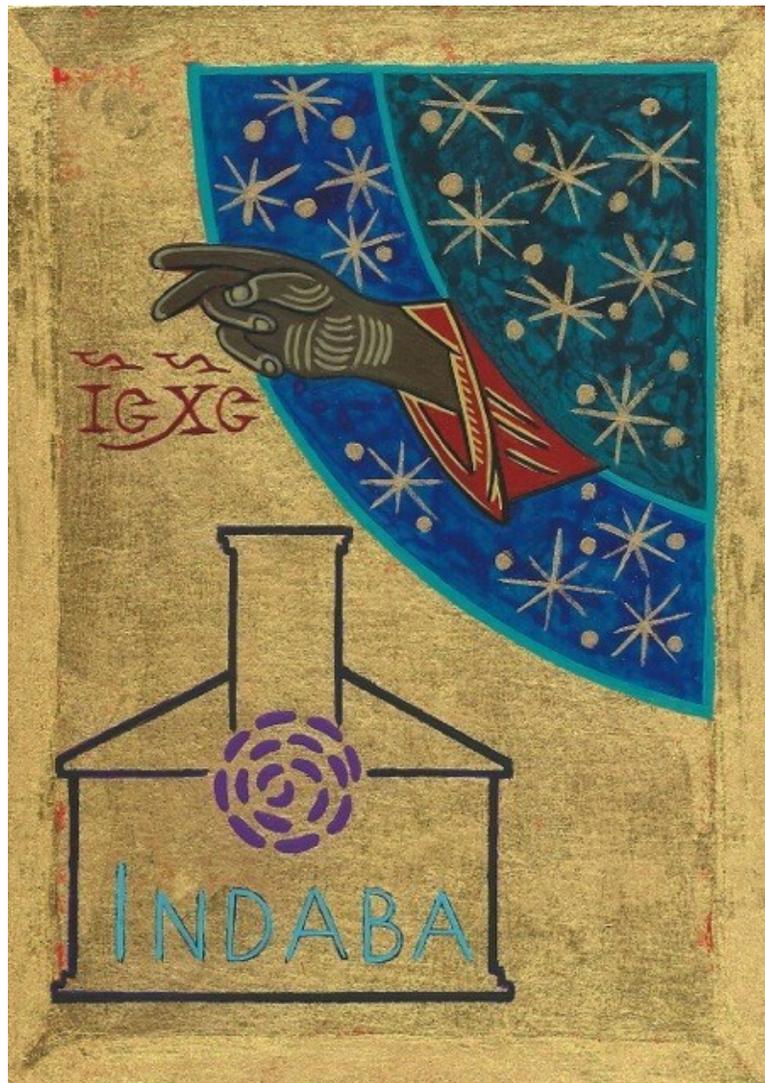




*Toward a
Shared Understanding
of our
Common Life*

*A Report on Indaba in the Diocese of New York
2011-2015*

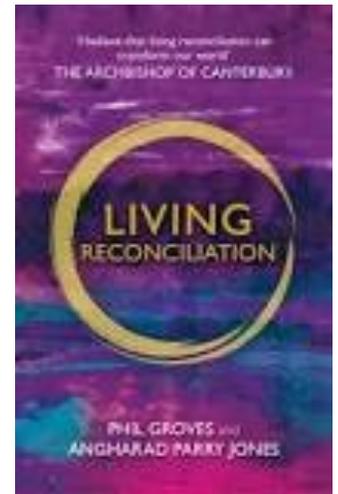


One of a pair of icons created by artist and illustrator Ferris Cook, an Indaba participant and parishioner at the Church of Christ the King, Stone Ridge. The icons were presented as gifts to their Indaba partners.



What is Indaba?

