The Lambeth Commission on Communion

The Lambeth Commission on Communion was established by the Archbishop of Canterbury in October 2003, following the special Primates' Meeting called that month in Lambeth Palace to discuss developments in the Anglican Episcopal churches of North America, which were of a controversial nature. These pages set out the work of the Commission, their mandate, members, and submissions received

The Commission reported to the Archbishop of Canterbury in October 2004, and issued its findings in the **Windsor Report 2004**.

Mandate

The Archbishop of Canterbury requests the Commission:

1. to examine and report to him by 30th September 2004, in preparation for the ensuing meetings of the Primates and the Anglican Consultative Council, on the legal and theological implications flowing from the decisions of the Episcopal Church (USA) to appoint a priest in a committed same sex relationship as one of its bishops, and of the Diocese of New Westminster to authorise services for use in connection with same sex unions, and specifically on the canonical understandings of communion, impaired and broken communion, and the ways in which provinces of the Anglican Communion may relate to one another in situations where the ecclesiastical authorities of one province feel unable to maintain the fullness of communion with another part of the Anglican Communion

2. within their report, to include practical recommendations (including reflection on emerging patterns of provision for episcopal oversight for those Anglicans within a particular jurisdiction, where full communion within a province is under threat) for maintaining the highest degree of communion that may be possible in the circumstances resulting from these decisions, both within and between the churches of the Anglican Communion

3. thereafter, as soon as practicable, and with particular reference to the issues raised in Section IV of the Report of the Lambeth Conference 1998, to make recommendations to the Primates and the Anglican Consultative Council, as to the exceptional circumstances and conditions under which, and the means by which, it would be appropriate for the Archbishop of Canterbury to exercise an extraordinary ministry of episcope (pastoral oversight), support and reconciliation with regard to the internal affairs of a province other than his own for the sake of maintaining communion with the said province and between the said province and the rest of the Anglican Communion

4. in its deliberations, to take due account of the work already undertaken on issues of communion by the Lambeth Conferences of 1988 and 1998, as well

as the views expressed by the Primates of the Anglican Communion in the communiqués and pastoral letters arising from their meetings since 2000.

Membership

- **Archbishop Robin Eames**,
  Primate of All Ireland, Chairman
- **The Revd Canon Alyson Barnett-Cowan**,
  Director of Faith, Worship and Ministry, Anglican Church of Canada
- **Bishop David Beetge**,
  Dean of the Church of the Province of Southern Africa
- **Professor Norman Doe**,
  Director of the Centre for Law and Religion, Cardiff University, Wales,
- **Bishop Mark Dyer**,
  Director of Spiritual Formation, Virginia Theological Seminary, USA
- **Archbishop Drexel Gomez**,
  Primate of the West Indies
- **Archbishop Josiah Iduwo-Fearon**,
  Archbishop of Kaduna, the Anglican Church of Nigeria
- **The Revd Dorothy Lau**,
  Director of the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council
- **Ms Anne McGavin**,
  Advocate, formerly Legal Adviser to the College of Bishops of the Scottish Episcopal Church
  Ms McGavin resigned for personal reasons after the first meeting of the Commission.
- **Archbishop Bernard Malango**,
  Primate of Central Africa
- **Dr Esther Mombo**,
  Academic Dean of St Paul's United Theological Seminary, Limuru, Kenya
- **Archbishop Barry Morgan**,
  Primate of Wales
  Archbishop Morgan was unable to be present at the first meeting of the Commission.
- **Chancellor Rubie Nottage**,
  Chancellor of the West Indies
  Mrs Nottage was unable to be present at the second meeting of the Commission.
- **Bishop John Paterson**,
  Bishop of Auckland, and Chair of the Anglican Consultative Council
- **Dr Jenny Te Paa**,
  Principal of College of Saint John the Evangelist, Auckland, New Zealand
- **Bishop James Terom**,
  Moderator, the Church of North India
- **Bishop N Thomas Wright**,
  Bishop of Durham, the Church of England.

Staff

- **The Revd Canon Gregory Cameron**,
  Director of Ecumenical Affairs and Studies, Anglican Communion Office,
  Secretary to the Commission
- **The Revd Canon John Rees**,
  Legal Adviser to the Anglican Consultative Council,
  Legal Consultant to the Commission

Administrative Assistants

- **The Revd Terrie Robinson**,
  Anglican Communion Office
- **Mrs Christine Codner**,
  Anglican Communion Office

Media

- **The Revd Brian Parker**,
  Church of Ireland Press Office

Documents

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ACNS 3450 - The Pastoral Letter from the May 2003 Primates' Meeting in Gramado, Brazil	view
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Other Documents being considered that are not available online

Grindrod Report, Women and the Episcopate, Parts B & C, 1987

To Mend the Net, Anglican Faith and Order for Renewed Mission, Gomez and Sinclair, Ekklesia Society, 2001

Claiming our Anglican Identity, Anglican Communion Institute, 2003

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	Statement from the Primates of the Council of the Anglican Provinces of Africa (CAPA) [ACNS3814]	View
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	Exchange of letters between the Most Revd Drexel Gomez, Primate of the West Indies and member of the Lambeth Commission on Communion and the Most Revd Robin Eames, Primate of All Ireland and Chair of the Lambeth Commission on Communion [ACNS3828]	View
	Statement of the Global South Primates 15/16 April 2004, Anglican Church of Kenya Office, Nairobi, Kenya [ACNS3829]	View
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The Virginia Report



The Report of the Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission

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PREFACE

This Report is the work of the Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission which comprises theologians and church leaders who themselves represent the diversities of the Anglican Communion. Their task was to respond to the call of the Lambeth Conference of 1988 to consider in some depth the meaning and nature of communion. This response was to be set within the context of the doctrine of the Trinity, the unity and order of the Church and the unity and community of humanity. At the heart and center of the Anglican pilgrimage lies the concept of communion. From it we derive so much of our belief and practice. It is not itself a static concept. It has become with out pilgrimage a living and developing reality. Yet that fact alone demands understanding which cannot be tied to any one period of our history or to any single cultural approach. This Report is offered to the Anglican Communion as one more step in the process of seeking greater understanding of what communion means to the Body of Christ. In particular it seeks to suggest ways in which our Communion can respond in practical ways which touch and concern how we order our corporate life and lives as individuals. I wish to acknowledge with sincere gratitude the generosity and support given to the Commission by the Right Reverend Peter Lee, Bishop of Virginia, the Diocese of Virginia and the staff of the Virginia Theological Seminary. Their practical assistance and encouragement made the production of this Report possible.
It has been a great privilege to chair the Commission and I acknowledge the support and work of all its members.

+ Robert Eames
Archbishop of Armagh

MEMBERS OF THE INTER-ANGLICAN THEOLOGICAL AND DOCTRINAL COMMISSION

The Revd Victor R Atta-Baffoe, The Church of West Africa
The Rt Revd Colin Bazley, Iglesia Anglicana del Cono Sur de America
The Most Revd Peter F Carnley, Anglican Church of Australia
The Rt Revd J Mark Dyer, The Episcopal Church, USA
The Revd Dr Milton B Efthimiou, Orthodox Participant
The Rt Revd Penelope A B Jamieson, Church of Aotearoa, New Zealand & Polynesia
The Very Revd Colin Jones, The Church of Southern Africa
The Rt Revd Dr Samuel B Joshua, The Church of North India (United)
The Revd Dr Patricia G Kirkpatrick, Anglican Church of Canada
The Revd Samuel I Koshiishi, Nippon Sei Ko Kai
Professor Dr Michael Root, Lutheran Participant
The Rt Revd Stanford S Shauri, Church of Tanzania
The Rt Revd Stephen Sykes, The Church of England
Dr Mary Tanner, The Church of England
Dr Fredrica Harris Thompsett, The Episcopal Church, USA
The Most Revd Robert H A Eames, The Church of Ireland *(Chairman),*
The Revd Dr Donald Anderson, Anglican Communion Office *(Secretary to November 1996)*
The Revd Canon David Hamid, Anglican Communion Office *(Secretary from November 1996)*
Mrs Christine Codner, Anglican Communion Office *(Administrative Secretary)*
The Revd Professor David Scott, Virginia Theological Seminary *(Observer)*

INTRODUCTION

Origin and Mandate of the Commission

In 1988 the Lambeth Conference was faced with a question that challenged the unity of the Communion: the proposal by the Episcopal Church of the United States of America to consecrate a woman to the episcopate. In the light of its deliberations the Lambeth Conference passed resolution 1 on the ordination or consecration of women to the episcopate. In response to this resolution of the Conference the Archbishop of Canterbury, in consultation with the Primates, established a Commission on Communion and Women in the Episcopate under the leadership of the Most Revd Robert Eames, Archbishop of Armagh

(a) to provide for an examination of the relationships between Provinces of the Anglican Communion and ensure that the process of reception includes continuing consultation with other Churches as well;

(b) to monitor and encourage the process of consultation within the Communion and to offer further pastoral guidelines (The Truth Shall Make You Free, The Lambeth Conference 1988. Resolution 1, page 201).

The Eames Commission, as it came to be known, met five times and produced four reports which were published together in December 1994. Its last meeting was in December 1993 and its report will be presented to the 1998 Lambeth Conference. During its lifetime the Commission engaged in theological reflection on the nature of koinonia. It offered guidelines on how Anglicans might live together in the highest degree of communion possible while different views and practices concerning the ordination of women continued to be held within the Communion. The Eames Commission saw this as a way of enabling an ongoing process of reception both within the Anglican Communion and the wider ecumenical fellowship. Its guidelines are intended to support graceful and charitable relationships and to ensure proper pastoral care for one another. Before its last meeting, five women had been consecrated as bishops. Also in that period the ordination of women to the priesthood had received the necessary consents in the Church of England and over
1000 women were ordained as priests, and by then women had also been ordained as priests in Australia, Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia, Brazil, Burundi, Canada, Hong Kong and Macao, Ireland, Kenya, the Philippines, Scotland, Southern Africa, Uganda, the USA and West Africa.

The Eames Commission between 1988 and 1993 provided a model of how Anglicans can remain together in the highest degree of communion possible while endeavoring to come to a common mind on a matter which touches the fundamental unity of the Communion. The 1988 Conference recognized that there was a need to describe how the Anglican Communion makes authoritative decisions while maintaining unity and interdependence in the light of the many theological issues that arise from its diversity. To address this need, the Conference resolved that there should be:

As a matter of urgency further exploration of the meaning and nature of communion with particular reference to the doctrine of the Trinity, the unity and order of the Church, and the unity and community of humanity (Lambeth Conference 1988, Resolution 18, page 216. See Appendix I).

Resolution 8 on the Final Report of the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission also had a direct bearing on the exercise of authority in the Church. It encouraged ARCIC to explore the basis in Scripture and Tradition of the concept of a universal primacy, in conjunction with collegiality, as an instrument of unity, the character of such primacy in practice, and to draw upon the experience of other Christian Churches in exercising primacy, collegiality and conciliarity.

In implementing Resolution 18 of Lambeth 1988, and at the request of the Primates of the Communion, the Archbishop of Canterbury invited a group of representative church leaders and theologians to meet in December 1991 at the Virginia Theological Seminary at Alexandria, USA to begin the exploration. The Consultation's report was called Belonging Together. The Report was circulated widely within the Communion between 1992 and 1994 with a request for critical comment. A number of Anglican member churches responded officially. There were also responses from theological institutions and individuals.

All the responses were considered by the Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission, the successor of the 1991 Consultation, when it met in December 1994, and again in January 1996, on both occasions at the Virginia Theological Seminary. This report is the product of its consideration and further reflection on the issues.

CHAPTER 1

THE CONTEXT

1.1 Our Lord Jesus Christ prayed that his followers might be one, as He and the Father are one, so that the world might believe (Jn 17:20-21). Christians of every tradition struggle to respond in faith, life and witness, to the vision of unity expressed in the prayer of Jesus. At every level of Christian life, the call to graceful interdependence and unity in faith and doctrine challenge us.

1.2 From the earliest time in the history of the Christian community, an admonishing voice has been heard exhorting believers to maintain agreement with one another and thereby to avert divisions. From an almost equally early date they have found consensus, even on apparently major matters, singularly difficult to achieve. When the second century Churches evolved a collection of early Christian documents which came to be called the New Testament, they had a few documents which did not attest and reflect deep disagreements, and the formation of the collection itself was the product of controversies. Nevertheless the controversies themselves were stages on a road towards greater consensus.

1.3 What makes unity and interdependence particularly difficult today? In the last 200 years the world has seen extraordinary development in the political, scientific, economic and psychological spheres. These developments have brought many blessings to the peoples of the world. At the same time there has been the disintegration of traditional cultures, values and social structures and unprecedented threats to the environment. The tension between blessing and disintegration creates a challenge to the unity and interdependence that the peoples of the world face.

1.4 The authority of nineteenth and twentieth century notions of progress, economic growth and the free market economy, the omnipotence of scientific method and technology, and competitive individualism is no longer accepted without question. In many places there is a search for cultural, personal and social identity which honours the integrity and value of cultural roots.

1.5 Within this context, Anglicans strive to be faithful to the Gospel in their particular cultural contexts, and to face moral, doctrinal, social and economic exigencies which demand discernment and response if identity as the Christian community is to be maintained. For example, issues of justice and human rights including human sexuality, the family and the status of women, racial equality, religious freedom and the use and distribution of resources demand attention. Our response to these issues is conditioned by our particular cultural context, our way of interpreting the Bible, our degree of awareness of being part of a wider human community, and our attentiveness to the response of other ecumenical partners and to the concerns of those of other faiths.

1.6 The churches of the Anglican Communion struggle with these concerns within a life of communion and interdependence. Discernment has to be exercised about which concerns are best addressed by the local church, which provincially and which by the whole Communion. An added burden is placed on decision making when churches are separated from one another.

1.7 New challenges to unity press impatiently upon all churches, not least those of the Anglican Communion. Today we might cite divisive issues in, for example, the Indian Ocean and Europe, Rwanda, Northern Ireland, Nigeria and the Middle East, the United States, Australia and South East Asia.

1.8 When Christians find themselves passionately engaged in the midst of complex and explosive situations, how do they avoid alienation from those who by baptism are their brothers and sisters in Christ, who are embraced in the communion of God the Holy Trinity, but who disagree? How do they stay in communion with God and each other; how do they behave towards each other in the face of disagreement and conflict? What are the limits of diversity if the Gospel imperative of unity and communion are to be maintained?

1.9 In addressing issues raised by the complexities of contemporary life, solutions will in some cases be necessarily provisional. There are times when the path ahead is insufficiently clear for categorical claims to be made. Forming a mind entails learning from those within the Anglican Communion and being in partnership and dialogue with ecumenical and interfaith colleagues. There is merit in the Anglican approach of listening to others, of holding each other in the highest degree of communion possible with tolerance for deeply held differences of conviction and practice.

1.10 While we are aware of significant challenges to our unity as a Communion we recognise that we have received the gracious gift of God the Holy Trinity, the resources of our life in Christ in word and sacrament and the determination to develop appropriate and more effective structures for maintaining unity in service and mission.

1.11 The Commission has centered its study on the understanding of Trinitarian faith. It believes that the unity of the Anglican Communion derives from the unity given in the triune God, whose inner personal and relational nature is communion. This is our center. This mystery of God's life calls us to communion in visible form. This is why the Church is called again and again to review and to reform the structures of its life together so that they nurture and enable the life of communion in God and serve God's mission in the world.

1.12 The references in the Lambeth resolution to the Trinitarian doctrine and the unity and community of the whole human family make it clear that the concern of the Lambeth Conference was not simply for strengthening the peace and unity of the Anglican Communion, but also for the faithful and effective engagement of the Communion in God's mission of love and reconciliation in the world.

1.13 The mission and ministry of reconciliation entrusted by God to the Church are given in baptism to the whole people of God, the laos. While this report necessarily dwells on the structures of ministry in the processes of oversight, their interdependence and accountability, it does so in the conviction and hope that this reflection will open up the possibility of creative change which will strengthen the ministry and mission of the whole people of God.

1.14 The instruments of communion which are a gift of God to the Church help to hold us in the life of the triune God. These are the instruments which we seek to renew within the Anglican Communion. They are also the structures we seek to share with all those who have been baptised into the life of the Triune God. Our hope is that this theological reflection may contribute not only to the Anglican Communion but to the ecumenical goal of full visible unity.

1.15 In reflecting on the structures of Anglican unity and authority, we are aware that discernment, decision making and teaching with authority are today, sadly, in the context of separated Churches, and are therefore only partial reflections of the One, Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. This requires Anglicans to listen to the experience of other ecclesial communities and to continue to deepen the work of ecumenical dialogue on the nature of authority and its exercise in the Church and to renew our Anglican structures in line with the emerging ecumenical convergence.

1.16 Having referred in this chapter to the context and the challenges that face Christians today, the report goes on in chapter two, to a theological reflection on the gracious gift of love in the triune God and how the Church responds to that gift in the ministry that the Church has received from Christ. Chapter three examines the bonds of interdependence: what holds Anglicans together. Chapter four explores the principle of subsidiarity, identifying the ways in which the bonds of unity are appropriately expressed at the different levels the Church's life. Chapter five identifies the principles which undergird our life together and chapter six offers some observations about how Anglican international institutions of unity might be strengthened and improved in order to strengthen our life together for the sake of God's mission in the world.

CHAPTER 2

THEOLOGY OF GOD'S GRACIOUS GIFT:
THE COMMUNION OF THE TRINITY AND THE CHURCH

I. The Understanding of Gracious Gift 2.1-2.12
II. The Communion of the Trinity and the Life of the Church 2.13-2.15
III. The Communion of the Trinity and Mission and Ministry 2.16-2.26

I. The Understanding of Gracious Gift

2.1 God's gracious gift of steadfast loving kindness was from the beginning known by the people of God in the form of covenant. From the prophets came the conviction that God's faithfulness was never ending even when God's people were forgetful and betrayed the divine trust.

2.2 God's love and faithfulness was understood as having been an act of creation. God's promise to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature on the earth (Gen 9:17) was a promise which was renewed again and again through the ages.

2.3 God's word to Moses in Exodus 3:14 expresses the divine promise which forever grounds the hope of inter-relational communion between God and the people of God in an everlasting and personal relationship even in the midst of tragedy.

2.4 The people of God interpreted the memory of the Sinai Covenant in words remembered as spoken by Moses, words which would forever define God's sacred relationship with his chosen people:

For you are a people holy to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on earth to be his people, his treasured possession. It was not because you were more numerous than any other people that the LORD set his heart on you and chose you - for you were the fewest of all peoples. It was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath that he swore to your ancestors. (Deut. 7:6-8a).

2.5 God's chosen, the people of Israel, would tell the story of God's never failing love in intimate longing and passion. So the prophet is moved to proclaim:

You shall no more be termed Forsaken, and your land shall no more be termed Desolate; but you shall be called My Delight is in Her,and your land Married; for the LORD delights in you, and your land shall be married.
For as a young man marries a young woman, so shall your builder marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you (Is. 62:4-5).

And in the midst of despair and anguish Jeremiah speaks of God's loving act of restoration:

But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people (Jer. 31:33).

2.6 Jesus spoke of this God of steadfast loving kindness and faithfulness as his Father. He prayed: "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him" (Matt. 11:25-27).

2.7 The good news of the Christian Gospel is that Jesus' life among us is God's life - God breaking down the barriers of our bondage and sinfulness. In Jesus, God is with us in all our human helplessness; with us in our life and in our death. In Jesus, God is faithful to us even on a cross. In the risen Jesus, God is with us to transfigure and set free all those who are bound by fear and sin. Jesus is God with us, and to know Jesus is to be with God. God has shared our human world with us, and through the great events of cross and resurrection we are empowered and invited to share God's life, to share God's glory and freedom, to proclaim God's holiness and mercy in word and act. We know God as we live with Jesus: so that we can and must say that Jesus' life is the act and expression of God (The Lambeth Conference 1988, page 82).

2.8 The climax of the Son's revelation of the Father occurs in the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus. On the night before he died, Jesus revealed that the communion of love he shared with the Father would be shared by the community of his disciples. John's Gospel remembers the intimate moment of God's gracious gift of love.

As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another (John 15, 9, 13, 15-17).

2.9 The love with which the Father loves Jesus is the love with which Jesus loves us. On the night before he died Jesus prayed (Jn. 17) that all who follow him should be drawn into that love and unity which exists between the Father and the Son. Thus our unity with one another is grounded in the life of love, unity and communion of the Godhead. The eternal, mutual self-giving and receiving love of the three persons of the Trinity is the source and ground of our communion, of our fellowship with God and one another. Through the power of the Holy Spirit we are drawn into a divine fellowship of love and unity. Further, it is because the Holy Trinity is a unique unity of purpose, and at the same time a diversity of ways of being and function, that the Church is called to express diversity in its own life, a diversity held together in God's unity and love (The Lambeth Conference 1988, page 130).

2.10 At the Last Supper with his disciples, Jesus promised the outpouring of God's Holy Spirit. He prayed that God would come to the community as the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit would bear witness to the truth of all that Jesus said and did.

I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides in you, and he will be in you .
Jesus goes on,

On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them (John 14:16-17; 20-21).

2.11 The sending of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost created the Church, the community of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit lifted up the community into the very life of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Spirit empowered the community to pray "Abba, Father" as free, adopted, children of God (Romans 8:15-17, Gal. 4:4-7). "Clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:49), the community is empowered to go forth to proclaim the Good News of God to all peoples and nations. The Holy Spirit is the unifying force of God in the community. The unity of the Church which is given, and yet which it seeks to deepen, is grounded in the very unity of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:3-14, 4:1-6).

2.12 Every act of God is an act of the undivided Holy Trinity. The very being of the Church is thus dependent upon the outpouring of God's gracious love, the love of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The experience of the truth of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ came to the disciples as a gracious gift. What the disciples experienced at Pentecost in Jesus Christ was that communion of life with God which was present at creation and which will be perfected in the fullness of time.

II. The Communion of the Trinity and the Life of the Church

2.13 By the power of the Holy Spirit the Church is born into history as the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:27). The Church is called the temple of God (1 Cor. 3:16), a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people God claims as his own (1 Pet. 2:9). These images of the Church speak of a communion with God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit; Christians are participants in the divine nature. This communion also determines our relationship with one another. "We declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ" (I John 1:3). Communion with God and one another is both gift and divine expectation for the Church (Eames I, Koinonia and the Mystery of God, 21-22).

2.14 Because the Church as communion participates in God's communion of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, it has an eschatological reality and significance. The Church is the advent, in history, of God's final will being done "on earth as it is in heaven." That will was revealed in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ and is continually inspired by the work of the Spirit in the life and mission of the Church. The Church is the icon of the future toward which God is directing the history of the world. A faithful church signifies by its life that it is the living promise of God's purpose in the midst of today's history. The Church lives in the present, remembering again and again (making anamnesis) the Christ event and receiving in hope the promise of the Kingdom. In this way, the saving events of Christ's death and resurrection and the foretaste of the Kingdom are brought into the present experience of the Church.

2.15 The Church looks forward in Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to that day when God's name will be made holy, God's Kingdom come, when God's will is done on earth as it is in heaven. The seventh century theologian St. Maximus the Confessor put it this way: "The things of the past are shadow; those of the present icon; the truth is to be found in the things of the future" (Scolion on the ecclesiastical hierarchy, 3,3:2). Faithful Christian community with God the Holy Trinity, is focused in a vision of the final and ultimate reign of God. Its mission is to be the living and visible sign of that divine reign, when He will dwell with them as their God; "they will be his people, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more; for the first things have passed away (Revelation 21:3-4).

III. The Communion of the Trinity and Mission and Ministry

2.16 A living faith in the God of Jesus Christ draws us into the life of the Holy Trinity. This means living as Jesus lived his life. empowered by God's Spirit:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour (Luke 4:18-19).

2.17 The same Spirit of the Lord rests upon the Church and dwells in the hearts of the believers, empowering the community to go forth as Christ did to proclaim the reign of God. The mission of the Church is to be the icon of God's life. By prayer and praise, mercy and peace, justice and love, constantly welcoming the sinner, the outcast, the marginalised into her sanctuary, the Church is revealed as communion and is faithful to its mission. As Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:27), Temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 1:16), God's own people (1 Pet. 2:9) the Church lives in mutual love and is sent forth as a missionary community to gather all of creation into God's reconciling love, restore and renew it in the life of the triune God (Rom. 8:19-25).

2.18 The mission of Christ and the Church is celebrated and proclaimed in the liturgy, which shapes the trinitarian faith of the people of God and empowers them for a life of ministry and mission. This is especially true of holy baptism and holy eucharist.

2.19 As the sacrament of initiation into the life of the Church, baptism is related not only to a single experience, but to lifelong growth in Christ and participation in his ministry. Those who are baptized are called upon to reflect the glory of the Lord with ever increasing splendour as they are transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit into his likeness. As they grow in the Christian life of faith, baptized believers demonstrate that humanity can be regenerated and liberated. They have a common responsibility to bear witness in the Church and the world to the Gospel of Christ, "the Liberator of all human beings." (BEM, Baptism 9, 10).

2.20 The eucharist also embraces all aspects of life. It is a representative act of thanksgiving and offering on behalf of the whole world. The eucharistic celebration demands reconciliation and sharing among those who are brothers and sisters in the one family of God, and constantly challenges those who participate to search for appropriate relationships in social, economic and political life (Matt 5:23f. I Cor 10:16f; 11:20-22. Gal 3:28). All injustice, racism, separation and denial of freedom are radically challenged when Christians share in the body and blood of Christ. Through the eucharist the grace of God penetrates, restores and renews human personality and dignity. The eucharist involves believers in the central event of the world's history, the passion, death and resurrection of Christ, and sends them into the world in peace to love and serve the Lord (BEM, Eucharist 20).

2.21 Jesus Christ manifests and carries out for us God's creative, reconciling and perfecting mission and ministry to the world. All Christian ministry is rooted in that unique ministry of Jesus Christ. The centre of Jesus's ministry is his self-offering on the cross for the reconciliation of God and humanity and the healing of the whole human family (Colossians 1:19; 2 Cor. 5:19). Christ's passion, death and resurrection brings into relationship those who had become alienated, both individually and corporately. The reconciling work of Christ, the very heart of the Christian good news, brings those who receive him into the trinitarian life of sharing and interrelationship.

2.22 Christ calls human beings to share in that loving and redeeming work of God and empowers them for that ministry with his Spirit. Jesus prayed, "As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world" (John 17:18). Christ called and equipped his disciples and sent them to reflect his own ministry of healing, teaching, leading, feeding and proclaiming. Through the varied aspects of the Church's one ministry, the Kingdom which Jesus proclaimed is brought into historical expression.

2.23 To be baptized and to participate at the Table of the Lord is to be entrusted with Christ's one, continuing mission through the Church. The baptised are called to unity and interdependence. United to Christ, each member of the Body relates to the other members; they are interdependent with and through Christ. To celebrate the eucharist together reveals and builds this mutuality. "We who are many are one body for we all partake of the one bread". In eucharist the Spirit affirms and renews communion in Christ and the gifts given us to participate in the divine mission.

2.24 The Holy Spirit bestows on the community diverse and complimentary gifts. (cf. BEM, Ministry 5) God the Creator, blesses people with many talents and abilities. The Holy Spirit graces individuals with special gifts. The outworking of one person's gift in the Church is unthinkable apart from all the others. The mutuality and interdependence of each member and each part of the Church is essential for the fulfillment of the Church's mission. In the early Church, those who spoke in tongues needed interpreters of tongues; Paul's mission to the Gentiles complemented Peter's mission to the Jews. The ministry of serving tables in the early Church freed the other disciples to preach God's word. The gifts of all contribute to the building up of the community and the fulfillment of its calling.

2.25 But the one mission of the Church, the Body of Christ, must always find its motivation, its intelligibility and its integrity in the one ministry of the Church's Lord, Jesus Christ. The variety and difference among Christian charisma would quickly become incoherent and disabling if it were to become eccentric, without a reference to its centre in Christ. An important function of life in communion is always to remain attentive to one another, particularly when conflict arises, so that the centre may never be forgotten. Seen in the framework of God's mission of love in Christ and the Spirit, the variety of gifts, which may appear to be potentially divisive, is seen to be necessary, mutually enriching, and a cause for thanks and praise to God.

2.26 God invites his people to enjoy diversity. As Christ's body, the Church must affirm that variety of gifts and use them faithfully both for the building up of the body "until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity to the measure of the full stature of Christ" and "to equip the saints for the work of ministry" (Eph. 4:12-13).

CHAPTER 3
BELONGING TOGETHER IN THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION

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3.1 Anglicans are held together in a life of visible communion. Baptism is God's gift of unity, the means by which an individual participates in the life of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit and is brought into a living community of faith. The confession of a common faith, the celebration of the eucharist, a life of common prayer, the service of an ordered ministry, conciliar structures, shared service and mission sustain a life of Anglican belonging. These elements belong to the universal Church and are not unique to Anglicans. They are nevertheless, lived out in a recognisable and characteristically Anglican way.

3.2 In the sixteenth century, members of the Church of England continued to understand themselves as the local embodiment of the Catholic Church, continuing to live in England with the same faith, sacraments and ministry of the Church through the ages, and yet they developed a family likeness which today characterises Anglicans who live not only in England but in the 36 provinces of the Anglican Communion.

3.3 One feature of Anglican life is the way it holds together diversities of many kinds. From the Reformation Anglicans endeavoured to hold together people of different temperaments, convictions and insights: the puritans who wanted more radical reform and the conservatives who emphasized their continuity with the pre-reformation Church. Today, for example, evangelicals, catholics, liberals and charismatics bring a diversity of insights and perspectives as Anglicans struggle to respond to the contemporary challenges to faith, order and moral teaching. Bound up with these groupings are the differences which arise from a variety of reactions to critical study of the Bible, particular cultural contexts, different schools of philosophical thought and scientific theory. The Reformation insistence on providing the Scriptures in the vernacular opened the possibility that the faith is expressed in the language, symbols and imagery of the different cultural contexts.

3.4 At best the Anglican way is characterised by generosity and tolerance to those of different views. It also entails a willingness to contain difference and live with tension, even conflict, as the Church seeks a common mind on controversial issues. The comprehensiveness that marks the Anglican Communion is not a sign of weakness or uncertainty about the central truths of the faith. Neither does it mean that Anglicans accept that there are no limits to diversity.

I. The Anglican Way: Scripture, Tradition and Reason

3.5 Anglicans are held together by the characteristic way in which they use Scripture, tradition and reason in discerning afresh the mind of Christ for the Church in each generation. This was well described in the Report of the Pastoral and Dogmatic Concerns section of Lambeth 1988.

3.6 Anglicans affirm the sovereign authority of the Holy Scriptures as the medium through which God by the Spirit communicates his word in the Church and thus enables people to respond with understanding and faith. The Scriptures are "uniquely inspired witness to divine revelation", and "the primary norm for Christian faith and life".

3.7 The Scriptures, however, must be translated, read, and understood, and their meaning grasped through a continuing process of interpretation. Since the seventeenth century Anglicans have held that Scripture is to be understood and read in the light afforded by the contexts of "tradition" and "reason".

3.8 In one sense tradition denotes the Scriptures themselves, in that they embody "the tradition", "the message", "the faith once delivered to the saints". Tradition refers to the ongoing Spirit-guided life of the Church which receives, and in receiving interprets afresh God's abiding message. The living tradition embraces the ecumenical creeds, the classical eucharistic prayers, which belong with the Scriptures as forming their essential message. Tradition is not to be understood as an accumulation of formulae and texts but the living mind, the nerve centre of the Church. Anglican appeal to tradition is the appeal to this mind of the Church carried by the worship, teaching and the Spirit-filled life of the Church.

3.9 Properly speaking "reason" means simply the human being's capacity to symbolise, and so to order, share and communicate experience. It is the divine gift in virtue of which human persons respond and act with awareness in relation to their world and to God, and are opened up to that which is true for every time and every place. Reason cannot be divorced either from Scripture or tradition, since neither is conceivable apart from the working of reason. In another perspective, reason means not so much the capacity to make sense of things as it does "that which makes sense", or "that which is reasonable". The appeal to reason then becomes what people - and that means people in a given time and place - take as good sense or "common" sense. It refers to what can be called "the mind of a particular culture", with its characteristic ways of seeing things, asking about them, and explaining them. If tradition is the mind that Christians share as believers and members of the Church, reason is the mind they share as participants in a particular culture.

3.10 Anglicanism sees reason in the sense of the "mind" of the culture in which the Church lives and the Gospel is proclaimed, as a legitimate and necessary instrument for the interpretation of God's message in the Scriptures. Sometimes Scriptures affirm the new insights of a particular age or culture, sometimes they challenge or contradict those insights. The Word of God is addressed to the Church as it is part of the world. The Gospel borne by the Scriptures must be heard and interpreted in the language that bears the "mind" and distils the experience of the world. Tradition and reason are therefore in the Anglican way two distinct contexts in which Scriptures speak and out of which they are interpreted.

3.11 The characteristic Anglican way of living with a constant dynamic interplay of Scripture, tradition and reason means that the mind of God has constantly to be discerned afresh, not only in every age, but in each and every context. Moreover, the experience of the Church as it is lived in different places has something to contribute to the discernment of the mind of Christ for the Church. No one culture, no one period of history has a monopoly of insight into the truth of the Gospel. It is essential for the fullest apprehension of truth that context is in dialogue with context. Sometimes the lived experience of a particular community enables Christian truth to be perceived afresh for the whole community. At other times a desire for change or restatement of the faith in one place provokes a crisis within the whole Church. In order to keep the Anglican Communion living as a dynamic community of faith, exploring and making relevant the understanding of the faith, structures for taking counsel and deciding are an essential part of the life of the Communion

II. The Anglican Way: Sacrament and Worship

3.12 Fundamental to the Anglican way of living with and responding to diversity is the constant interplay and influence of Scripture, tradition and reason. The Scriptures are read and interpreted in the round of common daily prayer and in the celebration of the sacraments. In worship the faith is encountered in the hearing of the word and in the experience of the sacraments. In the sacrament of baptism Christians die and rise again with Christ through the waters of baptism to new life in him. In the eucharist they encounter the central mysteries of the faith in the anamnesis, the making present of those past events and the experience of future glory, through the power of the Holy Spirit. Word and sacrament are fundamental to the life of the Anglican Communion as it seeks to teach the faith and to give guidance for the right conduct in human life, expressing this in doctrine and moral guidance. A family likeness in common prayer expressed in many languages is a precious heritage which is significant in forming Anglican identity and maintaining unity. A commitment to daily prayer, to systematic scripture reading, to praying the psalms and canticles, to regular credal confession of the faith, and to intercessory prayer for one another and for the needs of the world is an integral part of Anglican belonging.

3.13 All of these resources keep Anglicans living together in fidelity to the memory and hope of Jesus under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. In the present they are bound together as they remember the past and anticipate the reconciliation of all things in Christ at the end of time.

III. Interdependence of Charisms in the Life of the Church

3.14 All who are baptised into the life of God and live out their calling as members of the Anglican Communion are given a charism of the Holy Spirit for the life of the Communion and for the service of others. The vocation of the laos is exercised in a broad context of social and communal life in civil society, at work and in recreation and within the family, as well as within the life of the community of the Church. By virtue of their baptism all members are called to confess their faith and to give account of their hope in what they do and what they say.

3.15 The calling of lay persons is to represent Christ and his Church; to bear witness to him wherever they may be; and according to the gifts given to them, to carry out Christ's work of reconciliation in the world; and to take their place in the life, worship and governance of the Church.

3.16 To enable the community of faith to respond to Christ's call God has given to the Church the charism of ordered ministry: the episcopate, the presbyterate, and the diaconate. The ordained ministry is exercised with, in and among the whole people of God.

3.17 The calling of a bishop is to represent Christ and his Church, particularly as apostle, chief priest, teacher and pastor of a diocese; to guard the faith, unity and discipline of the whole Church; to proclaim the word of God; to act in Christ's name for the reconciliation of the world and the building up of the Church; and to ordain others to continue Christ's ministry.

3.18 The calling of a priest or presbyter is to represent Christ and his Church, particularly as pastor to the people; to share with the bishops in the overseeing of the Church; to proclaim the gospel; to administer the sacraments; and to bless and declare pardon in the name of God.

3.19 The calling of a deacon is to represent Christ and his Church, particularly as a servant to those in need; and to assist bishops and priests in the proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments (ECUSA, BCP, page 855-856).

3.20 The complementary gifts bestowed by the Holy Spirit on the community are for the common good and for the building up of the Church and for the service of the world to which the Church is sent

IV. The Ministry of Oversight

3.21 The continuation of a ministry of oversight (episkope) at the Reformation exercised by bishops, by bishops in college and by bishops in council is what is referred to in the current ecumenical writing as "the personal, collegial and communal" ways of exercising the ministry of oversight. These forms of ministry help to hold Anglicans together in a community of discernment and reflection.

3.22 Every diocese in the Anglican Communion knows something of the exercise of the personal ministry of oversight of the bishop (or bishops); of collegiality in the coming together of bishops and clergy; and of the communal dimension of oversight which brings together the bishop with clergy and laity in the meeting of synods. These dimensions of the ministry of oversight are expressed in different ways in the different regions of the world and are affected by local circumstance and custom.

3.23 The bishop presides over the gatherings, collegial and communal in the diocese. Sometimes the bishop shares the presiding over meetings with a member of the laity. In most places at the level of a Province, the collegial and synodical gatherings are presided over by an archbishop or presiding bishop. Collegiality and primacy are thus part of the Anglican experience at diocesan, Provincial and Communion-wide levels. Within the Communion, Provincial primacy, influenced by the different cultural contexts, varies in perception and practice.

V. Structures of Interdependence

3.24 The life of belonging together with its characteristic ethos within the Anglican Communion is supported by a web of structures which hold together and guide a common life of belonging. These structures owe something to their continuity with the western catholic Church and also to the Reformation of the sixteenth century. They have undergone considerable development since the sixteenth century and continue to be subject to change and development today.

3.25 At the Reformation the Church of England maintained the threefold order of ministry in continuity with the early Church. Bishops in their dioceses continued to be the personal focus of the continuity and unity of the Church. There was no attempt to minimise the role of bishops as ministers of word and sacrament nor to stop a collegial relation between bishops and presbyters in the diocese or bishops together at the level of Province. Conciliar life continued to be part of the Church of England's experience. The role of Parliament and the Royal Supremacy ensured that the role and place of the laity were embedded in the structuring of the life of the Church of England. In time, this developed into synodical structures which bring together ordained and lay for discernment, decision making and authoritative teaching.

3.26 The expansion of the Church of England as a result of British colonisation led to the formation of Provinces, each with its own episcopal and synodical structures for maintaining the life of the Church. In the post-colonial period of the twentieth century the various independent Anglican Churches are governed by synods which recognise bishops' authority in some form as crucial and distinct, but which include, not only presbyterial representation, but also lay representation. Each Province, too, has developed some form of primatial office in the role of archbishop or presiding bishop .

3.27 The expression of episcopacy and the form of synodical and collegial government are not identical in each place. The experience and exercise of authority in the local context has played a part in shaping the different Provincial structures and processes. In some places the increasing emphasis on democratic forms of representation in modern secular governments has also affected church government.

3.28 In the development of the Anglican Communion there is no legislative authority above the Provincial level. (How far this is a result of the Royal Supremacy in the Church of England is a matter for reflection. Other historical factors in other Provinces have also affected the question of autonomy and interdependence.) There has been an insistence upon the autonomy of the Provinces of the Anglican Communion. However, while autonomy entails the legal and juridical right of each Province to govern its way of life, in practice autonomy has never been the sole criterion for understanding the relation of Provinces to one another. There has generally been an implicit understanding of belonging together and interdependence. The life of the Communion is held together in the creative tension of Provincial autonomy and interdependence. There are some signs that the Provinces are coming to a greater realisation that they need each other's spiritual, intellectual and material resources in order to fulfill their task of mission. Each Province has something distinctive to offer the others, and needs them in turn to be able to witness to Christ effectively in its own context. Questions are asked about whether we can go on as a world Communion with morally authoritative, but not juridically binding, decision-making structures at the international level. A further question is the relationship between the autonomy of a Province and the theological importance of a diocese which is reckoned to be the basic unit of Anglicanism.

3.29 The interdependence of the Provinces has come to be maintained by certain ministries, structures and relationships which continue to develop. The first of these is the Archbishop of Canterbury.

3.30 While the request for first Lambeth Conference in 1867 came from the Communion and not from Canterbury, it assembled at the invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, who also presided over it. The continuing role of Canterbury, as a focus of the unity of the Anglican Communion and the "first among equals" in the Anglican college of bishops, came to clear expression in this way. The primacy of Canterbury and the international collegiality and conciliarity of Anglicanism are inextricably interrelated.

3.31 The primacy of the See of Canterbury and its key role in the Communion clearly emerged in many of the resolutions of the first Lambeth Conference. However, at the Conference of 1897 the role of the Archbishop of Canterbury in gathering the Communion was explicitly acknowledged and affirmed when he was urged to foster the maintenance and development of the Communion by calling the Conference of bishops every ten years.

3.32 Today Anglican identity and authenticity of belonging is generally determined by the outward and visible test of communion with the See of Canterbury. The 1930 Lambeth Conference explicitly defined Anglicanism in this way:

"It is part of the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. Its centre of unity is the See of Canterbury. To be Anglican it is necessary to be in communion with that See".

Resolution 49 added further:

The Anglican Communion is a fellowship, with One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church...in communion with the See of Canterbury... (Lambeth Conference 1930, Resolution 49).

3.33 Lambeth 1968 described the role of the Archbishop of Canterbury in more detail:

Within the college of bishops it is evident that there must be a president. In the Anglican Communion this position is at present held by the occupant of the historic See of Canterbury, who enjoys a primacy of honour, not of jurisdiction. This primacy is found to involve, in a particular way, that care of all the churches which is shared by all the bishops.

3.34 The Lambeth Conference of 1978 in a further statement on the basis of Anglican unity said inter alia:

"Its [unity] is personally grounded in the loyal relationship of each of the churches to the Archbishop of Canterbury who is freely recognised as the focus of unity."

3.35 Being in communion with the See and Archbishop of Canterbury has been a visible sign of the membership of bishops and of their Churches in the Anglican Communion. The Archbishop of Canterbury's task has been described as involving "in a particular way, that care of all the churches which is shared by all the bishops", and also as a task "not to command but to gather" the Communion. Clearly, the emphasis is upon service and caring and not upon coercive power.

3.36 The Lambeth Conference of bishops first met in 1867.It arose from the missionary concern of the Provinces, particularly the bishops of Canada, but the first moves to establish a meeting of all bishops of the Anglican Communion did not go unopposed. What was said about the identity and role of the first Lambeth Conference in 1867 was cautious:

It has never been contemplated that we should assume the functions of a general synod of all the Churches in full communion with the Church of England, and take upon ourselves to enact canons that should be binding upon those represented. We merely propose to discuss matters of practical interest and pronounce what we deem expedient in resolutions which may serve as safe guides (Lambeth Conferences 1867-1930, SPCK (1948), page 9).

3.37 The consultative rather than legislative role of the Conference was reiterated clearly in 1920:

The Lambeth Conference does not claim to exercise any powers of control. It stands for the far more spiritual and more Christian principle of loyalty to the fellowship. The Churches represented in it are indeed independent, but independent with the Christian freedom which recognizes the restraints of truth and love. They are not free to ignore the fellowship...the Conference is a fellowship in the Spirit (Lambeth Conference 1920, SPCK (1920), Evangelical Letter, page 14).

3.38 A balance is held between denying any power of compliance or control while upholding the need for loyalty to the fellowship expressed in restraint imposed by virtue of belonging to the Communion. No one part should act without regard for the others.

3.39 In 1958 the Lambeth Conference recognised the need for an executive officer who would serve both the Lambeth Consultative Body and the Advisory Council on Missionary Strategy. It was out of the tireless efforts of the Rt. Rev'd Stephen F. Bayne, Jr. that communication within the Communion was strengthened and a new vision of interdependence and mutual accountability in Anglicanism was shaped. From his work, and that of his successor, Archbishop Ralph Dean, came the vision of a Consultative Council.

3.40 The Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) was established by a resolution of the 1968 Lambeth Conference. The Conference recognised that there was a need for more contact between the Churches of the Anglican Communion than that provided by the Lambeth Conference every ten years by bringing together bishops, presbyters and laity, under the presidency of the Archbishop of Canterbury, to work on common concerns. The Council met for the first time at Limuru, Kenya in 1971.

3.41 Resolution 69 of the 1968 Lambeth Conference set out areas of ministry belonging to the Anglican Consultative Council:

1. To share information about developments in one or more provinces with the other parts of the Communion and to serve as needed as an instrument of common action.

2. To advise on inter-Anglican, provincial, and diocesan relationships, including the division of provinces, the formation of new provinces and of regional councils and the problems of extraprovincial dioceses.

3. To develop as far as possible agreed Anglican policies in the world mission of the Church and to encourage national and regional Churches to engage together in developing and implementing such policies by sharing their resources of man power, money, and experience to the best advantage of all.

4. To keep before national and regional Churches the importance of the fullest possible Anglican collaboration with other Christian Churches.

5. To encourage and guide Anglican participation in the ecumenical movement and the ecumenical organisations; to co-operate with the World Council of Churches and the world confessional bodies on behalf of the Anglican Communion; and to make arrangements for the conduct of pan-Anglican conversations with the Roman Catholic Church, the Orthodox Churches and other Churches.

6. To advise on matters arising out of national or regional Church union negotiations or conversations and on subsequent relations with united Churches.

7. To advise on problems of inter-Anglican communication and to help in the dissemination of Anglican and ecumenical information.

8. To keep in review the needs that may arise for further study and, where necessary, to promote inquiry and research.

3.42 The Anglican Consultative Council meets every three years and its Standing Committee annually. Its constitution and functions have been clearly set out and agreed to by the Provinces, and it has been incorporated as the legal entity for the Communion. In 1988 the members of the ACC were invited participants without vote at the Lambeth Conference. They have been invited to Lambeth 1998.

3.43 Its most vital purpose, however, like the Lambeth Conference, is to establish a communion of mutual attentiveness, interdependence and accountability to serve the unity

and interdependence in mission of the Anglican Communion. The mutual attentiveness required when members from various parts of the Communion share the richness of their experiences also helps to form the mind of the Communion and is a reminder of the rich diversity of gifts which God has given us. The sharing of stories enhances and deepens the Communion's experience of interdependence at all levels.

3.44 Important to this process are representatives who are able not only to bring the concerns and stories of their Provinces with them but carry the proceedings of the council back to their communities, at the Provincial, national and diocesan levels. Only this constant interchange will provide the basis on which member Churches are able to develop and maintain constant relations and full communion with their sisters and brothers around the world. Each Provincial Church has a responsibility to assist their representatives to carry out this task.

3.45 The gathering of bishops, priests and laity at the meetings of the Anglican Consultative Council since Kenya 1971 provides a much needed opportunity for the opinions and experiences of the Communion to be shared.

3.46 The 1978 Lambeth Conference approved a proposal that the Archbishop of Canterbury convene a regular Meeting of the Primates. At that Conference Archbishop Coggan said:

"...I am coming to believe that the way forward in the coming years - and it may be a slow process will be along two lines: first, to have meetings of the Primates of the Communion reasonably often, for leisurely thought, prayer and deep consultation. There have been such meetings, but on very informal and rare bases. I believe they should be held perhaps as frequently as once in two years. But if that meeting now on some fairly regular basis is to be fruitful, those primates would have to come to such meetings well informed with a knowledge of the mind and will of their brothers whom they represent. Then they would be channels through which the voice of the member Churches would be heard, and real interchange of mind and will and heart could take place. That's the first thing.

The second line, I think, on which we might make progress would be to see that the body of Primates, as they meet, should be in the very closest and most intimate contact with the ACC."

3.47 The minutes of the 1979 Meeting of the Primates comment that:

The role of a Primates' meeting could not be, and was not desired as a higher synod... Rather it was a clearing house for ideas and experience through free expression, the fruits of which the Primates might convey to their Churches.

3.48 Since then, meetings of the Primates have become occasions of debate and discussion of personal and Provincial matters in the context of eucharist, prayer and study, in which the primates have achieved, in spite of the constantly changing membership of the group, a deep sense of fraternity that has nourished the unity of the Communion. At a meeting of the Primates at Newcastle, Northern Ireland in 1991, the Primates considered that the primary importance of meeting is the building and maintenance of personal relationships:

(a) as a sign of the unity and catholicity of the Church;
(b) to give high profile to important issues;

(c) for mutual support and counsel.

3.49 The Primates also expressed the opinion that there appears to be no issue which is the exclusive preserve of the Primates alone; all issues, doctrinal, ecclesial and moral, are the concern of the whole baptised community.

3.50 What has yet to be given serious consideration is Resolution 18 Section 2(a) of Lambeth 1988:

This conference urges that encouragement be given to a developing collegial role for the Primates' Meeting under the Presidency of the Archbishop of Canterbury, so that the Primates' meeting is able to exercise an enhanced responsibility in offering guidance on doctrinal, moral and pastoral matters."

3.51 The episcopate is the primary instrument of Anglican unity, but episcope is exercised personally, collegially and communally. The emergence of the Lambeth Conference and more recently, the Primates' Meeting and the Anglican Consultative Council, together with the primacy of the Archbishop of Canterbury, have become effective means of keeping the Provinces in touch with each other and of binding the Anglican Communion together. Apart from the episcopate these instruments were not given from the beginning but have gradually developed and are still developing. The instruments, while having no legislative authority, provide the means of consultation and go some way to helping to form a Communion-wide mind on issues that affect the whole Communion. In these developments we see the conciliar nature of modern Anglicanism which is one of its least recognised yet most characteristic features. However, the Provinces remain autonomous. They are governed and regulated by synods which recognize the authority of bishops in some form as crucial and distinct, but which also include representation from the ordained clergy and the laity.

3.52 This complex and still evolving network of structures within Anglicanism has developed and serves to keep Anglicans in a life of belonging together, a life of relationship. These structures are both formal and informal and interrelate and affect one another in subtle ways. They involve personal, collegial and communal relationships at the parochial, diocesan, regional and international levels. Each contributes towards a web of interdependence and serves to guard against isolation.

3.53 This complex network of structures gives expression to the fundamental bond of Anglican life which is that unity given in the life of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. That life of divine communion is made visible in a characteristic way within the ordered life of the Anglican Communion. The combination of allegiance to Scripture, tradition and reason, the life lived within the gifts of Scripture, creeds, sacraments and ordained ministry, the essential interrelatedness of lay and ordained and the structured, conciliar life contribute each in their particular way to a life of interdependence and belonging. The life of the Communion is dynamic as the fellowship seeks to respond to new insights, challenges and threats.

3.54 At the end of the decade one question for Anglicans is whether their bonds of interdependence are strong enough to hold them together embracing tension and conflict while answers are sought to seemingly intractable problems. In particular the call for more effective structures of communion at a world level will need to be faced at Lambeth 1998 for the strengthening of the Anglican Communion and its unity into the next millennium. A further question concerns the wider ecumenical community. Is there a need for a universal primacy exercised collegially and respecting the role of the laity in decision-making within the Church? This question was referred to the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (APCIC) by Lambeth 1988 and is also raised by the Bishop of Rome's invitation in Ut Unum Sint.

CHAPTER 4
LEVELS OF COMMUNION - SUBSIDIARITY AND INTERDEPENDENCE

Introduction 4.1-4.4
I. The Levels of the Church's Life 4.5-4.7
II. The Principle of Subsidiarity 4.8-4.21
III. The Particular Church and the Church Catholic 4.22-4.27

4.1 The Churches of the Anglican Communion belong to the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. That is to say, they understand themselves as an integral part of the mystery of God's reconciling work and an embodiment of the presence of God in the world. The task and aims of the Church are given by divine commission. The Church is commanded to go to all nations and make them disciples of the Lord (Mt.28: 19f). His followers are sent by Christ into the world, as he was sent by the Father into the world (Jn. 17). God has entrusted the Church's ministers with the task of being ambassadors, and makes an appeal for reconciliation through them (2 Cor. 5:18ff). In the most fundamental way, therefore, the Church is for mission, by commission.

4.2 As the Church reflected on the nature of this mission it formulated four classic "marks" or "attributes" which ought to characterise its life at all times, and in all places. These it confesses in the words of the Nicene Creed. It is to be one, as the Body of Christ, to proclaim and to embody the reconciliation of all things in Christ. It is to be holy, that is, to have about it the marks of the sanctifying presence of the Holy Spirit; it is to be catholic, that is, to be, as Christ was, for all people, at all times, in all places; and it is to be apostolic, to witness courageously and unceasingly to the authentic and liberating gospel of Christ, as taught by the apostles.

4.2 Together with these marks goes the presupposition that the Church must be a receptive and learning community. It can manifest none of these attributes unless Christians are encouraged corporately "to go to school" with Christ, to be nourished by teaching and the sacraments, and to grow up into his likeness (Eph. 4:11-16). So the Church is a school in which the gift of teaching is acknowledged, but in which all the teachers are themselves learners, enjoying mutuality of encouragement and correction. This enables the Church to be a teaching community not simply for its own sake, but for the sake of its mission to the world.

4.4 Although the aims of the Church have been given to it, nonetheless the Church has continually to formulate and reformulate its specific objectives with a view to their being consistent with these fundamental aims, and also appropriate and relevant to the given conditions of a particular place and time. The gospel has to be proclaimed afresh in each generation. New challenges and opportunities constantly arise to be addressed; new threats have to be resisted.

I. The Levels of the Church's Life

4.5 This raises the question of where and at what levels decisions are to be made. Characteristically, questions arise in the Communion in a particular place at a particular time. To respond appropriately and effectively the Church needs to be clear that there is a diversity of levels on which the God-given mission of the Church is carried out. The word "level" is used in this context neutrally; the more local is not "lower" in a pejorative sense, nor is the more international "higher" and for that reason more important. Each level has its own integrity and its own demands. Some matters concern a single parish; some relate to a diocese; some would be appropriately addressed by a national or Provincial assembly; a very few would be better approached at a regional or international level; and some are matters for the Communion as a whole as a part of the universal Church.

4.6 There is no simple way of separating levels, or of assigning the consideration of particular matters to particular levels without controversy. An ethnic matter, for example, may be divisive at parish level, and be relevant at every intermediate stage to the international level. No one guideline can be invoked to determine where responsibility for a decision lies.

4.7 The character of the Christian faith from its early days has given it a profound investment in the quality of personal, face-to-face relationships. Christians are called to embody in daily life God's reconciliation of all things in Christ, living newly in the light of God's justice and forgiveness. It is through the personal witness of Christians to the reality of that new life that the attractiveness of the gospel becomes apparent. And the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which are various to different people, are given precisely so that, used together in humility and love and with attentiveness to one another's interests, they may contribute to the building up of the whole body.

