Conferences

²⁴ Bayne, "Four Notes of Mission," 204.

²⁵ Heuss, *The Implications of the Toronto Manifesto*, 5.

²⁶ Johnson, *Global Odyssey*, 392. Bayne made a similar point in Toronto; see *Anglican Congress 1963*, 185.

²⁷ *Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ, with Related Background Documents*, ed. Stephen F. Bayne, Jr. (New York: Seabury Press, 1963), 27.

²⁸ The Rev. Roger Lloyd, canon at Winchester Cathedral, as quoted in "Anglicans: Empty Pews, Full Spirit."

²⁹ "Anglicans: One Big Family," *Time* (August 23, 1963).

³⁰ Heuss, *The Implications of the Toronto Manifesto*, 5; Bayne, "The Anglican Communion and the World Mission of the Church," 3.

of bishops, to respond to the changing times. The first Anglican Congress in nearly fifty years was held in 1954 in Minneapolis, and recommended the creation of a secretariat to oversee the work of the Communion. After the bishops approved the idea at Lambeth in 1958, Bayne, who had been bishop of the diocese of Olympia since 1947, was appointed to the new position of Anglican Executive Officer (AEO)³¹ in 1959.

There was no precedent for this new position and the role lacked both a clear definition and adequate resources for the work.³² Bayne's background and the uncertainty about the new job meant he continually had to show that he was neither a lapdog of the Archbishop of Canterbury nor a representative of the increasingly dominant American Episcopal Church.³³ He had to represent the Communion as a whole to its many constituent parts. Beyond that, there was a general reluctance on the part of many Anglican provinces to take direction from above: "There were those who . . . knew precisely how to be polite to the new Executive Officer without committing themselves to anything. . . . What does an Executive Officer do when there exists no canonical or traditional framework in which he can execute anything?"³⁴ Nonetheless, Bayne quickly set to work and Anglicans soon noticed a "vital new energy" coming from his office in London.³⁵

Bayne established himself and his role with an unrelenting travel schedule, covering approximately 150,000 miles each of the five years he was Executive Officer—far more than any Archbishop of Canterbury had ever traveled—visiting almost every province in the Communion, many on multiple occasions.³⁶ African Anglicans said of him, "Archbishops come and archbishops go, but not as much as Bishop Bayne."³⁷ He himself called traveling the "heart of the Executive Officer's work" because it oriented and interpreted members of the

³¹ The position is alternately referred to as Executive Officer of the Anglican Communion, and Bayne used the terms interchangeably.

³² Cox, "A Vision to Fulfill," 101; Whiteley, *Frontier Mission*, 4.

³³ Douglas, *Fling Out the Banner*, 248.

³⁴ Heuss, *The Implications of the Toronto Manifesto*, 8.

³⁵ Cox, "A Vision to Fulfill," 93.

³⁶ Various sources have different estimations of his travel, but all are around 150,000 miles. See "Anglicans: Empty Pews, Full Spirit"; Douglas, *Fling Out the Banner*, 249; Cox, "A Vision to Fulfill," 102. By contrast, John Paul II is estimated to have traveled 750,000 miles in his quarter-century papacy.

³⁷ Quoted in Cox, "A Vision to Fulfill," 102.

Communion to one another.³⁸ It was the particular attitude Bayne brought to his travels that made him effective: “He listens to people, anxious to learn what their problems are and how they think such problems can best be solved.”³⁹ But he could also provide direction. When he left the AEO position, an African Anglican noted, “We’re very sorry that Bishop Bayne no longer comes to meetings because he always told us where we were and where we were going.”⁴⁰

Beyond travel, Bayne was forever trying to facilitate communication and connect Anglicans to one another. He created new pan-Anglican publications so Anglicans could learn about each other around the world.⁴¹ He circulated lists of people with particular interests and abilities so that Anglicans around the world could communicate with each other directly.⁴² His motivation was for Anglicans to truly know one another and to build, in his words, “the most personal of relationships—communication in prayer, in individual acquaintance and friendship, in the exploration of one another’s ideas, in common enterprises shared, in common judgment accepted.”⁴³ His emphasis on improved communication was a central feature of Bayne’s tenure as AEO. But despite the improving communications technology in the world at the time, it was still difficult to link together Anglicans who were so far-flung around the world.