Indaba is a Zulu word which means gathering for purposeful discussion. It is both a process and a method of engaging one another in which we listen and learn about the opportunities and challenges that face us in our various communities of faith. At the Lambeth Conference of 2008, bishops from throughout the Anglican Communion participated in Indaba conversations with one another as an alternative to their more familiar parliamentary style of meeting. The format was so successful in deepening understanding among the bishops that, with leadership from the Continuing Indaba project at Anglican Communion Office, several groupings of three dioceses from around the globe were brought together in Continuing Indaba conversations. The Diocese of New York was fortunate to be linked with the Diocese of Derby (England) and the Diocese of Mumbai (India) in a series of conversations that took place in 2011 and 2012. Teams of eight from each diocese visited with one another in each place to experience firsthand what it means to be an Anglican Christian in very different contexts. When the New York team hosted their friends from England and India here, one of the biggest epiphanies was how varied our contexts are within the Diocese of New York and how much there is that we need to learn about one another. Thus was born the idea of a New York Indaba, which was announced by Bishop Andrew Dietsche in his address to the Annual Convention of the Diocese of New York in November 2012. All of us in the Diocese of New York are joined together in a common mission to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. That mission is carried out in urban, suburban and rural contexts, among a wide range of people with unique talents and interests. Indaba is designed to help us to deepen our appreciation and understanding of the amazing collection of people and resources that God has brought together in this diocese. With that greater understanding, we will be better equipped to join together in God's mission.



“Living Reconciliation” includes stories about Indaba throughout the Anglican Communion and a Bible Study for group use.



How was the New York Indaba introduced to the diocese?

Bishop Andrew Dietsche invited Johanna Shafer and John Madden, two of the participants in the New York-Derby-Mumbai Indaba, and Archdeacon William Parnell to design the format for the New York Indaba process. Each participating congregation was asked to appoint four persons, representing a diverse picture of the membership, as their Indaba team. The team was to include, where possible, a young person aged 16-30, and a member of the clergy, preferably the rector or priest-in-charge, in congregations where a settled clergy person was present. Three weekends were chosen for the Indaba encounters, with each congregation to host on one of the weekends. Each member of the congregational teams was asked to commit to participating on these three weekends, and to coordinate hosting the other teams on one weekend. Volunteer facilitators were appointed to accompany the teams throughout their encounters and to lead facilitated discussions at the conclusion of each of the weekend encounters. A critical piece of each Indaba encounter was that visiting Indaba teams were to be guests in the homes of members of the hosting congregation, preferably in the homes of the host Indaba team members. It was the experience of the international Indaba team members it was the experience of staying in homes of their hosts that led to the deepest and most meaningful conversations.



Canon Phil Groves

An Indaba Kick-Off event was held at the Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine as a way of introducing the concept of Indaba to the diocese on Saturday, September 28, 2013. Indaba teams learned about the concept of Indaba from the Reverend Canon Phil Groves, Director of Continuing Indaba at the Anglican Communion Office, and the Reverend Canon Glenda



Canon Glenda McQueen

McQueen, Province IX Officer for The Episcopal Church and a part of the Communion-wide Indaba process. Johanna Shafer, John Madden and Archdeacon Parnell reflected on the international Indaba experience with the dioceses of Derby and Mumbai. The Reverend Paula Nesbitt, a priest of the Diocese of California and part of the Communion-wide Indaba, also consulted with the planning team. Perhaps most importantly, Indaba teams were introduced for the first time to their partner teams from two other congregations, and were seated together throughout the event.

Who are our Indaba partners? That's a secret! You'll find out on Saturday morning!



What was the structure of the weekends?

The format of each weekend encounter was flexible but within a framework designed by the planning team. Visiting teams were asked to arrive by 10:00 am on Saturday morning and could expect to depart on Sunday afternoon following the concluding conversation held during or after lunch. The structure of the weekend in between those times focused on introducing the internal life of the host congregation on Saturday morning, connections to the community in the afternoon, and more personal conversations in the evening with host team members and their families (and, of course, staying overnight in the homes of host team members or other parishioners). Sunday morning was time for worship and fellowship with the entire host congregation, and the concluding conversation brought the weekend encounter to a close.