II. The Principle of Subsidiarity

4.8 The principle of "subsidiarily" has been formulated to express this investment in the local and face-to-face. Properly used, subsidiarily means that "a central authority should have a subsidiary function, performing only those tasks which cannot be performed effectively at a more immediate or local level" (Oxford English Dictionary).

4.9 Subsidiarity may properly be applied to the life of the Church in order to resist the temptation of centralism. But in the life of the Church the local level was never seen as simply autonomous. Because the work of Christ was itself a reconciliation of humanity, there is evidence from the first days of the churches of concern for the unity of the communities, both in their internal relationships and in their inter-relationships. St. Paul, for example, writes of his anxiety for the continuity of preaching and teaching the authentic apostolic gospel and for the effectiveness of the united witness of the Church to the gospel of reconciliation. Care was taken, as the Church grew, to preserve the continuity of its witness across time and its coherence and effectiveness in different places.

4.10 It is important to clarify the principles which should govern the relationship of the different levels of the life of the Church to one another. Clarity on this matter makes for creative, sustainable and transparent partnerships in the Body of Christ. Every "higher" authority ought to encourage the free use of God's gifts at "lower" levels. There must be clarity on what has to be observed and carried out at that level, and also on the limits of its competence. As much space as possible should be given to personal initiative and responsibility. For example, in the relationship between a bishop and a parish priest and congregation, there is initially a giving of responsibility to the latter for the task of worship, witness and service within its geographical boundaries or area of immediate influence. The priest and parish will be given a set of tasks which they are obliged to fulfil. These will be few in number and general in character The limits of their authority and responsibility will also be explained to priest and parish. These will essentially reflect agreements made previously by church synods, and expressed in canons and other ways. They will be honoured by all unless and until they are changed by the due processes of agreement. Subject to such boundaries the priest and parish will be encouraged to use all their gifts, energy and commitment to enable the gospel to go forward in that area. The bishop and parish priest will maintain the highest level of communication possible so that encouragement, advice, and, where necessary, correction can be given, together with new task as occasion arises.

4.11 Anglicans may properly claim that the observation of different levels and the granting of considerable freedom to the lowest possible level has been a feature of their polity. In Anglicanism today canonically binding decisions can only be made at the level of a Province or in some Provinces at the level of a diocese.

4.12 Decision-making by Provinces on appropriate matters has proved a source of strength to the Anglican Communion. Thereby, Provinces take responsibility in clear and bold ways for what they do.

4.13 However, when decisions are taken by Provinces on matters which touch the life of the whole Communion without consultation, they may give rise to tension as other Provinces or other Christian traditions reject what has been decided elsewhere. The Eames Commission has stressed the need for consultation prior to action, and for charity and patience in this situation, insisting that discernment and "reception is a continuing process in the life of the Church, which cannot be hurried". (Eames III, Reception 43-4)

4.14 The proclamation of the gospel to all humanity must embody its universal coherence. Care needs to be taken to prevent a Province from becoming bound by its culture. The corrosive effects of particular environments are often not perceptible to those who are immersed in them. The principle articulated here of a relationship between Provinces and the worldwide Communion applies at other levels also. At each interface the aim is to free the people of God to use their God-given gifts responsibly and cooperatively, in every way compatible with the gospel and its effective proclamation in word and deed.

4.15 The move to ordain women to the priesthood and the episcopate provides a recent example of the process by which Anglicans have struggled together to form a mind on a matter which affects the ministry and therefore the unity of the Communion. It is a story which throws into sharp relief some of the emerging questions concerning both the structures of Anglican interdependence and the processes by which we come to take decisions together.

4.16 The story illustrates, for particular historical reasons, how binding decisions can only be made at the level of a Province or in some places at the level of a diocese. However, it also reveals a struggle to honour the interdependence of Anglicans through reference to the international organs of consultation. When, in the 1960s, the matter of the ordination of women became urgent for the mission of the Church in Hong Kong, Hong Kong first brought the matter to the Lambeth Conference. The Conference asked that every regional church should study the matter. In this way consultation was initiated. But in spite of an attempt to listen to one another, in fact no written responses had been received by the time the Provincial representatives met for the first meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council. The Council adopted the following resolution:

In reply to the request of the Council of the Church of South-East Asia, this Council advises the Bishop of Hong Kong, acting with the approval of his Synod, and any bishop of the Anglican Communion acting with the approval of his 8Province, that, if he decides to ordain women to the priesthood, his action will be acceptable to this Council; and that this Council will use its good offices to encourage all Provinces of the Anglican Communion to continue in communion with these dioceses. (Resolution 28(b) The Time is Now Anglican Consultative Council, First Meeting, Limuru, Kenya, 23 February - 5 March, 1971. London: SPCK (1971), page 39).

4.17 In a similar way in 1985, after the General Convention of ECUSA had expressed its intention not to withhold consent to the election of a bishop on the grounds of gender, it also sought the advice of the newly created Primates Meeting. Through its working party the Primates sought the advice of Provinces. It was that Communion-wide reflection from 17 provinces that formed the background to resolution 1 of Lambeth 1988:

That each province should respect the decision and attitudes of other provinces ...without such respect necessarily indicating acceptance of the principles involved, maintaining the highest degree of communion with the provinces that differ.

4.18 In much the same way as a juridical decision made at Provincial level has to be received, so the expressed "mind of the Communion" given in resolutions of Lambeth Conferences, still has to undergo a process of "open reception", in the life of the Anglican Communion and the whole Church. Much emphasis was placed by the Eames Commission on the need for an open process of reception following the Lambeth 1988 Resolution (see The Eames Commission, pp. 54-5).

4.19 There has been an increasing awareness that certain issues arise that affect the unity of the universal Church. Issues of faith, the sacraments, the ordering of the ministry, fundamental changes in relationships with another World Communion and ethical issues have implications for the life of communion. These need a Communion-wide mind if a life of interdependence is to be preserved.

4.20 Matters which touch the unity of the whole Communion can rarely be decided without argument and therefore must always be brought to the life of prayer. The Church needs to be tolerant and open enough to conduct its arguments with charity and attentiveness to the wisdom and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Care needs to be taken to ensure that complex matters are fairly and appropriately considered. Different cultures have differing traditions in the matter of consultation and decision-making.

4.21 Anglican theologians, such as Richard Hooker, have spoken of the need for consent, without which the mere exercise of authority can amount to tyranny. But there is no one way of establishing what constitutes consent. Where there is disparity and diversity of traditions there is need for great care with communication. As long ago as 1888 the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral asserted the appropriateness of different styles of episcopal authority, appropriate to different cultures: "The Historic Episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the Unity of His Church" (Report on Home Reunion, Article 4, pages 159f).

III. The Particular Church and the Church Catholic

4.22 The life and mission of the Church is at its most authentic and vibrant in a particular context, that is a cohesive geographical region or an area covered by a people, tribe or group with its own traditions and customs. "Local" can mean different things in different places. A single parish can be a locality, and that place can be as small as a village, or as big as a city. A cohesive geographical region can be a local entity, or an area covered by a people, tribe or group with its own traditions and customs. Styles and ways of living, received wisdom, social customs or rituals, clan structures and inter-relationships can all contribute to a sense of particularity. The Church is effective when it is embedded a local place, challenging wrongs, healing relationships, standing with the vulnerable and marginalized, and opening up new possibilities for mutual service, respect and love. In such a context what the word "church" stands for is a rich, many-sided reality embodying God's saving and reconciling presence within a particular context. It is a richly referential term, culturally resonant, and locked into an established symbolic system or network of meanings.

4.23 It is important that the Church in its particular embodiment is not the "translation" of an abstract ideal into a merely temporary or transitory vehicle. The life of the Church, particularly developed, would show respect for the history of the Church of past centuries, including the early centuries and the biblical communities, noting both their failings and faithfulness. It would also be ready to be helped and challenged by the contemporary Church in other places, and use the experience of fellow Christians as a way of discerning truth within the ambiguities of local tradition and culture.

4.24 Dependent upon such embodied ecclesiologies is the expression of a catholic doctrine of the Church, which attempts to express what is, or should be, true of the Church in all places. Our trinitarian theology (chapter 2) provides the basis of such an ecclesiology. It is no accident that it is rooted not just in the doctrines and experiences of the churches of the Anglican Communion, but in the convictions of the vast preponderance of Christians who have ever lived and of the public witness of their churches. In no sense is this ecclesiology untried or flimsy. Like certain forms of highly sophisticated modern metals, it is thin and exceptionally tough, proved in vast numbers of stresses. It is a vital resource, and to draw upon it is to show a wholly appropriate respect for the Church catholic. We have also spoken of the "marks" or "attributes" of the Church (para 4.2) as providing its general aims. These are true, but likewise unspecific. Nor do they prevent disputes from breaking out as to their precise interpretation. What, for example, does it mean to be a "holy" Church in the context of a hedonistic culture? St. Paul himself had to work hard to interpret the Christian's responsibility in relation to the ramifications of idolatry in pagan society.

4.25 At all times the theological reflection and praxis of the local church must be consistent with the truth of the gospel which belongs to the universal Church. The universal doctrine of the Church is important especially when particular practices or theories are locally developed which lead to disputes. In some cases it may be possible and necessary for the universal Church to say with firmness that a particular local practice or theory is incompatible with Christian faith. This was said, for example, to those churches in South Africa which practiced and justified racial discrimination at the eucharist. Similarly if a church were to develop a different baptismal formula than that delivered in Scripture and used throughout the world, a comparable situation would arise. The Chicago Lambeth Quadrilateral is a list of norms and practices which must characterise the Church at all times everywhere. However, it is not a complete ecclesiology; nor is it free from interpretative ambiguity.

4.26 Elizabethan Anglican ecclesiology, for example as developed by Richard Hooker (c.1544-1600) or Richard Field (1561 - 1616), is a locally embodied ecclesiology for a particular time and place. It is not a "translation" of a universal ecclesiology, which can then be (as it were) "retranslated" into different times and places. It is, as ecclesiologies should be, a whole-hearted attempt to embody the saving presence of God in a given culture. It is a rendering of biblical ecclesiology, which is itself particular and local. Elizabethan Anglicans, however, acknowledged the authority of the Nicene creed and sought to show how the Church of England belonged to the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. The contemporary churches of the Anglican Communion also need locally embodied ecclesiologies, not pale imitations of Elizabethan Anglicanism, but full, rich, and relevant embodiments of God's saving presence within a locality. Nor will they be mere "translations" of a universal ecclesiology, but a confident and whole-hearted seeking of God's way for the Church in transforming relationships with particular traditions, structures and institutions.

4.27 But no local embodiment of the Church is simply autonomous and it is plain from the history of the Church that local churches can make mistakes. A care for reconciliation and unity is implicit in the catholicity of Jesus' unique, atoning work. The apostolicity of a particular church is measured by its consonance with the living elements of apostolic succession and unity: baptism and eucharist, the Nicene and Apostles' creeds, the ordered ministry and the canon of Scripture. These living elements of apostolic succession serve the authentic succession of the gospel and serve to keep the various levels of the Church in a communion of truth and life.

CHAPTER 5
KOINONIA: PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES FOR DEVELOPING STRUCTURES

Introduction 5.1-5.2
I. The Communion of the Trinity 5.3-5.4
II. Episcope, Personal, Collegial and Communal 5.5-5.16
III. Subsidiarity, Accountability and Interdependence 5.17-5.20
IV. Discernment and Reception 5.21-5.26
V. Theological Coherence 5.27-5.28

5.1 The purpose of all structures and processes of the Church is to serve the koinonia, the trinitarian life of God in the Church, and to help all the baptised embrace and live out Christ's mission and ministry in the world. Through baptism each person is called to live the new life in Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and is anointed with grace to do so in communion with all members of the same Body of Christ.

5.2 As we have seen in the Anglican Communion today the structures of unity and communion at a world level are still developing. This development needs now to be inspired by a renewed understanding of the Church as koinonia; a recognition of God's gift to the whole people of God of a ministry of episcope, exercised in personal, collegial and communal ways within and by the whole company of the baptised; by principles of subsidiarily, accountability and interdependence; and by an understanding of the Spirit led processes of discernment and reception.

I. The Communion of the Trinity

5.3 In chapter two we explored an understanding of the Church as communion, participating in and called to manifest in its own life, the life of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Those who are baptised, through the power of the Holy Spirit, die with Christ and rise to new life in him and are joined with all the baptised in the communion of God's own life and love. Through baptism and through participation at the Table of the Lord the baptised are called to a life of unity and interdependence and using all their diverse charisma entrusted with carrying out God's mission in the world. The structures of the Church, at every level, are to serve this vocation of the Church. In the way they are ordered as well as in the way they inter-relate and function they are to reflect and embody the fundamental reality of the Church's life - its communion in the life and love of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

5.4 This means that the personal and relational life of the Church is always prior to the structural. But without enabling structures the Church's life is weakened and the relational and personal life unsupported. Right structures and right ordering provide channels by which, through the power of the Holy Spirit, the mind of Christ is discerned, the right conduct of the Church encouraged and the gift of the many are drawn upon in the service and mission of the Church.

II. Episcope, Personal, Collegial and Communal

5.5 A ministry of oversight (episcope) of interdependence, accountability and discernment is essential at all levels of the Church's mission and ministry, and for the sake of the Church's wellbeing, must be exercised at every level in a way that is personal, collegial and communal. A bishop's authority is never isolated from the community; both the community of the Church and the community and unity of all humankind.

i. Personal

5.6 The ministry of oversight should be personal because the presence of Christ among his people can most effectively be pointed to by the person ordained to proclaim the gospel and to call the community to serve the Lord in a unity of faith and witness. Bishops have a special responsibility for maintaining and focusing the internal unity and communion of the local Church. In the diocese where they have oversight they represent, focus and have a care for the unity of the Church. Bishops also relate the local church to the wider church and the wider Church back to the local church.

5.7 Bishops are called by God, in and through the community of the faithful, to personify the tradition of the gospel and the mission of the Church. As the one with special responsibility to ensure that the proclamation of the word and the celebration of the sacraments is faithful to the gospel and the tradition of the Church, the bishop has specific responsibilities for the calling of all humanity into the unity of the Church. This specific responsibility is exercised in partnership with other bishops, clergy and laity, with members of other ecclesial bodies and leaders of the local community. Thus episcopal ministry is no authoritarian ministry above and separate from the community, but is a ministry, based in the grace of God, always exercised in relation to the community and always subject to the word of God.

5.8 By virtue of ordination, bishops are called and empowered to represent Christ to the community of the faithful and to the wider local community. This is the personal ministry of episcope. While this is the unique responsibility of the diocesan bishop, it is at the same time always shared with others. At a regional level Primates exercise a personal ministry of oversight, and at the level of the whole Communion the Archbishop of Canterbury exercises a personal ministry of episcope.

ii. Collegial

5.9 Bishops share in a Collegial relation with those whom they commission to serve with them in the diocese, in the priestly ministry of word and sacrament and in the pastoral work of the Church. Bishops also share collegially with other bishops of the same Province representing the concerns of the local church and community to the wider Church, and bringing back the concerns and decisions of the wider Church to their local community. The Lambeth Conference and the Primates' Meeting are wider expressions of collegiality.

iii. Communal

5.10 Bishops exercise their office communally. The community's effective participation is necessary in the discovery of God's will, under the guidance of the Spirit. In their communal relationships, bishops meet with representatives of those who hold office, or those who exercise responsibility within the community of the local churches. This accords with the principle of subsidiarity, keeping the bishop in touch with the concerns and decisions which belong properly to the more parochial levels of diocesan life. As representative persons, bishops have a moral duty to reflect the concerns of the whole community, especially those whom society pushes to the margins.

5.11 The practical expression of the personal, Collegial and communal ministry of the bishop is to be seen in synodical government. The churches of the Anglican Communion may be said to be episcopally led and synodically governed. The task of synods is properly consultation, deliberation and legislation. Episcopal leadership is, however, always in accountable relation to the whole Church, both local and universal .

5.12 There is a proper place for the communal expression of the Church's life and ministry at levels other than the diocesan. Every Province has its communal synodical gathering. At the world level, the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) currently embodies the communal dimension of the church life, reminding the Communion of the shared episcopal, presbyterial, diaconal and lay vocation in the discovery of the mind of Jesus Christ. At the world level, however, the meetings of the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) are consultative, not legislative in character.

5.13 Primacy and collegiality are complementary elements within the exercise of episcope. One cannot be exercised without reference to the other in critical and creative balance. Further, both in turn must be open to the Christian community in a way that is both transparent and accountable, and in the decision-making of the Church, upholds a reception process in which critique, affirmation and rejection are possible.

5.14 The role of primacy is to foster the communion by helping the bishops in their task of apostolic leadership both in their local church and in the Church universal. A Primate's particular role in episcope is to help churches to listen to one another, to grow in love and unity, and to strive together towards the fullness of Christian life and witness. A Primate respects and promotes Christian freedom and spontaneity; does not seek uniformity where diversity is legitimate, or centralize administration to the detriment of local churches.

5.15 A Primate exercises ministry not in isolation but in collegial association with other bishops. If there is a need to intervene in the affairs of a diocese within the Province, the Primate will consult with other bishops, and if possible act through the normal structures of consultation and decision-making. The Primate will strive never to bypass or usurp the proper responsibility of the local church. ARCIC I spoke of the ministry of primacy in this way:

Primacy fulfils its purpose by helping the churches to listen to one another, to grow in love and unity, and to strive together towards the fullness of Christian life and witness; it respects and promotes Christian freedom and spontaneity; it does not seek uniformity where diversity is legitimate, or centralise administration to the detriment of local churches. (The Final Report, Authority I, para 21).

5.16 The primacy of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the meeting of Primates reflects at the Anglican Communion level the primacy and collegiality exercised at Provincial level. There is a difference, however, in that distance and infrequency of meeting add difficulty to the process of consultation and decision. Discernment, decision and action at this level will normally depend only upon the consensus of the Primates' meeting or a part of it and demands great sensitivity.

III. Subsidiarity, Accountability and Interdependence

5.17 The Holy Catholic Church is fully present in each of its local embodiments. Decisions about the life and mission of the Church should be made in that place and need only be referred to wider councils if the matter threatens the unity and the faithfulness of teaching or practice of the Church catholic, or where the local church encounters genuinely new circumstances and wishes advice about how to respond.

5.18 The various levels of the Church are accountable to each other. This will be expressed by openness to dialogue, by attentiveness to the particularity of people, times and places, by acceptance of interdependence on both the personal and corporate levels and by honouring plurality and diversity as gifts of God.

5.19 Attentiveness, in the Christian community, is a specific quality of interacting among members of Christ's body. Christian attentiveness means deciding to place the understanding of others ahead of being understood. It means listening and responding to the needs and the hopes of others, especially when these differ from one's own needs, agendas and hopes. Further, Christian attentiveness means keeping these needs and agendas in mind, when making one's own decisions and developing one's own practices. Such attentiveness is consonant, we said, with the quality of God's love known in Christ and shared in the Holy Spirit. This divine love is imaged beautifully in John's Gospel, where the Father and Son glorify and affirm the identity of one another. It is mirrored further in our Lord's acute awareness of and compassionate responsiveness to the needs of others.

5.20 The world-wide Anglican assemblies are consultative and not legislative in character. There is a question to be asked whether this is satisfactory if the Anglican Communion is to be held together in hard times as well as in good ones. Indeed there is a question as to whether effective communion, at all levels, does not require appropriate instruments, with due safeguards, not only for legislation, but also for oversight. Is not universal authority a necessary corollary of universal communion? This is a matter currently under discussion with our ecumenical partners. It relates not only to our understanding of the exercise of authority in the Anglican Communion, but also to the kind of unity and communion we look for in a visibly united Church.

IV. Discernment and Reception

5.21 The faith of the Church is always in need of fresh interpretation, so that the living Christ can be realised in the lives of contemporary men and women. Discerning the mind of Christ for the Church is the task of the whole people of God, with those ordained for a ministry of oversight guiding and leading the community. Authority is relational. Some matters are properly determined at a local or regional level, others which touch the unity in faith need to be determined in the communion of all the churches.

5.22 When a matter is raised by a local church processes of discernment, decision making and reception, all have their part to play. It is the responsibility of the local church to consider the implication of taking decisions for the wider Communion. Anglicans agree that the Great Ecumenical Councils of the fourth and fifth centuries were the highest conciliar authority. However, no ecumenical council possesses final authority simply as an institution. Even with these early councils there was no guarantee that the guidance of a council was free from error of judgement or distortion of the truth. Its words were accepted as true and binding, not because a particular council spoke, nor because it had been convened by a particular authority, but because its decisions came to be received and recognised by the faithful in the local churches as expressing the truth of the gospel. This is not to say that certain councils of the Church in the past and in the Anglican Communion today should not command the respect of the faithful and be taken with all due seriousness in the response and discernment process.

5.23 Anglicans hold that the universal Church will not ultimately fail. Through the leading of the Holy Spirit, truth is gradually discerned. However the discernment of truth is never an uncomplicated and straightforward matter. There are always setbacks along the way.

5.24 Within the Anglican Communion matters which touch the communion of all the churches need to be discerned and tested within the life of the interdependence of the Provinces, through the meeting of bishops in the Lambeth Conference and through the consultative process of the Anglican Consultative Council and the Primates' Meeting. Beyond that lies the process of open reception within the life of the local churches. The maintenance of communion both within and between churches, in the process of testing the truth of a

decision needs great sensitivity, and adequate space needs to be found for clearly expressed dissent in testing and refining truth. In the process of discernment and reception relationships need to be maintained, for only in fellowship is there opportunity for correcting one-sidedness or ignorance. Though some of the means by which communion is expressed may be strained, the need for courtesy, tolerance, mutual respect, prayer for one another and a continuing desire to know and be with one another, remain binding upon us as Christians. The reception process involves the preparation of appropriate and informative study materials and the preparation of occasions for conversations, bringing together those on both sides of the particular issue.

5.25 In a divided Christendom there is no possibility of making decisions today in a General Council. Nevertheless, at this stage of the ecumenical movement any decisions which touch the faith or order of the universal Church need to be offered for testing within the wider ecumenical fellowship.

5.26 In the matter of discussing the mind of Christ for the Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, discernment, conciliar debate and decision making followed by a process of reception each have a part to play. It is not a matter of weakness that the Church is unable to make instant decisions in relation to the complex matters of faith, order and morals which come before it, but the way it lives in the process of discernment, decision making and reception may give profound witness and provide a model for other communities.

V. Theological Coherence

5.27 The mission of the Church is to embody and proclaim Christ's gospel of love and reconciliation, healing and freedom. This must be transparent not only in the words it speaks and in its advocacy of justice and peace, but also in its visible structures and processes. The theology implicit in the Church's structures and processes must be one with the explicit theology of its words.

5.28 It is with the principles we have explored in this chapter that we turn now to reconsider the instruments of Anglican belonging at a world level and raise questions about how they might develop in the light of these principles.

CHAPTER 6
THE WORLDWIDE INSTRUMENTS OF COMMUNION: STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES

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6.1 In this chapter we raise a number of questions about the future development of the world-wide instruments of communion, the way they function and their inter-relation, one with the other. The Commission was not asked to give specific proposals for future developments. It simply seeks to ask questions which the bishops at Lambeth will need to address if they are to give direction for the future interdependence and coherence of the Anglican Communion.

I. The Archbishop of Canterbury

6.2 In our historical section we noted that to be in communion with the See of Canterbury is an important ingredient of Anglican interdependence, yet each of the Provinces is autonomous. The Archbishop of Canterbury is neither a supreme legislator nor a personification of central administrative power, but as a pastor in the service of unity, offers a ministry of service, care and support to the Communion. The interdependence of the Anglican Communion becomes most clearly visible when the Archbishop of Canterbury exercises his primatial office as an enabler of mission, pastoral care and healing in those situations of need to which he is called. This pastoral service of unity is exercised by invitation. For example, at the request of Provincial leaders, the Archbishop has exercised a pastoral role and mediation in the Sudan and Rwanda.

6.3 The Archbishop of Canterbury exercises his ministry in relationship with his fellow Primates. In considering how to respond to a request for assistance from a Province, he wisely consults all the appropriate resources in the region, the Province and the local diocese. Here, as elsewhere in the exercise of primacy, subsidiarity is important. So too is the exercise of an episcope in which personal, collegial and communal elements are held together.

6.4 Together with a ministry of presence and teaching, there is also a certain administrative primacy. Historically this has found its unique expression when the Archbishop of Canterbury calls and presides at the Lambeth Conference, where the relationship of the Archbishop of Canterbury to the Communion, and the bishops to each other, is most clearly seen. It is also visible in his chairmanship of the regular meetings of the Primates, and also exercised within the life of the Anglican Consultative Council where the Archbishop of Canterbury acts as its president and as an active participant in its meetings.

6.5 It is nevertheless most often the personal pastoral element in the exercise of this office which has become the most visible evidence of the Archbishop of Canterbury as an instrument of unity. Given the magnitude of this ministry, there must be concern that pastoral and spiritual care, beyond the prayers of the Communion, be made available to the Archbishop.

6.6 The special position of the Archbishop of Canterbury in the Communion raises questions that need to be addressed. Are there mechanisms by which tasks may be shared within the fellowship of the Primates, without weakening the symbol of unity provided by one person?

Is the Archbishop of Canterbury adequately resourced as Primate of the Communion? Is there sufficient coherence and consultation between the Anglican Communion Secretariat and the staff of Lambeth Palace? Does the role of the Archbishop mean that the Church of England must be more cautious in its decisions than other Provinces? Does an Archbishop of Canterbury necessarily have to be a member of the Church of England? Does the Primate of the Anglican Communion need to be the occupant of the see of Canterbury?

II. The Lambeth Conference

6.7 The Lambeth Conference plays an important role in strengthening the unity of the Anglican Communion by expressing the collegiality of bishops in a clear and concrete way at the international level and in symbolising the relatedness in bonds of spiritual communion of each of the dioceses from which the bishops come.

6.8 Though the Conference is not legislative it offers the opportunity to bishops who come from churches in different cultures and social and political contexts, and with different agendas and problems, to live together, to worship together, to join in Bible study together and to listen to each other. Through these means each bishop may share the difficulties and joys of every other church. This indicates that each church in the Anglican Communion is a partner in mission and a part of the body of Christ. In this way the Conference embodies the Pauline concept of the Church as a body. As Paul writes "when one part of the body suffers the rest of the body suffers". Each part of the body is different, but every part is necessary to the body.

6.9 The Conference also signifies the fundamental importance of face to face communication for the healthy life of the Communion. The personal encounters that it facilitates and the relationships that grow from them signify one aspect of the servanthood of bishops who bring the reality of each diocese to the whole Communion as a whole back to their own diocese.

6.10 The Lambeth Conference thus helps to define the bishop's role as one who represents the part to the whole and the whole to the part, the particularity of each diocese to the whole Communion and the Communion to each diocese.

i. Attentiveness at the Lambeth Conference

6.11 In the context of the Lambeth Conference, Christian attentiveness entails, in the first place, that individual bishops and groups of bishops will heed the voice of other bishops when these express the needs and hopes of the Church in their place. Such respecting of the voice of others, especially when such respect requires taking into account needs and agendas that are not one's own, can mean that bishops from one part of the world make their own an agenda they did not bring originally to Lambeth. This can result in a bishop or group of bishops leaving the Lambeth Conference committed to a quite new programme.

6.12 A special concern of Lambeth 1998 will need to be how the college is attentive to, and integrates the insights of, women bishops attending the Conference for the first time.

6.13 Christian attentiveness at Lambeth should mean giving special heed to those bishops whose first language is not English, and to those bishops who do not come from politically, culturally and economically powerful Provinces in the Communion. Attentiveness becomes distinctively Christian when the bishops assembled give ear to, and make space for, the voices of those Christians who are seldom. if ever, heard.

6.14 One example of such Christian attentiveness in the past is western bishops' heeding of, and being responsive to, the deep concern of African bishops regarding polygamy. A second example, from the Lambeth Conference, 1988, is western bishops acknowledging the legitimacy of a call from Asian and African bishops for a renewed commitment to evangelism. All the bishops left Lambeth 1988 committed to a Decade of Evangelism which they had not anticipated before the Lambeth Conference process began.

6.15 Increasing the opportunities for, and occasions of, Christian attentiveness should be promoted and protected at the Lambeth Conference. This will allow the bishops gathered at Lambeth to share in, to be shaped by and to show forth the attentiveness of God the Father's love as we know it in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit.

ii. Interdependence at the Lambeth Conference

6.16 The principle of communal interdependence, if brought to bear on the Lambeth Conference, might be thought to demand its reform so as to introduce priests and deacons and lay people into its structure. This was in fact suggested in 1871 before the second Lambeth Conference, when the presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church, USA suggested that the Lambeth Conference should be transformed into a "Patriarchal Conference" of world bishops, representative clergy and laity, under the presidency of the Archbishop of Canterbury. This would tend, however, to confuse Lambeth with the synodical structures of the local and national churches and move it in the direction of a "world synod". The calling of a World Anglican Congress from time to time may be a more appropriate opportunity for presbyters, deacons and lay people to meet together with bishops at an international forum. We explore this proposal in Appendix II.

6.17 An alternative approach would be to suggest that the gathering of bishops should continue to be seen collegially, but in the context of the life of the Church as a whole. Insofar as bishops are representative persons, they should understand Lambeth as an opportunity to bring the issues and concerns of their own dioceses to the consideration of brother and sister bishops. Few issues are entirely peculiar to a particular diocese, and the sharing of experiences and approaches to the resolution of difficulties makes for the easing of the burden of decision making.

6.18 At the last Lambeth Conference the Archbishop of Canterbury invited participating bishops "to bring their dioceses with them". At the same Lambeth Conference bishops voted on resolutions in the light of a preceding consultative process that had already occurred in their home dioceses and Provinces and at ACC-7. One obvious example was the resolution on the Final Report of ARCIC I which expressed a "Communion-wide mind" on the consonance of ARCIC with the faith of Anglicans. This resolution did not just express the mind of the bishops acting entirely alone, but as spokespersons who reflected the mind of their Provinces and were together expressing the mind of the Communion.

6.19 The bishops acting collegially can speak prophetically to the Church and to the world. On some issues such as, for example, ordination, the Church itself should expect the advice of those to whom the responsibility to ordain has been given. When the bishops speak to the Church, however, this should not be in an autocratic way, but in a manner that makes a positive contribution to, and stimulates, a continuing conversation in the wider life of the Church. True leadership demands consultation and partnership.

iii. Accountability at the Lambeth Conference

6.20 Bishops are accountable for their words and actions at Lambeth, before God and the whole Church. The bishops at Lambeth are to represent those who have no voice: those who can rely on no one else to tell their story and plead their case; those whose concerns society and/or the Church have chosen, sometimes deliberately, sometimes forgetfully, to address. It is when the bishops consider themselves to be accountable to those who have the least that they discover the way of God's Kingdom.

6.21 The diocese is to be brought with the bishop to Lambeth, and Lambeth through the bishop back to the diocese. It is an important way of involving the entire membership of the people of God in the concerns and thinking of the world-wide communion. Post-Lambeth educational programs may dictate that, in addition to the usual publication of a report of its proceedings, educational resources, audiotapes and videos should be made available so as to assist the bishops in the sharing of the Lambeth experience.

6.22 There are again questions worth asking. Is a Conference every ten years too frequent to allow for adequate preparation, consultation and reception? What is the nature of the authority of the Conference? How binding are the resolutions of the Conference? How should issues be selected and prepared; what concerns should be addressed? What form of report or pastoral letter would best strengthen the communion of the Church? If the Lambeth Conference is an effective instrument of unity of the Anglican Communion, what is its special vocation in relation to the movement for the visible unity of the Church? What part should ecumenical participants play? How might the Lambeth Conference encourage the development of shared oversight with other Christian traditions? How does the authority of the Lambeth Conference relate to the authority of other churches, in particular to those churches which claim to be the Church?

III. The Anglican Consultative Council

6.23 Unique among the international Anglican instruments of unity, the ACC includes laity among its members. The inclusion of the laity in decision-making bodies has long been a principle of Anglican life. Thus, the royal priesthood of the entire people of God (1 Peter 2:9), and the mutuality and interdependence of the various ministries within the Church, are witnessed to and affirmed. Means must be found to honour the specific experience and expertise that various lay members bring and also to provide them with whatever further resources and experiences they might need to participate fully and responsibly in the life of God's Church.

6.24 It is important that these rich experiences of being in community not be lost through either infrequency of meeting or too large a gathering. Significant too is the participation of members from the two-thirds world who represent a growing majority in the Communion and whose issues increasingly occupy the Communion's concern. Every effort needs to be made to enable people whose first language is not English to communicate freely and effectively so that there be no feeling of exclusion.

6.25 The mission of the Anglican Consultative Council is to represent the concerns of the Communion, in the Communion and for the Communion. Most of this work is effected day by day through the General Secretary and the Secretariat. However, to be effective and credible, the Secretariat must be governed by a reference group which is informed, has continuity and is also representative of the Communion's diversity. It must be adequately staffed.

6.26 There are two possible ways in which change might be effected in order to enhance the representative nature of the ACC and its effectiveness: first, by creating a smaller council

which would meet more frequently, or alternatively, by enlarging the Standing Committee and leaving the size and frequency of the ACC as it presently is. It is important that the representation be balanced between laity and clergy, with greater continuity of membership than at present. Representatives should have entree to the councils of their own church and be knowledgeable about its concerns and interests.

6.27 The existence of the Anglican Consultative Council raises questions of a general nature. What is the relationship of this body to the Lambeth Conference and to the Primates' Meeting? What part should the ACC play in contributing to the major issues that are to come before the Lambeth Conference and the reception of the Lambeth resolutions? Should the on-going tasks of the Communion be done by an expanded secretariat, or through meetings of the ACC, or a combination of both? Who is responsible for the continuity of membership in the ACC; is it the members themselves, is it the Primates, who make this decision? What is the nature of the responsibility and accountability of those elected to serve on the ACC?

IV. The Primates' Meeting

6.28 The Primates' Meeting provides the opportunity for mutual counsel and pastoral care and support of one another and of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Their meetings have an inherent authority by virtue of the office which they hold as chief pastors. The Meeting provides a place between Lambeth Conferences for each to share the burning or persistent issues of their Province and their own primatial ministry. It is the context in which Primates can identify common issues and resolve outstanding concerns. It also provides for a broader horizon than the Provincial which makes it possible for a Primate to consider a regional matter in a world-wide context. There is an opportunity to take responsibility together in the concern for the wellbeing of all the churches.

6.29 The Primates have in fact found it easier to affirm collegiality for the sake of consultation, study and mutual support than for the exercise of pastoral, moral and doctrinal guidance. This experience raises in yet another context the theological and practical importance of holding together the personal, collegial and communal modes of episcope.

6.30 Each Primate exercises his personal primatial ministry with fellow bishops and the synod of his Province. Similarly, the Archbishop of Canterbury exercises this Communion-wide ministry both collegially and communally. In the same way, the collegiality of the Primates' Meeting is exercised in relation to the personal and communal elements of the episcope at the communion-wide level.

6.31 The exercise of collegiality with one another and with the Archbishop of Canterbury, as well as the exercise of collegiality with all the bishops at the Lambeth Conference, raises the question of the relation of the Primates' Meeting to the communal gatherings of the Anglican Consultative Council. It is to be noted that while the Standing Committee of the Primates' Meeting meets with the Standing Committee of the ACC, this has hardly enhanced relations with the ACC. As an instrument of world-wide unity within the Communion, the Primates' Meeting has responsibility to maintain a living relationship with the ACC, so that the collegial and communal exercise of oversight are held together. Archbishop Donald Coggan commented at the 1978 Lambeth Conference that the Primates' Meeting should be in the very closest and most intimate contact with the ACC. What in fact this would mean in practice still has to be worked out.

6.32 How far should the task of the Primates' Meeting be that of responsibility for monitoring the progress of recommendations and resolutions which come from the Lambeth Conference in the interim between Conferences? For example, in the period following Lambeth 1988, the Primates received and promulgated the recommendations of the Eames' Commission to the Communion. The Primates' Meeting also referred to the Provinces the Porvoo Common Statement and the Concordat of Agreement.

6.33 In chapter 3 (paragraph 3.50) it was noted that the Primates have been reluctant to give serious consideration to resolution 18 Section 2(a) of Lambeth 1988 which asks the Primates to exercise greater responsibility in offering guidance on doctrinal, moral and pastoral matters. Should Primates be expected to make authoritative statements, or should the Primates' Meeting be encouraged to exercise a primarily pastoral role, both for their own numbers, but also for the Communion? What is the relationship of the Primates' Meeting to the Lambeth Conference and the Anglican Consultative Council? Do the Primates have sufficient resources for their ministry?

V. The Inter-relation of the Instruments of Communion

6.34 In reviewing the world-wide instruments of communion this report has at times commented on the relationship of one to the other and on their inter-connectedness with structures at other levels of the Church's life. Three instruments, the ACC, the Primates' Meeting and the Lambeth Conference, have their own distinctive characteristics and potentially hold in balance and tension three aspects of the life of the Communion. Lambeth focuses the relation of bishops to bishops and therefore dioceses to dioceses. The Primates' Meeting focuses the relation of Primates to Primates, and therefore Provinces to Provinces. The ACC, which is the most comprehensive gathering, represents the voice of the inner life of the Provinces, with representatives of laity, clergy and bishops. These three instruments of interdependence are presided over by the Archbishop of Canterbury, thus focusing the unity and diversity of the Communion.

6.35 At the present time the formal structural and continuing relations between the Lambeth Conference, the Anglican Consultative council and the Primates' Meeting is the responsibility of the Secretary General and the Anglican Communion Secretariat which staffs all three bodies. Greater clarity on the relations between the instruments of communion themselves would make for creative, effective and sustainable relations within the Anglican Communion. It is urgent that ways be found to strengthen the resourcing of the ACC Secretariat if it is to serve effectively the world-wide structures of Anglican belonging.

VI. Final Reflections

6.36 A deeper understanding of the instruments of communion at a world-level, their relationship one to another and to the other levels of the Church's life should lead to a more coherent and inclusive functioning of oversight in the service of the koinonia of the Church. When the ministry of oversight is exercised in a personal, collegial and communal way, imbued with the principles of subsidiarity, accountability and interdependence then the community is protected from authoritarianism, structures serve the personal and relational life of the Church and the diverse gift of all is encouraged in the service of all. The Church is thus opened up to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit for mission and ministry and enabled to serve more effectively the unity and community of humanity.

6.37 We have necessarily concentrated in the report on the world-wide instruments of the Anglican Communion. However, by virtue of our baptism we have in a communion in the Holy Trinity and therefore with the universal Church. The long history of ecumenical involvement, both locally and internationally, has shown us that Anglican discernment and decision making must take account of the insights into truth and the Spirit-led wisdom of our ecumenical partners. Moreover, any decisions we take must be offered for the discernment of the universal Church.

APPENDIX I
LAMBETH CONFERENCE 1988 RESOLUTION 18
THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION: IDENTITY AND AUTHORITY
This Conference:

Resolves that the new Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission (or a specially appointed inter-Anglican commission) be asked to undertake as a matter of urgency a further exploration of the meaning and nature of communion; with particular reference to the doctrine of the Trinity, the unity and order of the Church, and the unity and community of humanity.

urges that encouragement be given to a developing collegial role for the Primates' Meeting under the presidency of the Archbishop of Canterbury, so that the Primates' Meeting is able to exercise an enhanced responsibility in offering guidance on doctrinal, moral and pastoral matters.

Recommends that in the appointment of any future Archbishop of Canterbury, the Crown Appointments Commission be asked to bring the Primates of the Communion into the process of consultation.

Resolves that the Lambeth Conference, as a conference of bishops of the Anglican Communion, should continue in the future, at appropriate intervals.

Recommends that regional conferences of the Anglican Communion should meet between Lambeth Conferences as and when the region concerned believes it to be appropriate; and in the event of these regional conferences being called, it should be open to the region concerned to make them representative of clergy and laity as well as bishops.

Recommends that the ACC continue to fulfil the functions defined in its Constitution (developed as a consequence of Resolution 69 of the 1968 Lambeth Conference) and affirmed by the evaluation process reported to ACC-6 (see Bonds of Affection, pp 23-27); in particular to continue its consultative, advisory, liaison and communication roles within the Communion (and to do so in close cooperation with the Primates' Meeting).

Requests the Archbishop of Canterbury, with all the Primates of the Anglican Communion, to appoint an advisory body on Prayer Books of the Anglican Communion. The body should be entrusted with the task of offering encouragement, support and advice to Churches of the Communion in their work of liturgical revision as well as facilitating mutual consultation concerning, and review of, their Prayer Books as they are developed with a view to ensuring:

the public reading of the Scriptures in a language understood by the people and instruction of the whole people of God in the scriptural faith by means of sermons and catechisms:

the use of the two sacraments ordained by Christ, Baptism with water in the threefold name, and Holy Communion with bread and wine and explicit intention to obey our Lord's command;

the use of forms of episcopal ordination to each of the three orders by prayer with the laying-on of hands;

the public recitation and teaching of the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds; and

the use of other liturgical expressions of unity in faith and life by which the whole people of God is nurtured and upheld, with continuing awareness of ecumenical liturgical developments.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

On l above. If there is the possibility of ordination of women bishops in some provinces, it will throw into sharper focus the present impaired nature of communion. It is a matter of urgency that we have a further theological enquiry into and reflection on the meaning of communion in a trinitarian context for the Anglican Communion. Such an enquiry should relate to ecumenical discussions exploring similar issues. This, more than structures, will provide a theological framework in which differences can be handled.

On 2 above. We see an enhanced role for primates as a key to a growth of interdependence within the Communion. We do not see any inter-Anglican jurisdiction as possible or desirable, an inter-Anglican synodical structure would be virtually unworkable and highly expensive. A collegial role for the primates by contrast could easily be developed, and their collective judgement and advice would carry considerable weight.

If this is so, it is neither improper nor out of place to suggest that part of the consultative process prior to the appointment of a future Archbishop of Canterbury should be in consultation with the primates.

On 3 above. We are convinced that there is considerable value in the bishops of the Anglican Communion meeting as bishops, both in terms of mutual understanding and as an effective agent of interdependence.

On 4 above. Regional issues need regional solutions. Regional conferences can also provide for wider representation.

On 5 above. We value the present work of the ACC. We do not see, however, that it ought to move beyond its present advisory role.

On 6 above. Concern for how the Church celebrates the sacraments of unity and with what consequences is a central expression of episcopal care and pastoral oversight in the Church of God. As bishops of the Anglican Communion we have a particular responsibility for securing those elements in worship which nurture our identity and unity in Christ and which therefore have an authority for us as Anglicans. (A parallel but significantly different resolution has been proposed by the Anglican Consultative Council: Resolution 12 of ACC-7.)

(See further paras 113-152 of the Report on "Dogmatic and Pastoral Concerns".)

APPENDIX II

AN ANGLICAN CONGRESS

In considering the world-wide instruments of Anglican unity the Commission considered what role and contribution an Anglican Congress might make in the future. The Commission did not see a Congress as becoming a fifth instrument of unity for the Anglican Communion. Nevertheless, it did acknowledge the creative opportunity a Congress might, from time to time, offer the Communion, for the renewal of its life, witness and mission. At the same time the Commission was aware that, at a time of economic pressure on all institutions, the calling of a Congress would put additional financial strain upon the Communion.

The following paragraphs begin to explore some of the issues that would need to be considered if it were thought the time was right for calling for an Anglican Congress.

Local congregations and communities are strongest when there are regular opportunities to come together for worship, social gatherings and other festivals. The ties of friendship between individuals and families are strengthened when they share their joys and sorrows. Similar occasions offered to Anglicans on Provincial, regional and world-wide levels, could also develop and strengthen ties of affection within the Communion.

A World Anglican Congress held perhaps once every ten years might provide an opportunity to bring together representatives from various vocations and spheres of life. It would provide an occasion for conversation, and for sharing of needs and opportunity for prayer and worship.

In the planning of the Congress, Provinces and dioceses should be explicitly invited to propose participants who have a variety of God-given gifts to offer, and a capacity to receive the gifts of others and to be enriched by them. It would be of the essence of such a Congress that the diversity of cultural contexts in which the Anglican Church has taken root, should be visible.

The Congress would need to be planned in such a way that mutual cross-cultural communication could take place. Even if there were a small number of official conference languages, attention needs to be paid to the mode and style of communication, so as to facilitate genuine giving and receiving. A premium should be set upon face-to-face contact, as distinct from amplified addresses inhibiting response and dialogue. Nor should mutual communication be regarded as an end in itself, but as governed by and serving the goal of the universal mission of the Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. A Congress should not be so tightly structured and organised as to inhibit the freedom of the Spirit and the fruit of new discovery and infectious insights and joy.

The Congress would need to be attentive to particularity of context and life and an effort would made to avoid misty generalities. The stress would be laid on quality and depth, not quantity and superficiality. The Congress would avoid global tourism, and vague or fashionable international rhetoric, and give the opportunity for the exploration of complexity in depth.

If it is to be a proper reflection of the life of the Anglican Communion it would be essential that participants be full-hearted participants in the mission of the local church, and understand and accept the responsibility of accountability to that church, both in preparation for the Congress and following the Congress.

Membership of the Congress should include laity, deacons, priests and bishops. The Archbishop of Canterbury would preside, and be accompanied by a number of Primates, as well as by other bishops. Efforts should be made to symbolize the personal, collegial and communal aspects of the ministry of the Archbishop. At the same time as the unity of the

Church is made visible, the recognition of the diversity of God's gifts should also be expressed. There should be opportunity to show how plurality and unity are held together within the one fellowship.

As an international Congress, it would not be appropriate for decisions or resolutions to be taken. A message to the Communion might be an appropriate form of communication.

The Lambeth Commission on Communion - Documents

Selected articles about human sexuality issues

Statement of the Primates of the Global South in the Anglican Communion

[ACNS source: Anglican Church in Nigeria] It is with profound sadness and pain that we have arrived at this moment in the history of the Anglican Communion.

We are appalled that the authorities within the Episcopal Church USA (ECUSA) have ignored the heartfelt plea of the Communion not to proceed with the scheduled consecration of Canon Gene Robinson. They have ignored the clear and strong warning of its detrimental consequences for the unity of the Communion which was contained in the Statement from the Primates' Meeting of October 15th and 16th which was unanimously assented to by the thirty-seven Primates present including the presiding bishop of ECUSA.

The consecration of a bishop, who divorced his wife and separated from his children now living as a non-celibate homosexual, clearly demonstrates that authorities within ECUSA consider that their cultural-based agenda is of far greater importance than obedience to the Word of God, the integrity of the one mission of God in which we all share, the spiritual welfare and unity of the worldwide Anglican Communion, our ecumenical fellowship and inter-faith relationships. The overwhelming majority of the Primates of the Global South cannot and will not recognize the office or ministry of Canon Gene Robinson as a bishop.

We deplore the act of those bishops who have taken part in the consecration which has now divided the Church in violation of their obligation to guard the faith and unity of the church. A state of impaired communion now exists both within a significant part of ECUSA and between ECUSA and most of the provinces within the Communion. By its actions, ECUSA is held solely responsible for this division. In addition to violating the clear and consistent teaching of the Bible, the consecration directly challenges the common teaching, common practice and common witness within the one Anglican Communion.

As ECUSA has willfully disregarded the strong warnings given at Lambeth that such an action would "tear the fabric of the communion at its deepest level", we can now have no basis whatsoever for any further confidence that ECUSA will pay any regard to the findings of the recently announced Commission set up by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

We urge the Archbishop of Canterbury to bring forward urgently a mechanism to guarantee "adequate provision of episcopal oversight" for parishes and clergy within ECUSA dioceses and the Diocese of New Westminster with whom we remain in fellowship. We also call on those persons who have already placed lawsuits that further tear the fabric of our common life to withdraw their destructive worldly actions.

As Primates who represent over fifty million Anglicans, we have a solemn stewardship to steadfastly uphold and promote the historic and universal Apostolic Faith and Order of the Church throughout the ages as well as to protect those who are one with us in this same. We therefore affirm the ministry of the bishops, clergy and laity in ECUSA who have, as a matter of principle, and in fidelity to the historic teaching of the Church, opposed the actions taken at General Convention and objected to the consecration. We will continue to recognize and support their membership within the worldwide Communion fellowship and promise them our solidarity and episcopal support. We will now do everything that is necessary to uphold historic Anglicanism and advance our common faith, life, mission and ministry.

We cannot now uniformly define the further implications of this impairment created by ECUSA. As each province lives into the "emerging" character of this impairment of communion according to the theological and legal demands of their respective churches, we pledge support of each other in our common response to the willful decision of ECUSA authorities to oppose the Communion's teaching.

We are challenged and hopeful about the future while we grieve for those who have defiantly chosen to walk another way. We call on faithful Anglicans to a season of prayer for repentance, renewal and reconciliation in Christ and for the unity of our Anglican Communion rooted in truth and love.

To God alone be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations for ever and ever! Amen.

The Most Revd Peter J. Akinola DD
For and on behalf of the working committee for the Primates of the Global South

The Lambeth Commission on Communion - Documents

Selected articles about human sexuality issues

Statement issued by a group of concerned Primates

The recent action of the Bishop of New Westminster displays a flagrant disregard for the remainder of the Anglican Communion. The Bishop's decision to proceed with same-sex blessings is at variance with the witness of Holy Scripture and the recently concluded Primates' Meeting where the Primates as a body, issued an unambiguous statement on the subject.

Full Story:

In the consensus process utilized by the Primates the failure to dissent constitutes an assent! All the Primates at the recently concluded Primates' Meeting gave their assent to the Pastoral Letter, including the refusal to authorize rites for same-sex blessings.

Bishop Ingham chose to ignore the Archbishop of Canterbury's earlier affirmation of the Lambeth Resolution 1:10 as the authoritative position of the overwhelming majority of Anglicans in the worldwide communion. In addition the Bishop, through his unilateral action, displayed contempt for the Archbishop's warning that "any individual diocese or even province that officially overturns or repudiates the resolution (Lambeth Resolution 1:10) poses a substantial problem for the sacramental unity of the communion."

Bishop Ingham, by deliberately and intentionally abandoning the established Anglican consensus, has placed himself and his diocese in an automatic state of impaired communion with the majority within the Anglican Communion.

The unfortunate situation at New Westminster has taken the diocese far beyond the generally accepted teaching of the church and a declaration has already been made that communion has been severed as a result. Bishop Ingham's action has brought the Anglican Communion to a defining moment in which the clear choice has to be made between remaining a communion or disintegrating into a federation of churches.

We, the undersigned, Primates in the Anglican Communion, declare our commitment to firmly and resolutely address this revisionist innovation and affirm the moral authority of the Primates within the communion and, at the same time, promote common faith and practice within the communion.

Meanwhile, we strongly encourage the members of the Diocese of New Westminster who have remained faithful to the witness of scripture and tradition in respect of same-sex blessings, to persevere in their faith in the knowledge that they are not standing alone.

The Anglican Communion cannot ignore the blatantly divisive course of action initiated by Bishop Ingham and the Synod of New Westminster within the Anglican

Church of Canada. Consequently, we urge all Anglicans who love their communion to join us in the call to action.

Prepared by the Primate of the West Indies

The Primates who have signed the statement so far are:

The Most Revd Drexel Gomez (West Indies)
The Most Revd Greg Venables (Southern Cone)
The Most Revd Bernard Malango (Central Africa)
The Most Revd Benjamin Nzimbi (Kenya)
The Most Revd KJ Samuel (South India)
The Most Revd Yong Ping Chung (South East Asia)
The Most Revd James Ayong (Papua New Guinea)
The Most Revd Ignacio C. Soliba (Philippines)
The Most Revd Livingstone Nkoyoyo (Uganda)
The Most Revd Robert Okine (West Africa)
The Most Revd Remi Rabenirina (Indian Ocean)
The Most Revd Fidel Dirokpa (Congo)
The Most Revd Peter Akinola (Nigeria)
The Most Revd Joseph Biringi Marona (Sudan)

NOTES OF THE ADDRESS BY THE RT REV PROFESSOR STEPHEN SYKES,
Given to the initial meeting of the Lambeth Commission, 9 February, 2004

For nearly three years now, the Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission, which I have the privilege of chairing, has been working on a study of Communion – what it is, what sustains it, nurtures it, threatens it. We have tried to develop our work from first principles, and to avoid the temptation – which has increased with the growth of the current crisis which the Anglican Communion is now facing – of allowing the Commission to become simply an agency for crisis management.

There are members of the IATDC on this present commission, but I would like to take this opportunity to remind others here of the way in which our Commission has been working; then make two or three observations about how I see the situation in the Communion developing; and finally to indicate at least some of the ways in which the work we are doing is closely connected with the task you have been asked to undertake.

The IATDC Study and its methodology

At its first meeting the Commission made a decision to establish as widespread a communication network as possible, and to carry out its investigation in conversation with as many of the churches and institutions of the Communion as we could. This was partly a result of circumstances. Our first meeting was disrupted by the terrorist attacks of September 11 (2001), and several of our number were stranded on their way to the Commission meeting. Those of us who were able to assemble in London communicated with them as best we could be e-mail, and this I suppose was what suggested the idea of pursuing that approach more widely. Following that meeting we circulated The Four Key Questions – about the nature of communion, and things which could threaten it. We have not been fixated by the issue of homosexuality, but certainly the questions raised by the Righter judgement about whether or not agreement in moral teachings was a condition of communion was in our minds when we sent out that enquiry. These questions were sent to every diocesan bishop, as many theological education institutions that we were able to contact, to the Primates (and subsequently to members of the ACC), Provincial Secretaries, and through them, to church newspapers and communication departments. We received somewhere over 130 replies to that initial mailing and while we were disappointed not to receive more (although staff at the ACO assured us that this was a comparatively good response to such requests for information) most of the responses were extremely helpful and at times, quite inspiring. From consideration of replies to those questions – along with some 40 substantial papers which have been written for or by members of the Commission – we formulated Six Propositions

which were circulated again to the same group for discussion. Somewhat fewer responses were received on this occasion – partly, I suspect, because the questions were longer and more difficult – but again the content of many of the replies was significant. I should stress that our method has not been that of an opinion poll or survey. We have not sought just to discover the current state of affairs in the communion, but much more to identify the sort of arguments that are being employed by Anglicans in discussing the issues which concern them.

Although our methodology was initially suggested by circumstances, we have continued (and will continue) to use it quite intentionally. By involving as many partners in the study as we already have (we estimate that somewhere over 600 separate theologians, church leaders or concerned individuals have been involved so far) we hope to avoid the fate of *The Virginia Report* which was welcomed when it was published, but very little read since then. We think that the dialogue we have established is important in itself, and hope that when a report is made on our study it might be part of an ongoing debate which might ensure that it does not sink without trace – as so many worthwhile church reports seem to do!