All this travel and listening gave Bayne a unique insight into the nature and state of the Anglican Communion that was unmatched by any other Anglican leader. He learned about financial disparities between churches and the need for more clergy; he saw both the needs newly-formed provinces had as well as the resources they could offer to the larger Communion. These findings were shared in his prolific writings, particularly his annual reports, which were to form the basis of the conversation when missionary executives and archbishops met and produced MRI.⁴⁴

³⁸ Quoted in John Booty, *An American Apostle: The Life of Stephen Fielding Bayne, Jr.* (Valley Forge, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1997), 103.

³⁹ Heuss, *The Implications of the Toronto Manifesto*, 8.

⁴⁰ Both quoted in Cox, “A Vision to Fulfill,” 102.

⁴¹ Booty, *An American Apostle*, 106.

⁴² Cox, “A Vision to Fulfill,” 102.

⁴³ Bayne, in his diary; quoted in Booty, *An American Apostle*, 109.

⁴⁴ John Clark, “CMS and Mission in Britain: The Evolution of a Policy,” in *The Church Mission Society and World Christianity, 1799–1999*, ed. Kevin Ward and Brian Stanley (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2000), 327.

Bayne's work in his new role laid the groundwork for a series of meetings, held mostly in Ontario during the summer of 1963, that culminated in another Anglican Congress that August in Toronto. Two of these meetings—one of the Advisory Council for Missionary Strategy and the other of the primates of the Communion—were held in succession prior to the Congress at Huron College in London, Ontario. Bayne was vocally present throughout both. The men—and they were all men—went into the meetings not expecting to change the Communion. They came out with a manifesto they called “Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ” that recognized “the pictures we have of one another . . . are utterly obsolete and irrelevant to our actual situation” and called all Anglicans to a “completely new level of expression and corporate obedience” to God.⁴⁵

Though it has largely since faded from Anglican conversations, MRI had an immediate and dramatic impact when it was read aloud to the Anglicans gathered in Toronto. The full text was printed in *The New York Times* at the conclusion of the Congress,⁴⁶ and the newspaper also had a lengthy, front-page article—featuring Bayne prominently—that reported how delegates had been “electrified” by MRI.⁴⁷ In an editorial, the *Times* said MRI “needs no underlining to mark its importance”⁴⁸ and *Time* magazine called it a “dramatic manifesto.”⁴⁹ *Christian Century* noted in an editorial that statements at the end of such church gatherings were usually uninteresting, but that MRI deserved special attention for the way it showed Anglicans “admitting [their] problems and yearning for new life.”⁵⁰ One observer noted that after MRI was read “only the dullest person present . . . could have failed to realize that Anglicanism . . . had turned a decisive corner in its history from which there could be no return. . . . It calls for radical change in the whole structure of Anglicanism.”⁵¹

⁴⁵ Bayne, ed., *Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ*, 17, 18.

⁴⁶ “Text of Manifesto Presented at Closing of Anglican Congress in Toronto,” *The New York Times*, August 18, 1963, 32. MRI was actually initially presented to delegates in the first week of the Congress.

⁴⁷ “Anglicans Urged to Give Church New World Basis,” *The New York Times*, August 18, 1963, 1, 33.

⁴⁸ Editorial, “An Anglican Manifesto,” *The New York Times*, August 20, 1963, 31.

⁴⁹ “Anglicans: A Test of Our Discipleship,” *Time* (August 30, 1963).

⁵⁰ Editorial, “Second Chance for Anglicanism,” *Christian Century* (August 28, 1963): 1045.

⁵¹ Heuss, *The Implications of the Toronto Manifesto*, 9, 19.

The influence Stephen Bayne had on the drafting of MRI is contested in the historical record. The major work on global Anglican history in recent years takes Bayne's authorship for granted by simply asserting that it was Bayne who challenged the delegates in Toronto with MRI.⁵² At the Toronto Congress, some delegates referred to it as "Bishop Bayne's paper."⁵³ Participants noted that the way in which he defended it at the Congress showed that he had been deeply involved in its writing.⁵⁴ R. David Cox, who has written the most comprehensive account of MRI's development and legacy, calls it "Bayne's *magnum opus*" and details a late-night meeting of archbishops in which Bayne was detailed to draft what became MRI. One participant noted that his draft "was not unfaithful to our discussion but it certainly introduced new ideas and gave a coherence which was quite fresh, and its sheer brilliance won the acclaim and endorsement of the whole conference."⁵⁵ But the picture is more complex than this. Bayne took great pains to distance himself from authorship. At various points in his writings, he says MRI emerged naturally from the discussions at the pre-Toronto meetings,⁵⁶ that the vision embodied in MRI came from the primates,⁵⁷ and he denied authorship outright, even if people did recognize "a phrase or two" in MRI as his.⁵⁸ Beyond his own denials, it is obvious that Bayne was not working in a vacuum. Many of the ideas he developed built on work done by earlier and contemporary missiologists, notably Max Warren, the long-time general secretary of the Church Missionary Society, who was also present in Toronto.