An afternoon walk in Poughkeepsie



A "humbling" mini-golf experience in New Rochelle

An Indaba Idea Sheet was provided to each team as an aid to planning their weekend as hosts. Congregations were asked to lift up one another in prayer throughout the year. Conversations were to follow a "Mutual Invitation" model in which care is taken to ensure everyone has an opportunity to speak and to listen to one another respectfully. Each team was invited to present their partner teams with a small gift as a remembrance of the host congregation. Host teams were encouraged to include activities that would introduce their community to their guests and, of course, to have fun together.

The Framework of the Weekends

Ideas for hosting your Indaba partners and sharing the life of your congregation.

Saturday Morning: *The Internal Life of Your Congregation*

You can invite other congregational leaders to be presenters.

Conversation ideas:

What does our congregation do best?

What is distinctive about our church?

What best describes our part in God's mission?

What are the most important aspects of our common life?

What are our biggest challenges?

What are our hopes for the future?

Have lunch together. Keep it simple.

Saturday Afternoon: *The Congregation's Connection to the Community*

You can invite people from your congregation and community to be presenters.

Presentation ideas:

Visit a community ministry that you support.

Walk around your neighborhood.

Talk about a global partnership that you have.

Invite a community leader to talk about your church's gifts

Got a parish event going on? Include your Indaba visitors.

Show off your community: Go do something fun together.

Saturday Late Afternoon: *Take a Break*

Put your feet up: You're not running a marathon.

Have tea together, or head to a local pub.

Take some time to be quiet and reflect.

Spend some time with one of your Indaba visitors. Get to know each other.

Saturday Evening: *Getting to Know One Another*

Have supper together. Keep it simple.

Invite household members of the host team or other overnight hosts to join you.

Do something together that's fun and inexpensive.

Go to your host's home and get some rest.

Sunday Morning: *Worship Together*

Have breakfast either in host homes or together before worship at church.

Join in worship. Consider having your Indaba visitors take roles in the service.

Practice hospitality after the service as is your congregation's custom.

Sunday Midday: *Reflecting Together*

If coffee hour wasn't substantial, consider having a simple lunch together.

Have someone facilitate to guide and take notes.

Reflect on the experience of your time together using the questions provided.

Give thanks to God. Travel safely home.



An Indaba gathering in Fishkill



Visiting the Walton Health Center in the Bronx



Dinner in Monticello



Xenia (Greek for hospitality) Banners



New York Indaba Participating Congregations

Three Indaba encounters have been held in the Diocese of New York to date. The first took place between the fall of 2013 and the spring of 2014, involving teams of four from congregations around the diocese. A second Indaba was designed for individual participants in 2014, rather than congregational teams, to address concerns expressed by some who wished to participate in an Indaba but were unable to do so because their congregations were unable to put together a team. Separate groups meeting on a single day were arranged in this second Indaba for clergy on weekdays and lay people on Sundays, with each individual hosting an encounter. The structure of this proved difficult to manage, however, since one person withdrawing or even unable to participate on a given day meant that the group was incomplete. A third Indaba for congregational teams was held in 2015, beginning in the spring and concluding in the fall.



Bishop Dietsche addressing Indaba 1 participants at the concluding celebration

Indaba 1: Participating Congregational Teams (2013-2014)

Group 1

Calvary/St. George's, Manhattan
Christ Church, Marlboro
St. Margaret's, Bronx

Group 2

Epiphany, Manhattan
Mediator, Bronx
St. Margaret's Staatsburg

Group 3

St. James', Manhattan
St. John's, Monticello
Divine Love, Montrose

Group 4

St. Luke-in-the-Fields, Manhattan
St. Anne's, Washingtonville
St. Simon the Cyrenian, New Rochelle

Group 5

St. Michael's, Manhattan
Bon Samaritain, Bronx
Christ Church, Sparkill

Group 6

St. Luke's Bronx
Ascension/Holy Trinity, West Park
St. Stephen's, Pearl River

Group 7

Christ Church, Poughkeepsie
St. Andrew's, Hartsdale
All Saints', Manhattan

Group 8

Christ's Church, Rye
St. Ann's, Bronx
Regeneration, Pine Plains

Group 9

Holy Apostles, Manhattan
Grace Church, Hastings-on-Hudson
St. Paul's, Pleasant Valley