At our meeting last year, when it had become clear that ECUSA was going to ordain a non-abstinent gay priest to the episcopate and it was known that the Archbishop of Canterbury was calling the primates together for the October meeting, we felt it appropriate to respond to the Archbishop's invitation to offer our comment on the situation. Much of the last meeting was given to preparing an advisory document – which you have as Document 42 (and it is also available on the IATDC pages of the www.anglicancommunion.org web-site) – to which I will return later.

The Commission looks forward to meeting in Nairobi during August, and we are working towards resourcing the discussions leading up to the next (hypothetical) Lambeth Conference. We would like to come to some preliminary conclusions, perhaps issuing an interim report early in 2005 – and using it for further consultation in 2006-7 and, we have suggested to the Archbishop, in the preparation and design of the Lambeth agenda.

Future developments and some implications for the theology of communion

Of course all such timetables are tentative, and will depend on the actual course of events over the next few months. Reluctantly, I think that it is likely that when the Archbishop of Canterbury issues invitations to Lambeth, the refusal of a considerable number of bishops to attend will formally mark a schism in the Communion. That situation will be fore-shadowed in the reactions given to the publication of your Lambeth Commission report later this year,

and the eventual outcome will depend to no small extent on an adequate theological under-girding to the discussions which will take place after that.

If ecclesiology is neglected when the church faces times of controversy, then assumptions will be made about church and ministry which derive from the nearest secular model. I do not suggest that this is a seditious procedure. It is perfectly natural, just what you would expect. But it highlights the way in which ecclesiology matters. It focuses the life of the church on the Living God and on the Mission of God, and that is not something that can be accommodated to the nearest secular parallels.

Of course some secular models have much to offer. God has not abandoned the secular world to its own devices, and indeed within it we can find insights and responses which can be seen as a consequence of the work of the Holy Spirit. Learning from the secular world – about process and planning, leadership in times of change or crisis management is always an open possibility, but we must beware of slipping into easy assumptions. In a critical and open way, ecclesiology needs conversations with sociology, so that it can benefit from the best in organisational theory and practice.

The importance of trust is increasingly recognised in secular thought. The success of complex organisations, societies, even the future of capitalist economies is seen to depend on a restoration of trust among all participants. And if that is true, how much more it applies to the future of the Anglican Communion. What are we talking about? It seems to me that the problems we face in attitudes to homosexuality (and a number of other issues as well) is intensified by a break down of trust which has taken place over a number of years. And because we have not had an adequate ecclesiology, or worked out how the 'instruments of unity' can function in an atmosphere where authority structures are almost universally questioned, then easy access to secular models have accentuated rather than helped solve our problems. For example, recourse to the tactics of modern communication media by one or other side of a dispute increases the polarisation of opinion that is so apparent among Anglicans today. Camps of the like-minded have been built up, and conversation between them seems virtually impossible. Conversation, communication, is the God-given instrument of community (which is why the reluctance of so many bishops and leaders of the Communion to take part in conversation about the Key Questions and Six Propositions is a major cause – quite as significant as any much-heralded public dispute – of the difficulty of maintaining and nurturing communion between them). Even on a personal level we know how destructive a break-down of trust will be on human relationships, like marriage for instance: "He says X, but he really means Y". Where can you go from there? We operate in a

society, and also in a church which is becoming paralysed by what we have learnt to call 'the hermeneutic of suspicion'.

Yet within the Christian Church the problem is even more profound, because 'the other' whom we are so reluctant to trust must also be seen as bearing God's image and likeness. The Benedictine rule demands that 'guests are to be received as Christ', and in communion we are all fellow guests of Christ. The way I regard the 'other' is a consequence of a shared being (again the root meaning of biblical *koinonia*) – a metaphysical, ontological likeness – a common 'being in Christ'. To mistrust another as a matter of course is actually to deny the other's being in Christ.

What if that person seems unworthy of trust, or appears to have betrayed that trust? This is part, a tragic part of the human condition. Yet as well as the isolation which seems a natural result of such a break-down in communication, there is also another theological response. Rather than abandonment, within a fellowship formed by the gospel it should be possible to acknowledge the presence of Christ in the other and to respond by way of representations on behalf of the community, admonitions and concern. This is not empty idealism, or a pretence at ignoring the offence of alienating those who have been made one in Christ. If reconciliation is not possible then the suspension of trust can be formalised – *pro tem.* Discipline is invoked in order to bring about restoration. It is administered under an eschatological sign – the hope of reunification in God's future – at the very least, a recognition that this person may well turn up in the Kingdom of Heaven! A catholic definition of excommunication is not a grim threat of impending punishment, it recognises that a person's place at the eucharistic table has been *temporarily* suspended.

The Doctrine Commission and the Lambeth Commission's concerns

In its submission to the October 2003 Primates' Meeting, the IATDC urged a course of mutual admonition. We did not at that point discuss the particular question of the Primates' authority as such: it was sufficient to address them as fellow Christians who have, like all of us, responsibility to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace among those with whom they live, serve and worship. As such even in their representative positions, they have the same responsibility to address those who they are convinced have gone astray – and equally to pay attention to any word of exhortation or rebuke which is sincerely offered to their own responsibilities and discipleship. It is a ministry of admonition within a fellowship, a communion, of *mutual* responsibility. Attention must be given to the due process involved: it should be open; clear reasons for any admonition should be given and published; there should be a clear right of a reply; and there should be serious attentiveness to both the

obligations of Christian love and the prompting of the Spirit. It is not just modelled on a secular court of law.

The Virginia Report did say much of this. Part of the scandal of mutual *suspicion* in the Communion is that attention is not given to the advice passed between the instruments of unity, the commissions, networks and committees which they appoint to enable to community to work together as one body. That failing too is a denial of the way Christ is met in the life of others. Much more work needs to be done – on a more pastoral use of canonical and theological language for instance. And if suspension of communion for some groups or individuals is felt to be necessary, greater clarity must be achieved in explaining the consequences of such an action. How far does it extend for instance? To whole churches (provinces or dioceses?); to supporters of what are held to be divisive opinions? To those who fail to oppose them actively? To those who may not agree with them, but are persuaded that they ought to tolerate that degree of difference in their fellowship?

The discernment of what are crucial issues to the maintenance of communion is a decisive element in this whole process. More is involved than simply listing criteria or conditions for inclusion or exclusion from the Body of Christ. Although it will disappoint some of the correspondents who have written to the IATDC (and no doubt others besides) I do not believe it is possible to specify in advance what are 'communion breaking' issues in the church. That is why spiritual discernment must always accompany discussion of the church's integrity and authenticity. A situation we have considered more than once is that of the normally uncontroversial matter of bringing flags into the chancel of a church – uncontroversial that is until that flag carries a swastika and the church is in Nazi Germany! You cannot legislate away the challenge of fidelity or the cost of bearing the cross. But that increases the need to be attentive when an unexpected situation occurs and a significant number of experienced Christians draw attention to it as seriously compromising the message of the gospel.

Two judgements may be made when a controversial issue is judged to be so crucial that it threatens the communion of the church. The first may decide that a particular idea, practice or life-style is disrespectful to the honour of Jesus Christ; the second, that the opinion or practice is such a departure from the truth of Christ that the church needs to ensure that it should not be identified with or promulgated in its life and fellowship. Hence in the matter of the ordination of women to the priesthood or episcopate, some judged that they should oppose its introduction – and they should be able to do that without prejudice – while they did not draw the second judgement, that it was such a substantial departure from the truth that it broke the

unity of the church and invalidated it ministry and witness. Many who adopt that position hold that for the meantime the theological evidence for the ordination of women is indecisive, and the 'rights and wrongs' of any church's decision on the matter will have to await the judgement of the whole Church.

It seems that in the present situation Anglicans have *discerned* that the question of homosexual behaviour and the ministry of the church is a serious issue touching on the integrity of the church and the maintenance of its community. What is needed now is a process and a mechanism for *judging* whether it is an issue over which Christians can disagree, or whether it is something which requires a suspension from fellowship who those that teach that homosexual practice (as distinct from orientation) is still consistent with the truth of the gospel.

These are serious questions, and my counsel is simply that as part of our recognition of Christ in each other, in communion, we should attend closely to each other and to the gospel of Christ.

The two commissions, the IATDC and the 'LC' need to stay in close touch with each other. The Anglican Communion needs to re-establish an environment in which the task of spiritual discernment and the conclusions which follow from it can occur in a manner which is natural, constant, and virtually instinctive. As I understand it, your brief is to find immediate canonical and structural ways in which Anglicans can keep talking to each other – to communicate communion. I believe that the IATDC is looking towards ways in which the theological environment, the tradition of doctrine and spirituality which has served Anglicans well during controversies in the past, might be renewed. I do not believe that either body will be satisfied with a solution (even if one were possible) which is merely political, managerial or superficial. There is no clear divide between the task of theology and canon law in sustaining and nurturing the communion of the church. Law and theology must follow the nature of the Church of Christ.

PRIMATES MEETING, OCTOBER 2003:
SOME LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Introduction

1.1 At the heart of their work, the authors of *To Mend the Net*[1] endorse the view of the Lambeth Conference 1988 that "authority in the Church works *through* rather than in spite of disagreement"[2].

1.2 It could hardly be otherwise in a worldwide Christian community characterised as "a learning Church as well as a teaching Church"[3]. The recent history of Anglicanism has been marked by its willingness to engage with difficult and divisive issues such as birth control[4], polygamy[5], divorce[6] and the ordination of women[7]. Its approach to these issues has been cautious, and marked by patient attention both to the sources of its Christian understanding, and to the reception of its teaching by the whole community of the faithful.

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[1] The Most Reverend Drexel Gomez and the Most Reverend Maurice Sinclair, (Ekklesia, 2001)

[2] *Ibid*, p82 para 3.4. The quotation is from LC Report 1988, p104, para 89. The context is worth quoting, as it contains a succinct summary of Anglican theological method: "…every Christian community must deal with issues which are raised by intellectual, social and political developments in that part of the world in which it is set. Its response to these issues is also part of its interpretation of the Scriptures and of the Word that the Scriptures mediate. Inevitably, then, the operation of authority in the Church involves conflict and disagreement. Indeed it would probably be true to say that authority in the Church works *through* rather than in spite of disagreement. Its primary function is not, then, to provide ahead of time answers to all possible questions, but to ensure that when disagreement occurs it is settled in accord with the principles according to which Christians normally discern the mind of Christ for them: that the solution is rooted in Scripture, consonant with the mind of the Church, and 'reasonable' in the sense that it speaks a language the world can understand – that it makes 'good sense' even if the sense it makes is unexpected."

[3] Bishop Stephen Neill, *Anglicanism* (Penguin, 1958), p423, where he also comments "not everyone has what it takes to be an Anglican".

[4] LC 1908, Resolution 41 to LC 1958, Resolution 115

[5] LC 1888, Resolution 5 to LC 1988, Resolution 26

[6] LC 1888, Resolution 4 to LC 1988, Resolution 34

[7] LC 1948, Resolution 113 to LC 1988, Resolution 1

1.3 The 1988 Lambeth Conference Committee on Dogmatic and Pastoral Concerns expressly addressed the "frequently asked question whether there are any limits to the plurality of interpretations of the Gospel", and remarked that "the fact that difficulties may arise in some cases does not mean that there are no boundaries"[8]. The Conference in plenary session went on to recommend that the Primates' Meeting, under the presidency of the Archbishop of Canterbury, should come to exercise "an enhanced responsibility in offering guidance on doctrinal, moral and pastoral matters"[9].

1.4 The authors of *TMTN*, themselves Primates and writing in advance of the Primates Meeting 2001, trace the origins of this "enhanced responsibility" role for the Primates from a source in Archbishop Donald Coggan's call for the Primates of the Communion to meet regularly as a "move towards a maturity in the exercise of authority"[10]. They see it developing through the 1988 recommendation, to the Lambeth Conference recommendation in 1998 calling for "intervention in cases of exceptional emergency which are incapable of internal resolution within provinces, and giving of guidelines on the limits of Anglican diversity, in submission to the sovereign authority of Scripture and in loyalty to our Anglican tradition and formularies"[11].

1.5 The authors then make the novel suggestion that, once the Primates had identified the boundaries of Anglican diversity, and "at least a significant minority of the Primates" had concluded that any proposed change in doctrine or practice in one of the Provinces appeared to exceed those limits, the Primates' Meeting (having sought to persuade the Province concerned not to take the proposed step), would recommend to the Archbishop suspension from full communion, and recognition in its place of "a jurisdiction whose practice lies within the limits of Anglican diversity"[12].

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[8] LC, 1988, p105, para 90.

[9] LC 1988, Resolution 18.2 (a)

[10] LC 1978, Report, p124. Coggan envisaged the meetings being for "leisurely thought, prayer and deep consultation" (*Ibid*, p123)

[11] LC Report, 1998, Resolution 3.6 (b), p397.

[12] *TMTN*, pp21, 22, paras 3.2 to 3.8.

1.6 What weight should such a recommendation carry? How might such 'suspension' be implemented? Who has authority to recognise new Anglican alignments as constituent parts of the Anglican Communion? The purpose of this paper is to consider the legal and constitutional framework – not as it might be, but as it is – within which in our communion with one another we seek to work out the disagreements, difficulties, limitations and boundaries Anglicans have identified as a necessary part of their ongoing life in Christ.

Provincial Autonomy

2.1 The Anglican Communion lacks any central body which has legal jurisdiction over the whole. This is hardly surprising given that "the growth of Anglicanism has been haphazard and unplanned"[13]. The result, however, is that the network of relationships between the 38 Churches which presently make up the Communion rests, from a legal perspective, on little more than 'bonds of affection'[14]. As Professor Norman Doe puts it, "There is no formal Anglican canon law globally applicable to and binding upon member churches of the Communion. No central institution exists with competence to create such a body of laws"[15].

2.2 On the face of it, therefore, it can look as if every Church in the Anglican Communion is entirely independent of every other Church. That was certainly the immediate legal purpose of the Henrician break from the overriding jurisdiction of the

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[13] Stephen Platten, *Augustine's Legacy* (DLT1997), p59. Platten quotes W M Jacob, *The Making of the Anglican Church Worldwide* (SPCK 1997) "The Anglican Communion at a very basic level 'just happened'". Jacob's book is probably the most accessible historical introduction to the development of the Communion currently available.

[14] The title given to the Anglican Consultative Council's 7th Meeting in Badagry, Nigeria in 1984. For a brief legal analysis, see *The Anglican Communion: Does it Exist?*, John Rees (1998) 5 *Ecclesiastical Law Journal*, p.14.

[15] Norman Doe, *Canon Law in the Anglican Communion* (Oxford 1998) p339. Doe's book repays careful study, and presents a formidable distillation of the "very complex and sometimes bewildering set of technical forms [employed] to signify the sources of ecclesiastical regulation" (p.21).

Roman See[16]. The Lambeth Conference in 1930, after a visionary and remarkably modern-sounding analysis of the situation as it existed more than seventy years ago[17], asserted that such autonomy was intrinsic to the Catholic faith and order of the earliest centuries: "…the true constitution of the Catholic Church involves the principle of the autonomy of particular Churches"[18].

2.3 As a matter of law, there is no doubt that, in contrast to the Roman hierarchy, but in conformity to the pattern of Eastern Orthodoxy, every Church in the Anglican Communion "is free to build up its life and development upon the provisions of its own constitution"[19].

Interdependence

3.1 But that is not the whole story. Although the Churches of the Communion are autonomous, they are not free of constraints in the way they develop. They are subject to internal constraints, deriving from their recognition of Scripture, the Creeds, Councils of the undivided Church, and historic liturgies and formularies[20]; and it is an important part of their self-understanding that they are "in communion with the See of Canterbury…[and] bound together not by a central legislative and executive authority, but by mutual loyalty sustained through the common counsel of the Bishops in conference"[21].

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[16] See the Submission of the Clergy Act 1533, etc

[17] "Our Communion has come to occupy a large place in the thought of this Christian world, and provokes questionings as a world-wide institution…Freedom [to develop locally] naturally and necessarily carries with it the risk of divergence to the point even of disruption...We believe in the Holy Spirit. We trust in his power working in every part of Church as the effective bond to hold us together…The future is big with further possibilities." (LC Report, 1930, pp 153-155)

[18] LC 1930, Resolution 48

[19] LC Report, p 154, para 7

[20] They are "particular churches *based on a common faith and order"* (LC 1930, Resolution 48; my emphasis)

[21] LC 1930, Resolution 49

3.2 This emphasis on 'dispersed authority'[22], both theological and structural, internal and external, has meant that the issue of authority is rarely off the agenda at any international gathering of Anglicans. But the authority to which Anglicans appeal when they speak of their communion with each other is not primarily a legal concept, even though it may have aspects that carry legal implications.

3.3 The use of the word 'communion' to describe the relationship between the autonomous Provinces tells us a great deal. It suggests that this is not the kind of contractual or treaty-based relationship that might be described as a 'federation' or 'association'[23]. 'Communion' suggests a more intimate, familial or genetic relationship. Bishop David Hamid captures something of this by contrasting the relationship with the means by which it is expressed: "...Communion is sacramental, ecclesial, mystical. The Anglican Communion existed even before we had a Lambeth Conference, and certainly before the ACC or the Primates' Meeting came to be"[24].

3.4 Having said that, the interdependence of Anglican Churches around the world does manifest itself in legal ways, notably in mutual recognition by the Provinces of each other's orders, and participation in each other's sacraments. In each case, the provisions contained in each Province's constitution will determine the conditions upon which such recognition and participation are to take place[25]. A direct legal effect of "being in

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[22] For an extended recent treatment of the concept of 'dispersed authority' see the *Virginia Report* (the report of the Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission, printed in *Being Anglican in the Third Millenium* (Harrisburg, 1997); and, for a more diverse treatment, see Stephen Sykes (ed), *Authority in the Anglican Communion* (Toronto, 1987)

[23] "...We Anglicans have taken this New Testament word to characterise and underpin our relationships with each other. In many African languages, there are words like *utu, uhuntu, ubuntu* which speak of belonging to one another in a loving, committed, supportive and inclusive sense. This is not unlike what we understand by *koinonia,* communion. It includes generous forgiveness of one another's faults, and, as a result, being open and generous in our relationships". D Hamid, *Church, Communion of Churches, and the Anglican Communion,* (2002) 6 *Ecc LJ 352, at 356*

[24] *op cit, p 369*

[25] For the Church of England, for example, the recognition of ministry is governed by the Overseas and Other Clergy (Ministry and Ordination) Measure 1967, and admission to 'membership' (an odd concept for the Church of England) under the Church Representation Rules. Most Provinces of the Communion have some similar provision for recognising ministers and admitting as communicants visitors from other

communion" is that the exercise of orders does not require fresh admission into the orders of a 'foreign' Church, but merely submission upon transfer between jurisdictions to the new Church's internal discipline: so a priest of the Church of the Province of West Africa does not have to be ordained again in the Church of England in order to hold office in any Diocese in the Province of Canterbury; he merely needs to obtain the Archbishop of Canterbury's permission to exercise his orders, and licence of the diocesan bishop. Interchangeability of ministries is a key indicator as to whether a state of interdependent communion exists between two Provinces as a matter of law.

3.5 To pursue this example further in the context of the Church of England, the Overseas and Other Clergy (Ministry and Ordination) Measure 1967[26] does not give unrestricted power to the Archbishop of Canterbury to "pick and choose" the Churches with which the English Church is in communion. Under Section 6(2), he is required to act collegially, making his decision jointly with the Archbishop of York[27]. The provision is expressly limited to "the purposes of the Measure"[28]. It begs the question how the Archbishops are to determine whether a Church is in communion with the Church of England, and does not supply either a simple answer or any mechanism for discovering where the Archbishops should look for an answer. However, it is doubtful whether the Archbishops would act without reference either to the other internal organs of the Church of England (the House of Bishops and the General Synod); nor would it be prudent for them to decide without consultation with the other instruments of unity of the Communion[29].

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provinces. Doe lists a range of methods (letters dimissory, production of letters of orders, letters of recommendation) by which mutual interchangeability of ministry is effected (*op .cit*, p.353)

[26] *Halsburys Statutes*, 4th edition, vol 14, pp429 *et seqq*

[27] "6(2) If any question arises whether, for the purposes of this Measure, a Church is in Communion with the Church of England or whether the Orders of any Church are recognised and accepted by the Church of England, it shall be determined by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, whose decision shall be conclusive"

[28] That is to say, in order to determine whether an individual applicant comes from a qualifying Church

[29] The process whereby the Church of England has come to regard itself as being in full communion with the United Churches in the Indian subcontinent provides a good example of this interplay between the internal and external counsel taken by the Archbishops before reaching a final conclusion on the matter of

3.6 However, under Sections 1 and 4 of the Measure, the Archbishop of Canterbury is given a wide discretion as a matter of internal discipline to give or withhold permissions to officiate within the Province of Canterbury to those from other Provinces who wish to exercise their orders in any diocese in his Province. An example of the way in which this discretion has operated is in relation to the ministry of women bishops at the time of the 1998 Lambeth Conference. The then Archbishop of Canterbury let it be known that, because of the Church of England's own law on the matter of women's ministry, women bishops from other parts of the Communion would be permitted to exercise their orders as deacons and priests if invited to do so in dioceses they visited, but should not expect to receive his permission to exercise any episcopal function in the Province of Canterbury.

3.7 This example illustrates the way in which "being in communion" can have legal significance within the life of each Province; and how internal discipline can be exercised without issues of communion being raised. Although there was a fundamental difference of polity between the Church of England and the Churches which ordained women as bishops, communion between the Provinces was not in question. In practice, the issue was resolved by mutual respect and self-restraint, with a measure of grace and courtesy on all sides. The internal rules of the Church of England had operated to govern the way in which the women bishops might exercise their ministry whilst they were within the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Canterbury[30].

3.8 The constitutions of many Anglican Provinces, if not all[31], contain similar provisions enabling decisions to be made as to how clergy from elsewhere may be allowed to minister, or take part in the sacramental life, of their Province. The law may

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recognising orders in those Churches, or their communion status; another would be the relationship with the Scandinavian Lutheran Churches, in relation to which there could have been no question of recognising communion status had it not been for the Porvoo Agreement.

[30] In the last resort, disciplinary proceedings might have been brought under the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1963, in relation to any bishop in contravention of the Archbishop's direction (OOCM, 1976, s 4(3))

[31] There is an interesting point here, as to the extent to which provisions which are not expressed may be regarded nevertheless as having legal force, on the basis of an underlying *ius commune* in the Anglican Communion. See N. Doe, *The Common Law of the Anglican Communion* (2003) 6 *Ecc LJ*

give a wide discretion, but like the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, it is likely that the appropriate authorities will consult widely both within and beyond the Province for guidance in deciding who should or should not be recognised and accepted as a minister or to take part in the sacramental life of the Province. In particular, they are likely to have regard to the views of the Communion's own 'instruments of unity', even though these (unlike their own internal bodies) have no strictly juridical status.

'Instruments of Unity'

4.1 The four 'instruments of communion, unity and interdependence'[32] are (in historical order) the Archbishop of Canterbury himself, as the pivotal figure in the Communion, its *primus inter pares*; the Lambeth Conferences of Bishops from all Churches of the Communion; the Anglican Consultative Council; and the Primates' Meeting.

Archbishop of Canterbury

4.2 The Archbishop enjoys a primacy of honour within the Communion, though it gives him no jurisdiction, save to the extent that any individual Province may owe some particular duty to refer to him[33]. A vivid recent illustration of his lack of intrinsic authority relates to his intervention in the affairs of the Diocese of Karachi (Church of Pakistan) in 2001. He has no jurisdiction whatsoever in that United Church, though it is a full participant in the affairs of the Communion. His intervention was at the request, and under the entire authority of the civil court of Karachi, albeit with the goodwill of the constitution of the ecclesiastical authorities of the Church of Pakistan. The recommendations of the (ecumenical) Commission he established to investigate the

[32] Bishop Mark Dyer's more descriptive expansion of the usual phrase 'instruments of unity', in *The Communion We Share* (Morehouse, 2000) p 189.

[33] For example, in Central Africa, he has a back-stop role in the appointment of the archbishop, if the electoral college has failed to appoint (Central Africa Canon 3); the constitution of Jerusalem and the Middle East contains a most unusual provision under which metropolitical jurisdiction over the whole Province may revert to the Archbishop of Canterbury in certain circumstances.

problem were implemented, not under his direct authority, but under the authority of the civil court.

4.3 Similarly, his assistance to the Province of Rwanda in the mid-nineties, and to the Province of the Sudan throughout much of the last decade of civil war was characterised as a "ministry of support" at the Lambeth Conference in 1998[34], not as an exercise of legal authority. He has none in either jurisdiction.

4.4 Nevertheless in his role as one of the four symbols of unity within the Communion, the Archbishop of Canterbury makes decisions which carry considerable weight, in terms of influence, even though they do not have the force of law in the normal sense in which lawyers use the phrase. A particular function in this regard is his role as the host of the Lambeth Conferences (which are called together on his invitation) and as convener of the Primates' Meeting. These are immensely important symbolic functions, even if in no juridical sense of the word can they be described as having "legal authority"[35].

Lambeth Conferences

4.5 It is a commonplace to observe that the Lambeth Conferences were initiated with the clear and articulated expectation that they should have no legal force whatsoever[36].

[34] LC 1998, Resolution IV, 13(a)

[35] Norman Doe identifies a range of regulatory functions within and between individual churches as "quasi-legal": that is to say, functions which do not have the force of law in a juridical sense, but which are generally accorded respect "as if" they had legal authority. This analysis is helpful for study purposes, but for the purposes of the present discussion, it must be emphasised that "quasi-legal" concepts are not likely to have the force of law. The language needs to be treated with great care. See Doe *op cit*, p.23

[36] The background is explained thoroughly in A M G Stephenson, *Anglicanism and the First Lambeth Conference* (SPCK, 1978). As David Hamid points out, "It is important to note that the [first] Conference was seen to be necessary to address an issue which was dividing the Communion. It was seen to be a way to strengthen the unity of the Communion, not through legislative authority, but through the experience of bishops taking counsel together, in the context of prayer and discussion for the good of the whole Church" (*op cit*, p 362)

They are explicitly not to be regarded as councils of the whole Church[37], and the status of their Resolutions can only be recommendatory. If all or any part of any Resolution is to be given effect, it must be adopted by the synodical mechanisms of any Province into its own internal rules.

4.6 That is not to say that the Conferences do not enjoy considerable respect within the general counsels of each Province: as Owen Chadwick put it, "meetings start to gather authority if they exist and are seen not to be a cloud of hot air and rhetoric. It was impossible that the leaders of the Anglican Communion should meet every ten years and not start to gather respect; and to gather respect is to slowly gather influence, and influence is on the road to authority. It continued to have that absence of legal authority which some of its founders wanted and which of necessity was denied to them. But in most Churches some of the most important parts of authority are not based upon the law"[38].

4.7 As a matter of law, then, Lambeth Conference Resolutions have no binding force in the Provinces of the Communion; but their influence upon the developing life of the Communion is very great indeed, as witness the impact of the 1998 Conference Resolution I.10, in relation to human sexuality issues. Further, participation in a Lambeth Conference is one (but only one) of the signs that a bishop belongs to a Church in the Anglican Communion.

Anglican Consultative Council

4.8 There have been consultative committees of the Communion, at least since 1897[39]. In its present form, the Anglican Consultative Council originated from a

[37] See Article XXI of the Articles of Religion, which provided one of the fundamental objections raised against the possibility of the Lambeth Conferences having legal authority within the Communion

[38] in R Coleman (ed) *Resolutions of the Twelve Lambeth Conferences* (Toronto 1992) p.x.

[39] LC 1897, Resolution 5

recommendation of the Lambeth Conference 1968[40]. As a matter of law, it is a charity, incorporated under the English Charities Act 1993, with a constitutional structure based on representative membership drawn from each of the Provinces that make up the Anglican Communion.

4.9 One (but again, only one) of the tests of communion between the Provinces is inclusion as one of the Member-Churches listed in the Schedule to the ACC's constitution, and consequent entitlement to send representatives to its meetings. Unlike either the Lambeth Conference or the Primates' Meeting, the ACC speaks with the distinctive voice of lay Anglicans from around the world.

4.10 In order to achieve inclusion in these representative gatherings, a newly formed Province must seek the approval of the Council as a whole at one of its plenary meetings, and its decision must be ratified by a two-thirds majority of the Primates of the Communion[41].

4.11 In 1996, at the request of the then Archbishop of Canterbury, *Guidelines* were drawn up and adopted by the ACC to assist the Archbishop in coming to any decision with regard to recognition of the Communion status of particular Churches and Provinces seeking admission to the Communion[42]. The *Guidelines* speak of "the ACC's view on the eligibility of the applicant body for recognition by the Archbishop of Canterbury as an autonomous Province of the Anglican Communion", emphasising the interplay between the instruments of unity in determining whether any particular Church is to be regarded as a constituent part of the Anglican Communion[43].

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[40] LC 1968, Resolution 69

[41] ACC Constitution Article 3(*a*)

[42] These are published in *Being Anglican in the Third Millennium*, Report of ACC-10, (Harrisburg, 1997), pp 110, 111

[43] *op. cit.*, p 111, *Guideline 9*

4.12 Although it has its own legal status as a fully constituted organisation, the ACC has no formal legal jurisdiction to intervene in the affairs of any individual Province of the Communion. At the height of the difficulties in Rwanda, for example, it added its encouragement to the Archbishop's support for the Province but this was (and could only be) an encouragement the Province to use its own internal legal mechanisms to restructure itself[44]. There was no question of either the Archbishop of Canterbury or the ACC arrogating to themselves any legal authority to intervene in the affairs of that autonomous Province, notwithstanding the depth of its internal difficulties.

Primates' Meeting

4.13 Similarly, the Primates' Meeting, though now convened more frequently than at its inception, has only the authority of those who participate in it. When language is used to the effect that Primates should "bring their Provinces with them", the language is symbolic, not legal. The Primates do not come as delegates with mandated block votes, but as fellow Christian leaders seeking mutual understanding and support in their calling as disciples of the one Lord.

4.14 The Meeting itself does not have a legal constitution, and its practice has been to issue pastoral letters rather than to pass formal resolutions. Like the Lambeth Conferences, however, its influence is immense, notwithstanding its lack of legal authority. Nevertheless, for its deliberations to have any legal effect, individual Primates would have to persuade the synodical bodies in their own Provinces to adopt for themselves any collective view reached by the Primates.

4.15 Again, a good example is provided by the problems in the Sudan in recent years. The joint meeting of the Primates and the ACC in 1993, having received a report of the painful difficulties in that Province, sought to support the Province but carefully used

[44] "This Council…[urges] the Church leadership, in consequence, in consultation as necessary with the secular authorities, to set in motion legal procedures to elect bishops to those four vacant sees; and as soon as possible after these elections and consecrations, to call a Provincial Synod meeting in order to finalise a Provincial Constitution". (ACC-10, Resolution 15.4)

language which did not claim for itself any power to intervene: Resolution 29 is couched in terms of encouragement, solidarity, and commendation, urging member-churches and the All-Africa Conference of Churches to be alert to the problems and assist in the process of reconciliation[45].

The Authority of the 'Instruments'

4.16 In considering ways forward in the present difficulties faced by the Anglican Communion, it is important to be clear about the extent to which any of the four instruments of unity can reach conclusions which would have a legally binding effect upon relations within the Communion as a whole.

4.17 The fact is that, within our fellowship of autonomous churches, the concept of any single overarching authority having the legal authority to determine the status of our Churches is alien. Each of the instruments of unity makes its own contribution to determining whether Churches are 'in' or 'out' using slightly different criteria: the ACC applies its *Guidelines*, but these are not ultimately binding on the Archbishop. As in the case of Hong Kong in 1998, the Archbishop can treat a Province as fully part of the Communion long before the Primates give their approval under the terms of the ACC's constitution, to enable it to be listed in the Schedule of Member-Churches.

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[45] "Resolution 29 – Sudan
1. Resolved, that this Joint Meeting of the Primates of the Anglican Communion and the Anglican Consultative Council, urges Member Churches to do everything in their power to draw the attention of their nations to the tragedy of the Sudan, particularly in its religious dimensions, and further
2. Urges the All-Africa Conference of Churches to seek the resolution of the crisis in the Sudan in co-operation with the Organisation of African Unity, and further
3. Commends the Episcopal Church of Sudan for bringing to an end the schism which has existed for six years. The Primates and members of the Anglican Consultative Council are convinced that the unity of the Church in the Sudan is essential in the process of bringing peace and reconciliation in the country and further
4. Expresses solidarity with and prayerful concern for the life of the Episcopal Church of Sudan and the people of that country and finally
5. Encourages the Provinces of the Anglican Communion to do all in their power to help the Episcopal Church of the Sudan materially.

4.18 What is remarkable is the extent to which consensus is achieved, given the different approaches that are being adopted by the 'instruments of unity'.

A Note on 'Episcopal Visitors'

5.1 'Episcopal visitors' are bishops whose role is duly authorised within the Province and / or diocese in which they are to function. Their appointment may be established by rules made by the appropriate body within the relevant jurisdiction, as in the case of the Church of England's Act of Synod 1993[46]. Alternatively, they may be authorised by agreement between the Bishops concerned (or, indeed, a mixture of both, as is the case in a significant number of English dioceses, where the Provincial Episcopal Visitors operate, not by virtue of the authority given them by the Act of Synod, but by commission of the diocesan bishop, as an assistant bishop within his diocese).

5.2 The concept appears to have originated in arrangements adopted by the General Convention of ECUSA in 1988, and was commended as a model by the Lambeth Conference in 1988[47]. The American House of Bishops revisited the same type of provision when it met in Spring 2002.

5.3 Because of the way such arrangements have been established, whether by formal rule or by agreement between proper ecclesiastical authorities, though they may appear ecclesiologically curious[48], they have clear legal authority (either by legislation or by voluntary agreement) within the constitutional structure of the Provinces concerned[49].

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[46] The Act established three "Provincial Episcopal Visitors" to serve, one in the northern Province, and two in the southern Province These Bishops are, technically, suffragan bishops in the Dioceses of York and Canterbury respectively.

[47] LC 1988, p 119, para 154(c)

[48] See Rees, *Alternative Episcopal Oversight* in Michael Watts (ed) *Through a Glass Darkly* (Gracewing, 1993) at p131

[49] Similarly, there are pastoral reasons why certain clergy are deployed to minister inter-provincially (the clearest example being the deployment of military chaplains - British Crown forces, for example, are ministered to by chaplains licensed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, although they serve in all four

5.4 The episcopal visitor strategy is attractive in many ways as a policy for maintaining as high a degree of communion within a diocese or Province as may be achieved in a time of principled disagreement. However, it is probably unsustainable in the longer term: it presupposes ministry to a fairly coherent and well-defined group of objectors, but it is by no means obvious how it could be made to apply in a situation in which further fault-lines began to emerge amongst the group in the episcopal visitor's care.

5.5 In England, the PEVs are all firm and articulate Anglo-Catholics, and only a handful of Evangelical parishes have sought their oversight. In the North American situation, it does not necessarily follow that the ministry of an episcopal visitor appointed for his views on the ordination of practising homosexuals would be able to give credible apostolic leadership to parishes, some of which will be in favour of the ordination of women, and others will oppose women's priestly ministry, and in which a variety of views may be held on issues such as divorce or abortion[50]. In theory, Provinces could make a number of episcopal visitors available to minister to a range of theological opinions. As a matter of law, the appointment of episcopal visitors is a workable way forward, but the wider the range of theological interests that each claim the right to special episcopal oversight, the more the whole arrangement begins to look like congregationalism or consumerism by another name.

5.6 If some recommendation for providing episcopal visitors to meet the present difficulties were to emerge from this Primates' Meeting, it would be important to identify the legal means by which it would be given effect. That is to say, would it be by adoption in the appropriate constitutional forum (as in the case of the Church of England's Act of Synod), or by voluntary arrangement between the Bishop of the diocese

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Anglican Provinces in the British Isles, and beyond); again, there are clear lines of legal authority, as well as historical justification, for this exceptional ecclesiological arrangement.

[50] This is not intended to be a *reductio ad absurdum*: forceful and principled arguments can be made out on each of these issues, but a range of opinion is to be found on them in most 'conservative' as well as 'liberal' parishes

and the proposed episcopal visitor (as has been offered in New Westminster, but not accepted by a number of the parishes concerned). Unless one or other of these courses is taken, intervention by a Bishop from outside the Diocese or Province will certainly result in a degree of ecclesiological confusion, and may well result in litigation[51].

A Note on Parallel and Alternative Jurisdictions

6.1 The Communion is familiar with parallel episcopal jurisdictions. Well-known examples include the four overlapping jurisdictions in Europe (the Church of England's Diocese of Europe, the Convocation of American Churches in Europe, the Lusitanian Church, and the Spanish Reformed Episcopal Church)[52]. There are other examples where clear understandings have been entered into between one Province and another for a variety of reasons, historic or pastoral[53].

6.2 As a matter of law, these arrangements are capable of ready explanation. For whatever historical or pastoral reason, a Province has extended its area of operation so that there are now two (or more) bodies operating in the same geographical territory, each claiming to be authentically Anglican, each deriving its immediate legal authority from a different jurisdiction. The legal situation is simple; the practical effect for the faithful is to create confusion; and concern to avoid this difficulty can be traced back in the Catholic

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[51] Because, in effect, the unwelcome episcopal visitor would be establishing his own Church in the territory of another bishop, without having any legal authority to do so; and those who sought to join him, unless they left all their ecclesiastical property behind, would be in breach of trust in relation to any church property they took over into their new allegiance. Their former diocese would be likely to sue for its return

[52] There are five, if the Churches of the Porvoo Agreement are taken into account; or six, if we include the Old Catholics. The Scandinavian Lutheran Churches are in a relationship of full communion with the Anglican Provinces in Britain and Ireland, including the Diocese of Europe, though that agreement does not put them in a relationship of full communion with the other three churches mentioned above. The Old Catholics are understood to be in communion with all the Churches of the Anglican Communion.

[53] For example, the United Churches in the Indian subcontinent have arrangements with the Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East whereby some church buildings in the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf are made available for ministry to expatriate workers from the Indian subcontinent, under the supervision of an Assistant Bishop from one of the United Churches.

tradition at least as far as the Council of Nicaea in 325. The Lambeth Conference has offered guidance on the matter repeatedly since 1878[54].

6.3 What is important to note conceptually is that these overlapping Churches are fully-organised, and legally distinct. They are not part of the same Church, even though they may be part of the same Communion. They have had to negotiate their own terms of interchangeability of ministry with each other, just as if they were ministering on opposite sides of the globe instead of opposite sides of the street.

6.4 To find their way into recognition as part of the Communion, a Church made up of former members of an existing Anglican Church would have to satisfy the same criteria as any other Church negotiating its way into the fellowship of the Communion. That is to say, it would have to separate from its parent church on terms which resulted in the transfer of metropolitical jurisdiction by agreement between the Primate of the "parent" body (as, for example, when the Province of Nigeria emerged from the Church of the Province of West Africa in 1979); and as part of that process of separation, it would be expected to satisfy the tests set out in the ACC *Guidelines* (as to financial viability and other matters) in order to satisfy the Archbishop of Canterbury and the ACC that the new Province would bear all the authentic hallmarks for admission to the Lambeth Conference, Primates' Meeting and Anglican Consultative Council.

6.5 Unilateral separation of dioceses from their parent body would be unlikely to attract recognition. It would raise immediate questions about the transfer of metropolitical authority, and about relationships between the breakaway body and its parent body. Certainly, if there were litigation on foot between the parishes or dioceses concerned and the parent body, it would be likely to indicate that there was serious doubt whether, as a matter of law, the "new church" really existed as a separate entity at all, whether it remained part of its parent body (or be in conflict with it). If it had become

[54] There is a long history of Lambeth Conference Resolutions, encouraging regularisation of the overlapping jurisdictions – see, for example, Recommendation 11 (Encyclical Letter 3.8-14) of the LC 1878. Most recently, their views are expressed in LC1988, Resolution 72, and LC1998, Resolution V.13

legally separate from the parent body, the question would arise whether it had simply become yet another "continuing Church"[55]; if such a church wished to seek recognition as a separate province of the Anglican Communion, and to be admitted to the wider counsels of the communion, it would need to follow the process of negotiation outline above.

A Note on the Singapore and Denver Consecrations

7.1 By contrast with either of these clear legal concepts (episcopal visitors and parallel jurisdiction), the constitutional basis for the consecration of six American priests as bishops in Singapore and Denver in 2000 and 2002 was far from clear. The metropolitical authority for the consecrations was doubtful: Archbishops do not have free-floating authority to act outside the boundaries of the authority given them by the Church of which they are metropolitans. They are themselves "men under authority". For a bishop to be regularly consecrated as a diocesan or a suffragan, he must be consecrated to an office which exists constitutionally, under the enforceable law of the province concerned. Otherwise, his consecration will be, at best, "irregular". If he has been lawfully ordained as a bishop within the constitution of the Church concerned, he is bound also to exercise his ministry within the constitutional structure of that Church.

7.2 It is not at all clear how the six American priests consecrated in this way fit into the two Provinces to which they are said to belong; still less is it clear how the congregations to which they minister fit into those Provinces. In what synodical structure do they find representation? How is their life ordered? What is the support and disciplinary structure for their clergy?

7.3 All these questions, and more, were asked at the time of their consecration. The impression was given that these bishops and their congregations were integral parts of the

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[55] The website *Anglicans on Line* has a useful page setting out the details of Churches that have broken away from one or other of the Provinces of the communion, and are considered to be "not in communion"

Provinces of South East Asia or Rwanda (as the case may be). However, it now seems that the umbrella organisation to which they belong is developing a constitutional structure of its own[56], which would seem to suggest that they are now an autonomous enterprise, separate from either of the two Provinces concerned in their creation[57].

7.4 If they are duly constituted bodies within the two Provinces, their internal patterns of authority should be fairly clear, even though their relationship with the wider communion may yet be a matter for discussion within the Communion (and part of that discussion will depend upon their compliance with their internal constitutional structures in the Provinces); but if they are not integral parts of those provinces, as seems increasingly to be the case, they will need to negotiate their own terms of recognition with the "instruments of unity" in the way that has been described.

Looking Ahead Together

8.1 As will be clear from this brief summary, although there are distinct areas that can be described as "legal" in the relationship between the Churches of the Anglican Communion, our Churches depend to a very large extent on non-legal or "quasi-legal"[58] sources to bind them together.

8.2 This brings us back to the terms in which the Bishops' Meeting in 1998 expressed their encouragement to the Primates' Meeting to exercise "enhanced responsibility in offering guidance on doctrinal, moral and pastoral matters". As we have seen, this was a non-juridical recommendation: it is not enforceable, save by the creation of the kind of

[56] See the *Foundational Documents* on the Anglican Mission in America website, and in particular the section headed *Constitution*; Article III states clearly that "the office of Primate or Presiding Bishop will be filled by one of the diocesan bishops for a term of three years. The Provincial Synod may re-elect the bishop for a total of three terms".

[57] Though the process of this separation, like the circumstances of their inception, is far from clear

[58] in Norman Doe's terms; see *supra*, note 32

overarching legal body that the Communion has always eschewed[59]. It is important to note that the bishops were careful to suggest that the Primates' Meeting should act only "*in sensitive consultation with the relevant Provinces and with the Anglican Consultative Council ..... [and without] interfering with the juridical authority of the Provinces*"[60].

8.3 In dealing with the matters facing the present Meeting, then, it may be as well to recall the clear and detailed process of consultation, and respect for juridical autonomy, which was in the mind of the Bishops, and which is articulated in this Resolution. If the present Meeting is minded to take up the challenge of the Bishops from 1998, it should hold firmly in mind the caveats, and the call for wider consultation, which they expressed so clearly.

8.4 Further, in another Resolution of the same Conference[61], having noted the Archbishop's personal "ministry of support" in relation to Sudan and Rwanda, the Bishops invited the Archbishop of Canterbury to:

> "*...appoint a Commission to make recommendations to the Primates and to the Anglican Consultative Council, as to the exceptional circumstances and conditions under which, and the means by which, it would be appropriate for him to exercise an extraordinary ministry of episcope (pastoral oversight), support and reconciliation with regard to the internal affairs of a Province other than his own for the sake of maintaining Communion within the said Province and between the said Province and the rest of the Anglican Communion*".

8.5 To date, no such Commission has been established, and it is possible that this may be one of the reasons why Provinces and individual Primates may have been tempted to

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[59] See *supra*, section 4.5-4.7. The *TMTN* proposal, of course, presupposes precisely the kind of juridical authority to "suspend" which the Bishops were careful to avoid

[60] LC 1998, Resolution 3.6(c). This part of the recommendation is not followed up by the authors of *TMTN*

[61] LC 1998, Resolution IV.13

"take the law into their own hands". The present Meeting might wish to revisit that proposal of the Bishops in 1998, and invite the new Archbishop of Canterbury to take that particular proposal of the 1998 Conference further.

8.6 Finally, it may be valuable to undertake some lateral thinking in relation to law, rules and patterns of authority in the life of our Communion. In recent thinking about the form that the Primates' "enhanced authority" might take, have we allowed ourselves to become so dependent on models based on the law courts or political rallies that we risk losing the art of listening attentively to one another? In a striking passage in *Augustine's Legacy*, Stephen Platten refers to the *Rule of St Benedict*, and to its possible significance as a "signpost in the search for a coherent approach to authority within the Church"[62]. He goes on:

> "*The aligning of the will individually and corporately with the will of Christ is at the heart. Scripture and tradition are tools which assist us in identifying the direction of the will. The context of liturgy and prayer remind us of the significance of the Book of Common Prayer in setting Anglican patterns. The application of reason within a life of holiness was one of the seminal contributions of the Caroline Fathers. Any pattern of authority that ignores such factors will err.....The Benedictine pattern instead challenges us to understand and practise these models in a manner which demonstrates a true recognition of our interdependence and our acceptance of the beliefs and needs of others within the wider Church. This requires a self-discipline (both corporate and individual), an attitude of listening, and a trust which is as yet only imperfectly manifested both inter-provincially and within separated provinces of the Anglican Communion*"

John Rees **Oxford**
Provincial Registrar **October 2003**

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[62] *op cit.*, p 40

COMMUNION AND AUTONOMY IN ANGLICANISM: NATURE AND MAINTENANCE

Norman Doe

A Paper for the Eames Commission[1]

1. This paper explores the nature of and relationship between communion and autonomy, namely: (a) global theological and conventional understandings about communion and autonomy in the worldwide Anglican Communion, as expressed in the decisions of the institutional instruments of Anglican unity;[2] and in public responses[3] to events in ECUSA and Canada;[4] (b) the canonical treatment of communion and autonomy in the laws of the individual Anglican churches, in the context of the principles of canon law common to the churches of the Communion; (c) where appropriate, the understanding of communion and autonomy in ecumenical dialogue between Anglicans and others, and in other Christian traditions themselves. One aim of the study is to identify a fundamental dissonance between theological and canonical understandings of worldwide communion and provincial autonomy; that is, how the disciplines of communion and autonomy at the global level have not been translated into the discipline of each Anglican church or province, and how this has contributed to current conflict.[5]

2. The paper suggests some ideas, which might be considered for possible incorporation into the domestic discipline of individual churches, for the maintenance and management of both communion and autonomy, the prevention of conflict, the resolution of conflict and the management of continuing conflict, and the monitoring of schemes for these. It is necessary for each church: to develop its understanding of communion and autonomy; to agree on the terms of their communion and autonomy; and to translate these understandings into a disciplinary regime within their own systems of internal law, in order to convert `bonds of affection` into `bonds of responsibility`.[6] Needless to say, it is also assumed that any ideas of communion and autonomy developed by Anglicans should be consistent with those employed in

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[1] I am very grateful, for assistance in preparing this paper, to: my colleagues at the Centre for Law and Religion, Cardiff Law School: Eithne D`Auria (Research Associate: for materials on communion and autonomy in other traditions), Dr Augur Pearce, and Anthony Jeremy and Revd Dr Robert Ombres, Research Fellows, Revd Canon Gregory Cameron and Chancellor Mark Hill, honorary Research Fellows, and Revd Gareth Powell, Associate; and to Revd Canon John Rees, Chancellor Rubie Nottage, Bishop Dominic Walker, Bishop Christopher Hill, Revd Dr Hans Engelhardt, Dr Alan Mayer, and Chancellor James Behrens.

[2] That is: the statements of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lambeth Conference, the Primates Meeting and the Anglican Consultative Council.

[3] The responses surveyed are those which have been produced by ACNS.

[4] `Since the consecration of Gene Robinsion…nine of the 38 worldwide Anglican provinces have declared themselves to be in "impaired" or "broken" communion with all or part of [ECUSA]`: ACNS 3703, 9/12/03.

[5] A related theme is (a) the presence in global Anglicanism of a *ius commune* (the principles of canon law common to the churches, generated by the laws of churches themselves in an exercise of their own autonomy), and (b) the absence of a *ius communionis* within the law of each church (that is, a body of law which might be created by each church to translate global conventions about communion into a meaningful and binding reality for each church, and to enable that church to be responsible for its own maintenance of communion with other Anglican churches in an exercise of autonomy by that church).

[6] In short, for each church to develop, perhaps under the guidance of the Primates Meeting, its own *ius communionis*: see above n. 5.

ecumenical dialogue between Anglicans and churches of other traditions, as well, perhaps, as with ideas of communion in within other (non-Anglican) traditions.

I. THE NATURE OF WORLDWIDE COMMUNION

The most obvious level at which Anglicans experience communion[7] is in the context of the institutional church: in province, diocese and parish. The communion of the faithful gathered in the particular church is understood to be grounded in the communion of the Godhead.[8] Communion seeks, in the corporate mission of the institutional church itself, to achieve (for example): witness to and proclamation of the gospel; celebration of the sacraments; and response to human needs in loving service.[9] The form of communion in the local church may be seen as multipartite: a network of relationships the subjects of which are all the faithful, ordained and lay, each playing their part in the life of the church.[10] The communion of the faithful, in which the bishop is seen as a focus of unity,[11] is manifested in common life and action, including: the participation of the faithful, ordained and lay, in the governance of the church (communion in government); the collaborative ministries of bishops, priests and deacons (communion in ministry); sharing in profession of the same faith (communion in faith); participation in common worship (communion in worship); and common accountability to the discipline of the church (communion in responsibility).[12] Communion may be most fully practised in the context of eucharistic community, through admission to share in the eucharist, and, formally, therefore, through the enjoyment of communicant status; yet, even exclusion from holy communion does not sever the bond of communion acquired in common baptism.[13] The particular church itself, then, through its polity, facilitates and orders the communion of the faithful.[14] The remainder of this section is about the experience of communion at the global level of the Anglican Communion.[15]

1. The Foundation of Communion

For Anglicans, the foundation of communion is the `divine communion`:[16] `the communion of the Godhead…is the source and ground of our communion`;[17] and

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[7] `The fellowship or mutual relation between members of the same church`; `An organic union of persons united by common religious faith and rites, a church or denomination, the organised body professing one faith`: OED.

[8] See eg, for the Church of England, *Bishops in Communion*, GS Mis 580 (2000), Chs. 1 and 2.

[9] See below I.2. for examples of these.

[10] See eg the idea that churches are `to promote within each of their territories a national expression of Christian faith, life and worship` (LC 1930, Res. 48,49); `The Conference calls on every Church member, clergy and laity alike, to take an active part in the mission of the Church` (LC 1958, Res. 58).

[11] See eg Wales, BCP 1984, 714: the bishop is to be `the centre of unity`; LC 1988, Res. 1.4: `the unity of the diocese`.

[12] For the canonical treatment of these communion acts and events, see generally N. Doe, *Canon Law in the Anglican Communion* (Oxford, 1998) 11f.

[13] Ibid., Ch. 9.

[14] For an analysis of the idea of the communion of the faithful in the corporate canonical life of the particular church, see the study by E. Corecco, *Concilium* (1986) 3.

[15] See also *Women in the Anglican Episcopate: the Eames Commission* (Toronto, 1998) (hereafter WAEEC), para. 136: `While the diocese, with its bishop, has usually been regarded as a focus of communion, Christians are also related to each other within the wider communion of the province and of the world-wide communion of churches`.

[16] WAEEC, para 19.

communion is required by the *ius divinum*: `God wills the full communion of all humankind with himself and among all peoples`.[18]

(1) The Divine Communion: Communion, *koinonia*, is understood `to describe theologically the nature of the relationship of the three persons within the Holy Trinity: the relationship of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Its theological meaning has to do with love, with loving, interdependent relationship, with equality, with giving and receiving, with sharing life`.[19] the `unity of will between Father and Son is an expression of the eternal communion of persons within the Trinity`;[20] `[t]he death of Jesus, the Son of God, reveals the depth of communion that God seeks and offers to his people`.[21]

(2) The Church as Communion with God: The church is seen as in communion with God the Father through the Son and in the power of the Holy Spirit: `[t]he basis of the Christian Church is that spiritual reality of *koinonia* which is a sharing in the life of God the Trinity`;[22] `[s]o we call relationships within the Church to be "communion", patterned after the intimate relationship within the Godhead`.[23] Communion with God and with each other is a gift and a divine expectation for the church, and is fully realised only in the Kingdom of God.[24] There is no discord in the communion of the Trinity.[25]

(3) Anglican Churches join in Divine Communion: Communion is genetic: `[t]he revealed faith, which is the foundation of Christian living, is also necessarily the

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[17] The Virginia Report (TVR) 2.9: `our unity with one another is grounded in the life of love, unity and communion of the Godhead. The eternal, mutual self-giving and receiving love of the three persons of the Trinity is the source and ground of our communion, our fellowship with God and one another. Through the power of the Holy Spirit we are drawn into a divine fellowship of love and unity`.

[18] WAEEC, para. 29.

[19] D. Hamid, `Church, communion of churches and the Anglican Communion`, 6 *Ecclesiastical Law Journal* (2002) 352 at 355.

[20] WAEEC, para 17.

[21] WAEEC, para. 18.

[22] WAEEC, para. 35.

[23] D. Hamid, `Church, communion`, op cit., at 355: `[T]he Church is communion because of the way that she is related to, and gifted by, the Holy Trinity, and receives these same qualities from the life of God the Holy Trinity`; thus, `the Church, as *koinonia*, is directed eternally towards the life of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and the purpose of the Church is made clear, to bring all into communion with God, who gathers the whole creation under the lordship of Christ and binds us to his Son, through the power of the Holy Spirit`; `[T]ruly, our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ` (1 John 1:2-3).

[24] WAEEC, para. 22,23: `communion with God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit` determines theologically our relationship with one another. Communion with God and one another is both a gift and divine expectation for the Church`; `all are invited to share in the inner life of the communion of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the fullness of communion will be perfectly realised only in the Kingdom of God when all things will be subjected to Christ and, in him, to the Father so that God may be all in all`.