Given his position, his knowledge of the Communion, and the relationships he had with major Anglican figures, it is natural that Bayne would have had a major role in drafting MRI. Yet one Toronto participant called MRI the "culmination of ideas and thinking which had been going on for some time in various parts of the Anglican

⁵² Kevin Ward, *A History of Global Anglicanism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 302.

⁵³ *Anglican Congress 1963*, 190. Bayne mentioned this common attribution in order to deny it.

⁵⁴ Heuss, *The Implications of the Toronto Manifesto*, 63–64.

⁵⁵ Quoted in Cox, "A Vision to Fulfill," 129.

⁵⁶ Bayne, ed., *Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ*, 11.

⁵⁷ *Anglican Congress 1963*, 183.

⁵⁸ *Anglican Congress 1963*, 128.

Communion,”⁵⁹ and it is possible to see MRI as more than just a summation of Bayne’s ideas. Even Cox writes that MRI “marked something strikingly new, something more profound and far-reaching than any had imagined when they came—including Stephen Bayne himself. They stood on a threshold watching a birth.”⁶⁰

Whatever role Bayne had in crafting the final draft of MRI, it is clear that he was deeply invested in it and his work and travels as Executive Officer laid its groundwork; moreover, it is clear that it is possible to study MRI through Bayne’s writings and theology and vice versa. MRI represents the high point of Anglicans’ efforts to respond to their growing Communion and the postwar world. Examining it now, one can see how a new authentically Anglican missiology emerged that was shaped by the context of the times.

Responding to Change: MRI and Bayne

A hallmark of Bayne’s thinking was its practicality. The Anglican Communion would not be transformed by church leaders sitting in office. Bayne demonstrated with his travel and emphasis on communication, which flowed from the belief that what was truly important were relationships among Anglicans around the world. These relationships could not be formed if people stayed at home all the time. The way forward for Anglicans, Bayne wrote even before he became Executive Officer, was not “through theological documents or elaborate agreements . . . [but] through the common, shared life of Christians with different experiences and different backgrounds, who pray and work and think together, who do in fact share a common life and, supremely, share a common Sacrament.”⁶¹ Bayne sensed that some of the tension and anguish caused by the shifting of power in the Anglican Communion could be eased if people more truly knew one another. This, in part, is what the Toronto Congress was designed to do. After a day trip to Niagara Falls, one participant commented, “If an Irishman sits next to an Indian, or an African to an American for several hours in a bus, the chances are they may discover a great deal more about one another than in a whole week of formal speech-making.”⁶² Bayne’s travels, efforts at facilitating communication, and

⁵⁹ Whiteley, *Frontier Mission*, 56.

⁶⁰ Cox, “A Vision to Fulfill,” 133.

⁶¹ Bayne, “The Anglican Communion and the World Mission of the Church,” 7.

⁶² Whiteley, *Frontier Mission*, 34.

emphasis on relationships represented one practical way of binding the Communion more tightly together.

Relationships in the Anglican Communion to this point had often revolved around monetary transfers. Bayne recognized that Anglican relationships needed to be more than simply financial and he was careful to emphasize this. While the final version of MRI called for an immediate increase of \$15 million as part of a “strong, sustained and expanding pattern of giving,”⁶³ Bayne wrote in the documents accompanying its publication that “it should be made clear that no new central fund, treasurer or ‘appeal’ is contemplated. The additional financial support requested in the proposal is in the nature of a blood transfusion, mainly through our existing channels.”⁶⁴ It was a message that he emphasized at the Toronto Congress: “Whatever else you think of this proposal, do not talk about it as a great financial drive. . . . As long as I live I will never appeal for money for the mission of God in this world. This is a degradation of God and of ourselves. . . . God has no need, and if the mission is God’s, then we do not ask for help to give God a boost.”⁶⁵ While MRI contained an element of financial support, for Bayne and others who conceived of it, MRI was more about establishing new patterns of relationships, of which increased giving might be one fruit, but certainly not the central or most significant one.