Group 10

St. John's-in-the-Village, Manhattan
St. Gregory's, Woodstock
All Saints', Valley Cottage

Group 11

St. Matthew & St. Timothy, Manhattan
St. Paul's, Poughkeepsie
Good Shepherd, Granite Springs

Group 12

St. Mark's-in-the-Bowery, Manhattan
Trinity Church, Morrisania, Bronx
Messiah, Rhinebeck

Group 13

Trinity Church, Fishkill
St. Edmund's, Bronx
Good Shepherd, Manhattan

Group 14

St. John's, Kingston
St. John's, Getty Square, Yonkers
St. John's, Staten Island

Group 15

Christ Church, New Brighton, Staten Is.
St. Augustine's, Manhattan
Christ the King, Stone Ridge

Group 16

Holy Innocents/St. Mark's, Highland Falls
St. Mary's, Manhattanville
Zion Church, Dobbs Ferry

Group 17

St. Peter's, Peekskill
St. Esprit, Manhattan
St. John's, Cornwall

Group 18

All Souls', Manhattan
Trinity Wall Street, Manhattan
St. Mary's, Mohegan Lake

Indaba 2: Congregations Represented by Participating Individuals (2014)

Clergy Groups

Ascension/Holy Trinity, West Park	Calvary/St. George's, Manhattan	Cathedral of St. John the Divine
Christ Church/San Marcos, Tarrytown	Diocesan Staff	Epiphany, Manhattan
Good Shepherd, Granite Springs	Good Shepherd, Roosevelt Island	Grace Church, Broadway, Manhattan
Grace Church, Middletown	Grace Church, White Plains	Heavenly Rest, Manhattan
Holy Communion, Mahopac	Holy Innocents/St. Mark's, Highland Falls	Intercession, Manhattan
LaMESA, Dover Plains	Non-Parochial Clergy	Our Savior, Manhattan
Retired Clergy	St. Andrew's, Manhattan	St. Bartholomew's, Manhattan
St. Bartholomew's, White Plains	St. George's, Newburgh	St. James', Goshen
St. James', Hyde Park	St. James', North Salem	St. John's, Getty Square, Yonkers
St. Joseph of Arimathea, Elmsford	St. Luke's, Somers	St. Margaret's, Bronx
St. Mary's-in-Tuxedo	St. Mary's, Scarborough	St. Mary the Virgin, Chappaqua
St. Michael's, Manhattan	St. Philip's, Manhattan	St. Thomas', Amenia Union
St. Thomas', Mamaroneck	San Juan Bautista, Bronx	Trinity Wall Street, Manhattan

Lay Groups

Ascension/Holy Trinity, West Park	Crucifixion, Manhattan	Epiphany, Manhattan
Holy Apostles, Manhattan	Holy Trinity (E. 88th St.), Manhattan	Intercession, Manhattan
Mediator, Bronx	St. Andrew's, Manhattan	St. Gregory's, Woodstock
St. John's, Cornwall	St. John's, Ellenville	St. John's, Getty Square, Yonkers
St. Margaret's, Staatsburg	St. Mary's (Ghanaian), Bronx	St. Mary's, Manhattanville
St. Philip's, Manhattan	St. Stephen's, Woodlawn, Bronx	Trinity Wall Street

Indaba 3: Participating Congregational Teams (2015)

Group 1

Atonement, Bronx
Christ Church/San Marcos, Tarrytown
Grace Church, Millbrook

Group 2

St. James', Hyde Park
St. John's, Wilmot, New Rochelle
St. Mary's, Manhattanville

Group 3

St. Matthew & St. Timothy, Manhattan
St. Gregory's, Woodstock
St. Peter's, Chelsea, Manhattan