[25] *Bishops in Communion*, House of Bishops [of the Church of England] Occasional Paper (London, 2000) 2-6: `Discord is not a possibility between the persons of the Holy Trinity, whose communion arises from the Father as the sole cause and origin`. `Through its exalted head, the Church and its members are already in communion with the Trinity`. `[W]e declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship (koinonia) with us; and truly our fellowship (koinonia) is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ` (1 John 1.2-3). `As you Father are in me, and I am in you, may they also be in us` (John 17.21).

foundation of that unity which spans time and space`;[26] through baptism, Christians are `united with God the Holy Trinity and brought into a relationship of communion with all the baptised through the ages and across the world`; and communion `is centred upon, and built up in, the eucharist`, by which individuals are `united and stamped with their Christian identity`.[27] Consequently: `the Churches of our Anglican Communion are joined in the communion of God through Our Lord Jesus Christ by the gracious power of the Holy Spirit`;[28] `[a]ll the various elements of visible communion are gifts of the risen Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to the Church`.[29] Anglican churches do not incorporate these theological ideas about the source of communion into their laws, though some of them have appeared in responses to current events in ECUSA, of churches,[30] of archbishops,[31] and of bishops.[32]

(4) Ecclesial Communion as Ecclesial Agreement: At the institutional level, ecclesial communion is founded on agreement between churches: this has been the Anglican understanding in the ecumenical context.[33] In this institutional sense, it is possible to see the form of communion as covenant-like: communion is quasi-contractual in form (but not in source or substance).[34] Ecclesial communion between Anglicans also has a canonical basis.[35] Statements in the law of an Anglican church that that church is in communion with the See of Canterbury are grounded upon bilateral agreement between that church and Canterbury, and this is expressed in the law as an exercise of the will of that church. Similarly, that the law of a church provides that that church is in communion with other Anglican churches is grounded in mutual agreement to that effect, and recognition in the law of that church is an

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[26] WAEEC, para. 28.
[27] Ibid., para. 25.
[28] LC 1998, Res. III.8(d).
[29] WAEEC, para. 27.
[30] Province of Congo: `The Anglican Communion is a precious gift from Christ Himself that needs to be jealously protected and promoted by each and every faithful Anglican Church`: ACNS 3730, 5/1/04: Statement of House of Bishops.
[31] R. Williams, `The structures of unity`, *New Directions* (2003): `[T]he life of faith begins from nowhere in this world. It is a supernatural gift. Consequently, the Church too is a supernatural body; tha sacraments are God`s ordinances, not simply a set of identifying rituals, the Bible is the Word written, not simply an historical deposit. Most importantly of all, unity is not human consensus but a common identity through incorporation into the risen and glorified Christ`.
[32] G. Rowell, *Times*, 8/11/03: `"Communion"…translates…*koinonia*, which means a being or unity held in common…a life of interrelatedness, a fellowship or belonging-togetherness. For Christians, the fundamental communion is that of God`s own communion, whose very life as Holy Trinity is a communion, a web of love…*perichoresis*, a round dance of interwoven love`; `[C]ommunion is first of all a gift and a sharing in the life of God. It is no accident that Christians speak as they share the bread and wine of the Eucharist of "receiving Communion". It is that gift which enables us to live in communion, but it is also a gift which is holy, for it is grounded in the goodness of God…[C]ommunion is something we receive, and that the communion we receive is always about our being changed…There can be no true communion without sanctification`.
[33] LC 1958, Res. 14: for example, inter-communion is `established by agreement between two…Churches`; see also, for the role of agreement in the idea of intransitivity: *Growth in Communion*, para. Para. 160: `relations of communion established by new ecumenical agreements`.
[34] A quasi-contractual understanding of the form of communion (see below for forms of communion), raises questions about repudiation or rescission of the communion relationship: in the law of contract, rescission involves the right of a party to an agreement to treat the agreement as rescinded if the other party has failed to perform a fundamental term of the agreement. *Quaere*: is the legal doctrine of rescission of relevance and value in cases involving claims of impaired communion.
[35] Communion between Anglican churches exists because sometimes their laws so provide.

expression of the will of the church.[36] At the level of individual churches, laws do not clearly prescribe which authority within them has the right to determine whether that church is in communion with another Anglican church.[37] The laws do, however, deal with Anglican relations with other churches: an Anglican church is in communion with another church when so recognised by a designated authority within the church, such as: the central church assembly or synod;[38] the bishops collectively;[39] the archbishops;[40] or the episcopal assembly with the consent of the general synod.[41]

There would seem to be, then, no obvious legal evidence to suggest that each church is canonically required to consult fellow Anglican churches in its establishment of communion with another Anglican church.[42] Similarly, at the global level, recognition of communion may be determined by reference to admission to the Lambeth Conference (subject to the agreement by invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury,[43] though the Lambeth Conference itself may have a part to play in invitations).[44] By way of contrast, the scheme which regulates admission to and representation on the Anglican Consultative Council seems to require multipartite agreement: inclusion of a church on the list in the schedule to the ACC constitution, which indicates being in communion, is by approval of the Council and its decision must be ratified by a two-thirds majority of the Primates.[45]

2. The Purposes of Communion

Several ideas have been developed by Anglicans about the purposes of communion, and the purposes of the Anglican Communion itself. They include the following. First, the purpose of communion is **to fulfil the will of God** - communion between Anglicans seeks to fulil the imperative of the *ius divinum*: `God wills the full communion of all humankind with himself and among all peoples`;[46] `[t]he great purpose of God in history is to unite the peoples of the earth through the reconciling sacrifice of Christ (Eph 1:9-10; 2.13-22)`; as such, `[s]taying together is pointless

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[36] See below as to the form of communion.

[37] As general laws of a church contain statements that a church is in communion with others, and as the laws are generally in the keeping of the central church assembly (eg provincial synod), so it might be assuemed that the establishment of communion relations is in the keeping of that assembly.

[38] See eg Wales: N. Doe, *The Law of the Church in Wales* (Cardiff, 2002) 281; New Zealand, Can. XIII.6: the church recognises as being in full communion with itself `[t]he Church of England and all other Churches of the Anglican Communion, and such other Churches as shall be recognised by General Synod from timte to time as being in full communion`.

[39] Central Africa, Res. of Provincial Synod

[40] England, Overseas and Other Clergy (Ministry and Ordination) Measure 1967, c.6(2): `If any question arises whether, for the purposes of this Measure, a Church is in Communion with the Church of England…it shall be determined by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, whose decision shall be final`.

[41] Scotland, Can. 15: for impaired communion under this canon, see below for degrees of communion.

[42] The laws of churches seem to present it, once presumably agreement is reached with the other church, as a matter for unilateral action.

[43] LC 1897, Res. 2: `on the invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, if he is willing to give it`.

[44] LC 1988, Res. 12.2: `all United Churches with which the Churches of the Anglican Communion are in full communion be invited to full membership in the Lambeth Conference and the Primates Meeting (as is already the case with the Anglican Consultative Council)`.

[45] ACC Constitution, Art. 3(a); also `With the assent of two-thirds of the Primates of the Anglican Communion, the council may alter or add to the schedule` (3(a)).

[46] WAEEC, para. 29.

unless it is staying together because of the Body of Christ`.[47] In short, communion is a calling,[48] and its function is to achieve the purpose for which the church exists.[49]

Secondly, communion exists **to express catholicity**: the Anglican Communion (as mediated through its instruments) exists to express itself as the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church.[50] Communion amongst Anglican churches is understood to serve as a step towards the establishment of communion between all Christian churches[51] (an idea shared with Lutherans).[52] It has been said, indeed, that `[h]uman beings long for communion. It is that for which we were made`.[53] Thirdly, therefore, the Anglican Communion exists for **mutual interdependence**: it exists for the member churches to assist each other to fulfil the mission of the church.[54]

However, the absence of a more detailed treatment of the purposes of the worldwide Anglican Communion,[55] as it functions at the global level, may be contrasted with ideas about the canonical purposes of particular churches at the local level, as expressed in their legal systems; for example: `[to] give glory to God through united and common witness and proclamation of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ`; to `strengthen and further the Church`s fellowship and partnership`; `to make disciples of all nations`;[56] `to minister the doctrine and sacraments and discipline of Christ`;[57]

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47 Gomez and Sinclair, *To Mend the Net* (2001) 2.5.

48 *Bishops in Communion* (2000) [Church of England] 6: `This communion of baptized believers with Christ and with one another is expressed in a visible human community. It is a community called to live a Christ-like life, whose members participate in one another`s joys and sorrows, and bear one another`s burdens for the good of the whole (Philippians 2.1-5). There is mutual giving and receiving of spiritual and material goods, not only between individuals but also between communities, on the basis of a fellowship that already extsts in Christ. In this communion, God is known to be all in all (Ephesians 1.23;3.19). It is the will of God for the whole creation that not only the Church, but all things should attain their unity and communion in Christ (Ephesians 1.10;4.1-16). The Church, therefore, as communion, "is sent into the world as a sign, instrument and first fruits of a reality which comes from beyond history - the kingdom, or reign, of God"`.

49 D. Hamid, `Church, communion`, op cit., at 355: `the Church, as *koinonia*, is directed eternally towards the life of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and the purpose of the Church is made clear, to bring all into communion with God, who gathers the whole creation under the lordship of Christ and binds us to his Son, through the power of the Holy Spirit`. `[T]ruly, our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ` (1 John 1:2-3). `So we call relationships within the Church to be "communion", patterned after the intimate relationship within the Godhead`.

50 WAEEC, para. 26: `Structures, or bonds of communion, are the instruments for maintaining and strengthening the visible communion of the Church, for the world wide Church must experience and express itself as the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church`.

51 `The Conference makes this statement praying for and eagerly awaiting the time when the Churches of the present Anglican Communion will enter into communion with other parts of the Catholic Church not definable as Anglican in the above sense, as a step towards the ultimate reunion of all Christendom in one visibly united fellowship`: LC 1930, Res. 49.

52 LWF, 30: development of LWF communion is `a contribution to the one ecumenical movement`.

53 G. Rowell, *Times*, 8/11/03.

54 WAEEC, para. 36: `The different Provinces have come to a greater realisation that they need each other`s spiritual, intellectual and material resources in order to fulfil their task of mission. Each Province has something distinctive to offer the others, and needs them in turn to be able to witness to Christ effectively in its own context`.

55 A doctrine about the purposes of the Anglican Communion is implicit, needless to say, in the purposes of its instruments of unity (eg in the resolutions of the Lambeth Conference, in terms of the subjects it treats and the actions it takes).

56 South East Asia, Const. Preamble.

57 Sudan, Declaration of Fundamental Principles, 1.

to effect `educational, medical, social, agricultural and other service`;[58] to respond to human needs by loving service, seeking `to transform unjust structures of society, caring for God`s creation, and establishing the values of the Kingdom`.[59]

3. The Maintenance of Communion

Structural questions about the maintenance of communion between Anglican churches are dealt with in Part II in the context of limits on the exercise of autonomy. However, it may be noted at this point that Anglicans have several ideas about the means by which worldwide communion is maintained: (1) the communion is sustained by God;[60] (2) worldwide communion is maintained by the instruments of faith;[61] (3) communion is held in place by common patterns of worship, prayer, friendship and service to others;[62] (4) churches are held together by the need for interdependence;[63] (4) communion is sustained by the moral authority of the institutional instruments of Anglican unity: Archbishop of Canterbury, Primates Meeting, Lambeth Conference, and Anglican Consultative Council,[64] and the principles of canon law common to the churches of the Communion may be a fifth instrument of Anglican unity.[65] The idea of a responsibility to maintain communion also appears in the Lutheran tradition,[66] and in the Roman Catholic Church.[67]

4. The Forms of Communion

Understandings of communion at the global level embrace a number of forms of communion as a relational phenomenon:

(1) Bipartite Communion: Communion is seen as a bipartite relationship between one particular institutional church only and Canterbury: `[T]he Anglican Communion

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58 North India, Const. II.I.II.

59 New Zealand, Const. Preamble.

60 See eg LC 1998, Res. III.8(d): `the Churches of our Anglican Communion are joined in the communion of God through Our Lord Jesus Christ by the gracious power of the Holy Spirit`.

61 LC 1998, Res. III.8(d): the Conference affirms that `our communion together is maintained in the life of the truth of Christ by the gift if the Holy Scriptures, the Apostles and Nicene Creeds, the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist, and the historic episcopate`.

62 LC 1998, Res. III.8(f): the churches are `held in *koinonia* by our liturgical tradition and common patterns of worship, by prayer and the communion of the saints, the witness of the heroes and heroines of our history, the sharing of the stories of our faith, and by our interdependence through exchanges of friendship between our dioceses and by service to others in the name of Christ`.

63 WAEEC, para. 36: `While the Provinces are autonomous in matters of order and discipline, they are held together by the visible bonds of communion and thus in a real sense belong to one another: they are interdependent. The life of the Communion is held together in the creative tension of provincial autonomy and interdepedence.`

64 LC 1998, Res. II.6: this `reaffirms the primary authority of the Scriptures`; see also the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral.

65 Report of the Primates` Meeting 2002: `The Primates recognized that the unwritten law common to the Churches of the Communion and expressed as shared principles of canon law may be understood to constitute a fifth "instrument of unity"`. Indeed: `The existence of these principles both demonstrates and promotes unity within the Anglican Communion`: Legal Advisers` Consultation (2002), Proposition 6.

66 See eg the Lutherans understand that `we also have a greater responsibility to develop our communion fellowship worldwide. Not for the sake of confessionalism but for the sake of Christian unity`: LWF, BM 2003, 22.

67 Code of Canon Law (1983), c. 209: `Christ`s faithful are bound by an obligation, even in their own patterns of activity, to maintain communion with the Church`.

is a fellowship, within the one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, of those duly constituted dioceses, provinces and regional Churches *in communion with the See of Canterbury*`;[68] `[i]ts centre of unity is the See of Canterbury. To be Anglican it is necessary to be in communion with that See`.[69] This formula suggests that a church is a member of the Anglican Communion if it is in communion with Canterbury. But the formula does not state that all Anglican churches are in communion with each other (by virtue of the communion of each with Canterbury). Indeed, the idea of intransitivity suggests that if Anglican church X is in communion with Canterbury, and Anglican church Y is in communion with Canterbury, this does not necessarily mean that churches X and Y are in communion with each other;[70] to be in communion with each other, `individual churches would need to take the required action`.[71]

On the canonical level, the laws of most churches make no explicit reference, in their provisions on self-identity, to the See of Canterbury:[72] most churches do not expressly present themselves canonically as in communion with Canterbury, though this bilateral relationship has been understood as an unwritten principle of law.[73] However, the bipartite model appears in the laws of some Anglican churches which, for example, `declare [the] Church to be, and desire that it should continue, in full communion with the Church of England`,[74] or that the church `will maintain communion with the sister Church of England`.[75] Intransitivity in implicit in these canonical approaches, as is the legal principle of privity.[76] The bipartite model also surfaces in understandings of communion in the ecumenical context: full communion is `a relationship *between two distinct churches or communions*`.[77]

(2) Multipartite Communion: Communion appears in the form of a multipartite relationship in the laws of many churches. The law presents a church as in: `in communion with all churches of the Anglican Communion`;[78] in full communion with `the Church of England and all other Churches of the Anglican Communion`,[79] in `communion with the See of Canterbury and with all Dioceses, Provinces and regional Churches which are in full Communion with the See of Canterbury`;[80] `as in full communion with itself the Churches of the Anglican Communion`[81] or as `in

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68 LC 1930, Res. 49.

69 Virgina Report, 37, citing LC 1930.

70 Conversely, according to the doctrine of transitivity, if two churches are in communion, they ought to be in communion with all churches with which either is in communion: *Growth in Communion*, Report of the Anglican-Lutheran International Working Group 2000-2002 (Geneva, 2003) para. 159.

71 *Growth in Communion*, op cit., para. 164.

72 See eg Australia, Japan and Melanesia.

73 That `Communion with the See of Canterbury is a necessary part of the self-understanding of each member church of the Anglican Communion` has been proposed as a principle of canon law common to the churches of the communion: see www.acclawnet.co.uk.

74 Canada, Declaration of Principles, Solemn Declaration, 1.

75 Ireland, Const. Preamble and Declaration, III: `and with all other Christian Churches agreeing in the principles of this Declaration`.

76 In the (common) law of contract, the doctrine of privity means that an agreement, as a general rule, cannot impose duties or confer rights arising under it on any person not party (or privy) to it: see, for example, G.H. Treitel, *The Law of Contract* (8th edn., London, 1991) 523.

77 *Growth in Communion*, Report of the Anglican-Lutheran International Working Group 2000-2002 (Geneva, 2003) para. 45; see also ibid., para. 113 Cold Ash Statement (1983).

78 Korea, Const., Fundamental Declaration.

79 New Zealand, Cans. G.XIII.6.

80 Nigeria, Const. I.3(1).

81 Scottish Episcopal Church, Can. 15: for the list see the Schedule to the canon.

communion with the Church of England and with all churches in communion therewith so long as communion is consistent with the Fundamental Declarations contained in this Constitution`.[82] These canonical formulae indicate, therefore, the idea that one Anglican is in communion with another Anglican church (a) when its law so provides and/or (b) if that other church is in communion with Canterbury.

(3) Communion Membership: In some cases, the law identifies a church with Canterbury and other churches, without explicit reference to its own direct communion with Canterbury or others, but through a general statement of membership of the Anglican Communion; typically: the church `is a constituent member of the Anglican Communion, a Fellowship…of those duly constituted Dioceses, Provinces, and regional Churches in communion with the See of Canterbury`;[83] or a `part` of the Anglican Communion`,[84] or, in one case, `in communion with the Anglican Communion throughout the world`.[85]

Canonical communion forms, then, may be bipartite, multipartite, or based on membership ideas. Such provisions do not appear in the formal laws of the majority of Anglican churches, nor is it common for the formal law even to define the Anglican Communion,[86] though there are some multipartite understandings of the Anglican Communion as `a family of churches in full communion with one another`.[87] Indeed, in one church, the law defines the Anglican Communion as `a federation of autonomous provinces which maintain fraternal contact on a global level`.[88] In contrast to the ecumenical context,[89] the multipartite forms might represent a claim or assumption of transitivity in inter-Anglican relations:[90] `if two churches are in communion, they ought in principle to both be in communion with all churches with which either is in communion`.[91] Finally, the mutipartite model appears in other Christian traditions: for example, the Lutheran World Federation is currently working on its development as a `Lutheran Communion`,[92] to develop the federation `as a worldwide communion`,[93] `a communion of churches`.[94]

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[82] Australia, Const., Pt I.6.
[83] ECUSA, Const. Preamble.
[84] Venezuela, Const. Art. 1: `The Anglican Church in Venezuela is an ecclesiastical jurisdiction which forms an indissoluble part of the Anglican Communion`.
[85] Hong Kong, Const. Preamble.
[86] Definition of the Anglican Communion is usually left to catechetical documents: see eg New Zealand, Prayer Book 1989, 936.
[87] See eg Wales, BCP 1984, 692, Catechism: `The Anglican Communion is a family of Churches within the Catholic Church of Christ, maintaining apostolic doctrine and order and in full communion with one another and with the See of Canterbury`.
[88] Chile, Can. A.7.
[89] For example: `Within our present structures of decision making, relations of communion established by new ecumenical agreements cannot be transitive. If they were, then a pair of Anglican and Lutheran churches would each be able to bring the other into communion with all the churches of their own world family without the consent of these other churches`: *Growth in Communion*, op cit., para. 160; intransitivity is considered anomalous: para. 165.
[90] `There are good theological reasons to think that communion between churches is transitive…All communion is communion within Christ`s one body, which cannot be divided`: *Growth in Communion*, op cit., para. 159.
[91] *Growth in Communion*, op cit., para. 159. See, however, below for degrees of communion.
[92] See *From Federation to Communion* (1997) and LWT Report 26, 1988: *Toward a Lutheran Communion*; *The Lutheran Understanding of Communion* (A Statement of the Working Group on Ecclesiology, March 1996).
[93] LWF, 17.

Nevertheless, the canonical contribution to communion must be put in perspective as a means to an end: `it is clear that a juridical notion of simply being "in communion" or "out of communion" with another church has been shown to be insufficient`.[95]

5. The Subjects of Communion

A number of ideas have been developed by Anglicans about the subjects of global communion: that is, those entities capable of being party to a communion relationship.

(1) The Institutional Church: Institutional Communion: As has already been seen, the most common understanding of communion at the global level is that it is a relationship between two institutional churches;[96] typically: the law of an Anglican church provides that the church is in communion with `the Church of England and all other Churches of the Anglican Communion`.[97] Indeed, the law of one Anglican church contemplates that the Anglican Communion itself may be a subject of communion with a particular province.[98] Also, insofar as institutional Anglican churches are territorial units (provinces, dioceses, etc), such provisions suggest that communion is a relationship between territorial units: that a diocese in one institutional church is capable of having a communion relationship with a diocese in another Anglican church is implicit in the notion of paired or partner dioceses.[99] In any event, the notion that communion is `a relationship between two distinct churches or communions` also appears in Lutheran tradition,[100] and in the Roman Catholic tradition.[101]

(2) Individual Ecclesiastical Persons: Personal Communion: Anglicanism has developed the idea that communion between the individual and God involves communion between individuals as members of the church.[102] Also: `[w]hile the diocese, with its bishop…[is] a focus of communion, Christians are also related to each other within the wider communion of the province and of the world-wide communion of churches`.[103] This admits the possibility that global communion involves individuals in one institutional Anglican church being in communion with individuals in another Anglican church (transprovincially) - in the same way that individuals within an institutional church are sometimes expressed canonically as

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[94] LWF, 21 and 29: according to its constitution, `The Lutheran World Federation is a communion of churches which confess the triune God, agree in the proclamation of the Word of God and are united in pulpit and altar fellowship`.

[95] WAEEC, para. 56.

[96] Be they a province, a diocese or a regional church: see LC 1930, Res. 49.

[97] New Zealand, Cans. G.XIII.6.

[98] Hong Kong, Const. Preamble: the province is `in communion with the Anglican Communion throughout the world`. *Quaere*: does this suggest that the instruments of Anglicanism (such as the ACC or the Lambeth Conference) can be subjects of communion?

[99] See LC 1998.

[100] *Growth in Communion*, para. 45.

[101] LG 23: `it is an established fact of experience that, in ruling well their own portions of the universal church, [bishops] contribute efficaciusly to the welfare of the whole Mystical Body, which, from another point of view, is a corporate body of Churches`; see also *Code of Canon Law: Text and Commentary*, Coriden et al (eds) (1985 edn), p.142: `the Church is a communion of churches`.

[102] The Virginia Report (TVR) 2.9: `our unity with one another is grounded in the…communion of the Godhead`; `the Trinity is the source…of our communion, our fellowship with God and one another`.

[103] WAEEC, para. 136.

being in communion with each other.[104] Indeed, the Primates have understood themselves to be in communion,[105] and means are to be explored for bishops `to gather in inter-regional groupings…for communion`.[106] The idea has also been used by the Lambeth Conference in relation to the admission of Anglicans from fellow Anglican churches in a host Anglican church: the basis of admission is that the individuals involved have communicant status.[107] The basic idea surfaces implicitly in the laws of Anglican churches.[108] It also appears explicitly in the laws of other Anglican churches in the ecumenical context: members of a partner non-Anglican church are treated as members (in the domestic communion) of the Anglican church in question.[109]

The notion of communion as a relationship between individual persons at a global level is fully developed in the Roman Catholic Church:[110] individual members of the Catholic faithful are in communion with the Church,[111] the bishops are in communion with the pope;[112] and the bishops are in communion with each other.[113] The subjects of communion have been summed up as the faithful, the particular churches, the ministers; as such, Roman Catholics speak of the communion of the faithful, the communion of the [particular] churches, and the communion of ministers.[114]

6. The Substance of Communion

Anglicans have developed several distinct (but associated) ideas about the substance of communion. These include the propositions that communion consists, variously, in: a process; unity; agreement; mutual recognition; acceptance; commonality; the presence of diversity and difference.[115]

(1) Communion as Process: The Anglican Communion, as a fellowship (or communion) of churches, is seen as `a communion still learning what it means to

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[104] See eg Wales, Can. 26-4-1973: this canon states that Church of South India is under `the jurisdiction of Bishops in the historic succession`, and that `all ordinations in [it] are episcopal and all ministers are in communion with their bishop`.

[105] Statement, Primates Meeting 15-16/10/03: the primates `have also been renewed and strengthened in our Communion with one another through our worship and study of the Bible`.

[106] LC 1998, Res. III.9.

[107] LC 1968, Res. 45,46: `it is a general principle of the Church that Anglican communicants receive Holy Communion at the hands of ordained ministers of their own Church or of Churches in communion with therewith`.

[108] For example: England, Can. B15A: there shall be admitted to holy communion `baptised persons who are communicant members of other Churches which subscribe to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity`.

[109] See eg Wales, Porvoo Canon (28-9-1995): the Church in Wales commits itself `to regard baptised members of other churches as members` of the Church in Wales.

[110] The church considers that there exists a relationship between the church and all humankind: *Lumen Gentium*, 1: `[T]he Church in Christ is in the nature of sacrament - a sign and instrument that is of communion with God and of unity among all men`; 13: `All men are called to this catholic unity, which prefigures and promotes universal peace`, and `in different ways to it belong, or are related: the catholic faithful, others who believe in Christ and finally, all mankind, called by God`s grace to salvation`.

[111] Code of Canon Law, c. 205.

[112] Code, c. 204.2, see also c.333.1.

[113] Code, c. 336.1: bishops are members of the College of Bishops `by virtue of sacramental consecration and hierarchical communion with the head and members of the college`.

[114] E. Corecco, `Ecclesiological bases of the Code`, *Concilium* (1986) 3 at 7.

[115] Communion as: `The fellowship or mutual relation between members of the same church, or of bodies which recognise each other as branches of the Church Catholic`: OED.

become more fully a communion`.[116] This notion of communion as process is implicit, for example, in the recommendation that `there should be a change in the name of the Anglican Consultative Council to the Anglican Communion Council, reflecting the evolving needs and structures` about equal representation from each province and broad representation on the executive.[117] It has been observed that: `the unsteady, temporary and partial nature of communion within the Church is vastly understated and the remedies suggested to overcome division are too weak by far`.[118]

(2) Communion as Unity:[119] The notion of communion as unity is well-established. Frequent appeals are made to `the unity of our Communion`,[120] the communion as a `union` of churches,[121] *koinonia* as unity held in common in the sense of relatedness,[122] and communion has been explored with reference to `the unity and order of the church`.[123] However, sometimes `unity` and `communion` are distinguished.[124] Communion as unity is also used by other Christian traditions, such as the Lutherans,[125] and Roman Catholics for whom communion as unity is about the faithful `being joined` (*coniunctum* or *iunguntur*).[126]

(3) Communion as Commonality and Common Life: Communion has been understood as having `characteristics in common`.[127] This idea is directly associated with the notion of communion as community, common life and sharing: communion involves `the unity and the community`.[128] The Primates, for example, meet `to seek to discern in an atmosphere of common prayer and worship, the will and guidance of the Holy Spirit for the common life of the thirty-eight provinces which constitute our Communion`;[129] and communion may be presented as a shared divine calling.[130]

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116 WAEEC, para. 61.
117 LC 1998, Res. III.6(d).
118 D.W. Gomez and M.W. Sinclair (eds), *To Mend the Net* (2001) 2.2.
119 `The quality or condition of being one in mind, feeling, opinion, purpose, or action; harmonious combination together of the various parties or sections (of the Church…) into one body`: OED.
120 Statement, Primates Meeting 15-16/10/03: `These actions threaten the unity of our own Communion as well as our relationships with other parts of Christ`s Church, our mission and witness, and our relations with other faiths`.
121 See Encyclical Letter of the Lambeth Conference 1878 with its `Report of Committee on the best mode of maintaining union amng the various Churches of the Anglican Communion`: *The Six Lambeth Conferences 1867-1920*, pp.82-83.
122 G. Rowell, *Times*, 8/11/03: `"Communion"…unity held in common…belonging-togetherness…a web of love…*perichoresis*, a round dance of interwoven love`.
123 LC 1988, Res. 18.1: the Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission is to explore `the meaning and nature of communion…with particular reference to the doctrine of the Trinity, the unity and order of the Church, and the unity and community of humanity`.
124 LC 1998, Res. III.6.(e).
125 `The unity among Lutheran churches is not essentially different from the unity we share with other churches. But since we share the same confessional tradition, we are closer to each other than we are to other churches. Therefore we also have a greater responsibility to develop our communion fellowship world wide. Not for the sake of confessionalism but for the sake of Christian unity: LWF, 22.
126 Vatican II, *Orientalium Ecclesiarum* (1964) 2: the Mystical Body of Christ, is made up of the faithful who are organically united in the Holy Spirit by the same faith, the same sacraments and the same government`; see also Code, cc. 205,206(2).
127 LC 1930, Res. 49: `The Anglican Communion is a fellowship…of dioceses, provinces or regional Churches…which have the following characteristics in common`.
128 LC 1988, Res. 18.1: see abve n. 123.
129 Statement, Primates Meeting, October 2003.

(4) Communion as Agreement in Mind and Action: We have already seen the extent to which Anglicans see communion as being founded on agreement: this agreement is sometimes expressed as having both internal and external elements - it consists in a meeting of minds and shared action;[131] as it is sometimes expressed by others: `to act jointly in common tasks`.[132] Nevertheless, it has been observed that communion `is not the kind of contractual or treaty-based relationship that might be described as a "federation" or "association". "Communion" suggests a more intimate, familial or genetic relationship`. `Communion is sacramental, ecclesial, mystical. The Anglican Communion existed even before we had a Lambeth Conference, and certainly before the ACC or the Primates` Meeting came to be`.[133]

(5) Communion as Mutual Recognition: It has been understood by Anglicans, in the ecumenical context, that communion involves `the mutual recognition of the partners as belonging together in the one Body of Christ through faith and baptism. From this is follows that what the partners have in common is more important than what divides`.[134] Anglicans also see themselves as belonging to one another.[135] Moreover, a communion relationship may nevertheless exist even without the acceptance by a church (party to it) of all doctrinal opinion, sacramental devotion, or liturgical practice characteristic of the other, but implies that each believes the other to hold `all the essentials` or `the essentails` of the Christian faith.[136]

(6) Communion, Diversity and Difference: Communion between churches has been understood to involve, or to be consistent with, the accommodation of legitimate (conscientious) diversity,[137] creative diversity,[138] reception,[139] bearable anomalies,[140] unbearable anomalies, and mutual forebearance.[141]

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[130] For similar idea, see R. Williams, *New Directions* (2003): `The task is to keep in focus the conviction that what makes a church a church, even through the struggles of major disruption and disagreement, is a shared divine calling…`.

[131] Statement, Primates Meeting 15-16/10/03: communion is understood to involve `[A] deeper commitment to work together`, and `we affirm our pride in the Anglican inheritance of faith and order and our firm desire to remain part of a Communion`, where `what we hold in common is much greater than that which divides us in proclaiming the Good News to the world`.

[132] LWF, 29.

[133] See respectively: J. Rees, `Some legal and constitutional considerations`, 3.3; see also below no 138; and D. Hamid, `Church, communion etc`, 6 *EccLJ* (2002) 352 at 356.

[134] WAEEC, para. 33.

[135] WAEEC, para. 36: `the Provinces…are held together by the visible bonds of communion and thus in a real sense belong to one another: they are interdependent. Each Province has something distinctive to offer the others, and needs them in turn to be able to witness to Christ effectively in its own context`.

[136] For `all the essentials`, see Wales, Can. 30-9-1937; for `the essentials`, see nn. 168,170.

[137] `[D]iversity is understood to be a desirable dimension of the catholicity of the Church, where judged to be genuine expressions of a faith held in common. A sufficient agreement in faith does not require us "to accept every doctrinal formulation characteristic of our distinctive traditions"`: *Growth in Communion*, op cit., para. 138: the inset quotation is from the Porvoo Common Declaration, para.33.

[138] Statement of the Archbishop of Cape Town: ACNS 3683, 23/11/03: `God is the God of reconcilation (2 Cor 5:19) and in reality there is only one Church, only one body of Christ. The Church is not a club of like-minded people, a group of those who are happy to agree. We belong together whether we like it or not, and ultimately we cannot get away from one another…One of the main characteristics of our worldwide Anglican Communion down the centuries has been an element of creative diversity. We have lived with and disagreed on different issues at different times…We have achieved this by modelling that diversity on the Trinitarian nature of God…We must face the challenge to develop an ethic of together-in-difference…We have never been a denomination based around a single statement of faith or set of rules. Rather, we are held together through a shared past of deep

7. The Objects (or Manifestations) of Communion: Terms and Conditions

As a general principle, the relationship of communion exists when the substance of communion (unity etc) is manifested in the objects (or marks) of communion.

(1) Anglican Approaches in Inter-Anglican Relations

Anglicans have developed concepts of the `common characteristics` of the churches of the communion,[142] and the `visible elements` of communion.[143] These represent a wide range of ideas about the objects, marks or manifestations of communion between Anglican churches, around the fundamental idea that the bonds of communion are faith, sacraments and ministry.[144] Moreover, these objects of communion may represent the prescriptive dimension of communion; they may be cast as both (i) the terms and conditions of communion, that is, the objective criteria to determine whether communion exists; and (ii) the requirements of communion, that is, those matters and responsibilities which are required by the relationship of communion: the rights and duties of communion.

Unity in Faith: A church is a member of the Anglican Communion and in communion with Canterbury (and/or other Anglican churches) if it upholds and propagates the Catholic and Apostolic faith set forth in the Book of Common Prayer as authorised in that church.[145]

Unity in Order: A church is a member of the Anglican Communion and in communion with Canterbury (and/or other Anglican churches) if it upholds and propagates the Catholic and Apostolic order set forth in the Book of Common Prayer as authorised that church.[146]

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historic roots, and through the maintenance and development of these relationships as the Anglican Communion has spread through the world into its many and still changing cultures. That is what Communion is all about. Relationships, not rules. We are a federation, a family, of 38 ecclesiastical provinces, bound together by bonds of affection and mutual commitment. We know that unity, especially unity in diversity, is often hard to maintain but Jesus would not have prayed for unity as he did at the Last Supper if it were easy`.

[139] LC 1988, Res. 1.3(a): reception includes `continuing consultation with other Churches`.

[140] Lambeth Conference 1998, Res. IV.1(c): `the process of moving towards full, visible unity may entail temporary anomalies, and…some anomalies may be bearable when there is an agreed goal of visible unity, but there should always be an impetus towards their resolution and, thus, towards the removal of the principal anomaly of disunity`.

[141] *Growth in Communion*, paras. 142-144; see also be.ow n. 236.

[142] LC 1930, Res. 49: `[t]he Anglican Communion is a fellowship…of dioceses, provinces or regional Churches…which have the following characteristics in common`.

[143] WAEEC, para. 35.

[144] WAEEC, para. 37.

[145] LC 1930, Res. 49: `The Anglican Communion is a fellowship…of dioceses, provinces or regional Churches…which have the following characteristics in common: (a) they uphold and propagate the Catholic and Apostolic faith…as [it is] generally set forth in the Book of Common Prayer as authorised in their several Churches`.

[146] LC 1930, Res. 49: `The Anglican Communion is a fellowship…of dioceses, provinces or regional Churches…which have the following characteristics in common: (a) they uphold and propagate the Catholic and Apostolic…order as [it is] generally set forth in the Book of Common Prayer as authorised in their several Churches`.

Unity in Expression of Faith, Life and Worship: A church is a member of the Anglican Communion and in communion with Canterbury (and/or other Anglican churches) if it promotes an `expression of Christian faith, life and worship`.[147]

Unity in Mutual Loyalty: A church is a member of the Anglican Communion and in communion with Canterbury (and/or other Anglican churches) if it is bound with other Anglican churches `by mutual loyalty sustained through the common counsel of the bishops in conference`.[148]

Unity in Confession: A church is a member of the Anglican Communion and in communion with Canterbury (and/or other Anglican churches) if it shares with it/them the `common confession of the apostolic faith expressed in the living Tradition of the Church in continuity with the normative record of Holy Scripture`.[149]

Unity in Prayer: A church is a member of the Anglican Communion and in communion with Canterbury (and/or other Anglican churches) if it expresses a commitment to pray for fellow Anglicans.[150]

Unity in Sacrament: A church is a member of the Anglican Communion and in communion with Canterbury (and/or other Anglican churches) if it participates in the celebration of the sacraments of baptism and eucharist.[151]

Unity in Ministry: A church is a member of the Anglican Communion and in communion with Canterbury (and/or other Anglican churches) if it recognises a single interchangeable ministry as between Anglicans.[152] (However, it has been observed that `excessive concentration on the ordained ministry can mislead us into thinking that communion is only to be defined in terms of the interchangeability of ministries.[153])

Unity in Care: A church is a member of the Anglican Communion and in communion with Canterbury (and/or other Anglican churches) if it expresses a commitment to care for fellow Anglicans, and share with them resources and goods.[154]

Unity in Mission: A church is a member of the Anglican Communion and in communion with Canterbury (and/or other Anglican churches) if it shares `a commitment to mission`.[155]

Unity in the Instruments of Faith: A church is a member of the Anglican Communion and in communion with Canterbury (and/or other Anglican churches) if

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147 LC 1930, Res. 49(b).
148 LC 1930, Res. 49(c).
149 WAEEC, para. 35.
150 WAEEC, para. 35: `The fellowship of Anglicans is expressed in a commitment to pray for one another`.
151 WAEEC, para. 35.
152 WAEEC, para. 35.
153 WAEEC, para. 60.
154 WAEEC, para. 35: `The fellowship of Anglicans is expressed in a commitment…in mutual responsibility and care, in a sharing of the resources and goods and a commitment to mission`.
155 WAEEC, para. 35: `The fellowship of Anglicans is expressed in…a commitment to mission`.

it maintains `the life of the truth of Christ by the gift of the Holy Scriptures, the Apostles and Nicene Creeds, the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist, and the historic episcopate`.[156]

Unity in Worship: A church is a member of the Anglican Communion and in communion with Canterbury (and/or other Anglican churches) if it shares with it/them `the liturgical tradition and common patterns of worship`.[157]

Unity in Counsel: A church is a member of the Anglican Communion and in communion with Canterbury (and/or other Anglican churches) if it recognises `the role of the Archbishop of Canterbury as a personal sign of our unity and communion, and the role of the decennial Lambeth Conference and of extraordinary Anglican Congresses as called, together with inter-provincial gatherings and cross-provincial diocesan partnerships, as collegial and communal signs of the unity of our Communion.`[158]

Unity in Polity: A church is a member of the Anglican Communion and in communion with Canterbury (and/or other Anglican churches) if it is an autonomous church with a system of polity shared by fellow churches and expressed through their structures of government and law in the principles of canon law common to the churches of the Communion.[159]

Unity in Eucharistic Admission: A church is a member of the Anglican Communion and in communion with Canterbury (and/or other Anglican churches) if it allows a member of another church freely to receive holy communion in the host church.[160]

No Anglican church has in its law a discreet, systematic or comprehensive compendium setting out these marks of unity, for the purposes of its own discipline, as the terms and conditions of its communion with other Anglican churches. Nevertheless, the laws of some churches contain some of these marks.[161] However, some of marks of communion may be recognised in the principles of canon law common to the churches of the Communion.[162] Models for a statement of the terms of communion may be found in Anglican laws incorporating ecumenical covenants.[163]

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156 LC 1998, Res. III.8(d).

157 LC 1998, Res. III.8(f).

158 LC 1998, Res. III.6(e)

159 See Report of Primates Meeting 2002 for the idea that these principles may be understood to constitute a `fifth instrument` of unity; see principles of law (op cit) Principle 8 on `Anglican polity`.

160 WAEEC, para. 60: `Lay people will still be free to receive the Holy Communion in Provinces of different principles and practice; and this as of right rather than by ecumenical hospitality. Further, the clergy and bishops of Provinces which differ will still themselves be free to receive Holy Communion together. This illustrates the fact that we are still in communion`.

161 See also Part II below for the limits of autonomy. For the degree to which the laws of churches express these marks of unity, see N. Doe, *Canon Law in the Anglican Communion* (Oxford, 1998).

162 See www.acclawnet.co.uk: Principle 3.3: `The Anglican Communion consists of those duly constituted national, regional, provincial churches and dioceses, in communion with the See of Canterbury, which uphold and propagate the historic faith and order as fet forth in the Book of Common Prayer as authorised in the several churches of the Communion`.

163 See eg Wales, Porvoo Canon (1995): 1. The churches party to the agreement recognise one another as churches belonging to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ, and as truly participating in the apostolic mission of the whole people of God. They acknowledge that, in each of

(2) Anglican Approaches in the Ecumenical Context

These prescriptive dimensions of communion are consistent with those appearing in ecumenical dialogue. For example, in Anglican-Lutheran dialogue,[164] full communion means the fundamental principle that each church `believes the other to hold the essentials of the Christian faith`. Consequently: (a) subject to such safeguards as ecclesiastical discipline may properly require, members of one body may received the sacraments of the other; (b) subject to local invitation, bishops of one church may take part in the consceration of the bishops of the other, thus acknowledging the duty of mutual care and concern; (c) subject to church regulation, a bishop, pastor/priest or deacon of one ecclesial body may exercise liturgical functions in a congregation of the other body if invited to do so and also, when requested, pastoral care of the other`s members; (d) it is also necessary and complement that there should be recognised organs of regular consultation and communication, including episcopal collegiality, to express and strengthen the fellowship and enable common witness, life and service`.[165] In short, communion is understood to be multidimensional, going beyond sacramental and ministerial unity.[166] The need to embody the communion in the law of each church has also been recognised.[167] Key concepts are diversity,[168] which is defined,[169] and freedom.[170]

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them, the Word of God is authentically preached, and the sacraments of baptism and the eucharist are duly administered. Each church shares in the common confession of the apostolic faith. In all the churches, ordained ministries are given by God as instruments of his grace: as such, these ministries possess not only the inward call of the Spirit, but also Christ's commission through his body, the church. The churches acknowledge that personal, collegial and communal oversight (*episcope*) is embodied and exercised in each other in a variety of forms, and in continuity of apostolic life, mission and ministry. Indeed, they acknowledge that the episcopal office is valued and maintained in one another as a visible sign which expresses and serves church unity and continuity in apostolic life, mission and ministry. 2. The canonical commitments of the Church in Wales are: (1) to share a common life in mission and service, to pray for and with the other churches, and to share resources; (2) to welcome members of the other churches to receive sacramental and other pastoral ministrations in the Church in Wales; (3) to regard baptized members of the other churches as members of the Church in Wales; (4) to welcome *diaspora* congregations into the life of the indigenous churches; (5) to welcome persons episcopally ordained in all the churches to the office of bishop, priest or deacon to serve in that ministry in the Church in Wales without re-ordination; (6) to invite bishops normally to participate in the laying on of hands at the ordination of bishops in the Church in Wales; (7) to work towards a common understanding of diaconal ministry; (8) to establish appropriate forms of collegial and conciliar consultation on significant matters of faith and order, life and work; (9) to encourage consultations of representatives of each church, and to facilitate learning and exchange of ideas and information in theological and pastoral matters; and (10) to establish a contact group to nurture growth in communion and to co-ordinate the implementation of the agreement.

[164] *Growth in Communion*, para. 45: the fundamental principle is that full communion between churches means that each church recognises `the catholicity and apostolicity of the other`, `believing the other to hold the essentials of the Christian faith`. Consequently, in such a relationship: (a) communicant members of each church are able freely to communicate at the altar of the other; (b) there is `freedom of ordained ministers` to officiate sacramentally in either church; (c) `transferability of members; mutual recognition and interchangeability of ministries`; (d) freedom to use each other`s liturgies; (e) freedom to participate in each other`s ordinations and installations of clergy, including bishops; and (f) and `structures for consultation to express, strengthen and enable our common life, witness, and service, to the glory of God and the salvation of the world`.

[165] Cold Ash Statement (1983) of the Anglican-Lutheran Joint Working Group: *Growth in Communion*, op cit., para. 113.; see below n.236 for ARCIC.

[166] Cold Ash Statement (1983) of the Anglican-Lutheran Joint Working Group: *Growth in Communion*, op cit., para. 113: `Full communion carries implications which go beyond sharing the same eucharist. The eucharist is a common meal, and to share in it together has implications for a

(3) The Marks of Communion in Other Traditions

The Lutheran Communion: `The Lutheran communion of churches finds its visible expression in pulpit and altar fellowship, in common witness and service, in the joint fulfilment of the missionary task and in openness to ecumenical cooperation, dialogue, and community`;[171] communion involves a commitment to help each other `**to act jointly in common tasks**`.[172] `The LWF is an expression and instrument of this communion. It assists it to become more and more a conciliar, mutually committed communion by furthering consultation and exchange among its member churches and other churches of the Lutheran tradition as well as by furthering mutual participation in each other`s joys, sufferings and struggles`.[173] `There is enormous diversity in this communion, with vastly different social locations, resources, and access to power. Lutherans are represented among the very rich and the very poor in this world. These together become part of an organic, living communion`.[174]

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sharing of life and of a common concern for the mission of the church. To be in full communion implies a community of life, an exchange and a commitment to one another in respect of major decision on questions of faith, order and morals. It implies, where churches are in the same geographical area, common worship, study, witness, evangelism, and promotion of justice, peace and love. It may lead to a uniting of ecclesial bodies if they are, or come to be, immediately adjacent in the same geographical area. This should not imply the suppressing of ethnic, cultural or ecclesial charactertistics or traditions which may in fact be maintained and developed by diverse institutions within one communion`.

[167] Porvoo Common Statement, para. 28: *Growth in Communion*, para. 116: `These expressions of communion may need to be embodied in the law and regulations of the Church. For the fullness of communion all these visible aspects of the life of the Church require to be permeated by a profound spiritual communion, a growing together in a common mind, mutual concern and a care for unity (Phil. 2.2)`.

[168] CCM, para. 2: *Growth in Communion*, op cit., para. 115: `We therefore undrstand full communion to be a relation between distinct churches in which each recognises the other as a catholic and apostolic church holding the essentials of the Christian faith. Within this new relation, churches become interdependent while remaining autonomous. Full communion includes the establishment locally and nationally of recognised organs of regular consultation and communication, including episcopal collegiality, to express and strengthen the fellowship and enable common witness, life and service. Diversity is preserved, but this diversity is not static. Neither church seeks to remake the other in its own image, but each is open to the gifts of the other as it seeks to be faithful to Christ and his mission. They are together committed to a visible unity in the church`s mission to proclaim the Word and administer the Sacraments`.

[169] *Growth in Communion*, op cit., para. 138: `[D]iversity is understood to be a desirable dimension of the catholicity of the Church, where judged to be genuine expressions of a faith held in common. A sufficient agreement in faith does not require us "to accept every doctrinal formulation characteristic of our distinctive traditions"`; the inset quotation is from the Porvoo Common Declaration, para.33.

[170] Waterloo Declaration, para. 7: *Growth in Communion*, op cit., para. 117: `Full communion is understood as a relationship between two distinct churches or communion in which each maintains its own autonomy while recognising the catholicity and apostolicity of the other, and believing the other to hold the essentials of the Christian faith. In such a relationship, communicant members of each church would be able freely to communicate at the altar of the other, and there would be freedom of ordained ministers to officiate sacramentally in either church. Specifically, in our context, we understand this to include transferability of members; mutual recognition and interchangeability of ministries; freedom to use each other`s liturgies; freedom to participate in each other`s ordinations and installations of clergy, including bishops; and structures for consultation to express, strengthen, and enable our common life, witness, and service, to the glory of God and the salvation of the world`.

[171] Seventh Assembly: *Growth in Communion*, para. 220.

[172] LWF, 29.

[173] LWF Report 19/29, para. 176.

[174] LWF, 15.

The Roman Catholic Church: In the Roman Catholic Church the baptised faithful are in full communion when (or if) they share: profession of the same faith; participation in the sacraments; and submission to the same system of governance: `Those baptised are in full communion with the Catholic Church here on earth who are joined (*iunguntur*) with Christ in his visible body, through the bonds of profession of faith, the sacraments and ecclesiastical governance`.[175] And *communicatio in sacris* is `a mutual sharing in sacred things`.[176]

9. The Degrees of Communion

It has been understood that `[n]o Province or individual bishop still less priest or lay persons, can meaningfully declare themselves to be categorically out of communion with another Province or bishop`.[177] However, Anglicans have developed the notion that there can exist degrees of communion.

(1) Communion and Full Communion: Each of these is both a theological and a canonical category. As has been seen,[178] the laws of churches describe their relationship with either Canterbury or with other Anglican churches as one of (simply) communion,[179] or as one of full communion.[180] Yet, the standard Lambeth Conference definition of the Anglican Communion refers only to member churches being `in communion` with Canterbury (not full communion).[181] In other words, from the individual legal systems of individual churches,[182] there is currently no obvious uniform canonical formula to describe the relationship of communion between particular Anglican churches, though the Lambeth Conference has understood full communion as `unrestricted *communio in sacris* including mutual recognition and acceptance of ministries`.[183] It would also seem to be the case that most churches through their laws do not define the terms and conditions of either `communion` or `full communion` in the sense of the relationship between Anglican churches; those laws which do so admit only sacramental and ministerial reciprocity subject to the domestic discipline of the host church.[184] Models do, however, exist for a canonical definition of communion (and full communion),[185] into which might be woven the Anglican understandings of the marks and manifestations of communion (see above). In the ecumenical context of Anglican-Roman Catholic relations, the idea of `full and visible communion is of a eucharistic communion of churches`.[186]

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175 Code of Canon Law, c. 205.
176 Eg OE, 26.
177 WAEEC, para. 56.
178 See above, Part I.4.
179 Australia, Const. Pt. I.6.
180 Eg Nigeria, Const. I.2; Scotland, Can. 15.
181 `[T]he Anglican Communion is a fellowship…of those duly constituted dioceses, provinces and regional Churches in communion with the See of Canterbury`: LC 1930, Res. 49.
182 The following provision is rare: New Zealand, Can. G.XIII.6.1: full communion is defined as `a relationship of unrestricted *communio in sacris* including mutual recognition of ministries`.
183 LC 1958, Res. 14.
184 Eg Wales, Can. 26-4-1973: this governs full communion with the United Church of South Indea, a member of the Anglican Communion.
185 See above n. 163 for an actual canon which might serve as a possible model.
186 Statement: Communion in Mission (Mississauga, Canada, 2000) para. 13.

(2) The Highest Possible Degree of Communion: The Lambeth Conference has urged maintenance of `the highest possible degree of communion with the provinces`.[187] This concept does not appear in the formal laws of Anglican churches. Might it mean substantial compliance with ideas about the marks of communion?

(3) Inter-Communion: For the Lambeth Conference, inter-communion is `varying degrees of relation other than "full communion" and established by agreement between two…Churches`.[188] This species of communion is also a known canonical category; but usages may be confused. In one Anglican church, canonical inter-communion simply means allowing members of each church to receive the sacraments of the other (but not interchange of ministers),[189] and inter-communion is the communion relationship which that church enjoys with some other member churches of the Anglican Communion.[190]

(4) Impaired Communion: For the Lambeth Conference the `terminology of "impairment" may be used or other language such as "restricted" or "incomplete communion" may be preferred. In either case, communion is less than it was`.[191] There is insufficient evidence to conclude that the concept of impaired communion (as between churches) is a canonical category in contemporary Anglicanism.[192] The obvious and nearest canonical equivalent is that of exclusion from holy communion under the law of the particular church, which usually deals in detail with: the grounds; the administrator, the procedure and appeals; restoration; and the effects of loss of communicant status.[193] Yet, as a result of recent events in ECUSA, Anglicans have understood impaired communion in the following ways:

The cause of impairment: Views include the idea that a church subject to an impairment declaration (by another church) has by its own action rendered itself in a state of impaired communion: the assumption is that a declaration is only confirmation of this.[194] There is modest canonical support for this view.[195]

The meaning of impaired communion: Views include ideas that impaired communion is: `not in communion, namely, Communion *in sacris*`;[196] `we cannot share fellowship, ministry, eucharist or gifts`;[197] if `there is restriction in the elements

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187 LC 1988, Res. 1.1.

188 LC 1958, Res. 14.

189 LC 1958, Res. 14: full communion is `unrestricted *communio in sacris*`, which includes `mutual recognition and acceptance of ministries`.

190 Namely: the Church in Wales has a relation of inter-communion with the Lusitanian Church and with the Spanish Reformed Episcopal Church.

191 WAEEC, para. 57.

192 The following provision is rare: Scotland, Can. 15.1: the Episcopal Synod may act (subject to consent of General Synod), `should any Church…take such action as shall have rendered itself…in a state of impaired communion with this Church`.

193 See N. Doe, *Canon Law in the Anglican Communion* (1998) 266ff.

194 ACNS 3703, 9/12/03: Kenya: the province will continue supporting `those Bishops, Clergy and laity in various dioceses in ECUSA who continue to uphold the historic faith and order of the Church`, but those who supported the consecration `have by their own action impaired communion`. This is analogous to automatic (self-imposed) excommunication in Roman Catholic canon law.

195 Scotland, Can. 15.1: `any Church…take such action as shall have rendered itself…in a state of impaired communion`.

196 ACNS 3703, 9/12/03: Tanzania.

197 ACNS 3735, 12/1/04: House of Bishops of the Province of the Southern Cone of America.

of communion, separated groups interpret the Tradition over and against each other`.[198]

The grounds for impaired communion: Views have included the ideas that impaired communion exists because of, variously: misinterpretation of scripture; breach of tradition; departure from `the moral teaching, practice and common understanding of the Anglican Communion`; an act as `contrary to Holy Scripture, and to moral law in the Third World`;[199] the premature nature of the action (of consecration); failure to comply with warnings;[200] and error in the decision.[201]

The subjects of impaired communion: Views include the idea that impaired communion affects relations, variously: between only bishops, priests, and deacons (ie not the laity);[202] `with those who have affirmed [which might include laity] or participated in the consecration of Gene Robinson, [and] with those who perform or permit blessings of same-sex unions outside historic Christian marriage, [and] with clergy who are sexually active outside marriage`;[203] `with the Diocese of New Hampshire [and] with all the bishops and dioceses in ECUSA that have joined` in the consecration;[204] `with any other Province that shall follow suit` (but `will continue to have partnership` with Americans opposed to the consecration).[205]

The authority and procedure to declare impaired communion: The authority to declare a state of impaired communion has been assumed by: individual primates; `the province`;[206] and an episcopal synod acting with a provincial synod standing committee.[207] Questions arise as to the lawfulness of such declarations. (1) As has already been seen, canonical authority and procedures exist in churches for the

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198 WAEEC, para. 28.