For Bayne, these relationships led to another important aspect of missiology: the belief that each church, and everyone in the church, had something to give and receive in mission. MRI reflects this view: “It is now irrelevant to talk of ‘giving’ and ‘receiving’ churches. The keynotes of our time are equality, interdependence, mutual responsibility.”⁶⁶ This theme appears again and again in Bayne’s writings, beginning several years before MRI was unveiled,⁶⁷ and it was especially true for the American and English churches that had so

⁶³ Bayne, ed., *Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ*, 19.

⁶⁴ Bayne, ed., *Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ*, 72.

⁶⁵ *Anglican Congress 1963*, 129–130.

⁶⁶ Bayne, ed., *Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ*, 18.

⁶⁷ Bayne, “The Anglican Communion and the World Mission of the Church,” 8, is a notable example.

often operated from a position of strength when they sent people and resources overseas:

We shall never send anything or anybody without realizing that we have needs equally, and must therefore ask in the same breath what we need to receive in return. What has Africa to bring to us? It may be that we shall receive from them a renewal of our sense of duty to the Church. It may be that they have to teach us what the cost of an industrial society is, and how the Church should meet that cost, and not merely note it and build around it.⁶⁸

Archbishop Ramsey echoed this theme in Toronto: “The word ‘missionary’ will mean not colonialism of any kind, but going to one another to help one another. Let African and Asian missionaries come to England to help convert the post-Christian heathenism in our country and to convert our English Church to a closer following of Christ.”⁶⁹ If all Anglicans were seen as both givers and receivers, this would deepen relationships and lessen tensions between branches of the Communion.

Bayne also worked hard to advance a relatively new view in missiology, that mission, which had traditionally been seen as belonging to the church and something the church must do, instead belonged to God, and that the church was only a participant in a larger effort. Bayne urged people to think again about mission: “Missionaries do not go out into the world to introduce the world to God or He to it. He is already there; He has been there from the beginning; He is standing waist deep in history, calling us to join Him. For the mission is His and not ours.”⁷⁰ This is repeated again and again throughout his speeches, letters, and other writings. In a major speech at the Toronto Congress, Bayne laid heavy emphasis on this theme: “The heart of mission is in God’s action. The best we can do is to find him at work in our world, to go to him, to call him by name so that he may be seen by others.”⁷¹ These views of mission responded to the changing Communion. By putting the focus on God, instead of on the actions of individual churches, and stressing how all churches—including

⁶⁸ Stephen F. Bayne, Jr. “Chosen for Mission,” address at Missionary Festival Service, 1962, in *An Anglican Turning Point*, 221.

⁶⁹ *Anglican Congress 1963*, 16.

⁷⁰ Bayne, “Chosen for Mission,” 218.

⁷¹ *Anglican Congress 1963*, 192.

Anglicans—were called into service to God’s mission, churches could begin to see themselves as equal partners with one another in service of a cause greater than Anglicanism.

By focusing on God’s mission, Bayne also shifted the emphasis missionaries had historically placed on doing things, represented by the hospitals, schools, and churches Bayne saw on his travels, to the importance of being the body of Christ:

Basically mission is not about things that we do as much as it is about what we are. The mission of the Church is not, first of all, to do something but to be something. In our world, broken and divided by the barriers between the nations, it is very hard sometimes for us to do very much. . . . Therefore, we are being forced back on being something, and the essence of being something is in the little cluster of ideas which is the only precious and irreplaceable treasure at the heart of the Christian body.⁷²

When MRI was published, Bayne noted that the document had confused some people, who “were perplexed because it did not tell anybody what to do.”⁷³ Instead, MRI was calling Anglicans into a new pattern of being and relationship that was difficult to reduce to a series of deeds and actions but was significantly more important for the life of the Communion. Archbishop Ramsey echoed these themes in Toronto. What was most required of the churches in the Communion, he noted, was not so much new procedures and institutions as “new attitudes.”⁷⁴

The worldwide trend toward ecumenism remained a difficult challenge. Several years before the Toronto Congress, Bayne had written, “I cannot believe the indefinite continuation of the Anglican Communion is an end to be sought. . . . Anglicanism as a separate family of churches must disappear.”⁷⁵ What Bayne meant was that Anglicans needed first to figure out who they were in obedience to God’s mission and then contribute those insights to ecumenical conversations. But the idea came under criticism from people in Toronto, who were unsure what it meant to say that the Anglican Communion

⁷² Bayne, “Four Notes of Mission,” 205.

