

Report on the CAECG Meeting in Heidelberg, 7-8 Sept 2018

The Council of Anglican and Episcopal Churches (CAECG) met recently in Heidelberg and were honoured to have as their guest speaker the Revd Kimberly Vaughn of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA). Revd Kimberly is the assistant Bishop in the New Jersey diocese of ELCA, responsible for Multicultural Ministry, Discipleship and Witness.

The topic for the meeting was “Far-Right Extremism in the 21st century and the Church’s response”. In the 1st session we looked at the situation in the US immediately prior to and after the 2016 election as well as the situation today, almost 2 years after the election. The discussion centred on what might have led to the election result, the reactions of those both for and against Trump to his victory and the effect the election had on the Episcopal and Lutheran churches as well as society in general. We then turned to consider the growing responses of the churches and society in the US against the rise of far-right extremism after the election, comparing this to protest actions in past decades.

In the 2nd session we turned to look at the situation in Europe, considering the rise in extremism in many different countries, the problems this has led to and the resistance against the rise in extremist behaviour. The similarities and differences between the countries, both in the reasons behind the rise in extremism and the reactions to it were considered and discussed. Finally, the meeting looked at the response of the Anglican Communion to the situation.

We began the 3rd session by looking at Biblical texts on the need for justice and how we should treat strangers, migrants and the poor. It was noted that our response to the current problems should be defined by our Baptismal Covenant and by the [5 Anglican Marks of Mission](#)¹ and, with this in mind, we discussed how we can react to the rise in extremism individually, in our congregations and in the wider church. Revd Kimberly finished by giving us details on where to find further information and resources with ideas on actions we can take to counter the results of the rise in extremism.

1 <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/mission/marks-of-mission.aspx>