199 ACNS 3730, 5/1/04: Statement of the House of Bishops of the Anglican Province of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

200 ACNS 3735, 12/1/04: House of Bishops of the Province of the Southern Cone of America: `The recent unilateral actions of [ECUSA], in consecrating a bishop who is sexually active outside marriage, and the recognition of same-sex blessings have created a deeply painful and divisive situation`. `In the light of Tradition, it reveals a misinterpretation of the clear witness of God`s Word and a deaf ear to the heartfelt pleas of the entire Communion…[D]espite repeated warnings, ECUSA`s leaders have shown selfish indifference to the difficulties and confusion their actions have now brought this and other provinces`. `Their action is a clear departure from the moral teaching, practice and common understanding of the Anglican Communion, clearly expressed by the Lambeth Conference of 1998…ECUSA`s action has forced painful division in the Communion and a schism of their own making`. `Because of its precipitous action [ECUSA] has formented needless division and denied the Tradition of the Church catholic`. `ECUSA cannot represent the Anglican Communion in any legitimate or moral sense`. `[W]e reject as sin those acts which separate us from God and from each other`.

201 ACNS 3735, 12/1/04: House of Bishops of the Province of the Southern Cone of America.

202 ACNS 3703, 9/12/03: Tanzania: not in communion (ie communion *in sacris*) with bishops who consecrate homosexuals to the episcopate, ordain them to the priesthood and diaconate, license them to minister, or permit the blessing of same sex unions in their dioceses, as well as all homosexual priests and deacons and clergy who bless same sex union.

203 ACNS 3735, 12/1/04: House of Bishops of the Province of the Southern Cone of America.

204 ACNS, 3703, 9/12/03.

205 ACNS 3703, 9/12/03: Uganda, Statement of House of Bishops.

206 ACNS 3703, 9/12/03: The Anglican Church of Kenya `will not recognise the ministry of this one Bishop`.

207 ACNS 3703, 9/12/03: The House of Bishops and Standing Committee of the Province of the West Indies: declared a state of `impaired communion` under which it will `maintain a formal relationship with [ECUSA], as part of the Anglican Communion, while keeping the matter under critical review`.

establishment of (and occasionally for the alteration in) relations of communion - but these seem to contemplate only relations between the Anglican church in question and non-Anglican churches;[208] they are silent as to relations with another Anglican church.[209] (2) If, as is the case for very many churches, the relationship of full communion is embodied in the law of the church, then it might be that alteration of that relationship must be effected by altering the law, in accordance with the procedures necessary for amendment.[210] (3) If the relationship of communion, which is embodied in the law of a church, is bilateral, between that church and Canterbury, and the law of that church is silent about its communion with another church which is the subject of its declaration of impairment, then it might be that such a declaration is otiose.[211] (4) the doctrine of intransitivity suggests that a declaration of impaired communion by one church towards another does not affect the relationships of communion between the latter and other churches in the communion.

The effect of impaired communion: Views include ideas that: the ministry of a bishop will not be recognised;[212] primates will not recognise the office and ministry of a bishop;[213] the person will not be recognised as a bishop;[214] or `as a Bishop in the Anglican Communion`;[215] `[w]e cannot accept the ministry of Canon Gene Robinson as a Bishop`;[216] a province `cannot accept this consecration as a valid one`;[217] there is concern about `retributive applications of canonical and secular legal procedures`;[218] `American priests would not be allowed to work or visit the church in Nigeria, nor would Nigerian priests be able to work in ECUSA`;[219] and, the effects are unclear.[220] It has also been stated that: `When one of the bonds of that unity is restricted or impaired, the possibility of living and growing as the body in the apostolic Tradition is weakened, and thus the visible communion diminished`.[221]

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[208] Typically the power is vested in the archbishops (as in England) or in an episcopal assembly acting with the consent of the general synod (as in Scotland), or in the central assembly (as in Wales).

[209] In other words, there is no obvious formal authority in the law to issue such a declaration.

[210] See eg Nigeria, Const. I.2: `The Church of Nigeria shall be in full Communion with the See of Canterbury and with all Dioceses, Provinces and Regional Churches which are in full Communion with the See of Canterbury`.

[211] For examples of such relations, see above Pt. I for the forms of communion.

[212] ACNS, 3703, 9/12/03: `In this case, the ministry of this one bishop will not be recognised by most of the Anglican world, and many provinces are likely to consider themselves out of communion with [ECUSA]. This will tear the fabric of our Communion at its deepest level, and may lead to further division on this and further issues as provinces have to decide in consequence whether they can remain in communion with provinces that choose not to break communion with the [ECUSA]`.

[213] ACNS 3703, 9/12/03: `[T]he overwhelming majority of the Primates of the Global South cannot and will not recognise the office and ministry of Canon Gene Robinson as a bishop`.

[214] ACNS 3703, 9/12/03: Nigeria: `We and our people will not recognise Gene Robinson and his ministry as bishop`.

[215] ACNS 3703, 9/12/03.

[216] ACNS 3703, 9/12/03.

[217] ACNS 3735, 12/1/04: House of Bishops of the Province of the Southern Cone of America.

[218] ACNS 3735, 12/1/04: House of Bishops of the Province of the Southern Cone of America.

[219] ACNS 3703, 9/12/03.

[220] ACNS 3703, 9/12/03: Global South statement attributed to Archbishop Akinola: `We cannot now uniformly define the further implications of this impairment of communion created by ECUSA`; `As each province lives into the "emerging" character of this impairment of communion according to the theological and legal demands of their respective churches, we pledge support of each other in our common response to the wilful decision of ECUSA authorities to oppose the Communion`s teaching`.

[221] WAEEC, para. 28.

The degrees of impaired communion: Views include the idea that impaired communion may exist in degrees, such as: this Province now shares only a profoundly impaired communion with ECUSA`.[222]

The subjects, scope, and limits of impaired communion: Views include the idea that impaired communion: is consistent with maintenance of `a formal relationship with [ECUSA], as part of the Anglican Communion, while keeping the matter under critical review`;[223] `[w]e remain in full fellowship, ministry and eucharistic celebration with` the `bishops, clergy and laity of ECUSA who have stood firm against these unacceptable acts`;[224] `the province will remain in fellowship with those in the United States who oppose Gene Robinson`s consecration`;[225] moral, pastoral, and spiritual support will be provided for opponents to homosexuality;[226] one province `seriously warns any of its Dioceses or Parishes that have fellowship with any such groups that are involved in active homosexuality for the purpose of material interest and support`.[227] However, for the Lambeth Conference, in cases of impaired communion those involved must show respect and courtesy.[228] Indeed, those declaring impaired communion may nevertheless continue to regard themselves as in communion with prescribed classes in the other church.[229] This ideas seem to contemplate a view of communion as interpersonal rather than institutional.[230]

The enforcement of impaired communion*:* The obvious basis of enforcement of impaired ministerial communion is the principle of canon law that: `No bishop, priest or deacon coming from another diocese, which includes a diocese in another Anglican church, shall minister in the host diocese without the permission of the host diocesan bishop`.[231]

Being out of communion: Views include the idea that: a province is `no longer in communion with the Presiding Bishop of ECUSA and all those Bishops and Dioceses who voted for the confirmation of [the] election and those who joined in the consecration`.[232]

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[222] ACNS 3735, 12/1/04: House of Bishops of the Province of the Southern Cone of America.

[223] ACNS 3703, 9/12/03.

[224] ACNS 3735, 12/1/04: House of Bishops of the Province of the Southern Cone of America.

[225] ACNS 3703, 9/12/03: South East Asia.

[226] ACNS 3730, 5/1/04: `The Anglican Province of Congo is in fellowship with all Parishes, Dioceses and Provinces of ECUSA and of the Anglican Church of Canada in opposition to homosexuality. It is happy to support morally, pastorally and spiritually all Christians from every part of the world within the network of theologically orthodox churches and dioceses in opposition to homosexuality`.

[227] ACNS 3730, 5/1/04: Congo.

[228] LC 1988, Res. 1.2: `That bishops exercise courtesy and maintain communications with bishops who may differ, and with any woman bishop, ensuring an open dialogue in the Church to whatever extent communion is impaired`.

[229] WAEEC, para. 136: `During the process of reception, congregations and clergy who cannot accept the sacramental and teaching ministry of their woman diocesan bishop may, nevertheless continue to regard themselves as being in communion with the rest of the province, its house of bishops, and the woman diocesan concerned (without, for the time being, accepting her episcopal ministry), and with the world-wide communion of churches`.

[230] They would thus seem to be contrary to the formal laws which treat communion as a relationship between two churches (ie as an institutional relationship): see Pt. I.5.1. This might suggest that canonically communion relations may be altered only with the institutional church *in toto*, and not with persons within them.

[231] For this and related principles, see draft statement of principles of canon law (op cit), Principle 14.

[232] ACNS 3703, 9/12/03.

The restoration of (full) communion: Views include ideas that communion may be restored on: repentance and amendment of life;[233] resignation of a presiding bishop;[234] but if there is no restoration, action for a realignment of the Anglican Communion.[235]

In short: whether one church (or persons within it) is separated from, or in a state of diminished communion with, another church (or persons within it) depends on the use of a *conjunctive* or *disjunctive* approach to the terms of communion (whether communion is about sharing `the essentials` or `all the essentials` of the faith etc: see above): (a) if communion subsists conjunctively in satisfying *all* the terms of communion (unity in faith *and* unity in ministry *and* unity in worship etc), then when a church does not share any one term, communion does not exist; and (b) if communion subsists disjunctively in satisfying one or more (but not all) of the terms of communion (eg unity in faith *and/or* unity in ministry *or* unity in worship etc), then when a church does share some (but not all) of these terms, with another church, communion still exists (albeit in a dminished form).[236]

II. THE NATURE AND LIMITS OF AUTONOMY

Of the many fundamental principles of the canonical tradition relevant to a discussion of autonomy and its exercise, four stand out: what touches all must be approved by all`;[237] in the exercise of rights, all the faithful must take into account the common good of the church, the rights of others, and their duties towards others;[238] no-one can

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[233] ACNS 3735, 12/1/04: House of Bishops of the Province of the Southern Cone of America: `It is our hope and earnest prayer that ECUSA will come to its senses, repent and turn back from its schismatic actions, but without renouncing their present position there is little hope of it. As a Province we believe institutional unity is meanigless unless it is based in the truth of the Holy Scriptures`.

[234] ACNS 3703, 9/12/03: Central Africa: Archbishop Malango in a letter to Presiding Bishop Griswold: `I call you to repent…Until that time, you have broken our fellowship. To sit with you and meet with you would be a lie. We are not one. We do not share the same faith or Gospel. You should resign and let someone else lead; someone who shares the faith of the Communion - the faith of the church catholic`.

[235] ACNS 3703, 9/12/03: `The declaration came December 2 following a meeting of the province`s synod`: For PSEA `[I]f ECUSA refuses to repent, we will commit ourselves through our Primates to work with like-minded Primates for the realignment of the Anglican Communion`.

[236] *Quaere*: see eg ARCIC, *The Church as Communion* (1990) IV, 45: `[I]t is now possible to describe what constitutes ecclesial communion. It is rooted in the confession of the one, apostolic faith, revealed in the Scriptures and set forth in the Creeds. It is founded upon one baptism. The one celebration of the eucharist is its pre-eminent expression and focus. It necessarily finds expression in shared commitment to the mission entrusted by Christ to his Church. It is a life of shared concern for one another in ***mutual forebearance***, submission, gentleness and love; in the placing of the interest of others above the interest of self; in making room for each other in the Body of Christ; in solidarity with the poor and the powerless; and in the sharing of gifts, both material and spiritual…***Also constitutive of life in communion is acceptance of the same basic moral values, the sharing of the same vision of humanity*** created in the image of God and created in Christ and the common confession of the one hope in the final consummation of the Kingdom of God`. Is this a conjunctive or disjunctive view of communion?

[237] The *quod omnes tangit* rule: *Liber Sextus*, VI.D: *de regulis iuris*, reg. 29; see eg J. Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law* (London, 1985) 106.

[238] See eg Roman Catholic Code of Canon Law (1983), c. 223.1.

be obliged to do the impossible;[239] and: it is not lawful for the Church to ordain any thing that is contrary to God`s Word written.[240]

1. The Nature of Autonomy

(1) The Meaning of Autonomy: The following outlines the common understandings of autonomy in language and law.

Autonomy is the Right of Self-Government: In the English language, autonomous means `making or having one`s own laws`.[241] The autonomy of a body or institution means: `The right of self-government, of making its own laws and administering *its own affairs*` (italics added)[242]; autonomy is `[s]ometimes limited by the [adjectives] local, administrative, when the self-government is only partial`.[243] In turn, autonomic means: `[o]f, pertaining to, or possessing autonomy; self-governing; independent`,[244] and autonomic laws are: `a body of law created by a body or persons within the community on which has been conferred subordinate and restricted legislative powers`,[245] and `laws made by subjects as private persons in pursuance of legal rights` (external to the subjects); autonomism is the `principle or system of autonomy or self-government`; and to autonomize` is `to make autonomous, to confer the right of self-government upon`.[246] An autonomous (or autonomic) body is one which is self-governing.[247] Autonomy may also be contrasted with: independence,[248] federation,[249] association,[250] sovereignty,[251] or autocephaly (in Orthodox tradition).[252]

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239 *Liber Sextus* (1298), 6. See A. Gauthier, *Roman Law and Its Contribution to the Development of Canon Law* (Ottawa, 1996).

240 Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, Art. XX.

241 *Oxford English Dictionary* (2nd edn., Oxford, 1989): *auto* - self, own; *nomos* - law.

242 OED; `Liberty to live after ones owne lawe`: Cockeram (1623). `Liberty to follow one`s will, personal freedom`; and in biology: `[t]he condition of being controlled by its own laws, and not subject to any higher one`.

243 Thus, eg: `English boroughs have a local autonomy, the British colonies an administrative autonomy; "political " autonomy is national independence`: OED.

244 OED; `Them that would…make the Church autonomicall…or chief Governour of itself`: Baxter (1659).

245 Walker, *Oxford Companion to Law* (1980), `autonomic law`.

246 J. Austin, *Lectures on Jurisprudence* (London, 1880)

247 OED.

248 `The condition or quality of being independent; the fact of not depending on another; exemption from external control`: OED.

249 `The action of federating or uniting in a league or covenant. Now chiefly…the formation of a political unity out of a number of separate states, provinces or colonies, so that each retains the management of its internal affairs`: OED; loosely, the Anglican Communion might be described as a federation, insofar as autonomy means `the management of [the] internal affairs of a province.

250 `A body of persons who have combined to execute a common purpose`: OED; loosely, the Anglican Communion might be described as an association.

251 That is; `supremacy…in respect of power…supreme dominion, authority to rule`: OED.

252 J.H. Erickson, *The Challenge of Our Past: Studies in Orthodox Canon Law and Church History* (Crestwood, NY, 1991) 91-2,110: `In present-day Orthodox usage, a church is termed "autocephalous" [lit: `self-headed`] if it possesses: (1) the right to resolve all internal problems on its own authority, independently of all other churches, and (2) the right to appoint its own bishops, among them the head of the church, without any obligatory expression of dependence on another church`, and is regarded by some as `the spiritual counterpart of the soveriegn nation-state`.

In public international law, autonomy is understood as the `right to self-government`;[253] and the principle of self-determination is: `the right of cohesive national groups ("peoples") to choose for themselves a form of political organisation and their relations to other groups. The choice may be independence as a state,[254] association with other groups in a federal state, or autonomy or assimilation in a unitary (non-federal) state`.[255]

Autonomy as Authority over Internal Affairs: As the right to self-government, autonomy is a form of limited authority: an autonomous body is one which is capable only to make decisions for itself in relation to its own affairs at its own level (unlike a soveregn body).[256] Autonomy does not include the right of a body or community to make decisions which will affect subjects involving others external to that body. An autonomous body cannot make laws, for example, on matters which fall outside its own internal affairs (ie the affairs of the people or places over which it has competence) and which touch the affairs of others a wider community of which it forms part: competence to deal with matters external affairs involving others is usually reserved to a superior (sovereign) body; or else the autonomous body must act consistently with the interests of the wider community of which it forms part.[257]

The Nature of Internal Affairs: In a polity which consists of autonomous bodies, the key question is: what constitutes an internal matter? Needless to say, the laws of sovereign states define the competence of autonomous communities (within them) to govern themselves: matters of mutual concern within the wider state are outside the competence of those communities.[258] Moreover, whilst external intervention in the affairs of a sovereign state is generally not permitted, the position with autonomous bodies is rather different. As a general rule, autonomous bodies have a right to freedom from intervention of the wider community in relation to the *internal* affairs of that authomous community (ie those affairs which do not affect others outside); but if an autonomous community trespasses on matters of shared concern to the wider community of which it forms part, then external intervention is permissible.[259]

(2) The Principle of (Provincial) Autonomy: It may be understood as a principle of canon law common to the churches of the Communion that: `Each member church in the Anglican Communion is self-governing. Every church has the right to order and

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[253] I. Paenson, *Manual of the Terminology of Public International Law (Peace) and International Organisations* (1983), 66,68.

[254] This involves `the requirement of the capacity to enter into relations with other states`: I. Brownlie, *Principles of Public International Law* (5th edn., Oxford, 1998) 599; in this sense, provincial churches enjoy a certain independence.

[255] I. Brownlie, *Principles of Public International Law* (5th edn., Oxford, 1998) 599.

[256] Compare: a sovereign body, as a general principle, has authority to legislate for the internal affairs of the territory in which it is located as well as for the external affairs of others in a community to which it is related but legally superior; the sovereignty of the UK parliament, for example, is understood to include the power to legislate (eg) extra-territorially, but its authority may be limited by external laws when incorporated into UK law (eg European law).

[257] An obvious example is the competence of the Scottish Parliament: this has authority only on those matters devolved to it; it cannot legislate on reserved matters dealing with issues concerning the whole of the UK, of which Scotland is part. UK matters are reserved to the UK (Westminster) parliament.

[258] This is the position, for example, with the autonomic communities of Spain.

[259] For example: if the Scottish parliament exceeds its powers, by dealing with matters reserved to the UK parliament, relief is available by way of judicial proceedings.

regulate *its affairs* through its own system of government and law`.[260] This principle of autonomy is often linked to the principle of subsidiarity;[261] it is summed up in the idea that `the true constitution of the Catholic Church involves the principle of the autonomy of particular Churches based upon a common faith and order`.[262] The churches `promote within each of their territories a national expression of Christian faith, life and worship`.[263] Autonomy, which implies local ecclesial unity,[264] might also be understood as derivative (not inherent to a province).[265]

(3) Canonical Expressions of Autonomy: The principle finds canonical expression in the legal systems of the churches;[266] typically, laws provides that the church is: `a fully autonomous part of the Anglican Communion`;[267] `a fully autonomous member within the Anglican Communion`;[268] `[i]n explaining the meaning of the standards of faith, teachings, sacraments and Discipline…and in dealing with all questions on these matters and those of worship, the Church of the Province is not bound by any decisions except those of its own Church Courts provided in this Constitution`.[269] Less typically, the idea of independence, rather than autonomy, is asserted.[270] The united churches too have separate, autonomous juridical identity.[271] Like secular States, Anglican churches have territorial and jurisdictional borders.[272]

In addition to the concept of provincial autonomy,[273] the autonomy of the diocese[274] is also implicit in laws, for example in those dealing with the competence of provincial synods: the provincial synod must give to all dioceses `the greatest possible liberty compatible with the unity and good order of the Church…and to ensure the fullest consultation with them in matters of legislation`; but dioceses are autonomous

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[260] www.acclawnet.co.uk: Principle 4.1 and 2.

[261] Virginia Report, Ch. 4.

[262] LC 1930, Res. 48,49.

[263] LC 1930, Res. 49.

[264] LC 1998, Res. III.2: the Lambeth Conference `is committed to maintaining the overall unity of the Anglican Communion, including the unity of each diocese under the jurisdiction of the diocesan bishop`. At the global level, the principle is obviously perceived as having a theological dimension, but its status at this level, as issuing from the moral authority of the Lambeth Conference, is moral, not legal. At the local ecclesial level, when expressed in the law of a particular church, the principle has a legal status within that church, where is also functions as a political fact (see below).

[265] The autonomy of a province is sometimes acquired from another institutional church: eg the disestablished Church in Wales was established as a province by declaration of the Archbishop of Canterbury on 10 February 1920.

[266] At the global level, we might also say that each of the institutional instruments of unity is autonomous: eg that the Primates Meeting is autonomous, or that the ACC is autonomous.

[267] South Easy Asia, Const. Fundamental Declarations, 5.

[268] Hong Kong, Preface, 2: having independent ecclesiastical authority vested in the General Synod.

[269] Melanesia, Const. Art. 2.

[270] Korea, Const. Preface: `in a spirit of self-reliance, self-support and self-sustainment, the Anglican Church of Korea becomes independent and promulgates this new Constitution and Canons`.

[271] North India, Const. I.IV.4: `The Church of North India shall be an autonomous Church and free from any control, legal or otherwise, of any Church or Society external to itself`.

[272] For example, deposition of a priest in one Anglican church does not, as a matter of law, bind in another Anglican church: see eg England, Clerical Disabilities Act 1870.

[273] ACC -4, 1979, B: a province is a `self-governing Church`.

[274] `The balance between provincial authority and diocesan autonomy may vary from province to province according to the constitutions agreed upon in each case` (LC 1930, Res. 53(d)).

communities to the extent that diocesan authorities have jurisdiction over the affairs of the diocese (but not over affairs of concern to the wider provincial community).[275]

The very existence of canon law is an implicit declaration of a church`s autonomy, its power of self-governance.[276] As a consequence of law, each church institutionalises its own separate identity from other Anglican churches;[277] rather than law spelling out the part the particular church is to play in the global communion, laws convey a sense of isolation of the particular church; the robust canonical expression of autonomy might be understood to act as a centrifugal force at the global level.[278]

(4) Internal Provincial Affairs and External Communion Concerns: Most actions performed by ecclesiastical authorities within a particular church, in exercise of its autonomy properly so-called, are internal: they deal with the domestic affairs of the church, and they do not involve or affect other churches.[279] However, some ecclesiastical acts performed within an autonomous church may be understood to have a wider nature and effect; they may be classified as *communion acts*: acts which may be seen as acts of the whole communion or of the church universal, or as acts which touch or affect relations with the Anglican Communion, ecumenical partners, and the church universal,[280] such as ordination,[281] or scriptural interpretation.[282] On the one hand, it is arguable that as such matters are not solely the internal affairs of a church, strictly they fall outside its autonomous competence.[283] On the other hand, that a church should be able to decide on such matters is consistent with autonomy provided that church acts compatibly with the interests and instruments of the wider communion.[284]

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[275] West Africa, Const. Art. XXIII.1; see also South East Asia, Const. Art. XVI; see N. Doe, *Canon Law in the Anglican Communion* (1998) 54-55.

[276] Sometimes the concepts of autonomy and belonging to the global communion are juxta-posed: typically, `the Province is a *fully autonomous part of* the Anglican Communion`: South East Asia, Const. Fundamental Declarations, 5.

[277] It is in line, of course, with understandings of the Lambeth Conference about the very nature of Anglican churches: see above.

[278] The robust way in which autonomy is expressed in the canon law of a particular church, and the exercise of that autonomy, generate the possibility of separation of that church from both the moral order of the Anglican Communion and from other Anglican churches.

[279] Matters of church property are typical: the property belongs to the local church. See also, Virginia Report, LC 1998, 44: Subsidiarity means that `a central authority should have a subsidiary function, performing only those tasks which cannot be performed effectively at a more immediate or local level`.

[280] Virginia Report, LC 1998, 44: `Each level has its own integrity and its own demands. Some matters concern a single parish; some relate to a diocese; some would be appropriately addressed by a national or Provincial assembly; a very few would be better approached at a regional or international level; and some are matters for the Communion as a whole as part of the universal church`.

[281] See eg New Zealand, Prayer Book 1989, 887: the ordained minister is `to serve…in the name of Christ and the universal church [which] is one of the responsibilities of the apostolic Church`.

[282] Statement, Primates Meeting 10-16/10/03: The Primates `re-affirm our common understanding of the centrality and authority of scipture in determining the basis of our faith. Whilst we acknowledge a legitimate diversity of interpretation that arises in the Church, this diversity does not mean that some of us take the authority of scripture more lightly than others. Nevertheless, each province needs to be aware of the possible effects of its interpretation of scripture on the life of other provinces in the Communion. We commit ourselves afresh to mutual respect whilst seeking from the Lord a correct discernment of how God`s Word speaks to us in our contemporary world`.

[283] The *quod omnes tangit* rule of canonical tradition may be of relevance here: what touches all must be approved by all: see above n. 237.

[284] See the following section for examples of laws which do so provide.

Needless to say, these possibilities also raise major issues of policy. They also raise questions about legality and validity. When proponents act or effect change lawfully (in accordance with the law of the church), but opponents question the validity of the act or change by an appeal (typically) to an extra-legal value or principle, we have the persistent tension between legality and validity.[285] Yet is may be understood a principle of canon law that: `The validity within a church of any ecclesiastical act is governed by the law of the particular church in which the act is performed`.[286] Also: `Any legislative, executive, judicial or other decision or action duly authorised under the law of each particular church, is not of its own force binding in any other church of the Anglican Communion, unless its effect is recognised as such in a manner prescribed under the law of that other church`.[287]

2. The Limits of (Provincial) Autonomy

The Anglican understanding tends to see autonomy as the right of an ecclesiastical community to govern its own internal affairs in a manner compatible with the interests and concerns of the wider community; this idea also appears in the Eastern Catholic, Lutheran, and Roman Catholic traditions:[288] autonomy is by nature a form of limited governmental freedom. As a fundamental principle: `it is not lawful for the Church to ordain any thing that is contrary to God`s Word written`.[289] Limits to the exercise of autonomy seem to exist in two forms: internal and external.[290]

(1) External Limits: External limits to the exercise of autonomy might be understood to be found in the responsibility of churches to maintain the terms or commitments of communion.[291] Implicitly, therefore, each church must not act

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[285] LC 1988, Res. 1.5: the Conference recognises `the serious hurt which would result from the questioning by some of the validity of the episcopal acts of a woman bishop, and likewise the hurt experienced by those whose conscience would be offended by the ordination of a woman to the episcopate. The Church needs to exercise sensitivity, patience and pastoral care towards all concerned`.

[286] www.acclawnet.co.uk: Principle 4.2. Whilst a church may not recognise the validity of the orders of a bishop in another church, this does not mean that the church must not recognise priestly or other acts of that bishop: eg baptisms.

[287] Principle 5.3.

[288] See below, section 4.

[289] Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, Art. XXI. Needless to say, the principle raises large questions about scriptural interpretation, and the extent to which the Articles have been incorporated into the laws of churches (to function as a substantive limit on decision-making in the church), see N. Doe, *Canon Law in the Anglican Communion* (1998) 197. However, whilst divine law may be understood to be a source of laws and decisions in the particular church, there is no obvious legal evidence which indicates a general practice in the laws of churches that divine law binds directly in a juridical sense, nor that divine law vitiates (as in the ancient canonical tradition) contrary church laws and decisions: to this extent, Anglican polity may be understood today to be largely positivist in nature: see briefly, N. Doe, `Canon law and communion`, 6 EccLJ (2002) 241 at 242-3.

[290] See typically for this idea of limited autonomy: `each province should have the right to make such adaptations and additions to the services of the Church as its peculiar cricumstances may require. Provided, that no change or addition be made inconsistent with the spirit and principles of the Book of Common Prayer` (LC 1867, Res. 8).

[291] `There are certain principles of church order which…ought to be distinctly recognised and set forth, as of great importance for the maintenance of union among the Churches of our Communion` (LC 1878, Rec. 1: the principles, in this and the following recommendations include eg mutual respect, territorial integrity, common work, sharing information).

contrary to, or must act in a manner consistent with the shared: faith;[292] order;[293] worship;[294] common counsel of the bishops in conference;[295] `apostolic faith expressed in the living Tradition of the Church in continuity with the normative record of Holy Scripture`;[296] commitment to pray for each other;[297] sacraments of baptism and eucharist;[298] ministry;[299] concern for the care of people;[300] mission;[301] `the life of the truth of Christ by the gift of the Holy Scriptures, the Apostles and Nicene Creeds, the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist, and the historic episcopate`.[302] `the liturgical tradition and common patterns of worship`.[303] The counsel of the instruments of unity (eg the Archbishop of Canterbury);[304] the principles of canon law common to the churches of the Communion;[305] the spirit of being a eucharistic community.[306]

However, these external limits have the status merely of extra-legal conventions; they do not juridically bind each church, in the exercise of its autonomy - they are (simply) moral requrements which have no binding force unless and until incorporated into the domestic law of each church.[307] Currently, he law of no church explicitly provides that: no ecclesiastical authority shall act in a manner inconsistent with the terms of communion, the bonds of unity, shared by the churches of the Anglican Communion.[308]

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[292] LC 1930, Res. 49: the Anglican Communion consists of `dioceses, provinces or regional Churches…which…uphold and propagate the Catholic and Apostolic faith…as [it is] generally set forth in the Book of Common Prayer as authorised in their several Churches`.

[293] LC 1930, Res. 49: the Anglican Communion consists of `dioceses, provinces or regional Churches…which..uphold and propagate the Catholic and Apostolic…order as [it is] generally set forth in the Book of Common Prayer as authorised in their several Churches`.

[294] LC 1988, Res. 47: The Lambeth Conference resolves that `each province should be free, subject to essential universal Anglican norms of worship, and to a valuing of traditional liturgical materials, to seek that expression of worship which is appropriate to its Christian people in their cultural context`; see also LC 1930, Res. 49(b).

[295] LC 1930, Res. 49(c).

[296] WAEEC, para. 35.

[297] WAEEC, para. 35: `The fellowship of Anglicans is expressed in a commitment to pray for one another`.

[298] WAEEC, para. 35.

[299] WAEEC, para. 60.

[300] WAEEC, para. 35: `The fellowship of Anglicans is expressed in a commitment…in mutual responsibility and care, in a sharing of the resources and goods and a commitment to mission`.

[301] WAEEC, para. 35: `The fellowship of Anglicans is expressed in a commitment to pray for one another, in mutual responsibility and care, in a sharing of the resources and goods and a commitment to mission`.

[302] LC 1998, Res. III.8(d).

[303] LC 1998, Res. III.8(f).

[304] LC 1998, Res. III.6(e)

[305] See Report of Primates Meeting 2002 for the idea that these principles may be understood to constitute a `fifth instrument` of unity; see principles of law (op cit) Principle 8 on `Anglican polity`.

[306] WAEEC, para. 60: `Lay people will still be free to receive the Holy Communion in Provinces of different principles and practice; and this as of right rather than by ecumenical hospitality. Further, the clergy and bishops of Provinces which differ will still themselves be free to receive Holy Communion together. This illustrates the fact that we are still in communion`.

[307] See N. Doe, `Canon law and communion`, 6 *EccLJ* (2002) 241 at 244.

[308] The laws of states contain analogous provisions: see eg UK Human Rights Act 1998, s. 6: `It is unlawful for a public authority to act in any way which is incompatible with a Convention right` (ie the European Convention on Human Rights).

(2) Internal Limits: By way of contrast, there is some (but by no means uniform) canonical evidence of a diversity of substantive and procedural limits operative in a binding manner under the laws of individual churches. And some of these limits, in some churches, represent the terms of communion (the marks of unity) as the basis for the limitation. The following examples may indicate best practice in the development by and within the particular churches their own communion law.

The duty to maintain communion: [309] The law of a church occasionally imposes on the church a duty to maintain communion with Canterbury and/or other Anglican churches: the church `should continue, in full communion with the Church of England`,[310] or the church `will maintain communion with the sister Church of England`,[311] or that its membership of the Anglican Communion as indissoluble.[312] Such laws are consistent with those dealing with basic ecumenical duties: to maintain fellowship,[313] or mutual understanding,[314] to seek unity,[315] to restore unity between churches,[316] or to heal divisions.[317] Some laws forbid schismatic conduct,[318] as does the canonical tradition,[319] and the modern laws of other churches.[320]

The duty to govern compatibly with the instruments of unity: In the area of ecclesiastical government: sometimes the law of a church presumes a duty to act `in accordance with the accepted traditions and usages of the Anglican Communion`,[321] but this is not common. Sometimes, but this is rare, laws impose a duty on a church to co-operate with other Anglican churches.[322] However, there is more evidence that legislatures of individual churches (synods, councils and conventions) are limited in the exercise of their legislative power by the Anglican instruments of faith: the incorporation of these instruments in the constitutions of churches means that legislatures, on the face of it, are forbidden to make law which violates the Anglican instruments of faith; but, usually, there is no explicit mention of the Anglican

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309 It may be understood as an unwritten principle law that: `Each church recognises and should maintain its own communion with the See of Canterbury and with fellow churches in the Anglican Communion`: Principle 3.5.

310 Canada, Declaration of Principles, Solemn Declaration, 1.

311 Ireland, Const. Preamble and Declaration, III: `and with all other Christian Churches agreeing in the principles of this Declaration`.

312 Venezuela, Const. Art. 1: `The Anglican Church in Venezuela is an ecclesiastical jurisdiction which forms an indissoluble part of the Anglican Communion`.

313 South India, Const. II.2.

314 Jerusalem and the Middle East, Const. Art. 5.

315 South Africa, Resolution of Permanent Force of the Provincial Synod, 1 (1975).

316 Korea, Fundamental Declaration of Faith and Rites.

317 England, Can. A8.

318 Eg England, Can. A8: `Of Schisms…it is the duty of clergy and people to do their utmost not only to avoid occasions of strife but also to seek in penitence and brotherly charity to heal such divisions`; see also: Southern Africa, Can. 37: schism is `acceptance or promotion of membership in a religious body` not in communion with the church.

319 Canons Ecclesiastical 1603, c. 9: on censure of the authors of schism who `separate themselves from the communion of saints`.

320 Roman Catholic Church, Code, c. 751: schism includes `the refusal…of communion with the members of the Church`.

321 See eg South East Asia, Const. Preamble.

322 Korea, Fundamental Declaration of Faith and Rites: `We believe that for the unity of Christ`s Church we must enter into co-operation with all churches on the basis of our faith and practice as a member Church of the Anglican Communion`.

Communion itself in provisions setting out these limitations.[323] Nevertheless, some laws prescribe that the Fundamental Declarations of a church cannot be altered without being `endorsed by the Archbishop of Canterbury as not affecting the terms of Communion between the Church of this Province, the Church of England and the rest of the Anglican Communion`;[324] in one church the law provides that for new legislation `ratification will be sought from the Anglican Consultative Council` – this is exceptional.[325] Occasionally, the law of a church provides that its central legislature shall be subordinate `to the higher authority of a General Synod of the Churches of the Anglican Communion`, were such an institution to exist.[326] Another feature of the centripetal force of individual canonical systems is their explicit (but occasional) incorporation of resolutions of the Lambeth Conference.[327]

The duty to exercise ministry compatibly with the terms of communion: In the area of ministry, occasionally the law of a church requires bishops to `respect and maintain the spiritual rights and privileges of all Churches in the Anglican Communion`.[328] Some laws forbid the use of clerical titles without persons having been `ordained in conformity with the procedure acknowledged by the worldwide Anglican Communion`.[329] Sometimes, a prohibition against parallel episcopal jurisdictions surfaces in actual law.[330] In some churches the law provides that a diocesan bishop may be elected from that church `or from any Church in full communion` with it,[331] and in others, when the electoral college fails to elect a bishop, `the appointment shall be delegated to the Archbishop of Canterbury`.[332] Many churches have law requiring them to communicate externally information about new episcopal appointments.[333] Often laws provide for recognition of orders for the purposes of ministry in the host church, and these forbid the exercise of ordained ministry in a diocese of another church without the consent of the bishop of the host diocese.[334] Some laws provide for episcopal declarations that a bishop `will pay all due honour and deference to the Archbishop of Canterbury`,[335] and others recognise the Archbishop of Canterbury as having `the first place` among `the Metropolitans` or `the Primates of the Anglican Communion`.[336] Of course, in churches constituted as extra-provincial dioceses, the law provides for the Archbishop of Canterbury to exercise a general metropolitical jurisdiction.[337]

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323 For entrenchment see eg Australia, Const. XI.66.
324 Central Africa, Fundamental Declarations, VIII. and Can. 33.1-2.
325 Southern Cone, Const. Art. 6.4.
326 Southern Africa, Const. Art. VI.
327 Eg for incorporation of LC 1948, Res. 37, on duties of church membership, see England, Act of Convocation, 1953-54, 173.
328 West Indies, Cans. 8.
329 Rwanda, Const. Art. 9.
330 ECUSA, Cans. I.15.1,7.
331 Southern Africa, Can. 4(1).
332 Central Africa, Can. 3: the archbishop must act in conjunction with two other bishops of the Anglican Communion nominated by the college.
333 See eg Central Africa, Can. 3.5.
334 See eg England, Overseas and Other Clergy (Ministry and Ordination) Measure 1967: recognition is in the keeping of the archbishops; see also Can. C8.
335 West Indies, Can. 8; this incorporates LC 1897, Res. 9.
336 Sudan, Const. Art. 2: among the Metropolitans; South East Asia, Const. Fundamental Declarations, 2: among the Primates.
337 Portugal (Lusitanian Catholic Apostolic and Evangelical Church), Const. Preamble, 7.

The duty to maintain common doctrinal and liturgical standards: In the area of doctrine and liturgy, churches are united positively in that their laws agree about the sources of doctrine as normative in matters of faith: scripture, the creeds, the dominical sacraments and, for a large number, the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion;[338] and sometimes the law provides that these are operative `as the Anglican Communion has received them`.[339] Whilst various models of doctrinal law exist in churches, some laws impose a duty on a church, in exercising a right to develop and modify liturgy, to avoid any change that would affect Holy Scripture and `other norms relevant to the faith of the Anglican Communion`.[340] The law of other churches disclaims their own right to depart from the standards of faith and doctrine.[341] The laws of most churches require clergy to assent or subscribe to broadly the same historic instruments of faith.[342]

Perhaps the best evidence that the Anglican Communion is a juridical reality in particular churches, is the incidence of provisions dealing with doctrinal controversies: the laws of some churches provide that, if a disagreement in the church persists then it is to be referred, either for determination by the Archbishop of Canterbury,[343] or for consultation with the Anglican Consultative Council,[344] or the Archbishop of Canterbury or the Primates of the Anglican Communion,[345] or the Archbishop of Canterbury assisted by `Bishops of the Anglican Communion`.[346] Similarly, in cases of liturgical disagreement within a church, laws sometimes provide for referral of the matter to the Archbishop of Canterbury,[347] or the archbishop and the primates of the Anglican Communion,[348] or, indeed, the Anglican Consultative Council.[349] In short: the canonical expression of bonds of communion is greater in some churches than others. A more extensive and uniform use of such provisions around the churches of the communion may be considered to represent best practice.

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338 See N. Doe, *Canon Law in the Anglican Communion* (Oxford, 1998) Ch. 7.

339 Melanesia, Const. Art. 1.A: `The Church of this Province has no right to alter or depart from these standards, but has the right to make alterations in its forms of worship and discipline, so long as these are agreeable to Holy Scripture and other standards of faith as the Anglican Communion has received them`.

340 Rwanda, Const. Art. 6.

341 See eg West Indies, Declaration of Fundamental Principles, (d)-(e): `We disclaim for ourselves the right of altering any…of the standards of Faith and Doctrine`.

342 See N. Doe, *Canon Law in the Anglican Communion* (Oxford, 1998) 204-208; see also J. Fox (ed), *Render Unto Caesar: Church Property in Roman Catholic and Anglican Canon Law* (Rome, 2000).

343 Central Africa, Const. Art. V: the archbishop is to act with two other bishops (one nominated by the bishop making the submission and the other by the Episcopal Synod); these must `determine the matter in accordance with the formularies and doctrinal teaching of the Church of England, and their decision shall be final`.

344 Uganda, Const. Art. II; Indian Ocean, Const. Art. 7(iii).

345 South East Asia, Const. Fundamental Declarations, 4,5,6: `whilst the Province is a fully autonomous part of the Anglican Communion, it shall nevertheless give due weight to the teaching and traditions of the Communion in the deliberations and decisions of its own ecclesiastical tribunals`.

346 Southern Africa, Can. 41 (Of Appeals).

347 Central Africa, Const. Art. 5.

348 South East Asia, Fundamental Declarations, 4: the Provincial Synod may consult in cases concerning `adherence to…the principles of worship` the Archbishop of Canterbury or the Primates of the Anglican Communion.

349 Uganda, Const. Art. 3(i).

(3) External Intervention in Internal Affairs of Autonomous Provinces: As autonomy is the right of a church (province) to govern its own internal affairs, it follows that no external body may intervene in *these* affairs.[350] At the global level, there are principles which provide that: each church should respect the autonomy of each other church;[351] two bishops should not exercise jurisdiction in the same place;[352] no bishop, priest or deacon may minister in a diocese without the permission of the host bishop;[353] and so on. These limits aim both to order and to enable communion. It is currently understood that external intervention in (a) the domestic affairs and (b) the communion affairs of a church is possible only when the law of that church so provides.[354] However, external intervention in relation to communion matters within a church, as a possibility, might be viewed as not inconsistent with the understanding of autonomy as the inability to decide on matters concerning the wider community of which the autonomous community forms part.[355]

3. Autonomy, Ecclesiastical Conflict and Its Management

(1) The Anatomy of Conflict: Conflict, within a particular church or between one church and another, commonly results from the exercise of autonomy,[356] the freedom afforded by the local juridical order, and the unenforceability of standards contained in the global moral order, institutionalises the possibility of conflict.[357] So do the laws of particular churches: law may create divisions within churches, or else it fails, for one reason or another, to assist in their resolution. In turn, internal conflict reverberates in other Anglican churches; it causes divisions between churches and, ultimately problems for the Anglican Communion itself. Internal conflict may also cause litigation in the courts of the State,[358] giving rise to issues of freedom of religion under civil law.[359] Sometimes conflict is actual, sometimes perceived.[360] Needless to say, the subjects of conflict cover a wide range of matters.[361] Above all, internal

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[350] It may be understood as a principle of canon law that: `Each church is free from control by any decision of an ecclesiastical body external to itself, unless that decision is authorised under or incorporated into its own law`: Principle 4.5.

[351] LC 1978, Reccomendations, 1.

[352] LC 1897, Res. 24; LC 1968, Res. 63.

[353] LC 1878, Res. 1.

[354] See below for laws of Anglican churches allowing for the exercise of metropolitical jurisdiction by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

[355] See above Part II.1; *quaere*: is there a doctrine of necessity in the canonical tradition?

[356] More precisely, the exercise of autonomy means the exercise of powers by ecclesiastical authorities, legislative, executive and sometimes judicial.

[357] J. Setien, `Tension in the church`, 8(5) *Concilium* (1969) 35.

[358] For England, over the legislation concerning the ordination of women as priests, see eg *R v Ecclesiastical Committee of Both Houses of Parliament, ex p Church Society* (1994) 6 Admin LR 670; for other examples see generally N. Doe, *Canon Law in the Anglican Communion* (Oxford, 1998) xix-xxv: many of these cases originated in disputes arising from the effects and application of church law.

[359] In short, excessively robust, weak or unclear canon law frustrates and even marginalises those who consider their rights as neither respected nor protected. Discriminatory and inflexible canon law marginalises minorities within churches. Canonical powers may be abused or misused. Canon law institutionalises tensions within churches. But canon law can also be remedial – it can mend divisions by a sensitive distribution and enforcement of rights and duties. Provisions in laws which forbid discrimination (eg on grounds of race) may represent best practice: see eg Tanzania, Const. II.5 or ECUSA, Cans. I.17.5.

[360] See N. Doe, `Canon law and communion`, op cit., 246ff.

[361] They include: the content of laws, executive and judicial decisions in the church; ministerial appointments; decisions as to suitability of ordination candidates; eligibility for ecclesiastical office; the validity and legality of action; the conduct of ministers; the timing of decisions; the extent of

conflict extends to the worldwide communion when it concerns *communion matters* (see above).

(2) The Prevention of Conflict: Laws aim to prevent internal conflict in a number of ways. Substantive mechanisms include the imposition of duties to comply with the standards of the church and the distribution of either freestanding or correlative rights.[362] Procedural mechanisms include: participation in decision-making (through membership of or representation in church bodies); rights to consultation, advice, direction and objection; rights of ecclesiastical authorities to delay action;[363] systems of pastoral exhortation, typified in the function of visitation;[364] and anti-discrimination laws.[365] However, there is little obvious evidence of schemes involving the wider Anglican community beyond the particular church to prevent conflict.[366] The doctrine of reception might also be developed in this regard,[367] and the incorporation into the laws of churches of explicit general provisions requiring the exercise of canonical discretions to be compatible with the terms and conditions of communion.[368]

(3) The Resolution of Conflict: The laws of churches contain a wide range of structures to resolve conflict, including: systems of administrative hierarchical recourse (when it is sometimes claimed that canonical discretions are misused); disciplinary visitatorial powers; quasi-judicial appeal systems; and, as a last resort, full judicial determination in tribunals and courts.[369] The exercise by the Archbishop of Canterbury of metropolitcal authority in a church other than the Church of England is permitted explicitly in the laws of only a very few churches: in some the archbishop has a general metropolitcal authority over a wide range of (communion) matters (which include doctrine and discipline), but in most the authority is more restricted.[370] Nevertheless, outside these circumstances, it may be understood as a principle of canon law that: `Any legislative, executive, or other decision or action duly authorised under the law of each particular member church, should be respected by all other

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consultation in decision-making; the authority and interpretation of scripture, tradition and reason. See generally eg J. Behrens, `Alternative Dispute Resolution in the Church` (University of Wales, Cardiff, PhD Dissertation, 2002).

[362] For example: standards implicit in ecclesiastical offences to direct the conduct of clergy.

[363] The following may be understood as communion acts: (a) in government: legislative, executive or judicial decision-making on inter-Anglican relations; (b) in institutional organisation: the formation of new provinces and dioceses; (c) in ministry: episcopal and archiepiscopal appointments; depositions from holy orders; (d) in doctrine: interpretations of scripture; (e) in liturgy: authorisation of new forms of worship; (f) in ritual: celebration of baptism, the eucharist (and perhaps marriage); (g) in ecumenical relations: the establishment of agreements with ecumenical partners.

[364] But laws of churches do not make express provision for consideration of objections from other Anglican churches to legislative or executive initiatives.

[365] See N. Doe, `Canonical approaches to human rights in Anglican churches`, in M. Hill (ed), *Religious Liberty and Human Rights* (Cardiff, 2002) 185.

[366] See, however, WAEEC, para. 76: this recommends collegial ordinations to obviate the possiblility of non-recognition of the validity of ordinations.

[367] WAEEC, para. 41,42.

[368] To ensure, for example: that rights to ordain suitable candidates are exercised in a way compatible with the protection of the interests of the worldwide communion. See also Statement of Primates Meeting, 15-16/10/03: `In most of our provinces the election of Canon Gene Robinson would not have been possible since his chosen lifestyle would give rise to a canonical impediment to his consecration as a bishop`. *Quaere*: on what basis?

[369] See N. Doe, *Canon Law in the Anglican Communion* (1998) Ch. 3.

[370] See N. Doe, *Canon Law in the Anglican Communion* (1998) 343ff.

churches of the Anglican Communion and by their individual members`; and that: `No particular church, or any authority or person within it, shall intervene in the internal affairs of another church without the consent of that other church given in the manner prescribed by its own law`.[371]

(4) The Management of Continuing Conflict: Anglican systems are less well-developed in their management of continuing conflict. Depending on the type of conflict (action, people, process) they might include:[372]

Alternative Episcopal Ministry: For example:[373] `If an ecclesiastical unit in this diocese has a genuine conscientious objection to the ordained ministry of any person lawfully exercising ministry in this church, the diocesan bishop may (or shall) make provision for alternative episcopal ministry for that unit to the extent permitted by the law of this church`. Models exist.[374]

Conditional Validity: For example: `This church shall recognise the legality of an ecclesiastical act performed in another church in accordance with its law, and it shall presume the validity of such an act. However, if this church does not recognise unconditionally the validity of an ecclesiastical act performed in another church, it shall recognise the ecclesiastical act as conditionally validity. It shall then recognise the consequences which follow from that ecclesiastical act to the extent permitted by the law of this church`.[375]

The Employment of Visits: For example: `For the purposes of reception, "it may be creative for a Province to invite facilitators to visit from another Province of the Communion for three or three months to foster communication between polarized groups and to encourage reconciliation where communication has broken down"`.[376]

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[371] Op cit: Principle 5.2 and 3.

[372] R. Williams, `The structures of unity`, *New Directions* (2003): `[i]t is worth exploring `how "structural complexity" can witness to the supernatural character of the Church`.

[373] For episcopal visitors see ECUSA General Convention 1988: `The Presiding Bishop may designate members of the House of Bishops to act as Episcopal Visitors to provide episcopal sacramental acts for congregations of this Church upon the request and under the authority and direction of the Ecclesiastical Authority of a Diocese. Nothing in this provision shall be construed as abrogating the jurisdiction of the Bishop, or Article II, Section 3 of the Constitution and the Canonical relationships between the Diocesan Bishop and the Congregation, together with its clergy` (see WAEEC, para. 45); the diocesan bishop must notify the Presiding Bishop`s office in writing of all requests and arrangements made in each case; the presiding bishop must report in writing to each meeting of the House of Bishops; `the provision is only to be used for the transition and incorporation of women into all ordained ministries and is not otherwise applicable`; a time limite was set on the application of the provision.

[374] LC 1988, Report of the Dogmatic and Pastoral Section, para. 151c: `Practical pastoral arrangements will need to be made both at provincial and diocesan levels for those who are conscientiously unable to accept a decision made at the provincial level`.

[375] WAEEC, para. 75: if a confirmation is performed by a bishop which another church does not recognised, the confirmed person is to be admitted to holy communion (on the basis of analogy to admission of an unconfirmed child); PM 1989, para. 75 (see WAEEC, para. 99): the Primates have agreed that : `persons confirmed by a woman bishop should not be excluded from Holy Communion`.

[376] WAEEC, para. 80.

The Employment of Powers of Delay:[377] `The Conference advises member Churches not to take action regarding issues which are of concern to the whole Anglican Communion without consultation with a Lambeth Conference or with the episcopate through the Primates Committeee`.[378]

Personal Ecclesiastical Status: For example: `If this church does not recognise episcopal orders conferred on a person in a fellow church, in order to maintain communion, this church shall recognise that person as a priest who may exercise functions as such, in this church, to the extent authorised by the law of this church`; or: `If this province does not recognise presbyteral orders conferred on a person in a fellow church, in order to maintain communion, this church shall recognise that person as a deacon who may exercise functions as such, in this church, to the extent authorised by the law of this church`; or: `If this church does not recognise diaconal orders conferred on a person in a fellow church, in order to maintain communion, this church recognises that person as a lay person with lay status, in this church, to the extent authorised by the law of this church`.[379]

Liturgical Celebration: For example: `If the orders of a bishop, priest or deacon ordained as such in another province are not recognised by this province, this province may nevertheless allow the person concerned, in this province, to preside at a eucharist or officiate at any service administered according to a rite of that other province, subject to the consent of the appropriate diocesan bishop of this province`.[380]

Episcopal Care: `The bishop, as a symbol of the unity of the church,[381] having a particular responsibility to foster the communion and interdependence of the local church,[382] in order to maintain communion amongst the faithful, has a special responsibility towards those in the diocese who as a matter of conscience dissent in the life of the Church`;[383] or: `The bishop, as pastor, is an embodiment and agent of unity and continuity in the Church. Where a bishop ministers in dioceses and/or provinces in which there is a strong division of opinion concerning a matter, the bishop shall exercise special care to avoid becoming a focal point of dissension,[384] and shall seek to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ`.[385]

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377 Statement, Primates Meeting 15-16/10/03: `[T]he actions of the diocese of New Westminster and [ECUSA] which appear to a number of provinces to have short-circuited that process, and could be perceived to alter unilaterally the teaching of the Anglican Communion on this issue. They do not. Whilst we recognise the juridical autonomy of each province in our Communion, the mutual interdependence of the provinces means than none has authority unilaterally to substitute an alternative teaching as if it were the teaching of the entire Anglican Communion`..

378 LC 1978, Res. 11.

379 WAEEC, para. 107: response from Nippon Sei Ko Kai.

380 See similar scheme in the Scottish Episcopal Church: see WAEEC, para. 108.

381 LC 1988, Mission and Ministry Section, Report, 61.

382 WAEEC, para. 69.

383 WAEEC, para. 44: `In [the] process of reception, bishops in particular have a special responsibility to be sensitive both to the mind of the synod and to the collegiality of the house of bishops. While they may express disagreement with the mind of their provincial synod, they ought not actively to obstruct that decision`.

384 WAEEC, para. 70.

385 WAEEC, para. 77.

Religious Communities: `This church may recognise the establishment of religious communities (being part of wider non-territorial congregations of such communities), within its territorial boundaries, which express their communion with this church and the worldwide Anglican Communion, outside of and apart from the structures of the dioceses and parishes of this church, through their own domestic constitutions and in relationship with their own episcopal visitors, who exercise jurisidction within the community, appointed after consultation with the appropriate ecclesiastical authority of this church`.[386]

Territorial Prelatures: `A territorial prelature…is a certain portion of the people of God which is established within certain territorial boundaries and whose care, due to special circumstances, is entrusted to some prelate who governs it as its proper pastor, like a diocesan bishop`.[387]

Rights of Conscientious Objection: For example: `No member of this church shall be under any duty, whether by constitutional, canon or other form of church law or regulation, or by any administrative or judicial direction of a bishop, cleric or other ecclesiastical authority, or by other lawful requirement, to accept or assent intellectually to or to participate in any governmental, ministerial, liturgical, ritual, ecumenical, or proprietorial action authorised under the law of this church, to which that person has a conscientious objection`.[388]

Primates Meeting Ministry: The Lambeth Conference encourages development of a `collegial role for the Primates Meeting under the presidency of the Archbishop of Cnterbury, so that the Primates Meeting is able to exercise an enhanced responsibility in offering guidance on doctrinal, moral and pastoral matters`.[389]

Extraordinary Jurisdictions: `In order to accommodate coscientious objection within this church, a competent ecclesiastical authority may establish an extra-diocesan/extra-parochial jurisdiction, which shall function outside the jurisdiction of the ordinary, in which the faithful may be joined, subject to the direct jurisdiction of a metropolital authority of this or another church, visitable by the commissary of that metropolital authority`.[390]

Parallel Jurisdictions: `This church recognises the ministry and jurisdiction of a bishop, in communion with this church, parallel the the territorial jurisdictions which

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[386] This is based on the Anglican model for religious communities in the *A Handbook of Religious Life* (2004).

[387] Roman Catholic Code of Canon Law (1983) c. 370.

[388] See eg LC 1968, Res. 8: the Conference `holds that it is the concern of the Church…to uphold and extend the right of conscientious objection`, in relation to recourse to war`; and WAEEC, para. 44: `Sensitively and clearly expressed dissent can be creative to the forming of the mind of the whole Church, as it seeks critically to test and refine the truth; dissent should not be marginalized or excluded`; courtesy and respct are essential. `The fact that a synod has reached a decision does not foreclose the matter. Both sides need to work hard to ensure that the process of reception continues to be as open as possible, recognising that synodical decisions may indeed come to be overwhelmingly affirmed, or on the other hand, equally as overwhelmingly rejected`; see also LC 1958, Res. 21 for `the conscience of worshippers`.