⁷³ Bayne, ed., *Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ*, 12–13.

⁷⁴ Quoted in Cox, “A Vision to Fulfill,” 127.

⁷⁵ Bayne, “The Anglican Communion and the World Mission of the Church,” 6.

must disappear or who advocated a greater confessional basis for Anglicanism. Bayne clarified his initial position: "The phrase does not mean . . . a weary opening of its veins by the Anglican Communion, in some warm ecumenical bath. . . . It means the self-emptying we learned first in our Lord. It means the willingness . . . to abandon not our diversities, but our separateness."⁷⁶

Some delegates who supported ecumenism were concerned about MRI's seeming lack of concern for the cause and its apparent equivocation of the body of Christ with the Anglican Communion.⁷⁷ But this was an unfounded concern. A Catholic observer concluded the Congress had helped Anglicans seek "a greater cohesion and collaboration within their own Communion, but [they] did not forget to place this same Communion in relation to Christianity as a whole."⁷⁸ Bayne also addressed these criticisms when he stated, "It would not have been difficult to sprinkle the proposal of 'Mutual Responsibility' with ecumenical courtesies, like salt and pepper, to give it an agreeable flavor. . . . [But unity] is no option for dilettantes. . . . Mission and unity and the Bread and the Body all march together now, or they are gone forever."⁷⁹ By uniting around the mission of God, Anglicans would gain a better sense of what particular role they were called to play in the universal church and be able to contribute that understanding to ecumenical conversations. Ecumenism could only be understood in light of God's mission, which Bayne put at the center of his thinking.

This new unity that MRI was to produce among Anglicans led some to call for new structures and organizations to manage and facilitate the reborn Communion, building on the creation of the Executive Officer position. MRI itself called for the creation of a series of regional officers to help coordinate mission between churches. One influential interpreter of MRI used the document as a springboard to call for greater centralization in the Communion.⁸⁰ But Bayne disagreed, believing, as MRI reflected, that each local church had something to give to the broader Communion. The goal of Anglican

⁷⁶ *Anglican Congress 1963*, 189.

⁷⁷ Whiteley, *Frontier Mission*, 52.

⁷⁸ Emilien Lamirande, "Anglican World Congress and Ecumenism," *The Furrow* 14, no. 10 (October 1963): 623.

⁷⁹ *Anglican Congress 1963*, 191–192.

⁸⁰ Heuss, *The Implications of the Toronto Manifesto*, 12.

organization, then, should be to strengthen these churches so that they could give. Bayne said at Toronto that the Anglican Communion is “many churches, representing many cultures and peoples, [who] can take their self-reliant and buoyant place in full brotherhood, each giving and teaching, each receiving and learning. Therefore our organization must both reflect this and nourish it.”⁸¹ Bayne had long supported making churches in these parts of the world more reflective of their local situation.⁸² Rather than a centralized organization that could potentially further weaken peripheral churches, Bayne wanted to decentralize the organization.

But the major view underlying Bayne’s views on organization was the mission of God. Churches and the Anglican Communion needed to be organized around this central concept. This argued further against centralized planning, which “would only reaffirm the untruth that mission is something people give to other people out of their abundance, and it would fatally turn our eyes away from the only place where mission is born . . . God’s action and God’s summons.”⁸³ Were the church in fact to organize itself around the mission of God, it would mark a departure from past practices: “Our main energies are inescapably devoted to our own self-perpetuation. Mission is an option, reserved for those who have a special interest in social justice or industrial life or overseas evangelism or whatever it may be. As long as this is so, just so long will the Church rightly seem to be a private club, existing mainly for the sake of its own members and its own mysterious and private purposes. And anything less true to Christ I cannot imagine.”⁸⁴ The way the church had organized for mission in the past, around individual sending agencies, would work no longer. Mission needed to be seen as something the entire church was involved in, and the church’s organizations needed to reflect that.

This difficult task was what Bayne and MRI were gesturing at, as they attempted to integrate two different organizational views: on the one hand affirming the local variation of Anglicanism around the world, and on the other hand building cooperation and communion

⁸¹ *Anglican Congress 1963*, 186.

⁸² Bayne, “The Anglican Communion and the World Mission of the Church,” 1–2.

⁸³ Bayne, ed., *Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ*, 12.

⁸⁴ *Anglican Congress 1963*, 200.

among these various branches of Anglicanism.⁸⁵ Finding answers proved to be difficult.