Group 4

St. Saviour (Cathedral), Manhattan
St. Paul's, Spring Valley
St. John the Evangelist, Barrytown

Group 5

St. Michael's, Manhattan
St. John's, Cornwall
St. Andrew's, New Paltz

Group 6

Ascension/Holy Trinity, West Park
St. Mary's (Ghanaian), Bronx
Grace Church, Middletown

Group 7

Rural and Migrant Ministry
Trinity Wall Street, Manhattan
St. Peter's, Lithgow

93 Congregations

*plus Rural and Migrant Ministry, Non-Parochial & Retired Clergy and Diocesan Staff
participated in at least one expression of Indaba*



Celebrating Indaba / Celebrating our Diocese

To conclude the first Indaba, the Reverend Matthew Mead and the team from Good Shepherd, Granite Springs, supported by their Indaba partners at St. Matthew and St. Timothy, Manhattan, and St. Paul's, Poughkeepsie, offered to host a concluding celebration of the Indaba at Good Shepherd. About 200 participants—nearly every participant—came to rejoice in new friendships and the common mission of the Diocese of New York. Angharad Parry-Jones, associate for Continuing Indaba at the Anglican Communion Office, joined us and documented the day with interviews and video to share across the Anglican Communion.



Lots of meat on the smoker for the concluding Indaba celebration at Good Shepherd, Granite Springs



Angharad Parry Jones

At the concluding celebration, participants were invited to imagine how they might use Indaba as a method for deepening relationships: in their congregations, in ecumenical and interfaith conversations, among diverse neighborhoods in their communities. There was also an invitation to stay in touch and carry on the friendships begun over the several months of the Indaba process. Since then, we have continued to hear stories of congregations supporting one another in ministry, joining one another on mission trips, and broadening the companionship begun by their Indaba teams. Our friends at the Metro NY Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, after seeing the impact of Indaba on our diocese, used Indaba conversations at their annual convention last year.



An Indaba group praying together at the concluding celebration.



Good food and good company at the concluding celebration of the first NY Indaba.



They got more out of Indaba than the t-shirt, but it's still good to have the t-shirt.



The Impact of Indaba

It is difficult to quantify what Indaba has meant to the Diocese of New York. How do you measure new friendships formed and a broader understanding of our life together in our varied contexts? Perhaps the best way is to share some of the comments from concluding conversations.

“As long as we view the Diocese through the lens of our ministry it’s about us but Indaba opens that up to see our friends and fellow parishes as a part of the ministry.”

“Indaba removed stereotypes about the Diocese and made it possible for us to think of doing mission together.”

“How quickly strangers became friends!”

“Indaba helped us feel more a part of the Diocese, less alone, that although diverse we have more that we share.”

“Mission is the possibility of real communication with different groups. Sharing God’s love breaks down barriers and requires keeping in touch, staying connected, remaining flexible. Mission should create a deep trust and vulnerability.”

“Learning about the Diocese and seeing all we share has provided a sense of stability.”

“Hospitality and true welcome felt sacramental.”

“The opportunity to welcome strangers into our homes and lives was a humbling but positive powerful experience.”

“Resistance and worry show that Indaba came none too soon.”

“We are siloed in our churches. The individual is part of a much greater experience.”

“Christ is alive and lives in his people.”

“How we Episcopalians love our traditions!”

“Indaba led to the sense that our “lifeline” to the Diocese has grown.”



The Next Step: A Strategic Plan for Mission

Indaba is a prelude to a larger work we are called to undertake as a diocese: a strategic plan for how we will organize ourselves for God’s mission. That work has now begun under the guidance of the Reverend Canon Gay Clark Jennings, President of the House of Deputies of the General Convention and a priest of the Diocese of Ohio, and Steve Smith, former Executive Vice President of the Church Pension Group and an organizational consultant from the Diocese of Vermont. A necessary beginning for this work of strategic planning is *a shared understanding of our common life*. It is in celebration of the common life of the Diocese of New York that Indaba has been offered and received.