[389] LC 1988, Res. 18.2(a).

[390] For peculiars in England, see M. Hill, *Ecclesiastical Law* (2nd edn., 2001) 3.97.

funcion in this church`. Parallel jurisdictions have been criticised,[391] but parallel `cultural` jurisdictions exist.[392]

Associations of the Faithful: These are used in the Roman Catholic Church.[393] Missionary agencies may also provide a model.[394]

The Principles of Canon Law: `Questions of the parity of our canon law, and the nature of the relationship between the laws of our provinces with one another have also been raised. We encourage the Network of Legal Advisers established by the Anglican Consultative Council, meeting in Hong Kong in 2002, to bring to completion the work which they have already begun on this question`.[395]

4. Autonomy as Limited Self-Government in Other Traditions

(1) The Eastern Catholic Churches: These are autonomous churches.[396] The baptised are in full communion with the Catholic Church when joined in the bonds of profession of faith, sacraments and ecclesial governance.[397] The source of the autonomy of Eastern Catholic Churches is that of each church itself: it is not a

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391 WAEEC, para. 51: `Suspicion of parallel jurisdictions seems soundly based in an ecclesiology of "communion" which sees the bishop as the sacramental representative of the whole local ecclesial community, and that community itself as truly grounded in its social context and culture. The classical definition of schism was indeed the setting up of rival episcopal thrones in the same local community`.

392 WAEEC, paras. 52-53: `[T]he Anglican Communion has more recently accepted th practice of parallel `cultural` jurusidctions`: eg diocese of Aotearoa in New Zealand, the Order of Eithiopia in Southern Africa, and the Navajoland Area Mission in the USA. In Europe, the two Iberian churches are extra-provincial of Canterbury and the diocese of Europe within the Province of Canterbury. These are in communion with each other.and recognise ministries etc. `Therefore we do not recommend parallel jurisdiction within the Provinces of the Anglican Communion as an appropriate pastoral solution to this question`.

393 See below, section 4(2).

394 ACNS 3699, 2/12/03: Mission Agencies of the Church of England: Common Mission: A Covenant. The eleven mission agencies have over recent years been growing together within the framework of the Church of England Partnership for World Mission (PWM). There has been a recognition of the need for `working together to speak with one voice and take joint action` and to work more closely with the Archbishop of Canterbury. The new covenant contains a common vision: `1. We believe in promoting confidence in the Gospel and an understanding of mission that is holistic and evangelistic with the context of the Five Marks of Mission of the Anglican Communion. . We believe that our task in proclaiming the Kingdom of God can only be undertaken in partnership and within the fellowship of the worldwide Church. We believe the Church is God`s instrument for mission and recognise and affirm the voluntary principle as a proven model for mobilising and ecouraging effective engagement`. The covenant contains a common commitment: `1. To increase co-operation while acknowledging the richness of our diversities. 2. To increase mutual support, discussion of common issues and the development of strategic co-operation through regular meetings of the General Secretaries [of each agency]. 3. To build up contact, regular meetings and working links between the Archbishop of Canterbury and the General Secretaries of the PWM agencies. 4. To ensure meetings of specialist staff to share concerns, models of good practice and engage in practical partnerships. 5. To issue agreed public statements, study and promotional materials on issues of common concern. 6. To consult as widely as possible on mission issues in the Anglican Communion and in collaboration with relevant commissions, working parties and networks authorised by the Primates Meeting and the Anglican Consultative Council`.

395 Statement, Primates Meeting 10-16/10/03.

396 See V. Pospishil, *Eastern Catholic Church Law* (1996).

397 Code of the Eastern Catholic Churches (1990), cc.27-38.

concession of the Latin Church but a church *sui iuris*, of its own right.[398] Each church is understood as `[a] community of the Christian faithful, which is joined together by a hierarchy according to the norm of law and which is expressly or tacitly recognised as *sui juris* (`self-governing` or `autonomous`) by the supreme authority of the Church`;[399] each church is recognised as autonomous with regard to its own government and discipline.[400] `These individual churches [which] differ somewhat among themselves in what is called "rite"[401], namely in liturgy, in ecclesiastical discipline and in spiritual tradition, are none the less equally entrusted to the pastoral guidance of the Roman Pontiff`; they `are of equal rank, so that none of them is superior to the others because of its rite. They have the same rights and obligations`.[402] As such, each church (for example) adopts its own institutional form,[403] `organises its own parishes and hierarchy`, their prelates meet for consultation and to foster `unity of action and strive together to meet their common tasks`.[404] The Eastern Code of 1990 `represents the common law of the Eastern Churches`,[405] and the Apostolic See is `the supreme arbiter of inter-church relations`.[406] `The Christian faithful have the right to worship God according to the prescripts of their own Church *sui iuris*, and to follow their own form of spiritual life so long as it is consonant with the doctrine of the Church`.[407] Moreover, in addition to a duty to maintain autonomy,[408] a law common to the churches prescribes: `The Christian faithful of any Church *sui iuris*, even the Latin Church, who have frequent relations with the Christian faithful of another Church *sui iuris* by reason of their office, ministry or function, are to be accurately instructed in the knowledge and practice of the rite of that Church in keeping with the seriousness of the office, ministry or function`.[409]

However, the exercise of autonomy by and within a *sui juris* church is subject to limits. For example, in a patriarchal church, autonomy forbids the Roman Pontiff to intervene in the internal affairs of a church, and a patriarch has oversight of the metropolitan and bishops,[410] may erect and suppress provinces (with the consent of the synod of bishops and in consultation with the Roman Pontiff),[411] represents the

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398 R. Jones, *The Canon Law of the Catholic Church and the Church of England* (Edinburgh, 2000) 131.

399 V. Pospishil, op cit., 110.

400 *Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium* [CCEO] (1990), c.27.

401 CCEO, c.28.1: `A rite is the liturgical, theological, spiritual and disciplinary heritage, which is distinguished by the culture and the circumstances of the history of people, and which is expressed by each Church sui iuris in its own manner of living the faith`.

402 Vatican II, *Orientalium Ecclesiarum* (1964), 3.

403 They include patriarchal churches (CCEO, c.55), major archiepiscopal churches (CCEO, c.151), and metropolitan churches (CCEO, c.155).

404 OE, 4.

405 D. Motiuk, `The code of canons of the Eastern Churches: some ten years later`, 36 *Studia Canonica* (2002) 189 at 196. When Pope John Paul II represented the new CCEO he spoke of this and the Latin Code 1983 as `one *Corpus Iuris Canonici*` in the Catholic Church.

406 OE, 4.

407 CCEO, c. 17; `The reference to prescripts of their own "Church sui iuris" necessarily includes the rules established by that Church`s liturgical, theological, spiritual and disciplinary heritage or "rite" (CCEO, c.28.1)`: J. Abbass, `Latin bishops` duty of care towards Eastern Catholics`, 35(1) *Studia Canonica* (2001) 7 at 23,n.59.

408 CCEO, c. 40.

409 CCEO, c. 41.

410 CCEO, c. 56.

411 CCEO, c.146.

church,[412] and enjoys rights of visitation.[413] Yet: a patriarch must be in communion with the Roman Pontiff;[414] until he is in ecclesiastical communion with the Roman Pontiff, a newly elected patriarch cannot ordain bishops or convoke a synod of bishops;[415] a patriarch`s interpretations of law are operative only until the next synod of bishops;[416] a patriarch must submit a written report on the state of the church to the Roman Pontiff very five years;[417] and the patriarch has a duty to resolve disagreements between bishops.[418] In short, the enjoyment of autonomy is compatible with the existence of both their own internal regulatory systems and an external regulatory system: it is a general principle that: `For liceity they must follow the prescriptions of common and particular canon law`.[419]

(2) The Lutheran Communion: `The member churches of the LWF are autonomous, with their own structures of ministry and governing bodies. Normally, church government is carried out by synods in which the ordained ministers and bishops/presidents have their part. The LWF does not have decision making power over the member churches`. `On the other hand, no church is completely autonomous, since all churches live from traditions and spiritual sources that are not their own, but are shared gifts. Ordination to the ministry, in the Lutheran understanding, is not carried out simply from the particular church in which it takes place. Ordination is in principle an ecumenical action, since it is an authorization to preach the gospel and to administer the sacraments, which are gifts given to the universal church. This is reflected in baptism what is recognized ecumenically, and this recognition calls, in turn, for ever large measures of mutual recognition of ministries and eucharistic fellowship. The shared spiritual gifts, from which churches live, also call them to cooperation, mutual recognition, church fellowship and shared life in service`.[420]

In the development of communion between Lutheran churches `[t]he member churches remain autonomous`. `The churches which form the communion are autonomous, otherwise they could not be part of the communion`. `There is no autonomy without interdependency`. `The fear of decisions made above the heads of the churches is unfounded`.[421] `Autonomy is good when the congregation is healthy. When this is not the case, we need to see ourselves as being part of more…Autonomy contains a willingness to be accountable to others`.[422] `The meaning of autonomy of the member churches`has arisen as an issue for serious consideration.[423]

`The governing bodies of LWF are responsible for taking appropriate decisions pertaining to the common life of the churches as a communion and to their membership in that communion. In the LWF the member churches have developed procedures for acting together in maters of common concern. These procedures also

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412 CCEO, c. 79.
413 CCEO, c.83.
414 CCEO, c.600.
415 CCEO, c. 77.
416 CCEO, c.112.
417 CCEO, c. 92.
418 CCEO, c.1103.
419 Eg in relation to sacramental discipline: OE, 14.
420 LWF, 32.
421 The Lutheran World Federation as a Communion of Churches [LWF] (Geneva, 2003) 22.
422 LWF (2003) 23.
423 LWF (2003) 27.

come into function (as in the case of apartheid) if certain teachings or practices in member churches are found - by the governing bodies of LWF - to be incompatible with membership of the communion`.[424] Whilst the communion is composed of autonomous churches, the LWF has an Assembly (meeting every seven years) and a Council (meeting once a year):[425] In accordance with the LWF constitution,[426] `These have the authority to make decisions that are binding for the communion that is the LWF`.[427] They may make `decisions of structural and programmatic nature` and these governing bodies `have also taken some decisions pertaining to church discipline and doctrine`, resulting in both the suspension and restoration of member churches.[428] Decision of the LWF Council or Assembly `apply to the common life of the world communion as such. Decisions that have an impact on the common life of the communion can be reached if there is a firm basis for the decisions among the member churches`.[429]

(3) The Roman Catholic Church: The Roman Catholic Church, in its own theology and canon law, employs the concept of autonomy in both implicit and explicit ways. First, `the autonomy of the local Churches`,[430] namely, the diocese,[431] is based on the principle of subsidiarity.[432] Secondly, an exempt diocese is a diocese which is not part of the territory of the province in which it is situated; it may be established in exceptional circumstances and be subject to an external ecclesiastical authority.[433] Thirdly, public associations of the faithful enjoy a degree of autonomy: an association of the faithful is established by a competent ecclesiastical authority with prescribed aims.[434] Fourthly, the autonomy of institutes of consecrated life: `A true autonomy of life, especially of governance, is recognised for each institute. This autonomy means that each institute has its own discipline in the Church`;[435] in other words, `the right of each institute to have its own proper law and internal structures of government`.[436] The elected superiors and deliberative assemblies of the institute have authority to direct their activities and govern their members,[437] and they may be exempt from the

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424 LWF, 32.

425 LWF, 37.

426 Amended at the Eighth Assembly (Curitiba, 1990).

427 *Growth in Communion*, Report of the Anglican-Lutheran International Working Group 2000-2002 (Geneva, 2003) para. 222.

428 *Growth in Communion*, op cit, para. 223. In 1977 the Sixth Assembly in Dar-es-Salaam decided that `the practice of racial discrimination in the Church brought into question the *status confessionis* of the churches concerned. On that basis the Eighth Assembly `suspended the membership of two member churches in South Africa. This membership has since been restored, after changes introduced`.

429 *Growth in Communion*, op cit., para. 226.

430 P. Huizing, `The central legal system and autonomous churches`, *Concilium* (1986) 23 at 30.

431 Code, c. 369:

`A diocese is a portion of the people of God which is entrusted for pastoral care to a bishop with the cooperation of the presbyterate, so that, adhering to its pastor and gathered by him in the Holy Spirit through the gosepl and the Eucharist, it consistutes a particular church in which the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church of Christ is truly present and operative`.

432 J. Hite and D.J. Ward, Readings, Cases and Materials in Canon Law (Collegeville, MN, 1990) 230.

433 Roman Catholic Church: Code, can. 431.2; eg diocese of Switzerland which is subject directly to the authority of the Holy See..

434 Roman Catholic Code, ss.301,312-20.

435 Code, c. 586.1.

436 *Letter and Spirit*, para. 1150.

437 Code, c. 596.

authority of the bishop.[438] However, the exercise of that autonomy is regulated by universal law and limited by a number of external controls. For example: the internal constitution of each institute must contain basic norms about governance, admission, formation and discipline of its members,[439] it must define `the manner in which the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty and obedience are to be observed in its way of life`,[440] and while an institute may divide or suppress parts of itself, it cannot suppress the whole of the institute (this is reserved to the holy see).[441] The diocesan bishop must safeguard and protect this autonomy,[442] and there must be consultation between institute and bishop in relation to prescribed matters.[443] Yet, `[t]he better to ensure the welfare of institutes and the needs of the apostolate, the Supreme Pontiff…with a view to the common good, can withdraw institutes of consecrated life from the governance of the local ordinary, and subject them to himself alone, or to some other ecclesiastical authority`.[444] In Catholic universities, too, `while retaining their own scientific autonomy`, research and teaching must be conducted `in the light of catholic doctrine`.[445]

III. CONCLUSION

The relationship between communion and autonomy in Anglicanism has been described as one of `creative tension`.[446] Each reality draws strength from the other.[447] And in the ecumenical context communion and autonomy have been understood as fully consistent with each other,[448] a consistency also recognised in other Christian traditions. Generally, communion may be classified as predominantly a theological category, and autonomy a juridical category.[449] Though communion also has a prescriptive dimension: it requires unity, common life and action (and these

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438 Code, 591.
439 Code, c.587.1.
440 Code, c.598.1.
441 Code, cc. 581,584,585.
442 Code, c. 586.2.
443 Eg religious apostolates: Code, c. 678.
444 Code, c. 591.
445 Code, c. 809.
446 WAEEC, para. 36: `While the Provinces are autonomous in matters of order and discipline, they are held together by the visible bonds of communion and thus in a real sense belong to one another: they are interdependent. The life of the Communion is held together in the creative tension of provincial autonomy and interdepedence. The different Provinces have come to a greater realisation that they need each other`s spiritual, intellectual and material resources in order to fulfil their task of mission. Each Province has something distinctive to offer the others, and needs them in turn to be able to witness to Christ effectively in its own context`.
447 Report of Carrington Committee, in *The Lambeth Conference 1948* (London, 1948) 84: `While all [provinces] are autonomous they are all interdependent, drawing inspiration each from all. They are not independent in any deivisive sense, but are interlocked by ties that bind them one to another in a single faith and order, in a common loyalty to our Lord and Master, as in an agreed purpose in world evangelism`.
448 *Growth in Communion*, Report of the Anglican-Lutheran International Working Group 2000-2002 (Geneva, 2003) para. 45: Full communion is `a relationship between two distinct churches or communions in which each maintains its own autonomy while recognising the catholicity and apostolicity of the other, and believing the other to hold the essentials of the Christian faith`.
449 Virginia Report, LC 1998, Official Report, 36: `while autonomy entails the legal and juridical right of each Province to govern its way of life, in practice autonomy has never been the sole criterion for understanding the relation of Provinces to one another. There has generally been an implicit understanding of belonging together and interdependence. The life of the Communion is held together in the creative tension of Provincial autonomy and interdependence`.

may be expressed juridically); and autonomy has a theological side: autonomy must be exercised for the common good. Fundamentally, in Anglicanism: communion means that each Anglican church recognises that each other Anglican church holds the essentials of the Christian faith, and should hold to the terms of communion; and autonomy means that each church has the right to govern its own (internal) affairs, in a manner compatible with the terms of communion. Communion and autonomy have the same goals: fulfilment of the mission of the church. In this sense, autonomy may be understood as one means by which ecclesial communion is achieved.[450] In order to realise this relationship more fully, it may be thought that each church has a responsibility to develop within its own system of polity a body of communion law to commit itself to the terms and conditions of its relations with other Anglican churches,[451] and the permissible limits of its autonomy so that this may be exercised in a manner compatible with the spirit of worldwide communion.[452] The materials for such a body of communion law are abundant.

[450] *The Truth Shall Make You Free, The Lambeth Conference 1988*, 104 (committee report): The primary function of autonomy `is not, then to provide ahead of time answers to all possible questions, but to ensure that whendisagreement occurs it is settled in accord with principles according to which Christians normally discern the mind of Christ for them: that the solution is rooted in Scripture, consonant with the mind of the church, and "reasonable" in the sense that it speaks a language the world can understand - that it makes "good sense" even if the sense it makes is unexpected. At this level, authority in the Church refers not so much to an absolute right to decide,, vested in some particular individual or group, as it does to a right to orchestrate argument and consultation with a view to a guaranteeing that what emerges from disagreement will be an understanding that grows out of the authentic sources of the Church`s life. One inevitable result of such a process will be the exclusion of teachings or forms of behaviour seen at length to be inconsistent with Christian faith`.

[451] The necessity for translation of communion relations to law has been recognised in the ecumenical context: see above, n. 167.

[452] See Appendix.

APPENDIX: SCHEME PROPOSAL

Each church should have in place a binding scheme:

1. To represent best practice in relation to *the fulfilment and administration of communion* within the particular church and in its relations with other Anglican churches. The scheme should deal with, and express commitment to and respect for, the terms and conditions of communion. This might be based on the ecumenical models.

2. To represent best practice in relation to *the autonomy of the particular church and the exercise of autonomy* in the context of global communion: a structure to ensure autonomy is exercised with due regard and respect for the common good of the particular church, the autonomy of other churches, the global communion, and ecumenical relations.

3. To provide for best practice in relation to *the implications and effects of decisions* made in one church or province on the global communion (ie on other Anglican churches or provinces). The scheme should deal with the issue of the status in that church of ecclesiastical acts performed in another church.

4. To provide for best practice in relation to *the prevention of conflict, the resolution of conflict, the management of continuing disagreement, and unresovlable disagreement* concerning global communion issues both within a particular church and as between Anglican churches.

5. To review and monitor the implementation of the scheme in order to meet the expected outcomes of maintaining and promoting global communion.

6. To provide for the establishment *in that church* of a Provincial Anglican Communion Office:

(a) to promote, defend and maintain the bond of communion within the provincial church and between the provincial church and the rest of the Anglican Communion;
(b) to advise on the likely effects of a course of conduct or proposed decision in the province, or in dioceses within it, as to whether that decision is likely to affect relations between that church and other Anglican churches;
(c) to facilitate discussion and the opportunity to hear and entertain objections to the proposed action on the grounds of its compatibility with the terms and conditions of global communion;
(d) to presume that all ecclesiastical acts are consistent with the spirit of Anglicanism and to rebut that presumption by a determination made as a matter of conscience in good faith;
(e) to issue a declaration of compatibility between that proposed action and the terms of communion in the worldwide Anglican Communion);
(f) in cases of a negative response, to institute a confirmatory appeal to the Archbishop of Canterbury (or other external instrument of Anglican unity).

COMMISSIONING COMMISSIONS: a context for the work of the ABCC and IATDC?

Archbishop Coggan highlighted the issue of authority in his notable intervention at the 1978 Lambeth Conference. Since then questions about structures for decision-making, unity and diversity, the boundaries and identity of Anglicanism have never been far from the Communion's agenda. The initial Primates' Meeting (1981) reviewed the subject, and the first report of the Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission – instituted at the 1978 Conference – addressed itself to principles of cultural and theological pluralism. It is not clear that either initiative was able to advance the debate materially.

For the Sake of the Kingdom(1986) was produced by the IATDC as a resource for the 1988 Lambeth Conference. It did not find a place on the main agenda of the meeting, and was referred to only briefly in the footnotes of two Section reports. Ten years later, ***The Virginia Report***(1996) featured more prominently in documentation of the 1998 Conference, and was 'welcomed as helpful' in one resolution (III.8), but the document itself was not considered by the whole assembly, there has been scant response to a 'decade of study' of its recommendations which was anticipated by the bishops, and there is little evidence that the thinking behind the report has so far entered the blood-stream of Anglican life.

Successive crises within the Anglican family confirm how little progress has been made over the past 25 years in clarifying ideas of authority within the Communion. Perhaps this indicates the first element of the context in which its theological commissions work: *there does not appear to be a mechanism whereby theological advice, no matter how judicious, can be 'received' , evaluated, criticised or owned by Anglicans world-wide.*

Of course the validity of theological work is not limited to formal reports. Serious discussion has been undertaken at other levels too. ACC-7(1987) began a process which, with the Primates Meeting, produced 'The Anglican Communion: identity and authority' and while ACC-8(1990) considered its approach to be premature, it did provoke a significant consultation at Virginia Theological Seminary and the publication of a small but important booklet, ***Belonging Together***(1992). This process has been rather overlooked, partly as a result of changing personnel (from the two current Commissions, only Bishops Stephen Sykes and Tom Wright were directly involved in that discussion), but more-so because the controversy over women in the episcopate re-directed attention towards the work of the ***Eames Commission*** and subsequently to the production by the IATDC (also chaired by Archbishop Eames) of ***The Virginia Report.***

It in no way minimises the excellent work of these two bodies to express a degree of regret that pressure of circumstances focused their attention on structural and political dimensions of the exercise of authority, and to an extent, short-circuited the theological process from which it had begun. Neither ***For the Sake of the Kingdom*** nor ***Belonging Together*** ignored institutional expressions of unity, but both set them within a rich theological and spiritual framework of things which bind Anglicans together.

For the Sake of the Kingdom especially offered a subtle argument (is it fanciful to see the hand of a young Rowan Williams at work there?) which sets theological pluralism, but not relativism, within the yes and no, the even now and not yet of the reign of God. The Christian calling is to discern a 'transcendent horizon' in the midst of time and history, and Anglicanism's particular vocation is to do that within "a fellowship based in a common set of institutions ….through practical acts of sharing, through mutual consultation, through mutual admonition and criticism (and) through a common willingness to take up difficult – even divisive – issues for the sake of the truth of the Gospel."(p59-60)

It is not hard to see why a report like that, with its focus on repentance, faith, spiritual and cultural transformation, was not easily reduced to a set of conference resolutions. But this very fact identifies a second feature which determines the contribution that theological commissions can make. *For most readers the value of a report will be whether or not it supports their own opinion. If it does, then it will be accorded a status in future discussions which it is probably unable to bear, and if it does not, it will be ignored altogether.* In times of dispute, even within the church, most participants are not so much interested in understanding as winning. To often the issues are not about truth, but power.

For this reason special attention has to be given to the theological models which shape a commission's procedures. The notion of communion grounded in the doctrine of the Trinity which inspired ***The Virginia Report*** as well as the ***Eames Commission*** has been fruitful, ecumenically, in uniting groups of

churches which wish to grow together, but its resilience remains unproven for Anglicans who seem more intent on moving apart. Aware of this, the present IATDC is tentatively seeking an understanding of *koinonia* which will also incorporate themes of Christology – the interplay of the human and divine, into what Hooker identified as the realisation of the church as a society and a society supernatural. 'The Communion Study', with its four key questions and Six Propositions, is an attempt to engage both sides of the numerous arguments which threaten Anglican unity. It hopes that each will see this as a debate which deals with their own concerns, whether or not the eventual outcome is what they desire or expect.*

This points towards the third aspect of the context in which we are working. When Archbishop Coggan put forward the idea of establishing a Doctrinal Commission he was careful to point out that it would be but one of the bodies advising the Communion. Doctrine was important, he said, but it needed to be interpreted in practise, and "pastoral and practical aspects are not its primary concern". The first commission did not see its task as providing a final authority for doctrinal questions, nor being directly engaged in detailed controversies but, more modestly, as seeking to fashion " … a broad framework of theological understanding within which the answers to more specific questions can be developed". But theological superstructure and the pastoral re-construction need to be planned together. In the context of our present perilous situation, *practical solutions need to arise from principled convictions; ecclesial structure must follow theological functions; canonical provision should mirror doctrinal clarity.*

The context in which the ABCC and the IATDC are presently called to work seems to demand that they pursue their tasks independently, but in the closest possible relationship to each other.

Philip Thomas,
January, 2004

* An outline of the IATDC's process and resources can be traced by referring to the Commission's Bibliography and Archive, found on the Anglican Communion web-site.

COMMON LAW: a fifth instrument of unity?

This is just a question. I am not a canon lawyer, and the IATDC has not formally discussed the reports produced by the provincial legal advisers or the idea taken up by the Primates Meeting in 2002 of exploring whether canon law might constitute a fifth instrument of unity for the Communion. Interestingly, at the point when the Commission contemplated discussing the linkage between law and doctrine, it was discouraged from doing so. So the question raised is a personal one – reflecting at most only informal conversations among members of the IATDC – but it does also indicate the Commissions desire to take cognisance of this discussion in its own deliberations.

For myself, there is no reluctance to see canon law contributing to a deeper understanding of Anglican identity. I contributed a paper to the first Primates' Meetings (1981) making just that point, and offered research towards the preparation of a document on provincial constitutions tabled at ACC-8 (1990). On those occasions at least, it was felt that such a discussion was premature. The time for it to be taken up again has now plainly come.

My question then is not whether but where, theologically, that discussion should take place?

First there is the dissimilarity between what Mark Hill, editor of *The Ecclesiastical Law Journal*, calls the 'amorphous' nature of the four existing instruments, and the 'definable solidity' of the ostensible fifth. More is involved than a simple contrast between bodies made up of people with a body of law. Legal formulae will also require people to codify, interpret, enforce (presumably?), and in the interests of justice as well as peace, provide the possibility of appeal and review. Whether the churches of the Anglican Communion, with a well known history of antipathy to processes of jurisdiction, the creation of tribunals and appellate panels, will be ready to contemplate together such an 'instrumentality' is at least open to doubt.

More significant is the question about whether a theological comparison is possible at all. As has been argued elsewhere (*Tuning up the Instruments of Unity)* the existing instruments function interdependently, to combine charisms appropriate to the personal, collegial and communal dimensions of the church. Is it yet clear how law can provide an addition to this process? The answer to that question is not prejudged. Hooker's "laws are matters of principal consequence" can be conjoined with Gregory Cameron's equally judicious observation that canon law is "applied ecclesiology", but it remains to be shown how the linkage is to be made. I believe a number of members of the IATDC would want to see how the *consequential* nature of canon law is derived, and how an *application* from first principles is to be drawn. It seems that discussion of the relationship of doctrine and law should also be opened afresh.

Finally and most significantly perhaps is the gospel issue – noted by Tom Wright – that the people who make up the four instruments as we now know them, are all specifically upheld and prayed for by the church, that they might discern and declare the leading of the Spirit. This is not to suggest that lawyers do not need our prayers – there are too many of them in my family for me to think that! But it is plainly the case that all those who take part in the formal discussions of the Anglican Communion – from the Archbishop of Canterbury, to the Primates, the bishops at Lambeth, all the way up (sic) to the clergy and laity who join some of them at the ACC – are people who have been recognised, equipped, tested, and authorised to meet together and speak to and for member churches of the global Anglican fellowship. That must count for something.

Let us not though, to the marriage of true canonical minds, admit impediment. Along with questions about whether canon law easily fits into the category of an additional instrument of unity I would like to propose, tentatively though firmly, that canon law (and canon lawyers) might contribute best to the business of sustaining a common Anglican identity and mission, if included as a fifth element in the Lambeth Quadrilateral!

The Quadrilateral – Scripture, creeds, the dominical sacraments, the historic episcopate – have taken on the role of providing an essential framework for identifying what Anglicans see as the characteristics of full, visible unity within the holy catholic Church. As such they must also point to under-girding foundations, the markers and sources for Anglican ecclesiological identity. Unfortunately they do not of themselves define what Anglican identity is. The Quadrilateral offers necessary but not sufficient features for defining what Anglicanism is, and where its vocation lies.

Could it be that the common law of the Anglican churches might act as a kind of supplement (thus avoiding the historical as well as logical *non sequitur* of speaking about a fifth element) to the Lambeth Quadrilateral? In this way it might add a note of Anglican particularity to claims that provinces of the Communion, individually and collectively, participate in the universal reality of the church of God … with all those in every place (who) call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours (I Cor 1.2).

Furthermore, incorporating the work of canonists into a dialogue which involves biblical scholars, theologians, liturgy experts and specialists in the faith and order of the historic church, may help Anglicanism to thread its way through its current controversies and towards a deeper understanding of its own identity and vocation.

I am not a canon lawyer, but in the continuing task of engagement with scripture, tradition/experience, and reason/conscience, I believe that there is likely to be an important brief for the lawyers in charting Anglicanism's future.

Philip Thomas,
January, 2004

EARS TO HEAR?: why the Eames group will not be debating homosexuality

To be clear. The hearing deficiency alluded to in the above heading is not a reference to the members of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission. Equally the sub-heading is not a prediction of what will or will not be talked about during their meetings over the next few months. What is implied is that no matter who is discussing whether non-abstinent same-sex relationships disqualify Christian men and women from full participation in the life and ministry of Anglican churches, then the incomprehension on both sides of the debate is so great that no resolution of the issue is yet remotely in sight. Statements to the press when the new Commission was announced made clear that it was not going to deal directly with issues of human sexuality.

That was not what had been expected by a number of people. The IATDC had been told unequivocally that it was not expected to deal with the subject of homosexuality and the church, and that when the time was right for that subject to be discussed, a new Commission would be appointed to discuss it. Many observers, including Archbishop Ndungane, had anticipated that the meeting of the Primates in October, 2003 would be the occasion for such a body to be brought into being. When that proved not to be the case several media reports suggested a fudge, an attempt to buy time, to postpone the inevitable, to use techniques of crisis-management rather than theological principal to solve the Communion's dilemma.

Another view, and one that this note prefers, is that wiser council prevailed. The present state of the discussion between supporters and opponents of (for instance) the consecration of Gene Robinson or the provision of services of blessing for gay and lesbian couples in the diocese of New Westminster, means that the time is not yet ripe for decisive jurisdiction. Recriminations and counter assertions, incomprehension and outrage are not the ingredients of theological clarification. There is little point in promoting a dialogue of the deaf.

Even, perhaps especially in church controversies, there is a tendency to compare the worst of an opponent's arguments with the very best of ones own. Perhaps part of the reason for the vituperative nature of some public exchanges on attitudes to homosexuality and the church is that *at their best* proponents of both points of view believe that they take their stance because it is "a gospel issue". On one hand it might be a defence of plain teachings of Scripture and the issue of salvation for sinners: on the other, perhaps an appeal to interpret the overall sweep of Scriptural teachings in diverse cultural settings and insight into the redeeming work of God for his whole creation.

But there is another, darker side of things. Heterosexuals can be prey to exploitative, violent or predatory sexual tendencies, even when married, even within the church. Homosexuals need to recognise that not all of even their most comfortable, committed relationships manifest fruit of the Spirit such as kindness, gentleness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. In fact the one uniting factor in this whole debate is the way in which all Christian people, straight and gay, stand together in the need to hear afresh about that 'life in all its fullness' which Jesus Christ came to bring. In a post-modern world where a rootless, individualistic hedonism increasingly holds the ring, *the* gospel issue is about the way all human life, including our sexuality, is made new in Christ. The debate about homosexuality and the church is not just about winning an argument, it is about re-discovering wholeness and holiness, goodness and truth. What is the gospel message for a sexually confused global community? To discover that, perhaps both sides in the current controversy will need to be ready to hear some unexpected, and perhaps uncomfortable answers.

Is it because churches of the Anglican Communion still find themselves some distance from facing their differences with that sort of expectation that it is not yet ready decisively to debate the issues that divide it? The role of the ABCC is presumably to find ways in which the disputants can be held together in one institution in the meantime. The IATDC is seeking to discern the sort of theological framework in which particular disputes can be set and, ultimately at least, resolved. The discussion which is developing throughout the Communion around the 'Six Propositions'(2002) suggests that polarisation over issues like sexual behaviour is itself a result of disagreements concerning the use of Scripture, the ethical framework of discipleship, the contextualization and inculturation of the gospel, the relative place of the local and the universal in the fellowship of the church, and appropriate ways of gathering and then speaking to or for the whole Anglican community. A middle way through these and other controversies may point towards a meeting place where current questions surrounding sexual identity and fulfilment can be addressed with integrity and hope.

At present however, the image which comes to mind is that of two great ocean liners passing each other in the night, seemingly without realising how great is the danger of their colliding. The only communication between them is from passengers shouting distantly and incoherently at indistinct figures they fancy they can see on the decks opposite. So great is their tumult that they fail to hear the cries of distress and confusion which arise from the crews of unnoticed and less sumptuously appointed fishing boats which bob about between the larger ships, in danger of perishing in the turbulent wake thrown up by their passage.

Let those that *have* ears ….

Philip Thomas,
January, 2004.

ON BEING EXCOMMUNICATED: what does it mean to 'break off' communion?

The Bishop of Zambia has recently declared that his diocese is no longer in Communion with ECUSA or the Church of England. I can understand, while I do not wholly share, his sense of outrage at the recent events in the Anglican Communion which caused him and a number of his fellow bishops in Central and Southern Africa to make that sort of decision. But I particularly noticed his statement, because I quite often visit Zambia – and I am a member of the Church of England and, temporarily at least, of ECUSA too.

What will happen next time I visit the Cathedral in Lusaka? Will I be refused the elements at the altar rail? Or perhaps I will already have been theologically frisked and asked to leave with the catechumenate class before the Eucharistic Prayer? And what about a couple of people I know who have been working up in the Copperbelt? Will they have been thrown out of their diocesan house, and reduced to flogging off their designer jeans and Wippel's vestments at the *sa'laula* stalls in the local market? More immediately, I wonder if the small contribution that we send to help a struggling AIDS project will be returned to me as 'tainted money'?

Actually I don't think any of these things will happen, and I believe that when I turn up there my soul will be restored again by the warmth and generous hospitality of the African church. What worries me more is that in the present unstable climate in which the Anglican Communion clings on to existence, few of us have thought much about what is involved in declaring ourselves 'out of communion' with fellow members of the body of Christ. I have just been reviewing the use of the concept of communion in the New Testament. It is not all that common. The word itself is mainly used by St Paul in working through his somewhat turbulent relationships with churches in Greece and Asia Minor. What is clear though is that in his thinking, to be called into fellowship with (God's) Son, Jesus Christ our Lord (I Cor 1.9) is inevitably to be drawn into a partnership in the gospel, participation in subsidising the church in Jerusalem and elsewhere, and solidarity with the new ethical standards and possibilities brought about by life in the Spirit (Phil 1.5, Rom 15.26, II Cor 6.14, Phil 2.1). In Paul's thinking it does not seem possible that a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ can opt out of fellowship with his people, no matter how odd or different they may appear to be.

The place of 'the collection' is significant. The Chair of the IATDC, Professor Stephen Sykes, is a notable advocate for differentiating 'thin' and 'thick' ecclesiology, distinguishing generalised theories about what the church ought to be, from the hard graft of making it clear, in concrete situations, what difference the presence of Jesus might actually make. We could imagine that the tough-minded entrepreneurs of Macedonia and Achaia did not exactly find it easy to divvy up some of their profits to support the idealistic Hebrew Christians in Jerusalem, some of whom seem to have given up work altogether to dream of the imminent return of the Lord. But they did it. Fellowship for them was not a matter of warm feeling for someone they liked, but costly solidarity with people they didn't actually know, or probably even agree with. Kortright Davis, another member of the Commission, has made a powerful case for what he calls, "ecclesiology from below": unity at prayer and in the pulpit is invalid if separated from a common purse and identification with the poor. When Peter and Paul extended the right hand of fellowship to each other (Gal 2.9), they were actually bringing into being something that had never even been dreamed of in the long history of the people of God – that when the Messiah came, Jew and Gentile would be one. While there are situations in the New Testament when boundaries have to be drawn (I Peter, Hebrews) or when denial of the Lordship of Christ actually sunders the unity created through his Cross, short of that it is clear that to declare oneself out of communion with another part of God's church is to diminish the possibility of manifesting his coming kingdom.

Of course the situations with which I began trivialised the issue. An individual's experience is not to be equated with the relationship between two national churches. If Bishop Kamukwamba stands by his word, I will feel disenfranchised when the Archbishop of Canterbury is not represented as the cathedral dedicates a new learning centre; we will all be impoverished if it is no longer easily possible for vibrant Zambian priests to come and do research in English colleges or share ministry in our inner cities; and if the exchange of money or resources between our churches is not just a matter of simple charity but rather an issue of justice for the world Christian community, then it is not just Africa which will pay the price of a break-down of mutuality and trust. If we cannot share our prosperity with those who need it most, we will be the poorer as a result. As Tom Wright puts it, *koinonia* like *agape*, has money attached.

It is this distortion of the global fellowship which comes to concern me most of all. Philip Jenkins, in his book *The Next Christendom: the coming of global Christianity*(2002) convincingly traces the way in which the centre-of-gravity for world Christianity has decisively moved South. He further warns that our unfamiliarity with the churches of Africa, Asia and Latin America could lead the North to alienate itself from them, and ultimately to define itself against the direction taken by the Christian movement as a whole(p162).

Could that be what is happening now in all the talk about 'breaking communion' with each other? While I regret, and in the end actually question, the right of one bishop to unilaterally break off fellowship with others, may it not be the case that our own unilateral actions in the North have made it exceedingly difficult for Christians in the South to recognise that we are in fact, part of the same family, led by the same Spirit (Rom 8.14)? Conversely it may be that a refusal to contemplate differences that have yet to be fully discussed may actually throw up barricades that will prevent that discussion taking place at all.

My own conviction is, that in times of controversy Christians should hold together in fellowship and face their differences within it. So I will go to Zambia next with sadness in my heart. But I will also remember times when I have been excommunicated before and yet continued to seek ways to make common cause with those from whom I am separated. It happens each Sunday at home when 90% of the baptised Christians in the parish where I normally live and work decline to come to celebrate and communicate with the rest of the people of God. I don't think that this is the direct result of anything we have actually said to each other. But it certainly means in Heighington, and I think in Zambia, that the church is a less than it might be – and I happen to believe also, that our community at least is a less happy place in which to live.

Philip Thomas,
January, 2004

TUNING UP THE INSTRUMENTS OF UNITY: structures for Anglican decision-making

What is actually going on when one of the central bodies of the Anglican community meets, or when the Archbishop of Canterbury gets out his address book?

Failure to answer that question is a major cause of the present uncertainty about the whole exercise of authority within the Anglican Communion. ***The Virginia Report*** concluded its treatment of Anglican interdependence and coherence with the acknowledgement, "A deeper understanding of the instruments of communion at a world-wide level, their relationship one to another and to the other levels of the Church's life should lead to a more coherent and inclusive functioning of oversight in the service of the *koinonia* of the Church"(p63). A resolution of the 1998 Lambeth Conference looked for specific recommendations about future development of the instruments over the next decade(III.8i), although another expressed rather less patience, believing "the instruments of unity … need to work much more closely together and to review their mutual accountability"(II,2b).

To outward appearance, meetings of the Anglican bodies look straight forward enough. They might be likened to the organisational structure of an international charity, or a slightly unwieldy political system – with an upper and lower house, legislature and a titular head of state, or worse, as a multi-national business chain – with the bishops as shareholders, the ACC non-executive directors, the Primates, a Board of Governors, with the Archbishop of Canterbury hovering uncertainly between the role of a Managing Director or a Colonel Sanders-like symbol of brand-identity. Nearly 150 years of history makes it plain that the Anglican Communion cannot to be understood in terms of the hierarchies that these pictures suggest, yet neither can it be the case that the existence of separate organs will be justified merely because some are easier (or cheaper) than others to get together. The deeper understanding which ***TVR*** – and others – has sought, must be theological in its origin, giving articulacy and mobility to the body of Christ.

At a crucial point in the present discussion of the instruments of communion, Robert Runcie (seen by some as the instigator of moves towards more centralised Anglican organisation, and certainly the first object of that phrase, now so beloved of the media, 'spiritual leader of 70million Anglicans') set the tone of the debate. "The Archbishop of Canterbury is often described – inaccurately – as head of the Anglican Communion …. I do not rule. I serve the Communion, not only by crisis management, but by gathering it and sometimes speaking for it. I am only a senior bishop with a diocese like other bishops. I believe that should remain the case."(ACC-8,p26) He went on to explore the tension that inevitably exists in episcopally led, synodically governed churches, and the way this is magnified in a world-wide community made up of autonomous Provinces. The reality of community must be expressed through organisational, structural, even canonical and juridical arrangements. Yet the community comes first. Structures and canons are secondary. They do not convey authority, but are means by which the community comes to recognise the latent authority of baptism and orders. Synods do not derive their efficacy from formally delegated powers, administrative effectiveness or even ideals of democracy, but ultimately from the call of God and the gift of the Spirit(p34).

It is that sort of vision which needs to be realised as the role of the instruments of communion is clarified and developed. ***The Virginia Report*** identified such a development with the ***Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry***(1982) statement about uniting personal, collegial and communal authority for 'effective participation in the discovery of God's will and the guidance of the Spirit'(p26). In fact every Christian community participates to some degree in that experience, and it is an easy first step to identify how, for Anglican decision-making, the Archbishop with the Primates embody personal authority, the Lambeth Conferences demonstrates collegiality, and the ACC, with its representative membership, gives access to the communal life of the global family. When these bodies meet (or pick up their address book), they are potentially tapping-in to different charisms of guidance and discernment. What becomes critical at that point is the second step, that of recognising how the different instruments inter-relate, the way in which such 'dispersed authority' points towards the *consensus fidelium.*

Without any such inner coherence, the sequence of meetings of the Lambeth Conference, ACC, the Primates, can (and sometimes does) look like a mechanism for delay, of buying time and hoping that problems will go away, of waiting for someone else to act. At worst, they can appear to be engaged in a struggle for power, of simply checking and balancing each other, or of being solely concerned with their own programmatic agendas. It was presumably impressions like that which fuelled the exasperation vented in the resolution from Section II at the 1998 Lambeth Conference, cited previously.

In a paper utilising the same title as that given above, which was read and discussed by the IATDC at its 2002 meeting, I tried to illustrate how a better understanding of the roles of the instruments – which are distinct but not independent of each other, overlapping but not co-terminal, held together by bonds that are neither linear nor cumulative but, in the best sense of the word, charismatic – how such an organic view of Anglican authority might have addressed the question of homosexuality and ministry.

It regretted the situation in which Anglican gatherings turned into a media-fest of assertions and denunciations, with associated accusations of lobbying and recriminations over presumed attitudes of cultural superiority. It fantasised over a situation in which at Lambeth, instead of feeling obliged to pass decisive resolutions on every conceivable topic, the bishops had spent more time openly facing threats to their collegiality – and seriously listening to the *best* cases that could be put on both sides of the questions that divided them. Such a principled approach to unity in diversity could have provided a mandate to the Anglican Consultative Council, in its representative and communal role, to institute communion-wide dialogue on the subject and begin a process of listening for consensus – at least for a consensus on the nature of the division itself and what it means for a fellowship of churches seeking to maintain unity in mission and ministry together. On that basis the Primates, bearing in their persons authentic marks of where their churches stood on the matter could eventually have faced each other with equanimity – and in due course the Archbishop of Canterbury (who had 'gathered' the Communion at each point in the process) could also have 'spoken' for them too.

It will of course be argued that this sort of vision is impractical, that the administration of the Anglican Communion is already seriously under-funded for its existing functions, and this sort of co-ordinating and collating on behalf of the Council is beyond its resources. Others may suspect that in fact the ACC or the Primates are just not up to it, are actually not sufficiently trusted – or do not sufficiently trust each other – to perform such a task. To some parts of the Communion the problem appears to be that of *control* rather than just capacity.

But time alone will not heal divisions. For that, a determination under God to maintain communication and dialogue with those with whom we disagree is needed. I concluded my paper with a reflection on the nature of instruments. Ours are not instruments of government, nor legal instruments as commonly understood. Our theological tradition means it is unlikely that they will be surgical instruments, sharpened for cutting out heresy and schism. The instruments that Anglicanism is most likely to develop are those for creating the music of praise. And this means that when central bodies of the Anglican Communion meet, they know what part they are called on to play, they are in their different ways all tuned to a note of the same pitch – and they are learning to play, together.

Philip Thomas,
January, 2003

Decision-making process in the communion of the Church

1. I was invited to talk about 'Decision- making process in the Anglican Communion'. It's important to remind myself that I'm talking about decision-making in the Church whose essential nature is *koinonia* (communion), and that communion is the gift of being drawn into the communion of God's own life of love – the possibility of a life lived in Christ, and offered to the Father, through the power of the Holy Spirit. Because of human frailty and sinfulness the Church's life is always less than perfect; perfect communion, full communion, belongs to the consummation of the Kingdom. Nevertheless, the struggle for perfection is an absolute requirement of Christian obedience, the only fitting response to the gift of communion with God and with one another that we have already been given.

2. In the struggle for holiness we rely on God's gracious gifts of Word and Sacrament, on wise leaders, in the apostolic ministry, in order to translate the gift of communion into faithful service and witness so that the gift of communion is seen and heard as possibility for all people. Structures and decision-making processes are not an optional extra, imposed to straight-jacket our life together. They help the Church to live in a dynamic communion in which diversity can flourish and Christians can respond together to new challenges, whether to the faith, order or moral life of the Church. In this sense they are structures of grace through which the Spirit works in us and among us. Getting structures right, therefore, can never be a matter of indifference, though I suspect that we need to discover a whole new vocabulary that can communicate better that structures and processes of decision-making are about graced belonging in the communion of the Church. Archbishop Rowan has recently written that 'it is worth working at structures in Anglicanism that don't either commit us to a meaningless structural uniformity or leave us in mutual isolation'. That seems to me to be what the Anglican way has, at its very best, to offer - neither structural uniformity nor mutual isolation but a way of holding together a rich diversity in dynamic communion, while we discern the mind of Christ for the Church. It is with the conviction that it is worth working at structures and understanding how they work together for the good of communion that I approach the subject of decision-making process in communion.

3. Last week I had the task of reviewing for the sub-committee of IARCCUM the matter of authority in the Anglican Communion, what Anglicans have explored in theory in reports on authority, stated in Lambeth Resolutions, as well as how they have exercised authority in practice. I was struck again, by the fact that in the handling of the question of women's ordination it is possible to discern an emerging 'credible' process, an embryonic pattern of dynamic decision-making in communion. I think it is worth re-calling the story of the last 30 years. It may help you to understand something of the situation, the 'crisis', in which we are and also offer clues for what needs to be developed in the life of the Communion in future.

4. I shall tell the story, then draw from it some insights about decision making- process in communion, and finally suggest some things for the work of this Commission. I am conscious that in rehearsing the story I am telling a story in which some of you have been very involved, not least of all Archbishop Robin and Bishop Mark. I want to make it quite clear that in telling this story I am not concerned with the subject of women's ordination. I am telling the story simply to draw out what we might learn from it about a credible pattern of decision- making in communion.

I Telling the story

5. In 1968 Hong Kong brought the matter of the ordination of women to the Lambeth Conference. The Conference passed a Resolution affirming the opinion that the theological arguments were inconclusive and requesting every national and regional church or province to give the matter careful study and to report its findings to the newly established Anglican Consultative Council which would then make the views generally available. It also asked the ACC to consult other churches, both those who did, and those who did not, ordain women. The Conference went on to recommend that before any national or regional church, or province, made a final decision it should consider carefully the advice of the ACC. [1]

6. Two years later, at the first meeting of the newly established Anglican Consultative Council, a specific request came from the Bishop of Hong Kong for advice on what to do because his diocesan synod had now approved, in principle, the ordination of women to the priesthood.[2] The ACC noted that only eight provinces had begun to study the matter but that no responses had yet been received by the ACC. Provinces were still studying the matter. It would therefore be improper if the ACC were to prejudge their findings or take it to itself to decide the matter. However, many members of the ACC suggested that it would also be improper to postpone whatever decision lay within the power of the Council to make. Resolution 28 called for all provinces to study the matter and went on:

> In reply to the request of the Council of the Church of South-East Asia, this Council advises the Bishop of Hong Kong, acting with the approval of his Synod, and any other bishop of the Anglican Communion acting with the approval of his province, that, if he decides to ordain women to the priesthood, his action will be acceptable to this Council; and that this Council will use its good offices to encourage all provinces of the Anglican Communion to continue in communion with these dioceses. [3]

The Resolution was narrowly passed by 24-22 votes.

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[1] Resolutions 34-38 in *The Lambeth Conference 1968, Resolutions and Reports,* SPCK, (1968), pp. 39 and 40.
[2] *The Time is Now, Anglican Consultative Council First Meeting, Limuru, Kenya,* SPCK, (1970), p.34.
[3] *Ibid,* p.38.

7. Reflecting on these events it is little wonder that questions have been raised about the authority of the newly constituted ACC to pass such a Resolution, the narrowness of the vote on such a crucial matter, as well as the credibility of a process that called for consultation and then went on to pass a decisive Resolution, before that consultative process had hardly been started. But, what is also clear is that Hong Kong did not understand itself as so autonomous that it might act on the matter without prior consultation with the fellowship of Anglican churches, first through the 1968 Lambeth Conference and then, two years later, on the suggestion of that Conference, with the ACC.

8. Eight years later the 1978 Lambeth Conference passed a similar Resolution to that of ACC I. [4] The Conference noted that by this time Hong Kong, Canada, the Episcopal Church USA, and New Zealand had ordained women to the presbyterate, and that 8 other churches had approved the move in principle. It recognised 'the autonomy and legal right of each member Church to make its own decision but also the fact that such provincial action has consequences for the whole Communion'. The Conference encouraged all member churches to continue in communion with one another, not withstanding the ordination of women. It asked the ACC to promote dialogue between churches that do, and those that do not, ordain women, as well as dialogue with other Communions. The intention of the Resolution was quite clearly not to make a definitive judgement for the whole Communion on the validity, or otherwise, of women's ordination but to respect the position of both sides. It declared acceptance of member churches which do, and urged respect for provinces which do not, ordain women, and *vice versa*. The Resolution was passed with 316 for, 37 against, and 17 abstentions. As a result some bishops left the Lambeth Conference thinking that the question of the validity of women's ordination had been settled. Others were equally convinced that it had not been settled.

9. Whatever might be thought of what happened - not all provinces had yet expressed their mind, some had opposed the move, and there was no report from other Christian Communions - nevertheless, Hong Kong had not acted independently but had first consulted the Anglican fellowship. Moreover, there had been an expressed intention by those at ACC and at Lambeth to remain in communion in spite of difference on the matter.

10. In 1985 ECUSA, at its General Convention, expressed the intention not to withhold consent to the election of a bishop on the grounds of gender. But sensitive to the idea of interdependence within the world-wide Communion of Anglicans, ECUSA consulted the Communion, through the now newly established Primates' Meeting. The Primates welcomed the consultation, seeing it as a clear recognition on the part of ECUSA of the consequences that such action would have, not only in the United States, but on the wider Anglican family. The Primates did not understand the request as simply one for permission to proceed. They set up a working party, under the chairmanship of Archbishop Grindrod of Brisbane, to prepare a paper 'to aid

[4] Resolution 21, in *The Report of the Lambeth Conference 1978*, CIO Publishing, (1978), pp. 45 and 46.

discussion in preparation for the Lambeth Conference'.[5] It is significant that *The Grindrod Report* begins with a chapter called, 'Listening as a mark of communion; Voices from the Provinces', in which the responses of 17 (15 written and 2 verbal) out of the then 27 provinces were summarised. The working party was not invited to make a recommendation on the matter but to set out for the bishops coming to Lambeth the biblical, theological, ecumenical and practical issues involved. It was for the bishops at the Conference to express the mind of the Communion. In fact the Working Party did indicate that it believed that there were two options before the bishops. The first was to counsel restraint in the hope that the moral authority inherent in a gathering of all the bishops of the Communion would find its response at the provincial level. The other option suggested that, if a province went ahead, persuaded by compelling doctrinal reasons, by its experience of women in the presbyterate, by the demands of mission in its region, and with the overwhelming support of its dioceses, then such a step should be offered for reception in the Anglican Communion, and in the universal Church. There was a growing conviction that Anglicans ought not to act alone on a matter that concerned the ministry of the universal Church. The bishops resolved:

> that each province respect the decision and attitudes of other provinces in the ordination or consecration of women to the episcopate, without such respect necessarily indicating acceptance of the principles involved, maintaining the highest possible degree of communion with the provinces which differ.[6]

The Resolution went on to invite the Archbishop of Canterbury to set up a Commission to aid the process of reception.

11. From now on the notion of reception became central in understanding what was happening. The matter of the consecration of women came to be understood as being in an 'open process of reception', in the discernment of individual provinces, in the communion of all the provinces, and in the fellowship of all the churches. The matter could not be said to be settled, beyond doubt, until it was received by the whole Church. It was the task of the Eames Commission to aid the reception process by explaining the notions of 'open reception' and 'provisionality'. It is interesting to read the testimony of some provinces that they were helped by the interpretation given b y the Commission of what was happening. The Commission interpreted what 'living in the highest possible degree of communion' might mean. The Commission struggled to find the most appropriate language to express what had happened, referring to a restriction in ecclesial communion and using the terms of 'impairment', 'restricted communion', or 'incomplete communion'. I think we were aware that the way we talk about the situation, the language we use, shapes our understanding either for good or ill. The Commission provided practical guidelines on such matters as extended episcopal oversight, sacramental ministry, visits of women bishops to provinces that

[5] *Report of the Working Party Appointed by the Primates of the Angilcan Communion on Women and the Episcopate: To Aid Discussion in Preparation for the Lambeth Conference*,Chameleon Press, (1987).
[6] Resolution 1, in *The Truth Shall Make You Free, The Lambeth Conference 1988*, CHP, (1988), p.201.

were opposed to women bishops. It was in conversation with individual provinces and reported back at intervals to the ACC and the Primates' Meeting. The Commission was also given the task of helping discussion among provinces that differed, as well as with ecumenical partners.

12. Between the 1988 and 1998 Lambeth Conferences the Commission produced 4 reports, the last of them summed up where the Communion was ten years on. This was all a part of the reception process. Resolution III. 4 I note called for 'continuing monitoring within the Communion with regular reporting to the Primates' Meeting. It would be interesting to know whether this is in fact happening.

II What can we learn from what has happened?