Whither MRI?

MRI represents a high-water mark for the postwar Anglican Communion. Led by Stephen Bayne, it was an apt missiological response to a changing set of circumstances and had major significance for the Communion. It succeeded in showing Anglicans the worldwide nature of their Communion and broadened interest in mission beyond the usual supporters of voluntary societies.⁸⁶ It rooted the Anglican Communion in a biblical theology that stressed how each church was a co-equal part of the body of Christ.⁸⁷

Yet MRI's long-term impact was relatively minimal, such that it is now given only passing mention in histories of the Anglican Communion. Even though Bayne and many others at the Toronto Congress had emphasized that money was the least of their missional concerns when it came to MRI, the response of many of the churches in the developed world was primarily financial. They raised great sums of money to be spent on projects identified as needs by the churches in the developing world. Instead of focusing on the relationships and communication that Bayne had emphasized and prized, the focus shifted to dollars and cents.⁸⁸ That is how MRI was remembered in a 1999 report from the Mission Commission of the Anglican Communion: "The focus on money contributed to a 'shopping list mentality' in which churches of the South or Third World prepared lists of projects which the churches of the North or First World agreed to fund . . . or not. . . . Somehow the balance of power did not shift sufficiently to enable full relationships of mutuality and interdependence. Those who controlled the purse strings still held most of the power."⁸⁹ A shopping list, it turned out, was no substitute for actual, direct, personal engagement.⁹⁰ "Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence"

⁸⁵ Cox, "A Vision to Fulfill," 228.

⁸⁶ Clark, "CMS and Mission in Britain," 328, 329.

⁸⁷ Cox, "A Vision to Fulfill," 21.

⁸⁸ Clark, "CMS and Mission in Britain," 328.

⁸⁹ *Anglicans in Mission: A Transforming Journey: Report of MISSIO, the Mission Commission of the Anglican Communion, to the Anglican Consultative Council, meeting in Edinburgh, Scotland, September 1999* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2000), 64.

⁹⁰ Ward, *A History of Global Anglicanism*, 302.

became “a smooth slogan to cover up our sins of national pride and ecclesiastical slothfulness.”⁹¹

MRI’s strength was that it was a response to the particular circumstances of the postwar world. But this specificity was also its weakness. Times changed but the Communion’s missiology did not. Churches in the developed world turned toward domestic issues, like urban poverty and race relations. As they did so, funding for overseas mission dried up and was redirected to issues closer to home. Meanwhile, the churches in the newly independent world were overtaken by the political and economic realities of independence and likewise concentrated their energies on local concerns. Thus, MRI “expressed a synthesis of faith with a culture at almost the very point—the year, even the month—when that synthesis began to unravel. . . . It was a culminating expression of a world-view which almost immediately ceased to be appropriate.”⁹² Bayne returned to work in the United States a year after the Toronto Congress, where he was caught up in controversies in the Episcopal Church about whether to pay reparations to African Americans for slavery and historic racism.⁹³ His focus and energy, like much of the rest of the Communion, shifted to his province and away from the larger Anglican entity.

The world continues to change and the Anglican Communion faces new and different challenges that threaten its unity and fabric in the twenty-first century. As it does, history reminds us that this situation is not new. After the Second World War, the Anglican Communion was confronted by shifts in its historic power structures, challenges to its traditional thinking about mission, and questions about its existence from the ecumenical movement. Led by Stephen Bayne, Anglicans produced “Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ,” a document that embodied Bayne’s practical and contextual missiology, emphasizing strong communications and relationships and a new definition of mission, and that embraced a robust Anglicanism as a help, not a hindrance, to the ecumenical movement. The model of Bayne’s thinking—specifically, how he emphasized intangible factors like relationships over tangible factors like money and the way in which his missiology was a direct

⁹¹ Heuss, *The Implications of the Toronto Manifesto*, 14.

⁹² Cox, “A Vision to Fulfill,” 226, 227.

⁹³ C. Gerald Fraser, “2 Episcopal Bishops Here Given Demand for \$500 Million,” *The New York Times*, May 2, 1969, 46.

response to the challenges of his day—is an important lesson for modern Anglicans. Relationships outlast financial drives and allow God’s mission to be furthered even when the money runs out. Contextual missiology is valuable precisely because it is contextual. As times change yet again, it is clear the Anglican Communion needs a new missiology. Fifty years on, MRI and Bishop Bayne remind us of a path forward.