13. What then can we learn from the story of the Anglican Communion's struggle with a matter that touched a basic bond of communion? First, there was the realisation that **provincial autonomy is not the way of life in communion**. Although binding decisions can only be made at the level of province there was a prevailing 'sense' that matters that touch the faith, order or moral life of the Church should only be settled within the interdependent life of the whole Church – of the Anglican Communion and, in a divided Christendom, open to the rest of the Church. The 'shibboleth' of provincial autonomy as Robert Runcie called it is not the way of life in communion. Autonomy was already effectively challenged when Hong Kong brought its question of the ordination of women to the 1968 and 1978 Lambeth Conferences, and again when ECUSA brought the matter of the consecration of women first to the Primates' Meeting in 1986 and then to the Lambeth Conference in 1988. Anglicans were walking along a path of interdependence. The presidential speech of Archbishop Robert at the 1988 Lambeth Conference was an encouragement to face what was happening and continue along a path moving from independence to interdependence, a choice he saw as 'the choice between unity or gradual fragmentation'. [7]

14. What we were learning, as we struggled with the ordination of women, was that **interdependence requires decisions to be taken in communion** and that decision-making in communion is a lengthy, dynamic, dialogical, and Spirit led process. It requires careful articulation of the matter, the local church has to show why what it proposes is Gospel news. The challenge has to be brought to others to whom one belongs in the communion. Those opposed have to show why it is Gospel news that they oppose the action. There needs to be consultation, open debate, discernment together, moments of articulation of decision, and beyond that reception. The decision-making process is hardly likely to be swift when it touches matters of faith, order or moral life. It requires careful directing and oversight. It is not a legalistic process but a spiritual process. It matters that we do believe together that the Spirit leads the Church into all truth and that to believe this divine possibility requires on the part of all of us a willingness to be led together by the Spirit.

[7] R.Runcie, Presidential Address, *ibid*, pp. 16 and 17.

15. What we can also see in the story is the way in which the different and still **embryonic international structures or instruments of Anglican unity** had different, but complementary roles, to play. Moreover, they reflect what Anglicans believe about the role of episcopacy within the synodality of the whole Church. They embody fundamental truths about the nature of the Church. They reflect what ecumenical convergence was beginning to call the personal, collegial and communal dimensions of oversight. The Primates' Meeting came to play an important part in directing the handling of the issue of women and the episcopate, not in giving answers, but in guiding the pattern of consultation and discernment process. The Anglican Consultative Council too played a part in reflecting at its meetings on the issue of women's ordination. Although the appropriateness of the ACC passing a Resolution, like the one it did at its first meeting in Limuru, is rightly questioned, the ACC is an important international instrument of Anglican communion. It played a role both before and in the discussion at the Lambeth Conference. The role of the ACC was not minimal and it represented something deep within Anglican conviction about the place of the laity, reminding us and our ecumenical partners, that a decision of the Church is an articulation of the whole Church, the *sensus fidelium.* But it was the bishops at the Lambeth Conference that spoke the mind of the Communion. The Lambeth Conference of bishops, by virtue of being an episcopal gathering, has a decisive role to play. The episcopate has an authority *de jure divino,* an authority not given by delegation from the Church, but given by Christ, in and through the Church. In articulating the mind of the Communion the bishops did not act alone. To help them they had the results of consultation with the provinces, as well as the explication and reflection on the theological and ecclesiological issues. They rehearsed much of the arguments in lengthy presentations at the Conference where all side of the argument were presented. And the bishops were reminded of the advice of ecumenical partners in the addresses of Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Methodist and Reformed observers.

16. In the move to ordain women great stress came to be placed on the final part of the lengthy decision-making process, **the place of reception**. ? It is crucial that Anglicans continue to stress the need for the process of reception. For, without the possibility of reception, infallibility seems to be attributed to a Conference Resolution There was insistence that space for reception must follow and that the reception process be monitored for another decade. It was understood that sensitive and clearly expressed dissent can be creative in the continuing forming of the mind of the whole Church. The Commission had to struggle with what dissent meant when the matter was not a disembodied doctrine but there was a facticity in the lives of women who were ordained. What did dissent mean then?

17. The story of the Anglican Communion's struggle with the ordination of women is important for this Commission, not because of the decision taken about the matter itself but because it shows a Communion moving along a trajectory from autonomy to interdependence. It reveals a process of decision-making in communion which is at its best dynamic, inclusive, dialogical, open to the Spirit's leading, in which those with a ministry of memory play a special role within the symphony of the whole people of

God, and in which the different and developing instruments of Anglican Communion were coming to be seen as having a distinctive role to play.

18. But, at the same time the story also raises **sharp questions about the role of each of the instruments of communion and their relation to one another** in the decision-making process. These sharp questions were put in the *Virginia Report.* One of the most disappointing aspects of the story is the failure of the Lambeth Conference in 1998 to respond either to the Eames reports, or to the sharp questions put in the *Virginia Report*. But Resolution III.6, of the Conference, on Instruments of the Anglican Communion, did highlight the need to strengthen mutual accountability and interdependence among provinces and to that end encouraged reflection on the instruments of Communion and the inter-relation between them.[8] We Anglicans in recent years have a good track record for identifying what is needed we are less good at responding.

19. The story of the move to ordain women raises one particularly sharp question identified in the *Virginia Report* of special relevance for this Commission - what is **the authority of a Resolution of a Lambeth Conference**? Owen Chadwick's reflections on Lambeth Resolutions are worth recalling. In his introduction to the collection of Lambeth Resolutions from 1867-1988 he writes 'it was impossible that the leaders of the Anglican Communion should meet every ten years and not start to gather respect: and to gather respect is slowly to gather influence, and to gather influence is on the way to authority'. He goes on to suggest that the Resolutions:

> … might only be advice , by the law of the land or even by the customs of the local Church, but they were of such weight that they were more than 'not binding'. The consciences of many bishops felt the resolution to lay down a decision which they ought to follow or at least try to follow. It was a resolution taken after due debate and after prayer by the ministers who represented the apostles to their churches….That did not mean that the resolution was infallible, because none of them believed in the infallibility of bishops, singly or taken together. They were all agreed that wrong or out of date decisions could be reversed without qualm.[9]

Chadwick gives a 'strong' rather than 'weak' interpretation of Lambeth Resolutions. Anglicans in an episcopal church ought not lightly to disregard the moral authority of the world-wide episcopate. Anglicans are not likely to welcome a central authority structure that could command compliance. But if the understanding of Lambeth Conference Resolutions that Chadwick gives were acceptable to all Anglicans, then they might think it wise to incorporate in provincial documents an agreement to abide by Lambeth Resolutions, even when actively trying to change them. If provinces were to agree to such a strong understanding of Lambeth Resolutions then there would

[8] Resolution II.6, in *The Official Report of the Lambeth Conference 1998*, Morehouse Publishing, (1999), pp. 396 and 397.
[9] O. Chadwick, Introduction, in *Resolutions of the Twelve Lambeth Conferences 1867-1988*, ed, R.Coleman, Toronto (1992), p.xvii.

need to be clarity about what subject matter is appropriate for such binding Resolutions, the sort of consultative process required before a Resolution could be responsibly put, and the appropriate majorities required for passing a Resolution before it could be deemed to be 'the mind of the Communion'. At the same time it should be clear that a Resolution could call for restraint.

20. The story of the struggle with the ordination of women, whatever any of us may feel about the outcome, does tell us something about an emerging credible pattern of discernment and decision- making in communion and about the role and interplay of the different instruments of Anglican communion. It is also clear that right structures and right processes are of no avail without **right attitudes**. In a life of communion the personal and relational are always prior to the institutional and structural. The institutional and structural are there to serve and support the personal and the relational life of communion. In communion we belong to one another because we belong to God, and belonging to one another means being accountable to one another now, and to our Christian brothers and sisters through the ages. [10] It means listening attentively to one another, forbearing one another in love, deferring to one another, thinking the best of one another, bearing the pain of difference, and , as Elizabeth Templeton said so powerfully to the bishops at the 1988 Lambeth Conference, even entering each other's pain'.[11] Without attitudes expressive of communion no instruments of communion, no helpful processes, will work effectively in the service of communion.

III Implications for the Commission

21. What then might all of this suggest for the work of this Commission? **First** I hope that one of your tasks will be simply educational, helping Anglicans to understand the crisis they are in. In the present situation few people, even clergy, understand the present crisis as anything other than a clash of apparently irreconcilable responses to the issue of homosexuality. In the same way as the first Eames Commission had to interpret 'reception' and 'provisionality' in dialogue with the provinces, by letters and visits, this Commission needs to help Anglicans understand this is, at least in part, a crisis of authority and decision-making in communion.

22. A Lambeth Resolution has been passed, one that does not uphold diversity on this issue. The decision process that led to its being passed was, on any reckoning, very much less satisfactory than the very lengthy consultation, listening in communion, discernment, exploration of the issues together and decision-taking that went into responding to the issue of women's ordination. Bishop Mark Santer is not alone in maintaining that the process at Lambeth 1998 was 'wholly unacceptable' since the issue had only been discussed in detail by a quarter of the delegates, and it had taken them a full fortnight to really start listening to one another.[12] But the Resolution was

[10] Rowan Williams, The Structures of Unity, in New Directions, September 2003, p.5.
[11] *The Truth Shall Set You Free*, p. 292.
[12] M. Santer quoted in *Rowan Williams*, R. Short, Darton, Longman and Todd, (2003), pp. 65 and 66.

passed. Anglicans cannot both agree the importance of a Lambeth Resolution in the overall process of decision-making and then act contrary to it.

23. **Secondly**, because the Resolution was passed and re-affirmed by the Primates' Meeting there will need to be some response both to ECUSA and to those who are actively opposed to ECUSA. It will be a struggle to see how to produce a map for Anglican living into the future in which the presently warring groups, some of whom hardly seem to be able to hear one another, or to want to hear one another, but rather to live together with those who are like minded, can remain in some degree of communion which is not so minimal that it denies the fact of God's gift to us of the possibility of living together visibly in the orbit of his own life, and yet is true at the same time to the major difference that exists on a matter that touches a bond of communion.

24. **Thirdly,** what is clear is that the issue of homosexuality will not go away. Whatever side we are on we have to be prepared to go on talking together, not saying I have no need of you. It is important that we can reflect together on whether this particular development is authentic or not. Even after a Lambeth Conference decision is taken there has to be room for dissent in conversation, if not in action. We have to go on asking whether the action of ECUSA is authentic or not and evaluate its particular place in the total life of the Church. 'Does it enhance the fidelity of that particular church to the Gospel? Does it enable that church to fulfil its mission more faithfully in its own cultural context? Does the development affect the holiness of life, both for individuals and for communities? Does the church continue to be seen as the Body of Christ, where the Gospel is proclaimed and believers are nurtured in fellowship and truth? And are there necessary elements of continuity with the Church in other ages and different cultures?'[13] These are the sort of questions that we began to see we needed to ask of each other in responding to the demands to ordain women. As a Communion we have not begun to unpack together the biblical, theological or anthropological issues raised. Nor have we begun to listen to the experience of homosexual persons as the Lambeth Resolution called for. When they are invited to the table the discussion becomes not one of those outside but of those among us. It becomes our issue in a new way

25. **Fourthly,** my hope is that this Commission might challenge Anglicans to engage more intentionally with some of the questions raised in the *Virginia Report.* We do need to be able to give a more coherent account together of the instruments of communion- the Lambeth Conference, the ACC, the Primates' Meeting as well as the role of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the relation between them. We need to be able to explain to ourselves, and to our ecumenical partners, what is the authority and role of each, and what part each has to play in a lengthy process of decision-making. Our continued failure to agree what authorities bind us has led in part to the present confusion.[14] And we need agreement on whether Resolutions of a Lambeth

[13] *Women in the Anglican Episcopate,* The Eames Commission and Monitoring Group Reports, ACC, (1998), pp.27 and 28.
[14] John Hind, Halting Ecumenism, in New Directions 5, January, 2004.

Conference are statements of mere opinion or, if not, then in what way they are binding on us. It is obvious that a Lambeth Conference takes too many Resolutions with little or no distinction between them. There ought at least to be a clear distinction between those that touch a matter of faith, order or moral life and in these there should be a proper reticence. In matters of faith, order or moral life that touch the communion of the Church, 'the basic grammar of faith' as Archbishop Rowan calls it, ought we not to be prepared to stay where we are until we can show that to move from the traditional teaching of the Church is consonant with Scripture and Tradition, and required for faithful 'proclaiming afresh' today of the faith of the Church through the ages? Ought we not to err on the side of caution while at the same time not being afraid to explore new challenges together? And when such questions are raised, and we know there will be others, then there ought to be a clear, thorough, transparent, inclusive, managed process of decision making in which the instruments of Anglican belonging each plays its part.

26. **Fifthly**, as part of this, the Commission might encourage Anglicans to ask again whether we do not now need an agreed Common Statement which re-affirms our commitment to the faith of the Church as normatively revealed in Holy Scripture, set forth in the catholic Creeds, to the sacraments of baptism and eucharist, and to the historic episcopate and to which is now added an affirmation of those structures of grace that hold us in dynamic communion. The Lambeth Quadrilateral is not a check list of separable items for Anglican belonging but a skeleton frame of the inter-connected, inseparable life of faith, sacraments and ministry that hold us in unity, in communion. If we could add to that what we have come to see about the bonds of structured communion that enable us to discern and decide together and commit ourselves to it province by province, that might go some way to helping us to agree in the future the appropriate way to face new challenges to communion. An expanded Quadrilateral might become a part of the canonical law of every province. This is no new suggestion it was there in Lambeth 1988 and in the ecumenical section's report of the last Lambeth Conference.

27. I've strayed a long way from my brief. I do believe we have lessons to learn from the story of our response to the ordination of women, both positive and negative. I keep hearing the question that Robert Runcie put to the bishops in 1988, 'Do we want unity?' His answer to his own question was:

> I do, because our Lord prayed for it in the context of mission – 'That they all may be one…that the world may believe'. I do, because neither conflicting Churches, nor competitive Churches, nor co-existing Churches, will be able to embody effectively the Gospel of reconciliation while the Churches themselves remain unreconciled. Do we Anglicans *really* want unity (and communion)? We must do if we are to be instruments of unity and communion to a divided world.[15]

Mary Tanner, February 2004-02-10

[15] *The Truth Shall Set You Free*, p.21.

THE JOURNEY FORWARD TOGETHER

Reflections on Matthew 5:13-36

A contribution to the
Commission on the Anglican Communion
and its life

Prepared at the request of Archbishop Robin Eames
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THE JOURNEY FORWARD TOGETHER

Then Jesus ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass.
Taking the five loaves and the two fish,
He looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves,
And gave them to the disciples,
And the disciples gave them to the crowds.
And all ate and were filled;
And they took up what was left over of the broken pieces,
Twelve baskets full.

Christian discipleship is supplied with Jesus' authority.
This is the authority of hope, which is given divine power.

Alive in the generosity of God

The responsible charge given to the Commission on the Anglican Communion is to nourish and prosper life. This necessarily involves a care and concern for its own life, as for the life of a diverse and dispersed Communion. Such life, given and shared, broken and dispersed, is also given for the sake of a hurting and dangerous world.

The journey forward is discipled by the canonical, theological and ecclesiological expertise represented on the Commission. This expertise is respected, substantial and representative of much of the diversity facing the Communion.

The Commission has the authority and the legitimacy given by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Primates of the whole Communion. This is important authority which, like water in a dry land or food in the desert, must not be squandered.

It is the view of this contribution that the axis of the work of the Commission is hope.
It is a theology of divine hope which sustains the earth within our created universe.
It is disciplines and shared practices of hope which sustain our common life.
It is narratives of our experience of the fruits of hope which strengthen faith.
It is hope in the hope which is to come into fullness which is our common bond.
Hope creates shared vision which has the power to sustain the future of the Communion.

The axis of hope has a number of resources, including:

- The living faith and witness of Anglicans across the globe in local churches
- The collegiality, co operation and the common faith affirmed by the Primates and the Archbishop of Canterbury following their meeting in October 2003, which builds on previous meetings and previous Lambeth Conferences
- The nourishment of faith as the gospel is shared, lives transformed and communities served through the witness of Anglicans in diverse life worlds

- Our capacity to share and celebrate these stories of Anglican laity and leadership in lived mission and discipleship. These stories affirm the power and life of God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—in our midst and in our times in remarkable ways
- Our historical memory of God's faithfulness to his church, including the apostolic Anglican traditions, in times smooth and through times of conflict, disorder and pain
- The commitment, testimony and gospel of salvation brought by Anglicans through commitment to justice and reconciliation for the communities where they live
- Our experience and testimony of the power and authority of Jesus Christ to heal, teach, feed, disconcert, comfort, accompany and save.

The above resources are living food, which sustain hope, around the axis of common mission.

This is where the journey begins.

What we hold together in common is Christ.
This is who holds us together.

The life of God inspires vision, originates mission and mobilises hope

The view espoused in this contribution is that sources of constructive energy are most likely to be mobilised around discussion and affirmation of the vision held in common and the common action which flows from this source.

It is my view that agreement and helpful language need be created within the Commission around the vision and mission of what holds the Anglican Communion together. This language and conversation will go broader than structures and personnel, significant as those are. The meta-story of our common experience includes discipleship to Christ's call and work. I believe that by such a beginning the Commission will develop constructive and hopeful energy. It is shared commitment and shared mission (in specific work together) which will enable the Commission to work through the complex and delicate tasks which lie ahead.

The creation of a new Commission has a number of potential advantages. These advantages include:
- A clear mandate and authority given by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Primates of the Communion
- Timely reporting
- Positional influence and access to key opinion leaders and shapers
- Diverse geographical and cultural representation
- The creation of alternative space for discussion and exploration of new options.

Risks facing the Commission which will need to be mitigated include:

- Working in ambiguous space, where there are competitors for space
- Compensating for the weakness inherent in seeking to use and encourage co operative power and non violent forms of influence
- Appropriate responsiveness of timing and pace
- The lack of institutional supports, including norms and sanctions, to manage global conflict and local-global identity issues.

I begin by comments on working to strengths.

The life of God and the authority of Jesus make new spaces possible.

Creating safe, hospitable and impartial spaciousness

The advantages of the Commission's institutional authority can, in my view, be strengthened by the Commission seeing its role as including the creation of safe, hospitable spaces, open to divergent views and not threatened by strong emotions.

In my own reflection on the issues likely to be facing the Commission, I have been helped by distinguishing the three different kinds of social spaces that the Commission will be working in. These three spaces are:

Public space, open to the whole Communion and to the public domain. Examples from my culture include the shopping mall, public events, the daily newspaper, the customers and clients my workplace serves

Social space, ie the spaces which make ordinary community living possible. Examples from my culture include the local shop, the neighbourhood park or club, the local newspaper, my work place

Interpersonal space, ie close (but not intimate) social relationships. Examples from my culture include neighbours, work colleagues, business associates, members of groups, organisations or teams I belong to and with whom I have frequent working relationships.

Healthy organisations span these three spaces. Each "space" has distinctive forms of what constitutes appropriate social distance, social behaviour and forms of communication.

Important to the Commission's work will be the selection of the appropriate space/s within which to conduct the different aspects of its work. For example part of the present sensitivities involves issues surrounding homosexuality (intimate space). In part conflicts are being exacerbated because communication is being attempted using some of the ground rules of intimate space where inflammatory debates are being transacted in public space. This will not be productive. My experience of such conflicts is that the domain of the work to be done needs to be shifted. In the first instance the creation of new spaces (eg the formation of the Commission) allows greater distance between heated parties and buys time and gives new "space" and new rules about conduct. In this way new opportunities are created for participants.

It is also important to note that the creation of intermediary spaces by the Commission could be significant. For example in Australia the verandah links interpersonal space with social space. In North America the porch links social and public space. The creation of safe private spaces, and relationships of different kinds, are likely to be critical to the outcomes of the Commission.

God's spaciousness is hospitable and open.
It is trustworthy and safe.
It creates new and unexpected resources for us.

Securing safe space

In particular the work of the Commission in its own life will be more likely to be viable by:

- The Commission seeing itself in terms of creating hospitable spaces, open to the future and open to the diversity of the Communion and open to the creativity of God for our well being
- By being open, trustworthy and safe ground, the Commission will be more likely to favour the honest and frank discussions begun by the Primates
- Awareness of the strong feelings aroused by the current confluence of situations, and the strongly held and divergent understandings of the meaning of Anglican identity and unity. The issues raised go to the heart of our sense of life and well being, our hunger and the search for satisfaction long term
- Minimising the preconditions for discussion to be able to occur in safe, neutral, hospitable territory
- Recognising that weak social bonds are favourable to bringing coherence to large social systems, ie strong "fellowship" expectations are not necessary between all parties to achieve a common outcome
- Maximising opportunities for face saving, loosening of "positions" which may be rigid or becoming entrenched
- Refusing to personalise or minimalise or ostracise what are in fact substantive and legitimate issues
- Recognising that legitimacy has very different meanings in different cultural-historical contexts. Public respect and deep listening to different social-historical locations is essential
- Coming to agreement as to the rules of engagement between parties where there is hostility, suspicion or real or perceived threat.
- Hosting, sponsoring or facilitating private and trustworthy explorations among parties who may be suspicious of each other and whose engagement in this way is both possible and potentially helpful to all parties
- Being in touch with local regional points of connection to both hear and listen and to disseminate appropriate communication

- Being supported by expertise in the management of public media contact. Proven resources with experience in dealing with agnostic-hostile media channels will be critical as part of wider strategies of information/communication management.

Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat
and go on ahead to the other side,
while he dismissed the crowds.

New life experiences change us
Deep change challenges our sense of identity.
Who are we now?, we ask.
Where will this take us?

Where we are headed: who are we now?

The Anglican Communion can be seen in terms of distinctive history, ecclesiology and theology. By history, mission and grace the Communion has become a global communion of Anglican churches. Of necessity the Communion also takes social forms. Thus the Anglican Communion can also be seen as a distinctive social organisation. As a social organisation Anglicanism now takes global forms in what are both traditional and emergent arrangements of Anglican "society". This involves what some are calling "the reinvention of Anglicanism".

When we look at the Anglican Communion as a social organisation, the origins of the Communion were from an established centre. This "centre" has a very distinctive history and associated patterns of church-state establishment, canon law and ecclesial-social engagement. These patterns have not been replicated in other Anglican settings, which are both connected to England *and* distinct from England *and* distinct from each other.

Seen as a Communion of communions, each of the constituent Anglican jurisdictions has grown in different ways with distinctive histories, juridical authority and some distinctive traditions. Thus the balance between the traditional "centre" and the constituent parts has changed. Ambiguities in the balance of power and the sources of authority have emerged. Changes in the power resources and in the balances of power are occurring. This is occurring at a time when leadership in the global sense is not cohesively matched to or supported by developed structural forms and protocols. The Commission has been created as a forum for the consideration of these issues, partly because of the lack of alternative spaces of helpful inquiry, discussion and re-negotiation.

Balancing the risks inherent in the situation, there are certain distinctive commitments of Anglicanism. These distinctives are also potential strengths, as well as sources of strain.

Seen as a global organisation, the contemporary Anglican Communion has the advantages of at least four distinctive aspects of social organisation. Each of these is part of its distinctive identity. Each of them is important to its participation in the mission of God and the commission of Christ.

These four distinctive opportunities are:

- It is a voluntary organisation, whose paid resources are built on voluntary effort and commitment
- It is not for profit in material, monetary terms. Such organisations to flourish are oriented by agreed and shared mission
- It is diverse
  - geographically
  - culturally
  - historically
  - theologically
  - hermeneutically
  - structurally
- It is now reliant on the use of non violent forms of power and force.

A significant part of the practical discernment and skill of the Commission will be to work to favour the strengths of these features, and to minimise the potential weaknesses.

We are sent by Jesus on ahead.
However that exposes us to great dangers.
These dangers come from strong outside and hostile forces.

The present challenges of the Communion mirror global forces, without as well as within

I have been invited to offer my own distinctive perspective to the Commission for its consideration. As a missiologist with sociological experience, it seems to me that historically the Communion finds itself to be in the position of having become a global organisation of a very distinctive kind.

As a Communion of communions this experience is relatively new. It places the Anglican Communion in new and unchartered territory. This means that in terms of discerning and carrying out its mission, the Communion finds itself recontextualised. What this means in practical terms is suggested below.

Internal pressures are identity questions

The new situation the Communion finds itself in at the turn of a new millennium is creating an environment in which heated discussion is arising among and between sub groups within the Communion. Leadership is facing the risks associated with identity confusion, ambiguity, conflict and polarisation. The changed and unprecedented contexts facing the Communion also impacts on how the Communion could choose to relate to those outside the Communion. Accordingly the Anglican Communion is in

serious confusion as to how the Communion will express its core principles of identity.

Likewise the Communion is journeying regarding how the structural instruments of unity and the marks of unity are to be interpreted in divergent, unfamiliar and anxiety raising circumstances.

Relationships as well as canon law and particular ecclesial structures are also significant to Anglican identity. Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams put it this way speaking in an interview to the BBC following the October 2003 Primates gathering (ACNS 3640):

> What complicates matters where the Anglican Communion is concerned is that we're not a single monolithic body with a single decision making authority. Our Communion depends a great deal on relationships rather than rules, and it's those relationships that are strained at the moment.

Holding up the global mirror

Internal pressures and anxieties are being exacerbated by unfamiliar global contexts which impact on us all. As a global organisation situated among other global organisations and forces, the Communion is facing unprecedented contexts and outside pressures. These external pressures combine to create additional ambiguity, animosity and anxiety.

They include (indicative only):

- Leadership structures globally are breaking down and/or being significantly redefined in terms of what constitutes appropriate governance
- Organised force is typical in contexts where internal power balances are unstable or where ambiguity creates a vacuum or where minorities force coercion on majorities
- New forms of global organisation have arisen alongside or challenging national/geographic forms. Capital and the associated forces of power are mobile, opportunist, competitive, adversarial, with a limited sense of self interest. Together these pose alternative forms of authority, eg to established states or culture/s or traditions
- The above dynamics favour responses in terms of tribalism and limited spheres of interest politics. Identity/ideology politics and conflicts become common. Alternative sources of authority are sought. In the current Anglican context, single issue politics (around divergent single issues) seek dominance or recognition
- Rapid social change and restructuring globally creates new forms of power and influence, frequently challenging weak or established forms.

Each of these aspects of contemporary globalisation is reflected in different ways and from different perspectives in the churches of the Communion.

Many members and churches of the Communion are subject to these forms of strains and pressures daily in ways which risk honour, dignity, just opportunity and, for some, the basic preconditions of survival.

An important question therefore becomes: what is the global impact for the mission of God for the life of the world if the Anglican Communion itself buckles under these pressures? How can the distinctive and precious resources of our common life be valued and preserved?

The strains and difficulties posed to the Communion by the changed global contexts and external powers cannot be resolved. They can however be managed and responded to, more or less well.

A great strength which the Communion brings is the enormous social capital in which we all share. This social capital includes leadership, labour, physical and moral resources devoted to the sharing of the gospel. This through proclamation and evangelism, prayer and worship, schools and health care, social welfare and caring ministries, communal and national reconciliation, justice and peace making in the face of war and social abuse, even martyrdom.

These are some of the aspects of the shared identity and mission of the Anglican Communion. These forms of proclamation and service, teaching and loving response, social transformation and the safeguarding of the integrity of creation are the marks of mission of the Anglican Communion. In evangelism, mission and witness, the Anglican Communion participates in, and is formed in its identity by, the *missio dei*. As the Primates of the thirty eight Provinces stated in their statement issued following their meeting in Lambeth Palace October 15-16, 2003:

> [We are] led into a deeper commitment to work together, and we affirm our pride in the Anglican inheritance of faith and order and our firm desire to remain part of a Communion, where what we hold in common is much greater than that which divides us in proclaiming the Good News to the world.

We find our common salvation through commitment to each other.
We develop our resilience through common effort.
We find new energies for pulling together as we work together against counter forces from the outside.
We hold on in hope.
We wait for the life of Jesus to come in new ways.

Reassessing and reframing our resources

It is my understanding that there is espoused respect for the centre, represented by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Primates. In circumstances of ideological/secessionist conflict, the following questions are relevant. What are the risks and costs of disaffiliation, locally and globally? What perceptual loyalties, what ecclesial shifts, what protocols will be necessary to preserve the benefits of common strength and distinctive contribution globally, as well as provide satisfaction internally? What relationships (personal and non personal) need attention?

In the light of the above it is not surprising that within the Communion, its sense of its own internal resources is under strain. Traditional internal resources include:

Scripture (and its interpretation)
historical narrative and interpretation,
theological commitments and discussion,
development and stewardship of resources: for example liturgy, property, the capacity for authentic, gospel connections between local churches and Dioceses to their wider community/ies and societies
distribution of resources (including leadership, money and power) and mechanisms of structural governance.

Each of these poses significant and different ways of approaching identity questions.

Resources additional to the above which are highlighted in this paper are based on a three fold strength. This triad of strengths and supports additional to the above includes:

- Consideration of the structural-institutional arrangements not for profit global organisations of a similar size are finding helpful and effective. For example, I note that experience with large NGOs suggests that memoranda of understanding, heads of agreement, policies and formal protocols are necessary mechanisms for their ordering of social organisation. Similarly in NGOs, institutional mission is reliant on non coercive force, and rules based on precedent and local application of policy agreements rather than on uniform law. Synchronic (ie historical) constructions of institutional coherence need to be assessed against diachronic (ie contemporary social) constructions of institutional leadership and governance when applied to organisations with a global span. Such inquiry may assist the Primates for example in their assessment and discernment of their "enhanced responsibilities".
- A continuing focus on the missional identity of Anglicans the sharing of stories from around the Communion. This will provide constructive energy and will open different parts of the Communion to the diverse ways in which the life of God is being shared and experienced through Anglicans and Dioceses and Provinces in mission across the globe.
- Disciplined attention to the larger social good that forms and motivates the life and identity of the *ecclesia*. Internal issues and concerns of teaching and building up, of strengthening people in their relationship with God and each other, are linked to the outward focus which is the mission of Christ in the life of the world.

Managing risks

In the light of the above, the following suggestions are made for consideration by the Commission in its work:

- Societies and groups with supported institutions, rules and norms for managing conflict and established forms of governance are better placed to peacefully navigate change.

> Strengthening the capacity for conflict resolution is a key part of leadership and governance today. Groups with fragile social bonds, little consensus on values, and limited commitment to shared interests and identity are likely to buckle.

- In my own work with churches and judicatories and in my reading of ecclesiology I find that churches are apt to become self absorbed in how they construct their sense of identity. It is easy for groups under pressure to contract in their thinking processes. It is easy for our hearts to harden against one another in resistance to what the Book of Common Prayer calls "the imagination of our hearts".

  Structured processes of listening, of modelling the capacity for empathy, narratives which stand participants in the shoes/sandals of another, experiences of effective common action across heart-mind divides are likely to be very helpful

- I note in the documents which accompany the establishment of the Commission the frequent reference to anxiety. I wish to stress from my own work the importance and helpfulness of reducing anxiety in an overwrought system.

  Careful consideration needs to be given to the reduction of anxiety, including in the Commission's own relationships, tone, language and communication. This is a preliminary to re-establishing trust, and establishing credible common exploratory ground

- While internal pressures and traditions are important, the primary identity of the church is to be outward focussed. With respect to the task facing the Commission, outward and onward focus clearly has local-global dimensions, and insider-outsider issues to navigate.

  Conflict and responses that focuses on the internal issues alone are likely to be debilitating. By contrast new options become possible if highly polarised groups can find common commitment around a higher compelling vision and outward focus, and through recognition of the benefits of joint action in the face of common counter forces. With respect to internal focus, majority groups will move from self preoccupation and defensiveness if the vision and identity match is compelling enough. Similarly entrenched systems are given capacity to shift if there are foreseeable stages. Negotiated change or mediated/arbitrated outcomes around larger common goals and interests are sustainable if sub group interests and identity are protected or enhanced

- Contemporary global tensions are being experienced differently by those in the Communion.

  Analysis of the Commission of the present difficulties and tensions will include consideration of:
  * Collegiality
  * The impact and dynamics within local contexts
  * Cross cultural engagement
  *Global dimensions.

- Mapping will be differentiated and multivocal. However a critical part of the dynamics is that different global locations and contexts impact on perceptions.

What drives and feeds conflict is the perceptions and definitions of the participants. These perceptions are dynamic, and can also be rigid-unstable. Different participants and social-cultural-tribal locations describe what is culturally and socially desirable, or possible or acceptable.

When evening came,
Jesus was there alone,(up the mountain by himself),
but by this time the boat, battered by the waves,
was far from the land,
for the wind was against them.

When we are in danger we are afraid.
We feel life is at risk.
We are aware of the elements set against us.

Storm and tempest: Pressures and counterforces

Distinguishing presenting issues from underlying issues

The current pressures are certainly about distinctive and very divisive ecclesial issues. While human sexuality is a key presenting issue, it is not the only issue raised, as the Commission is well aware. In the statement issued by the Anglican News Service on 15 October, 2003 Archbishop Robin Eames makes very clear that there is in fact a cluster of complexly inter related issues. These reflect diverse concerns and, in some cases, very particular cultural perceptions and responses. This particular issue, as the Primates have noted, is also linked to a diversity of interpretations with respect to the authority of Scripture and its interpretation.

Some examples of the complexity and the diversity of perceptions follow. As the presenting issue, human sexuality is a powerful religious and social symbol. It is charged with strong emotional attachments and is linked to different social constructions. For example human sexuality issues is characterised in some environments as the key litmus of Biblical faith and moral faithfulness. In some quarters issues of sexuality have become linked to hermeneutics and an alleged battle for the Bible. In other quarters vigilant groups define the issues in terms of rights and tolerance. Yet others base deep grounds for concern in issues of respect, social scandal, public shame and disgrace. All claim substantive grounds to be orthodox and faithful to Anglicanism.

It is in the interests of the Commission and the Communion for the Commission to treat all significant issues identified in a substantive manner. I am myself of the view that the homosexuality issue is a primary presenting issue around which other issues are attaching. For many the attachments are substantive, for some the linkages are opportunistic. Human sexuality is not the issue on which the future of the Communion can or ought to be navigated. Discernment of the appropriate meta-issues around

which constructive discussions and potential agreements can be affirmed and/or negotiated is, in my view, the route forward.

Koinonia as a stabilising energy

If the task is re framed in this way, it is important to take as a working basis that groups are mostly well intentioned. This is to take *koinonia* as a significant basis of workable relationships.

Maintaining space hospitable to others

I have already noted that social relations will be conducted in at least three different kinds of spaces: in public space, in social space and in more proximate interpersonal space. (The fourth kind of space is intimate space which, as we are all aware, has become highly charged and inflammatory.) Each of these spaces has behaviours, courtesies and norms appropriate to it. Public, social and interpersonal spaces each offer distinctive opportunities for safe space and exploratory ground, *given favourable conditions and wise selection appropriate to context.*

Each space too mandates different kinds of communication opportunities and styles. Appreciation and application of the opportunities of each kind of space will greatly assist the likelihood of communication being appropriate to context.

Sharp conflict could be more likely to be defused and the level of aggression reduced by moving from intimate-personal space to public-social spaces and language. In this shift, ordinary social graces such as giving space, exercising tact and discretion are normative. Social graces of being neighbourly, saving face, and being culturally appropriate are all significant contributors to common weal in the face of common woe.

At this point I wish to affirm again the role of the Commission in terms of its position and role in public space and in providing a variety of kinds of safe and hospitable spaces where common identity can be explored, losses acknowledged, opportunities tested, risks assessed, constituents' willingness to follow tested, and where political and social face can be saved. Against counter forces and pressures a significant role of the Commission is to create and preserve "holding places" where such work can be explored.

Groups experiencing danger risk falling apart.
We feel tempted to withdraw, or to blame or to fight one another.

Experiencing third parties in constructive ways

One of the practical challenges facing the Commission concerns its role and relationships with respect to third parties. The Commission has been given mandate as a third party in constructive intervention. This authority is likely to include the oversight and facilitation of constructive third party intervention by others. These kinds of roles and relationships make unhealthy triangulation a significant danger.

With respect to third party dynamics the following are suggested:

- The potentially important role of internal third parties and indigenous peace makers
- Emphasis on building constituencies and capacity within and between groups is likely to be more productive than one shot, external mediation efforts
- Learn from particular cultures how to manage conflicts in a sustained way over time in their context/s.

With respect to communication and negotiation in dispersed and cross cultural contexts, attention is drawn to the following:

- Reciprocal communication is more likely to occur at horizontal levels across the organisation. Where there are imbalances in position or power relationships, mechanisms for feedback are critical. For example top downwards communication is typically one way, or links with adjacent groups only
- In tribal and more face to face social groups, trusted communication is typically via clan and tribe. Thus the "bridges of God" are personal connection and trust, sponsorship by indigenous leadership, host-guest relationships, and time. These are contexts where key opinion leaders are located near the top, and who have the capacity socially to explore and subsequently enact decisions in connection with their group
- Other contexts are larger, heterogenous, impersonal and frequently characterised by aggression. Here communication is via opinion leaders, allowing time for the effective diffusion of ideas. Challenges to belief or action must be addressed to the groups socially capable of making such decisions.
- On sensitive issues, in most social dynamics, it is preferable to speak to significant others (or their delegates) than about them.

The experience and expertise of the Commission and its resources will obviously add wisdom, discernment and practical expertise to these critical issues.

If we are to survive great danger,
We must focus on preserving life.
We commit ourselves to life-preserving action.
To focus on distractions or to become rigid with fear
will place our life in even greater danger.

Finding focus through the common ground

Of very significant concern is the levels of negative energy in the current situation/s. These appear to be escalating, and the middle ground rapidly shrinking. I note that if issues are to be discussable, the key to systems shifting lies with the middle ground and in the creation of shared ground. In the heat of the vortex many come to believe the future lies with the vocal margins or with strong minority groups. Shrill minorities and highly charged entrenched positions are not the key to resolution. Discernment of the substantive issues and interests from the distracting or the opportunist will be key to the effectiveness of the Commission's work.

This task is easier said than done. By way of concrete analogy about situational mapping, I offer the following illustration. The "map" of the London underground was a unique design and this style of map has subsequently been copied around the world. It is graphic and indicative. It is user friendly. It does not reflect the literal route in all its deviations, twists and turns. It does justice however to a complex system. It provides accurate orientation, overall direction, navigation and identification of parallel lines, single line routes, critical pressure points and intersections of connection. The alternative would be a "spaghetti map", a series of explanations going in all directions, creating confusion as to destinations, or even barriers to proceeding.

Undoubtedly members of the Commission bring much experience and many competencies. These include principles and common experience of creating means and mechanisms to foster shared identity, without compulsion to be or become "close". Appropriate shared public symbols, and most particularly language, are critical.

How and what we communicate strongly influences the possible outcomes

I wish to stress at this point the issue of language. In my own work over the past few years I have come to realised and appreciate the power of language to create being. Constructive and rich use of language is highly correlated with healthy organisational life. For example focus on conflict language is likely to compound conflicts. Hence in this paper I have focussed on journey, on common mission and the establishment of common interests. Common interests and a compelling vision are the overture to the motivation and establishment of shared identity.

Language choice and probably the invention of new language will be critical. Important too will be the vesting of traditional language with new power and significances. Some indicators of language choices and their impact follow. For example the mirroring by the Commission of labelling, scapegoating or separatist language will increase polarisation. It will also reduce the capacity for openness to the other. Anxiety language increases anxiety. A calm presence helps reduce it. The repetition of bifurcated (either-or) definitions and analysis will compound and compulse ideological polarisation.

To quite a significant degree the future we wish to arrive at is established by the language, metaphors and symbols we choose to use and affirm. In the present circumstances the perception of being listened to could create the environment in

which perceptual shifts and new responses become possible. New forms (and forums) of discussion, new language and new structural forms and agreed protocols, along with a certain lightness of touch and openness of spirit are all likely to be necessary.

Using indigenous forms of communication and indigenous authority

Given the cross cultural nature of the Communion, effective communication also needs to incorporate into its structures the valid indigenous forms of the respective sub groups within the social organisation as a whole. Establishing points of contact between groups and interests will be critical to reducing risks and threats and strengthening possibilities for common life. Coherent common action will be led by information power, exchange power, problem solving, mediation, conciliation and structural justice. Authoritative communicators will be those who have something worthwhile to communicate, ie those with common identification. They will also have social authority to make decisions or to address and influence the groups who have the social authority to make decisions.

Our choices in the face of danger reflect our beliefs about power.
What sources of power and influence do we have? How will we use these?
For what purpose? With what results?

Power, influence and position

In this section I have meditated on space and language in terms of maximising available opportunities and minimising possible constraints. I wish to conclude with a little more elaboration with respect to power and power dynamics.

In a post colonial setting the present power configurations make the Communion as a global entity vulnerable in ways it has not experienced before. For example "the centre" and the identity of the global Communion is reliant on co operative power from local settings. However co operative power between Provinces, regions and Dioceses in many instances is weak. In these circumstances experience, capacity and aptitude for co operative power is also likely to be weak.

In the presenting situation, Provinces have weak co operative power between each other, *and weak motivation to exercise their capacity for co operative power in the current circumstances.*

It appears that Dioceses are exercising their co operative power along different kinds of alignments and in accordance with different kinds of motivations. It is not that co operative power is not or cannot be exercised. It is rather that co operative power is being exercised selectively. Critically also, co operation is not simply being forged along geographic/national lines. Alignments (and threat) are motivated by ideology. Alliances are also linked to economic power and resources.

From the perspectives of the centre and the Communion as a global entity, the moves towards disaffiliation are zero sum responses. This is a dangerous dynamic. The threats secession and moves towards alternative sources of authority also reflect the high sense of frustration and limited sense of power negotiation options and channels. It is a power context where options for those dissenting are dangerously polarised. This, at least in part, is because

options are perceived to be limited, or are being constructed as limited,
because enabling institutional frameworks are either disabled or not available and/or
because certain interests are promoted by organisational stalemate and instability.

By its very nature efforts towards co operative power needs to be linked to other forms of power. For example information power, networking power, personal power and institutional power. Networking power and institutional mechanisms can link co operation to sanctions and to compliance/conformity. The present situation exposes an organisation which is vulnerable institutionally, given expectations of problem solving which has been requested from the initiative of "the centre". However "the ship" of global governance is not presently empowered or equipped for the place it finds itself.

Power is also exercised by positions and forms of influence which are authorised by those being led. Non compliance and the exercise of sanctions are forms of power.

My own experience suggests:

- Co operative power needs to be supplemented by other forms of power and leadership influence, non violent force and resistance, and the availability of sanctions
- Resistance to abusive uses of power is part of responsible leadership
- Non violent forms of power, force and resistance can be mobilised to resist violence
- Unequal power balances perpetuate disequilibrium or stalemates. Management and perhaps reconciliation of divergent interests is linked to greater justice in the use and balance of power
- The politics of polarisation and single issue politics favour enemy making within our own ranks. Outward focus and common effort towards opportunities and against common threats helps secure a more unitive vision. It is mutual interdependence rather than unilateral autonomies which secures moral force which commands respect.

And early in the morning
Jesus came walking towards them on the sea….
And they cried out in fear.
But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said,
"Take heart, it is I: do not be afraid."
Peter answered him, "Lord if it is you,
Command me to come to you on the water."
Jesus said, "Come!"

Jesus teaches us that we save our life by sharing it.

Experiencing fear: taking heart, taking risks

The delicate and diverse sensitivities facing the Communion at this time can be seen as a complex political emergency. As the Commission is well aware, discussions and settlements will need to be conducted at international, regional and relational levels. Cultural awareness and recognition at all levels are likely to be necessary. In the process changes in institutional discourse and structures are likely to come into view, unless the various kinds of polarisations and instabilities are going to be sustained or fracture.

Efforts to secure *shalom* by international agents and agencies need to be linked to the role of indigenous moderators and peace makers. Whether the Commission will seek input from a third party outsider, with international experience, in the role of adviser on global-cultural-ideological dynamics could be seriously considered. Local contacts and effective "listening posts" and feedback sources are of course crucial to the work.

Using indigenous forms of language and indigenous authority

Experience suggests that a helpful emphasis of the Commission and its successors is on building constituencies with the will and the capacity to manage conflict over time. Another key resource is to learn from distinctive cultures how to manage conflict in a sustained way over time. By way of specific example it is probably helpful to note here that Western style resolution styles frequently favour up front relationships, assertive time scales, expectation of all participant participation as the hall mark of agreement, "positions" and trade offs.

Other cultures favour more indirect and highly relational methods, where saving the face of the other is critical, with more subtle forms of understanding of what constitutes "agreement" and where longer time frames for reflection and constituent discussion off the table are examples of productive dynamics. The experience of the Commission will further add to and nuance these examples.

Sensitive issues and their discussion and resolution have their own diverse rhythm, including strong emotions. Examples include fears of abandonment, risk of identity confusion or even death, disorientation, withdrawal and triumphalism-despair. Holding on and travelling through takes commitment and discipline, greatly assisted by agreed processes at the outset.

Surprised by grace

I recall in my own work how frequently the rhythm shifts, like a boat on a wild sea. However patient and expectant waiting can be gifted with moments of sheer grace. Some examples follow. These gifts could include a significant perceptual shift, a reframing of the issues, the capacity for deep empathy with the situation and pain of another, the willingness to share or shift ground or to trade spaces. These are moments of grace to be received with gratitude, respected and acknowledged, and not frittered or abused. It is of course worship and prayer which create the environment in which Divine grace will be expected, recognised and welcomed in gratitude.

Staying alert

Part of the risk and perceived danger of the current situation by many of the participants is that the current tensions are not amenable to predictable solutions. The Communion finds itself in the position it is in because significant and familiar ways of working are no longer working.

In this kind of ambiguity, some well motivated intentions attempt to fill the void. Charts for unchartered waters begin to appear. Common examples in many situations include working along previously effective lines only harder, adopting limited "solutions" based on fixed positions and particular viewing points which satisfy particular groups, or providing comfort through bi polar analysis and "in-group" solutions to differentiated problems and eliminating any other groups from awareness or consideration.

The courage to choose and to take appropriate risks by key participants is always a part of the peace building story. The heart and mind to choose the big story in the face of partisan safety or aggrandisement is also the peace building way. Similarly creative option seeking, openness to the opportunity of the unexpected, can be the heart of journeying in a new way.

So Peter got out of the boat,
started walking on the water,
and came towards Jesus.
But when he noticed the strong wind,
he became frightened,
and beginning to sink, he cried out,
"Lord save me!"

Leaders explore new options and make new discoveries such that others can follow.

The will to reach out and walk forward is uneven

I have suggested that the work of the Commission will be operating at structural-protocol/constitutional levels as well as at relational-community-cultural levels. Co operation is currently being sought between involved international elements and local and internal ones. The goal is sustained commitment over time.

This goal is under strain where parties are pursuing "needs" rather than interests. When ground is claimed and issues framed in terms of "needs", positions quickly become fixed. "Needs" are self preoccupied and self focussed. I find in practice that they become non negotiable. There is also significant and real threat where the tone is tense, vicious and "irrational".

By contrast by exploring “interests”, the capacity for relational empathy becomes possible. Groups defined by interests can develop “currency” of shared ground. Identified common interests provide an authentic basis for shared work, and shared outcomes of mutual benefit with other groups.

Commitment over time to contact points of common interests is especially important in federated structures such as the Anglican Communion. Here the centre is relatively formally weak, though it is endowed with considerable historical, positional, symbolic and moral power and authority. In the contemporary Anglican Communion, significant identity and decision making power and authority are also dispersed locally. Where formal structures are federated, negotiations are necessarily complex, even convoluted. Processes of change are slow. These are givens in this form of structure and governance.

Leadership energy can be dissipated by counter tensions

However, in parallel with global forces and pressures, more disciplined agreement about authority structures is breaking down. There are not obvious mechanisms or agreed protocols as to how severe disagreement will be discussed and handled at the global level of the organisation (or at least not obvious or legitimate to some). Withdrawal/secession is being used as a key threat. Disaffiliation is being seriously discussed as the normative form of relation.

Traditional areas of tension are shifting, also in parallel with global conflict. Traditional areas of boundary and authority tension continue: ie territory, economic resources, East/West-North/South. Globalisation is also compounding and extending the tensions around communal identity. Communal identity is already a perennial issue, and a threshold issue, in organisations which are values based--as is the Anglican Communion.

In addition as traditional patterns of authority and order are under challenge, “exclusionist” politics and identities seem persuasive as alternative sources of identity. Such dynamics provide a shield from economic disparity, and defend unequal power relationships. They also promise structure in the face of ambiguity and the fear of chaos.

Stress and distress can be soothed by well placed risks

This raises the significant issues of pace and timing. The discernment and appropriate calibration of pace and timing will be crucial at certain junctures. Part of the critical judgment of the Commission will be to register and to respond where stress and distress are intolerable. The Commission needs to be in touch with the distress at all levels.

In the meta narrative of the journey story here being meditated upon, distress does not prevent forward movement. The timing however of new movement within the story is not haphazard. Manageable levels of distress, coupled with trusted support firmly in view, permits risk and a new understanding of a new world. Through calculated risk, leadership initiative, and emotional and social resilience a new world-view is made possible.

It is not the whole group who moves in the same way together. Significant and suitably timed leadership and symbolic acts, in the face of distress, create a sustainable holding pattern. At the same time these same acts create new kinds of spaces within which new capacities, realignments and possibilities are imaginable and discussable.

Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him,
"You of little faith, why did you doubt?

Doubt is part of risk.
But faith is supported by Jesus and nearness to him.

Establishing the bases for shared legitimacy

Faith-with-some doubting and faith, with some doubting, is part of the dynamics of all discipleship groups. Leadership too is hazardous, and these are dangerous times.

What some participants perceive as "conservative" forces are in fact legitimate tradition keepers and tradition bearers. It is also part of the paradox of change that tradition keepers are also the seed bearers of productive change. Thus the moderate middle of tradition bearers and change agents have a lot of potential common ground, *given favourable contexts, motivations and relationships.* The danger of the present situation is that significant middle ground is open to being co opted by strong voices located further towards the margins. This makes the possibility of serious instability a critical threat.

Another of the risks in the current situation is that the current norms of knowledge are not sufficient to the challenges. This will be tested by the Commission. The number of issues in the present confluence, and the vehemence, are strong indicators that a significant reframing of the opportunities and a re assessment of the risks facing the Communion is a necessary part of the structured conversation at many levels.

When they got into the boat
the wind ceased.

Dangerous times may pass.
Life has power to create and renew.

The capacity of human memory allows communities of faith to hallow the stories of adversity overcome, of forces and counterforces calmed. Fear gives way to recognition, separation is followed by restoration. New life is brought into being on

new terms. The long night brings disarming surprises. Established forms of authority are understood in a new light. New understandings of worthship recentre or reaffirm loyalties and allegiances.

The capacity for human imagination opens communities of faith to re imagine possibilities. The capacity for communal resilience offers opportunities to steadfastness which extend beyond the current horizons or trajectories.

It is however a costly story, where the cost is experienced throughout. This in different ways, by all the participants.

When they had crossed over
they came to land
at the other side.

The other side is where we are headed—together.

This is the shore we cannot yet see.
It is the shoreline which is not visible to view for much of the journey.
We do however know that it is there, and that the journey is accompanied.

It is not possible, nor appropriate, to predict the outcomes in any specific sense. The journey is hazardous and open ended. However in the narrative selected as a suggestive parable for the purposes of this contribution, the mixed company arrive together. They are intact. They are also changed by the journey, by one another and most truly by Jesus, the Son of God.

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2 February, 2004

The topic this paper has been requested to address is as follows:

"Reasons for the Anglican Communion from a Missiological Perspective: Arguments for an ecclesiology which might speak to our mission in the Anglican Communion and in defence of us holding together."

I have précised the title to be: What is the Anglican Communion for?

What is the Anglican Communion for?

Chris Sugden

"We are firmly set on our task of putting a dynamic missionary emphasis at the heart of our life as a Communion" Called to Live and Proclaim the Good News – Lambeth 1998 Report of Section II p. 77

1. The Context of the Communion

1.1 The Global Historical Setting When we need to locate the Anglican Communion missiologically, we need to locate it in its **global historical setting.** This is true to its roots - in the separation of the English from the Roman Church when the interests of reformers to indicate that their's was no new sect but was continuous with the church throughout history and the interest of the king to indicate that he was the sole sovereign coincided. In the world of today the world Anglican Communion has a potentially vital and unique role to play.

The current global historical setting is analysed particularly acutely by Susanne Hoeber Rudolph and James Piscatori in Transnational Religion and Fading States [1] Rudolph and Piscatori argue that following the end of the cold war, the "anarchic space" between states has increasingly been occupied by Non-Governmental Organisations. This was because the threat of war shifted from war "outside", between states to conflicts within states. The arena then of international engagement was increasingly occupied by people such as environmentalists and development activists who shared the same purposes and practice irrespective of their national locations. Transnational networks and solidarities emerged which bypass the nation state system. Global NGO fora have broken the monopoly of states on the representation of domestic opinion. This transnational civic society does not seek to replace the state but provides an alternative, complementary to the state, for representation and bringing change.

The Anglican Communion, like other global religious organisations, formal and informal, has found increasing significance and influence in this space. One writer suggests that the Roman Catholic Church is the first citizen of the global civic society.

To ask "What is the Anglican Communion for?" is to ask at least "What will the Anglican Communion represent in this transnational civic society space?"

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[1] Transnational Religion and Fading States by Susanne Hoeber Rudolph and James Piscatori (Colorado, Westview Press, 1997).

It is here we then have to ask what is meant by the Anglican Communion?

Is it the Anglican Communion as expressed in and represented by its organizational hierarchy – its instruments of communion? This is the Communion from above.

Or is it the Anglican Communion as expressed in and represented by the countless interactions, visits, friendships, and partnerships that criss cross the Communion between individual Anglicans, parishes, mission agencies, and clergy of all ranks. These are neither organized nor monitored by the central hierarchy or bureaucracy. They represent in a most significant way the Anglican voluntary principle. This is the Anglican Communion from below.

Both above and below are necessary. Rudolph makes very clear that while the energy and development of such transnational civic society from below is very dynamic, their ability to make an international impact and to effect change in the local context depends on whether they are linked by a transnational civic society from above: "Without connections to higher and more formal policy levels in civil society and the state, these networks may fail to generate consequential social change" [2]

The Anglican Communion in God's goodness in this divided world does provide an important framework within which many Christians especially in Africa and South Asia, but throughout East Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, can be in a world fellowship on an equality with those from the economically advantaged nations.

I ask what we mean by the Anglican Communion to help us clarify what might be at risk in matters of impaired communion. The commission's questions relate primarily to the Anglican Communion from above – the governance hierarchy. The most complete expression of the Anglican Communion from above is I suggest the Lambeth Conference – if for the purposes of argument we accept that the basic ecclesial unit is the diocese (not the province) and that the bishops are sovereign symbols of unity. If the Lambeth Conference is at risk, the Communion from above is at risk. If the Lambeth Conference is ignored then the Communion from above is ignored.

If the Communion from above breaks down, what will be the impact on the Anglican Communion from below? It would prejudice its role as a transnational religious organisation in the transnational civic society space. The Communion from below will continue to maintain and strengthen precisely those informal and grass-roots links which sustain its life but lack the strength and integrity of being a coherent multi-cultural global fellowship.

1.2 This setting is one in which people no longer find their primary relationships determined by geography but rather in a mixture of networks and localities.[3] This gives rise to the notion of "permeability" of geographical jurisdictions. "Mission Shaped Church", a report by the Church of England with a foreword by the Archbishop of Canterbury says "The

[2] Rudolph and Piscatori Preface op.cit p. 15

[3] The Church of England Report Mission Shaped Church – church planting and fresh expressions of church in a changing context (Church House Publishing 2004).

notion of permeability offers a framework for both respecting and crossing parish boundaries. The argument for permeability is the need for the Church's mission to engage with people in the way they live their lives in a mixture of networks and localities. The safeguards are the stress on diocesan identity, Episcopal brokerage, complementary mission aims and the mutual affirmation of diversity". [4] The Lambeth Conference noted in 1998 noted that "people's places of living are marginal to their places of meaning". [5]We have to ask whether the Anglican Communion is best any longer defined in the context of mission by solely geographical considerations?

1.3. This setting is one in which there is no truth except your truth and my truth. We cannot live like this in a healthy society. In the UK the Hutton Inquiry found that allegations made against the UK government were unfounded. Some responded by attacking Lord Hutton as being one-sided and unrepresentative. They would not accept his findings on a simple matter of fact – did a reporter correctly report an interview that he had been given by a weapons inspector – no; did the BBC adequately check whether his report was accurate; no. This is the media culture that dominates British society. The Anglican Communion is called to witness not to the truth it has constructed but what it has received, and been given in its vocation as stated in its motto: "If you hold to my teaching, you really are my disciples. Then you will know the truth and the truth shall make you free."[6]

2. What is the Anglican Communion for from a theological perspective?

What the Anglican Communion is for, is what any communion or fellowship of Christians is for – to witness to the kingdom of God, the love of the Father in Jesus Christ, and the life of the Spirit which energises it. The mission we are engaged in is not the mission of the church, it is the mission of God. And the mission of God as expressed in Jesus ministry was the mission of the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God was the fulfillment of God's promises and purposes in creation. Jesus proclaimed the Kingdom is at hand, repent and believe the gospel. The prayer of the kingdom, (the Lord's prayer), spoke of the new relationships with God, by which we could call God Abba, Father and the new relationships between people (those who are forgiven by the Father must in their turn forgive). New relationships with the physical creation were expressed in Jesus' healing miracles and ultimately in his resurrection which vindicated his claim that the kingdom had come in his ministry. The mission of the kingdom is about transforming all human relationships. The Lambeth Conference report on Mission and Ministry in 1988 stated: "His [Jesus'] mission was to announce and signify it [the kingdom of God]- to open people's eyes to the fact that God was with them in a new way for grace and judgement. This aim Jesus accomplished primarily through preaching, teaching and healing, and through his life, death and resurrection. These become the Church's model for mission." [7] The Lambeth Conference of 1998 resolved: " proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, forgiveness through the cross of Christ and deliverance from the power of Satan, will seek: spiritual renewal of God's people;

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[4] Op cit p 139

[5] Called to Live and Proclaim the Good News – Lambeth 1998 Report of Section II (Morehouse Publishing 1998) p. 17

[6] John 8.32

[7] The Truth Shall Make you free – the Lambeth Conference 1988 Report on Mission and Ministry p 31.

transformation in the lives of children and youth, transformation in the relations between ethnic groups and nations….transformation in our worship and proper use of Scriptures."[8]

Paul takes this concept of the kingdom and expresses it in the language of the new age and life in the Spirit. He shows how these new right relationships with God made possible through Jesus' ministry, death, resurrection and giving of the Spirit addressed and transformed the most fundamental corruption of human social relationships in his day: the divide between Jews and Gentiles. So in the Roman correspondence he tells the Jewish Christians that the Gentile Christians are enabling them to recover their heritage in Abraham, righteousness by faith. He tells the Gentile Christians that they are grafted in to a Jewish tree so should not despise the "weak in faith" Jews. In the Ephesian correspondence he argues that the mystery which the Church is to declare to the principalities and powers of evil who bring division out of the differences that God placed in creation, is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body. Throughout Paul's understanding of unity is unity that brings together Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female in the one Christian people and family of God. This unity is the evidence that the cross has been effective in breaking down the barriers of hostility between these separated groups. [9]

So for Paul communion, Christian fellowship, is highly dynamic; it is an expression of the life of the Spirit in transforming human social relationships. It is empowered by the Spirit. It is a first fruit, and an earnest of our inheritance in the final kingdom of God. It is costly, achieved by Jesus who reconciled both groups to God in one body through the cross. For John communion draws these groups into the close relationships of the Godhead. [10]

The mission of the church is the mission of the one triune God. This requires unity and consistency in what the church is heard to say is the word of the one God. The one Catholic Church is a necessary corollary of the mission of the one God: it is founded on the nature of the dominical commission to make disciples of all nations, to teach them all that Jesus taught and to gather into one the people of God.

For this reason it is most important that churches in one part of the communion do not put stumbling blocks or hindrances in the way of the witness of churches in other parts of the communion. Anything that anyone does in one part of the communion that hinders mission in another part is a very serious matter. We are accountable to God and one another in our mutual support and interdependence in the mission of God. There is a biblical principle not to proceed with actions even if adiaphora that cause another to stumble (1 Cor 8-10, Romans 14). The Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission reported in 2003:

> 20. It should also be noted that in Anglicanism if a proposed change is considered amongst the adiaphora and is also known to be a matter of significant dispute, there has been a reluctance to proceed. This compares with the Pauline principle (1 Cor 8-10; Rom 14) about not proceeding with actions, even if adiaphora, if they cause another to stumble.

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[8] Resolution V.4 in Called to Live and Proclaim the Good News – Lambeth 1998 Report of Section II op.cit. p. 15

[9] The references are to Romans 4, Romans 11 and 14, Ephesians 2-3, Galatians 3.28

[10] The references are to Romans 8:23; Ephesians 2 14-16; John 17.

> 21. A problem arises over innovations about which there are different views in the Church concerning the relative weight or significance to be accorded to a matter. Such are the matters in question. How ought the Church to proceed in such situations? A principle here might be that if the dispute is: intense (eg. generates high degree of sustained and unresolved debate that threatens the unity of the Anglican Communion; or that requires urgent attention) extensive (eg. not confined to one section or region of the Church; has significant implications for mission and ecumenical relations; has a wider social impact) and substantial (concerning an actual issue, and not for example, simply being generated by the media) then the matter cannot remain simply for the local Church (e.g. the diocese) to handle.[11]

The Church of England in South Africa still remains formally outside the Anglican Communion not least because its stance on apartheid was judged to be less than fully Christian and would therefore hamper Christian witness against such racism. The Virginia report specifically counsels that "Attentiveness, in the Christian community, is a specific quality of interacting among members of Christ's body. Christian attentiveness means deciding to place the understanding of others ahead of being understood. …keeping these needs and agendas [of others] in mind when making one's own decisions and developing one's own practices."[12] Communion that honours Christ is about mutual fellowship and accountability in discerning the mind of Christ.

Anything less than a mutually recognizing communion does not express the depth of fellowship and oneness that Jesus prayed for, and which the Spirit promises and yearns for in the hearts of believers. Unity in diversity alone does not adequately express the fulness of this communion or the oneness of God. Unity in diversity alone strains at the very notion of Catholicity. Unity in diversity alone cannot be the watchword of any solution to this current crisis because it is not an adequate expression of the oneness of God, the oneness of his mission and the oneness of his people. Unity in diversity alone could be applied to the Hindu religions of India, as it was by western orientalists who classed them all together in one religion of Hinduism, unknown in India. The inclusivity that is sought in Christian faith and community must be held within the understanding of Catholicity and within the understanding of the transformation of life entailed by the command to make disciples of the nations according to the teaching of Jesus. Why teach and disciple if your intention is not to transform?

3. The implications of being a Communion in obedience to the Mission of God.

The Bible's focus on the mission of the kingdom of God as transformation poses for us a question as we address the current crisis. Do we accept sub-optimal ethics which base policy on non-normative situations as an unavoidable expression of our existence in the world as we find it, by proposing faithfulness as the criterion for accepting relationships which might otherwise be highly promiscuous? Or do we witness to the transforming power of the resurrection? In making this choice we will need to ask to what else might we need to apply the principle of sub-optimal ethics? Might we accept abortion on demand as a lesser evil than the exposure of girl babies in China? Might we accept an allowable level of study of child pornography on the internet as a lesser evil than paedophilia?

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[11] IATDC on www.anglicancommunion.org/ecumenical/commissions, paras 20 and 21.
[12] The Virginia Report (Morehouse Publishing 1999) page 40

Further, even if sub-optimal ethics are to be allowed (as in Moses allowing divorce) it is clear that for the New Testament, sub-optimal ethics were not allowable for those having oversight of the church (an overseer was to be husband of one wife in a setting in which the image of the church and its relationships are described as family). We have to ask seriously if sub-optimal ethics are compatible with a united confession of one Lord, one faith, one baptism?

A united confession of Jesus as Lord requires ethical as well as ecclesiological and eucharistic communion. It is well pointed out in the Virginia report that "in some cases it may be possible and necessary for the universal Church to say with firmness that a particular local practice or theory is incompatible with Christian faith. This was said for example to those churches in South Africa which practiced and justified racial discrimination at the Eucharist." [13] The 1998 Lambeth Conference clearly set itself against some aspects of culture in affirming “Unlike our society, the Gospels see sin and debt as fundamentally inter-related”. [14]Similarly in addressing the issue of polygamy, while the Church extended fellowship to polygamists within the church as a pastoral requirement, there was no provision for a polygamist to be ordained to the priesthood, preside at the Eucharist or be consecrated to the episcopate. There are clear ethical guidelines in scripture as to who may represent the unity and truth of the church in its oversight.

4. What makes the Communion Anglican?

This testimony comes from a submission to the Commission:

> “The Eames Commission will have accomplished its mission if by the end of the year we do not have to go to a different church every Sunday in a creative search for a proxy of an orthodox Episcopal church to join. The churches of other denominations we have attended are warm and friendly and traditional, but they are not Anglican. Do you know what I mean? There is no place in the diocese to "drive to" and no clergyperson (as yet) in the diocese to provide pastoral leadership, much less episcopal oversight. We have resigned our leadership positions in our diocese and parish, and long for a new faithful orthodox Anglican community in our area.”

How do independent provinces regard themselves as Anglican? Is it just through positive law of governance? How much weight does that carry with the average church goer? What qualities and assumptions do they expect to find in a church which identifies itself as Anglican? What was the Anglican consensus?

The Anglican Church brought about a particular expression of the church. It was marked by freedom to express its mission in culturally appropriate forms, especially in the language of scripture and worship. It was marked by rejection of centralised and imposed bureaucracy using Latin. It exercised freedom to enable mission in its culture but was very concerned to stress its continuity with the original catholic church by emphasising the scriptures, the teaching and practice of the church of the first five centuries as being most approximate to the time and will of

[13] Virginia Report op.ci.t p 34
[14] Lambeth Report 1998 op cit. p 7 quoting Chad Myers, New Economy of Grace, Sojourners, July/Aug 1998.

the Lord, and engaging with the law of things - how things were in creation and how new discoveries were revealing them to be.[15] To be Anglican is formally to be in communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury. In practice it is to have a way of formulating Christian understanding in one (and possibly more) cultures different from a central controlling culture.

A.A way of reading scripture as our primary, governing authority. This is to engage scripture as our source with what God makes known through our other human faculties and experience (referred to in the classic formulations as reason but which actually refers to culture and new experience) and to ensure that any conclusions reached are in faithful continuity to the understanding and practice of the first five centuries of the Church which were closest to the life and teaching of Jesus and the apostles. This is in contrast with systematizing approaches which make logical constructions out of tendencies in the scripture, an approach which is in danger of making the scripture conflict with what God has made known in other ways. This way of reading scripture has proved very acceptable to churches founded in non-English cultures as it enables the church to engage in the translatability of Christian faith into their own culture. This means that scripture is to be read in the Anglican communion for transformative and pastoral purposes to change people towards the fulfilment of God's will, not primarily conceptual purposes to cohere with theological and philosophical systems.

B.A way of doing mission. The pastoral focus of the Anglican church, to be the church of the nation and for the nation; to take responsibility for all those within its community, has defined its mission approach as wholistic – requiring it to relate the mission of God to every situation of humanity.

C. Catholicity and order in arranging competent authority. The Episcopal focus of the Anglican church recognizes that God gifts, calls and chooses some to be leaders whom he gives to the church. The apostles were gifted called and chosen to lead the church, and bishops are seen to be their successors, gifted, called and chosen by God. Their role in the Bible, in early Christian tradition and in many cultures today is more akin to that of a father in a family than a chairman of a committee.

Being Anglican therefore does not refer to a cultural mode of English culture - a church of Anglos and Anglophiles (although such is its class setting in some parts of the world). Neither does it refer to the conceptual world we inhabit - a via media or sweet reasonableness between competing authorities. It is about our focus in mission, the whole nation, in obedience to scripture read in the light of culture (reason, the law of things) and in continuity with the tradition of the whole church. This has a major contribution to make as a global Christian fellowship because it combines the understanding of catholicity (not defined by but often

[15] For discussion of this approach see Bishop H.R. McAdoo The Spirit of Anglicanism – a survey of Anglican Theological Method in the Seventeenth Century (London, Black, 1965) p 309-315. "The theological method of Anglicanism, unlike theological movements whose emphasis is chiefly on the transcendental, will always take account of natural theology. It will have, for want of a better word, a certain quality of humanism, for no human experience or field of enquiry can be alien to an outlook in which concern with the Creation and the Incarnation are to the fore. It will hold that theology owes to men a rational consideration of their problems, and its method will be one of liberality rather than of liberalism. It will have a historical consciousness in respect of doctrinal content and the the meaning of continuity. It will have an element of practical divinity which it will integrate into its concept of spiritual life." Op.cit. p 315.

expressed in terms of liturgy) of the one gospel for the whole world and therefore the one people of God with a protestation that this must be founded on the scriptures and not the church's interpretation, however venerable.

5. What does the Anglican Communion witness to?

5.1. The Anglican Communion is therefore to ensure that the gospel of Jesus Christ is transmitted from generation to generation and culture to culture with the freedom to be expressed in the life of that culture and in faithfulness to the Catholic Creeds and formularies. For this the worldwide Communion is needed lest we become captive to our cultures.

5.2. Anglican identity is communion wide and is formed in the mutuality of the identity of its members. Thus for Paul the oneness of the church required to be expressed in the mutual self-identity and recognition on the one hand by the Jewish Christians that the Gentile Christians were fully members of the Christian body without circumcision, and by the Gentile believers that God had not rejected his Jewish people. Anglican identity is not shaped by continuity with the past as such; it is shaped by its engagement of scripture, tradition, and the sense of things under apostolic leadership and in mutual recognition of the standing of each culture in which Christians seek to obey Jesus. It is not shaped by its continuity with dead white males. The mutual recognition is at this point in doubt. More awareness and respect needs to be given to the contribution of cultures in World Christianity to Anglican identities. How the Communion receives and respects the contribution of its members from Africa, Asia and Latin America at this point is of crucial significance for Anglican identity. It was the Gentiles' inclusion which prevented the church becoming a marginal Jewish sect. Is the Anglican Communion in danger of becoming an expression of the ethics of western liberal elites?

5.3. The Anglican Communion is committed to embrace the gospel as a national commitment rather than being an ecclesiastical outpost of Rome. Indeed the early Anglicans accused Rome of being wedded to the past. The early Anglicans believed that God would speak to the English culture direct. Such cultural freedom comes as a result of obedience to the gospel, for without the gospel we could not discern in what areas cultural freedom could be expressed and in what areas central biblical themes needed to be preserved. The council of Jerusalem gave the Gentiles cultural freedom to express the gospel within a few clear limits.[16]

5.4. T*he Anglican Communion should be an expression of World Christianity rather than Global Christianity- but is it?* Lamin Sanneh poses a question to the identity of the Anglican Communion. He defines World Christianity as "the movement of Christianity as it takes form and shape in societies that previously were not Christian" where "Christianity was received and expressed through the cultures, customs and traditions of the people affected". Global Christianity "on the other hand, is the faithful replication of Christian norms and patterns developed in Europe".[17] The Anglican Communion has the potential to be an authentic gathering of senior Christian leaders in World Christianity who are mission leaders in their own right. For that reason the platform it provides for such leaders to come

[16] Acts 15:28-29

[17] Whose Religion is Christianity: The Gospel beyond the West by Lamin Sanneh, (Eerdmans 2003)

together, discover each other and what God is doing around the world, is highly creative and influential in developing missiological reflection and practice.

The Anglican Communion is at a crossroads. For some the current crisis has been precipitated by heterodox leadership in the Communion in an economically powerful province, which in the view of some is over-represented and over-influential in the central counsels and bureaucracy of the communion. Arbitration is being sought from a centre in Canterbury. This would suggest that elements of a "global Christianity" are at work here.

Dr Michael Poon of Macau in the Province of Hong Kong argues that this crisis is a time for the Communion to come to a maturity, to move on from the Mother Church relationship of the Church of England. He counsels against seeking just to manage the crisis. "The rules and resolutions adopted in the history of the Communion (dated from Lambeth 1868) so far are conventions which had served to keep adolescent children together within a family, during a period when the missionary societies are devolving their responsibilities to native churches. Is it not the time to move from custodianship to full status as heirs of the true promise? This is to say, in the past we have been at pains to devise means to keep the family together. It is more fruitful to think through how the family members can move on as an Apostolic Fellowship: as successors of our apostolic forefathers to bless and connect with other families (to follow through the analogy) and the wider world? Some radical restructuring of the Communion for mission is called for. Our Communion in the past decades have succumbed to the administrative style of governance, with bishops acting as chief administrators, and the instruments of unity as consensus building devices which we hope somehow are able to smooth out the uneven voices in the Communion. The present crisis serves as a wake-up call. Would there be a day when we can see more theological output from the chief-servants of the Church, marked by true scholarship and faithful witness, as Alexandria, Jerusalem and Carthage did in the Mediterranean world before Rome became the overlord?" [18]

In contrast to this vision, one dimension of the current crisis is the real possibility that a powerful church (Rome/ ECUSA) might be able to secure acceptance of its doctrinal and ethical stance, despite the disagreement of other less powerful provinces (in the Roman / American global empire) and thus become the defining centre of the Communion. Church history would tell us that any solution that the Commission adopts will not be static but on a trajectory. It must be recognized that one trajectory would be an ECUSA defined communion – an expression of a global Christianity with its cultural and theological centre firmly in western culture. This would not be the World Christianity which Lamin Sanneh commends. Neither would it express the ancient canonical principle that what affects everyone should be decided by everyone.

6. What will this communion witness to in the way it deals with this issue?

6.1 What is the issue? It is not the issue that it was presented with at the end of the primates meeting. The commission was set up in the context of what a significant number of primates regarded was an agreed stand-still on an episcopal consecration until it should report. That stand-still has in the mind of those primates not been observed. Those primates who regarded the

[18] Michael Poon The Communion post-November 2nd 2003 – self-examination from East Asia. www.fulcrum-anglican.org.uk

consecration as inevitable joined them all in warning that it would result in a tear in the fabric of the communion.

That tear has now happened. The consecration has taken place. Numbers of bishops and provinces have declared themselves out of communion with the formal leadership of ECUSA as a result.[19] Those in ECUSA who have not received the consecration of Gene Robinson say that they are experiencing a process of imposition on them of strange and erroneous teachings, and

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[19] The Primates of the Global South: "A state of impaired communion now exists both within a significant part of ECUSA and between ECUSA and most of the provinces within the Communion. By its actions, ECUSA is held solely responsible for this division. In addition to violating the clear and consistent teaching of the Bible, the consecration directly challenges the common teaching, common practice and common witness within the one Anglican Communion. "

The Archbishop of Tanzania has said that his church will not be in communion with bishops who consecrate a practicing homosexual as bishop, or who ordain a practicing homosexual as a clergyman, or any clergy who bless a same sex union.

The Archbishop of South East Asia: We are no longer in communion with the Presiding Bishop of ECUSA and all those Bishops and Dioceses [Appendix A] who voted for the confirmation of Dr Gene Robinson's election and those who joined in the consecration of the same.

The Church of Kenya will not recognise the ministry of this one Bishop and that "all those churches of our great Communion that have so far deviated from the norms and historic faith of the Church, have by their own action, impaired communion."

The Archbishop of Nigeria has said that his church will boycott all meetings attended by the ECUSA: By this unfortunate action, they have departed from the faith, order and unity of the Anglican Church. They have impaired Communion

The Archbishop of the Congo: the Anglican Province of Congo strongly condemns homosexuality and wishes to disassociate itself from relations with Dioceses and Parishes involved in homosexuality.

The Archbishop of the West Indies As a consequence a state of impaired communion now exists both within the Episcopal Church (USA) itself and between the Episcopal Church (USA) and the overwhelming majority of the Provinces within the Communion, including the Province of the West Indies.

The Presiding Bishop of the Southern Cone: this Province now shares only a profoundly impaired communion with ECUSA and, in faithfulness to the Word of God, we cannot accept this consecration as a valid one. Impaired communion means that we cannot share fellowship, ministry, Eucharist or gifts with those who have affirmed or participated in the consecration of Gene Robinson, nor with those who perform or permit blessings of same-sex unions outside historic Christian marriage, nor with any clergy who are sexually active outside marriage.

The Archbishop of Uganda The Church of the Province of Uganda (Anglican) cuts her relationship and Communion with the Episcopal Church of the United States of America (ECUSA) on their resolution and consequent action of consecrating and enthroning an openly confessed homosexual

The Archbishop of Central Africa you have broken our fellowship. To sit with you and meet with you would be a lie. We are not one. We do not share the same faith or Gospel. You should resign and let someone else lead; someone who shares the faith of the Communion-the faith of the church catholic.

The Bishop and diocese of Egypt In fact, by their actions, they have chosen to step out of communion with the Anglican Communion. It is not those upholding the historical and Biblical positions of the Church who are creating division and disrupting unity

are experiencing a form of witch hunt against them, threatening their property and positions. They find this a strange form of inclusion. Senior visitors to ECUSA indicate that the time has come for the Communion to make a choice between two versions of Anglicanism present in North America.

Three issues have now actually torn the fabric of our communion: the presenting issue of disagreement on sexuality; the political issue of the decision-making process in the Communion, and the issue of authority with reference to scripture and mutual accountability. The commission cannot undertake its deliberations as though that had not happened. While it may be considering impairment of communion in a process of reception, it is actually facing a de facto process of rejection. The Virginia report allows for the possibility of rejection in the process of reception but does not explore or address it.[20]

So the commission is now meeting not in a context of preparing for what might happen, but in a context of what has happened and the results that have already followed from that. The commission cannot live in a theoretical abstract world of what only existed as possibilities on October 17. It must take into account what has happened since then. It must include in the implications of the ECUSA and New Westminster decisions what has actually happened in the rest of the world as well as in North America. The terms of reference of the Commission have therefore been superseded by events subsequent to it being established. The Commission is now addressing a situation in which communion has been broken from two sides: first by a diocese and province who have put themselves outside the communion by acting on their own admission autonomously outside the agreed decisions of the communion; and second by provinces who have in response declared that they are now formally treating ECUSA's leadership as outside the Communion. An existential break in communion has now taken place. This is to be distinguished from a juridical and legal break, which are the canonical consequences of the prior and actual break. Relationships have been broken with and by ECUSA. ECUSA has forfeited its visas to much of the Anglican Communion. The question is whether its passport is still valid and whether a communion of autonomous provinces can become a world without borders – a contradiction in terms.

Will the commission treat this matter with the serious urgency it requires? A precious fabric of enormous complexity and venerable antiquity, woven from the strands of millions of Christians from many cultures and many centuries, valued and respected throughout the world has been torn. There is no use for the fabric of a torn skirt or shirt, a torn curtain or tablecloth. It must be urgently repaired or replaced. It should be met with embarrassment and urgency.

We are faced with an occasion when many primates perceive that the difficulties caused to them by their actions are not being taken into account, when agreements they thought were in place were broken, when decisions that had been made at the Lambeth Conference are ignored, and the clear and strong advice of the primates meeting in Brazil is flouted. As a result they perceive that this fellowship has been clearly broken. This breaking of communion matters so deeply to them, because it is not a man made fellowship but one brought about by Jesus himself which they value so highly.

[20] Virginia report op cit p 38

Does this break entail a breaking of Eucharistic fellowship? If the high point of communion and unity is expressed in the Eucharist, then there is a great obligation to maintain the highest level of Eucharistic fellowship. Unity in and through the Eucharist must not be watered down. The New Testament clearly teaches this. If we have anything against anyone we should first be reconciled with the brother before proceeding to eat the Lord's supper.[21] Unreconciled people cannot appear together at the table of the Lord. Therefore if that Eucharistic fellowship is to include those who are held to have transgressed against the Lord's fellowship and the bible's teaching, is not that Eucharistic fellowship watered down? Does then the notion of impaired communion, or impaired Eucharistic fellowship make any sense? It sounds like being a little bit pregnant. You are either in communion or not, reconciled or not. Perhaps the term suspended communion may make more sense.

Withdrawal from Eucharistic fellowship reflects on and confirms a fracture of fellowship that some perceive to have already taken place in the previous actions. It is not that a break in eucharistic fellowship is a new break - it represents a break that has already taken place. Paul's confrontation with Peter over his refusal of table fellowship with Gentiles was not a new break, but an expression of a break that had already occurred because Peter "was not acting in line with the truth of the gospel". [22] But this confrontation was not a final break - it was to facilitate a reconciliation. Even when Paul urged that a man in the Corinthian church be put out of the fellowship for sleeping with his father's wife, it was for the purpose that "the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord." [23]

This paper recommends that the Commission needs to hold its nerve with reference to due and proper processes in the Communion for seeking the mind of the Church with regard to the consecration of practicing homosexuals as bishops and the blessing of same sex unions and recognize as consonant with the teaching of the Anglican church and validate the statements and actions of those Archbishops and others who have repudiated such an action. An emergency situation has been created which requires the suspension (not the cancellation) of full fellowship with those who are out of step, with the goal of eventual reconciliation. The Commission should validate the statements of those who have recognized and pointed out the incoherence of the ECUSA action with the agreed understandings of the communion. It should also validate the statements and actions of those within ECUSA who have raised similar objections. It should say that these statements and actions are neither schismatic nor proto-schismatic. In this way the Commission will be giving respect to the Anglican Communion's own processes of discerning the mind of Christ for the Church. To reduce the level of Communion between most of the churches because of the action of one diocese with the majority vote of only one province would be to let the tail wag the dog.

[21] Matt.5. 23-24
[22] Galatians 2.11-21
[23] I Corinthians 5 1-5

6.2 What is at stake: the Anglican consensus and common ground has been severely undermined.

The Anglican Communion was able to express itself as a global Communion, part of one holy Catholic and apostolic church without a centralized bureaucracy or curia and with a light canonical touch because there was a very clear common ground which all accepted. This common ground and the resulting communion was based on and expressed the communion with and between the Holy Trinity. The common ground was not a lowest common denominator. The scriptures, the creeds and the formularies defined the universal faith held in common. It was therefore possible to build up national churches with the security of knowing that what people were committing themselves to was truly universal. The basis for claiming the Anglican Communion is part of and expresses one, holy, Catholic and apostolic church was the common ground of the universality of the faith which all received. Commitment to Christian faith as a revealed faith in scripture enabled the church to understand the common ground as something that it received and did not create. Commitment to the local expression of the Body of Christ was ipso facto commitment to the global Christian family since the whole of the global was present in the local and vice versa. National churches therefore saw themselves as part of the global Body of Christ sharing one life and expressing their oneness through participation in the Eucharist. There was also commitment to the interpretation of the scripture in the light of the universal tradition of the first five centuries. There was also commitment to engage with the national culture and society to produce a faithful expression of the bible and the gospel in that culture, but not so that culture would become determinative.

The Anglican Communion was able to allow for provincial autonomy in governance because of commitment to this common ground which was truly universal. Provincial autonomy was limited by what conformed to the universal as understood by the rest of the Communion lest the mission of the one God be compromised by legitimizing contradictory actions of its members. [24] Because of this commitment to the common ground, the communion was able to function on the basis of relationships and trust in a family of churches. There is no need for a heavy burden of canon law in a family. But remove the common ground and we are only left with canon law, which soon becomes canonical fundamentalism.

This common ground held together the three streams of catholic (including catholic charismatic), evangelical (including evangelical/charismatic) and liberal together in the same church. Evangelicals have developed significantly in their understanding of the social dimension of mission and have become deeply socially involved. The Catholic tradition has received deeply from the input of the charismatic movement.

Appeals to the common ground may provide too many reasons for an overcautious approach to developing the expression of the mission of the God through the Communion. This is precisely where the issue is joined in this current crisis - between those who for biblical reasons and as a prophetic action want to expand the category of the poor and oppressed who are welcomed into the symbolic leadership of the church and those who for biblical reasons see this as

[24] See further Impaired Communion - a non-western perspective by Vinay Samuel, Church Times October 2003 and www.anglican-mainstream.net.

fundamentally undermining the very common ground on which the Communion is based. Different narratives about the mission of God and human freedom underlie this conflict.

One narrative is that the theological implication of the consecration is an assault and challenge on the common ground on which the communion is based. Behind the consecration is the aggressive nature of the western culture undermining the notion of universal truth and moral norms. The argument for innovation is that the common ground of universality in truth and moral norms no longer holds in a pluralistic world. Thus Bishop Griswold can say " In that situation (Northern Nigeria) because the Islamic community is absolute in its views, the only way to surivive if you are a Christian is to be equally resolute in your theology…. The Church in Nigeria and other places is absolutely obliged, as far as I can see, to take a firm line and say "we find this aberrant and contrary to how we understand tradition and scripture."[25]

However the Islamic community is absolute in its views both in Northern Nigeria and the State of New York. So the criteria of how the church shapes its response has to do then with demography rather than its common ground of faith, and Christianity surrenders its claim to universality to Islam. Further, such a view implies that the Christians of Northern Nigeria are necessarily accommodating their faith and practice to their own absolutist context for their own safety, whereas in fact their clear witness in their context has often been at great cost.

Why does the leader of ECUSA no longer appear willing to work with the agreed consensus? Why does he want to innovate Christian morals and practice, in contradiction to the stances of Anglicans elsewhere (such as in Northern Nigeria) and yet urge that he is still in the Anglican Communion in fellowship? We have to note that the liberal strand in the Anglican tradition is practically absent in the regions where the Church is growing, and is numerically and financially declining even in its English homeland. How is this strand able to survive? Is it through social action involvement with other agencies, its inherited finances and the power of patronage? Is it possible that the liberal strand sees the growth of the more orthodox, catholic, evangelical and charismatic Anglican churches as a threat to its own power and influence and knows that on the basis of democratic representation it is unable to and therefore unwilling to work for consensus. Might it be that it is using a particular issue to force the issue and claim that the conservative majority in the church is actually oppressive and hegemonic to vulnerable minorities? Is it possible that the liberal tradition is appropriating the language of liberalism and freedom (see below) to consign orthodoxy to rigidity and authoritarianism? Is it possible that the liberal strand is wanting to challenge the universality of the common ground in order to be able to introduce innovations with no fear of being held accountable?

It is very clear that in the current crisis it is the beliefs and practices of the orthodox that are under threat and will be compromised by any formal acceptability of impaired communion as a level of equal being in the communion. That is why many non -western primates have already declared themselves to have broken relationships with ECUSA. It is also clear that those who stand to lose if the Commission maintains the present level of communion are those making innovations that have been already judged to be unacceptable.

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[25] Presiding over crisis and maybe schism - Interview with Bishop Frank Griswold, www.belief.net/story/138/story_13863_1.html.

These questions must be dealt with by the Commission for the simple reason that all previous decisions of the Communion with reference to the presenting issue have been flouted. There is no reason to believe that this Commission's work will be heeded unless clear bona fides and processes are established that would remove the suspicions of many that the concern to preserve the Anglican Communion at a level less than a federation or even a company (with impaired communion as an acceptable relationship between full members) is driven by concerns to retain institutional power and influence while rejecting the teaching and practice of the Communion.

6.3 Two conflicting narratives of freedom

The previous section has raised questions of institutional power and influence for the simple reason that matters of cultural engagement and expression are not just matters of ideas. Culture is manufactured and driven by engines of culture, by institutions and money. The whole culture of academic scepticism which has pursued the church in the west in the last 100 years comes not from popular culture, but is driven by the scepticism which finds institutional form in the media and universities.

These institutions establish their legitimacy by devising and propagating narratives about themselves. So the media can justify intense criticism of governments even to the extent of being de facto oppositions through the narrative of impartiality and independence. Universities justify teaching young people to be sceptical about all authority through the narrative of independence of mind and thought of autonomous individuals. The notion of autonomous individuals who have to validate their existence by rejecting dependence on all other authorities than themselves is not true to the lived experience of many peoples and cultures, but is heavily invested in by elites in western countries through these institutions.

The institution of the Anglican Communion, precisely because it is set in and engages with culture, is affected by the dominant cultural narratives of those cultures within which it is set. This applies both to all provinces and also to the central governing bodies and institutions. We must ensure therefore that the culture of the central governing bodies and institutions, at the level of instruments of communion are not overly influenced by any one culture.

We need to ask whether the fact that despite the operation of the Communion's decision-making procedures at the Lambeth Conference and Primates level, ECUSA has gone ahead with this action indicates that there is a bias in the central instruments of communion which is able to delegitimise the decisions of these bodies?

In the western culture there is a current war about issues of sexuality. What are the options? There is the option to try and recapture the culture for Christian morality; to try and preserve the Christian culture. However it is questionable whether western culture has ever been Christian or whether such a concept is theologically acceptable. We cannot recover or preserve what we never had. The clock cannot be turned back

There is the option to regard the culture as totally pagan and try and transform it through the gospel. This is the option of those churches which remain separate from engaging with their culture (but of course are completely subject to it) and develop Christian faith in a private domain.

Thirdly there is the option that the Church is not called to baptise or reshape a culture, but to live out God's life in it, to find where God is at work in the culture and evaluate it as to what should be retained, what removed and what transformed. The focus here is the mission of the church in developing the expression of its faith in a particular culture.

The latter has been the characteristically Anglican approach. However in the last 40 years there have developed the hermeneutics of suspicion. This suggests that whenever the church appeals to its tradition or its authoritative teaching, it always makes the wrong judgement. More than that it uses its tradition and authority to mask its own vested interests. So the church is suspect. It must listen to the voice of God present in its culture in the voice of the poor and the marginalised. Thus the voice and interests of those who present themselves as outcast and excluded become the voice of God to the church.

Thus what is happening is that the narrative of freedom for the oppressed is being used with relation to the consecration of Gene Robinson and what it represents for the church. The community which he represents has interpreted freedom as the western culture understands it to represent the freedom of human flourishing in sexual freedom. They experience mainline heterosexual culture, and in particular the culture of the church as rejecting them. Therefore in the name of freedom and the welcome to the marginalised, all the teaching, tradition, and consensus of the church throughout time and space is trumped.

The question is, who is in the margins. As far as the Anglican Communion is concerned most of them are themselves the poor. Who therefore are the poor and marginalised to whom the church should be committed? In the scripture the category of the poor never included those who deviated from the biblical teaching on sexuality. Issues of sexuality were never given a privileged place nor was biblical teaching on morality accommodated to their situation.

The competing narrative of freedom in the scriptures is that human flourishing is to be found as humans seek to conform their will to the will of their creator to discover and express their true identity, meaning and purpose. Our own Communion text is "If you hold to my teaching you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free." [26] Then we can be truly free to be who we are. Evidence of the truth of this is that in western society, the conception of freedom based on autonomous reason has led to terrible intolerance and totalitarianism as represented by fascism and communism in the twentieth century and the millions of deaths they caused because it was regarded as irrational and inhuman to oppose their iron cages of rationality. It has also led to a current movement towards anarchy in western society since the only authority is now the individual. The call for respecting the autonomy of Anglican provinces to innovate in contravention of the teaching of the scripture and the mind of the global church is an expression of this western notion of freedom. This western narrative of freedom as untrammeled human autonomy is understood from a Christian point of view to be the sin of Adam, the sin of pride. It has also led in the USA to intolerance, a rooting out of the church of those who disagree with the resolutions of the General Convention. We are faced with a contradiction whereby compliance is required of ECUSA parishes to the bishop and the resolutions of the General Convention which are sovereign. But the bishop and the General

[26] John 8.32 in full

Convention bear no accountability to comply with any higher law. This situation is only explicable as an expression of sovereignty prevalent in 1540 rather than 2004. It will not be long before such a process would be extended to the wider Anglican Communion who would be forced to accept those who are in good standing with the current ECUSA leadership.

The two-thirds world church does not want to impose its own culture on the west or the western church. But it is saying that just as they in receiving the gospel had to create Christian communities under the rule of Christian teaching to address pagan and immoral practices, so the church today globally must present a clear witness. The church is finally not responsible for a culture, but is responsible for maintaining a clear moral vision. To accommodate itself to any one culture would be destructive of the responsibility the church has to contemporary society. Bishop Griswold's concession to Anglicans in Northern Nigeria actually traps their moral stance as determined by their culture rather than by their obedience to the word of God and the mind of the church.

If therefore the language of freedom for those who reject biblical teaching on sexuality is inadmissible on biblical grounds; if the language of freedom for human flourishing is based on a notion of human autonomy which sets aside the will of God, we may need to conclude that the language of the periphery is being used by those at the centre of the institutional power to legitimize and sacralize their own immoral vision. And the reason they are doing this is because the Anglican church in western society for all its small numbers is a cultural icon. Anglicanism has been chaplain to the Anglo culture and as a church is over-represented in its English and North American national establishments. It also has an international worldwide communion. It is at the heart of Anglo culture. It is a great prize to capture its symbols and soul for the cause of religious and cultural sanction for homosexual practice.

We are dealing here with the aims of those who want to exercise cultural power. Culture is not produced in the mass or by the masses. It is produced by institutions of power as we have noted. What we are seeing is a process of universalizing the preferences of an elite in North American society (in the leadership but clearly not in the whole membership of ECUSA), first within its own society and then through the Anglican Communion in the world. It is no accident that these issues are focused on the consecration of a bishop. Such preferences of elites are always suspect in the bible, since they are always promoted to protect them from wider criticism and perpetuate their power. It is imperative in a church which is truly universal and which bears good news to the poor to resist these preferences in the interests of preserving the universal nature of the gospel.

The non-western churches received biblical morality as the morality of a universal faith. They received this in the past through the western church with all the weight of imperialism behind it. But they subjected their own cultural preferences to that faith and morality not only because it represented the might of a supposedly successful culture, but because it represented a universal faith in the will of the one God for all the peoples of the earth witnessed to in the experience of the church of all the ages. This they held on to and embraced beyond the end of the age of empire. The non-western churches now find that those Christians who were highly critical of the western missionary movement for imposing external standards on those of other cultures are themselves now seeking to impose their own elite preferences on the world Anglican Communion from the centre of world economic power.

This brings us to the economic issues that are raised and expressed in this crisis.

7. What does the Communion witness to by who pays for it?

Economic questions cannot be avoided. Paul made economic support for the Jerusalem church part of the expression of fellowship and gratitude that the Gentile churches were to show to the Jewish Christians. [27] The fundamental issue then as now is the issue of mutual respect. The older Jerusalem church needed to learn to receive from its new offshoots in alien and hostile cultures.

The refusal of the Province of Uganda to accept any financial gift from ECUSA was to show that they were utterly serious in refusing any indication that while they disapproved of ECUSA's actions they were content to use their money. This would have led to them not being respected.

Could it be suggested that the accounting of the communion be done in terms of its total turnover and the amount that each province delivers itself be calculated as an expression of its national annual salary (rather than in terms of a single global currency). Thus for example the Province of Uganda might cost the salary of 1 million Ugandan working days of its average national salary, and the Province of Canterbury on 100,000 working days of the average national salary of its members. We would then see who contributes most to the activities of the communion. That would be an important step to giving respect to the extent to which provinces in the two-thirds world fund themselves in their normal church life. To ensure that this respect continues and grows, the question of how the interconnection between provinces is funded must be totally divorced from any issue of governance or instrument of communion. For currently the notion that the operation of the Communion is funded by ECUSA is rightly or wrongly perceived to be part of the equation of dis-ease. The current situation of the supposed economic role of the central ECUSA bureaucracy in the communion must be addressed head on and totally divorced from the way in which the instruments of communion work.

8. The case made in this paper presents the following challenges to the innovators

The claim that provinces have untrammeled autonomy such that contradictory ethical practice is legitimized on the grounds of cultural appropriateness leads to there being different gods for each culture, fatally undermines the claim of the Christian faith to be a universal faith, the ability of Christians to fulfill the dominical command “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you”, and the integrity of the dominical promise that the “Spirit would convince the world of sin and of righteousness and judgment”. Witness to the unity of the one triune creator God of all the earth by his people would be fatally compromised. A church which accepted such contradictory practice would be a witness to different tribal gods.

Why should such a devastating challenge be made to the universality of the Christian faith unless people wanted to introduce innovations with no risk of being held accountable?

[27] 1 Cor 16. 2-3; 2 Cor 8-9.

The claim for untrammeled autonomy undermines the reality of communion which assumes and expresses the ability of Christians from different cultures and histories of faith to recognize in each other true Christian identity.

Were a claim to redefine communion to allow for untrammeled autonomy from a powerful western culture to succeed in the face of the already expressed objections, it would raise questions about how the central institutions of the Anglican Communion are managed and in whose interests. How could the Communion in any sense claim to represent good news to the economically poor when their opinions and objections are discounted? It would announce that the Anglican Communion is merely an extension of a form of elite western Christianity around the globe, run in its interests, and that those who associated with it were treated as dependent adolescents. It would be an insult to the self-respect of people in the very cultures which the Anglican tradition in its theological processes claims to take seriously as part of its theological method. Would the creator God be so demeaning of the dignity of his non-western people and their cultures? The Anglican Communion would have become as insensitive to national cultures and conscience as the medieval Roman Church from which it separated.

The claim for untrammeled autonomy in a situation where clear objections have been raised undermines the communion that we are called to enjoy and express at the Eucharist. The world knows that there are major disagreements on fundamental matters over which relationships have been sundered. If the eucharist is still celebrated together with whose who have stepped beyond the agreed family framework, it will speak of less than the full reconciliation and forgiveness that God extends through the work of Christ on the cross. Our reconciliation together is meant to express and reflect the reconciliation that God achieved in Christ. That is why reconciliation is required between people and repentance is required before the Lord before participating. That is why we celebrate the peace before we receive the bread and the wine. How can we repent before God whom we have not seen if we do not repent before and with the brother or sister whom we have seen?

The claim for untrammeled autonomy rewrites the inter-cultural consultative processes which the Anglican Communion has determined to discern the mind of Christ for his Church.

The claim to allow for legitimate diversity does not appear to apply within ECUSA to those who disagree with these innovations. Is there not a fundamental contradiction here revealing the very intolerance of which they are accusing others?

The innovation claims are made on the basis of an understanding of human freedom which runs counter to that which is given us in the scriptures. This “innovative” truth will not make anyone free. Such an expression of human freedom in the twentieth century was found to be disastrous for human flourishing. The Anglican Communion is now being asked to embrace untrammeled human autonomy as fundamental to its life.

9.Where is the communion going?

By its decisions the Commission will affect our children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. God works across the generations. Will the Commission set the communion on a course of keeping an open door for innovations driven by those with the ability to do so in response to the

changing pressures of western culture; will the Commission set the Communion on a road no longer to be one, holy Catholic and apostolic church believing and witnessing in its unity to the one triune God, but rather to where the logic of untramelled provincial autonomy seems to point, to be many individual churches believing in different gods?

Or will the Commission see the future of the Communion in the places where it is growing through the witness of the Alpha and Emmaus courses, the joyful and courageous witness of churches like Uganda, Kenya and Nigeria? Will the Commission enable the communion to be able to set limits to diversity and ensure that those limits are observed?

What vision will the decision of the Commission present of a mission centred Communion in 2030? Will it be of a genuinely world-wide communion, expressive of one Lord, one faith and one baptism, reflected in shared understanding of doctrine, faith and practice? Will it under God's grace be transforming both its own members and the diverse social conditions in which those members live and move? Will it be a highly respected community, consulted in transnational civic society on a par even with the United Nations, to serve the world by manifesting the kingdom and bringing the good news of the kingdom to the poor wherever they are to be found?

What expression of unity will the decision of the Commission represent? The Anglican Communion focuses its unity on relationships and spiritual fellowship with a light canonical hold rather than on precise formulations and defined structures. This has allowed it to become the church of the people in many diverse cultures. But its strength to do this resides in its unity in Christ, at the foot of the cross, in obedience to the scriptures. The less unity is based on this biblical foundation, the more there will be a need for structures to become ever tighter lest the organisation fall apart.

To what kingdom then will the communion be a witness? Will it be the kingdom of God or witness to another king, the sovereignty of human autonomy?

10. Conclusion

This paper calls on the Commission to

1. **Begin from the mission of God** which is to define the being and doing of the church

2. **Address the question that now faces the communion** following the precipitate action of consecration and the subsequent responses.

3. **Recognise the situation in ECUSA as an emergency situation** which requires the suspension (not the cancellation) of full fellowship with those who are out of step, with the goal of eventual reconciliation.

4. **Validate the statements** of those who have recognised and pointed out the incoherence of the ECUSA action with the agreed understandings of the communion.

5. **Validate the statements and actions of those within ECUSA who have raised similar objections**. They should say that these statements and actions are neither schismatic nor proto-schismatic.

6. **Recognise the nature of the choices before it**, choices which are both theological and which represent matters of social and economic disparity between the disputing parties;

- for World Christianity or Global Christianity
- For respecting, having confidence in and standing by the processes and decisions of the church seeking the mind of Christ on these matters in intense study and prayer for over ten years or for introducing innovations which have yet to commend themselves to the Communion as a whole.
- for maturity or adolescence (in which some are regarded as yet to develop to the level of others in their understanding).
- For Anglo-centricity or genuine respect for different centres of theological wisdom and action.
- for Communion defined by mission or by preserving the church as one particular type of social institution reflecting a dominant culture;
- for maintaining in the relationships of the Anglican Communion as high an expression of communion that our hearts long for, that expresses the unity of the persons in the trinity and that represents and calls for our transformation, or settling for sub-optimal ethics in a pluralistic world.
- Communion from below or Communion from above;
- to relate to a world defined by networks and localities or only by geography;
- for truth as truth as constructed or truth as received to express a clear moral vision.
- For understanding freedom as untrammelled human autonomy or freedom to flourish in accord with the will of our creator.
- For talking about this as an issue of transformation and discipline, or as an issue of affirmation, inclusion and acceptance of sub-optimal ethics.

These are the key choices because what the Commission recommends will witness to its vision and understanding of what the Communion is and is to be. The choices are as deep as those between Paul and the Judaizers in the first century about the acceptability of the Gentile Christians as equal heirs of the promise to Abraham. If these choices can be made in coherence with the mission of God, and in demonstrating appropriate respect to churches in cultures that are economically and socially very disparate then the current situation will not be a cause of breaking of the Communion but will set the stage for a new chapter of greater obedience and effectiveness. For it was through respect given to those regarded as newcomers, less schooled in the traditions and theology of the Hebrew Christian tradition, into the issues of power, theology and leadership, that the Jewish Christians could discover their own heritage. It will be as we genuinely include in Anglican identities the theological and missiological contributions from Anglican traditions other than English Catholic and liberal traditions that we will discover the true nature of the identity of the Anglican Communion. It is the solemn task of this Commission to decide whether to enable or forestall that process.

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Reflections offered to the Primates of the Anglican Communion by the Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission at the Invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury

The Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission, which has been charged to consider the ways in which communion may be protected and nourished, submits the following theological reflections to the Primates in response to the exceptional circumstances with which the Anglican Communion is now confronted, as part of the fruit of our ongoing studies.

1. 'In Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us' (II Cor. 5.19). Everything in the life of the Church depends upon this unique gift. It is the good news of grace to which the Church has been sent to bear witness.

2. The Scriptures are the unique source for this Gospel, and the Church lives in the light of and in dependence upon that testimony.

3. In all its words and deeds the Church is called to give a two-fold account of itself: to speak the words of life to the world, giving an account of the faith by which it lives, and at the same time each part of the Church is called to submit an account of its stewardship of the Gospel to other Christians.

4. Christian history reveals a plurality and diversity of accounts of the faith, though there is but one Gospel. Divergences of interpretation give rise to different traditions. Moreover, because human words are used and specific human situations are addressed, these accounts of the faith reflect the differing contexts of the proclamation.

5. Furthermore, because of human sin, ignorance and frailty, it is to be anticipated that omissions, mistakes or distortions may occur in any account given of the faith.

6. As a result it becomes vital that the account each part of the Church gives to other Christians of its stewardship of the Gospel contains the possibility of openness to correction. Communion in the Church requires this mutual accountability. By it, faithfulness in the truth is encouraged, partial understandings are enriched, errors are challenged and unity (which is the priceless gift of the Spirit) is enhanced.

7. In this document, we concentrate on one aspect of mutual accountability, namely *paraklesis* – a New Testament word with a range of meanings from "comfort" and "encourage" to "appeal" to "admonition" and "direction". Paul charged members of the Church to "admonish one another" in Christ (I Thess 4.18, 5.11). It is evident from the letters of Paul that he was often obliged to offer a critical assessment of the faithfulness of one of his congregations (see, for example, Gal 1:6) himself. Moreover he exercised this form of over-sight in relation to congregations which he had not personally founded (Romans 12.1ff) and in relation to those congregations in which some no longer recognised his apostleship (II Corinthians).

8. In II Corinthians, Paul hammered out a fresh statement of his apostolic authority, in great personal pain, under the imminent threat of a total breakdown of relations with the Church in Corinth. He saw this authority as grounded in the dying and rising of Jesus Christ, and thus as characterised by the power which is perfected in weakness.

9. Living life worthy of the calling with which we have been called involves humility, gentleness, patience, speaking the truth in love, putting away bitterness, wrath and anger, and being kind, tender-hearted and forgiving one another (Ephesians 4). We are in this way to 'make every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace' (Ephesians 3). Mutual admonitions may involve discernment and the exercise of judgment; but encouragement in faith and thus building up the body in love, is the primary motivation. The virtues involved go beyond mere civility.

10. Bishops are as open to admonition in respect of their conduct as other Christians. Gregory the Great regarded it as a compliment to a leader's humility, if those over whom he ruled felt able to rebuke him (Pastoral Rule II, 8). This has implications for the life of bishops, as the Pastoral

Epistles (which were a major source for the 16th century revision of the Anglican Ordinal) make clear. 'Timothy' is instructed to 'set believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity' (1 Tim 4:12). If, for example, a bishop's lifestyle becomes a stumbling block that bishop should hardly be immune from or expect to avoid constant challenge. This constant challenge is bound to affect adversely that bishop's *episcope*.

11. The cost of genuine dialogue between Christians of different convictions is considerable, even given the kindness of speech and conduct mentioned above. If conservative voices are not to be driven out, it must be possible for an admonition about recent issues to do with homosexuality to be delivered, clearly argued from biblical sources. Not all such arguments are well expressed or would be supported by scholarly writing; but it is a mistake to dismiss all of them, as if their sole basis were literalism or naïve fundamentalism.

12. On the other hand, if progressive voices are not to be ignored, new knowledge has honestly to be confronted. Though there is still much uncertainty, it is evident that the existence in some people of homosexual inclinations has to be understood in a way not available to biblical writers. It has to be recognised as a cost of the engagement of the Gospel with the world, that Christians remain open to changing ideas with their attendant uncertainties and controversies.

13. Not all features of the life of the Church are equally close to the "truth of the Gospel". Although what the Church is, speaks and does ought never to contradict the Gospel, aspects of its life may be relatively immaterial to the substance of the Gospel. Thus, W R Huntingdon assures his fellow Americans that 'a flutter of surplices' would not be thought to belong to the unity of the Church (see *The Church Idea*); A M Ramsey, on the other hand, argues that episcopacy <u>is</u> related to the content of the Gospel (*The Gospel and the Catholic Church*)

14. It would be convenient if there existed a permanently valid and unchallengeable list of fundamentals of the faith, and a corresponding list of secondary questions or *adiaphora.* But the continuing fact of controversies between and within the denominations shows at least that there is no universal agreement among Christians. Frequently moreover, though there is agreement at a general level on some doctrine or practice (for example Holy Communion), interpretations in detail tend to be diverse or even contradictory. It was the considered judgment of the nineteenth century Anglican theologian William Palmer, for example, that the doctrine of fundamentals was not an infallible guide when it came to the resolution of controversial questions.

15. .Yet it is equally true that the Church, for good reasons, consistently renews its understanding of the substance of the faith, by which it lives and prays for the coming kingdom. As it does this, it has to wrestle with the fact that not all features of the life of the Church are of equal importance; some lie closer to the heart of the Gospel than others.

16. The questions which now confront the Anglican Communion concern the blessing of same-sex unions, the ordination of non-abstinent homosexual persons to the diaconate and priesthood, the appointment of such a person to the office of Bishop and related issues of Church order. How is the Church to make right judgments in relation to such matters? What weight ought to be given to such innovations? How significant for Christian faith and practice is ECUSA's decision to appoint a non-abstinent homosexual person to the office of Bishop within the Anglican Communion?

17. In the present situation the Primates are called to determine first what weight should be given to the above decisions. How central to Christian faith and practice, for example, is the decision of ECUSA? Finding an answer to this question is not easy, though in the light of the controversy surrounding the Episcopal appointment and the decision of the diocese of New Westminster, Canada, there is a strong indication that the matter is neither light nor a matter indifferent (*adiaphoron*).

18. In making such judgments the usual distinctions between matters of faith and morals begin to collapse, in much the same way as distinctions between doctrine and ethics, while useful, often give way to an appreciation of the interwovenness of matters of faith and life. This reality is at

odds with the mistaken view that 'core doctrine' does not involve deep connection with Christian teachings about moral behaviour (as apparently the Righter Judgement [1996][1] holds).

19. If the Primates decide that the matter is of great weight with respect to the nature of Christian faith and its practice then it would seem that an innovation of such significance requires the broadest consideration and endorsement by the rest of the Anglican Communion.

20. Some matters are judged not to touch or significantly impact upon Christian faith and practice. They are judged either non-fundamental or *adiaphora* – neither commanded nor forbidden. If the Primates decided that the matter before them belonged at this end of the spectrum, this suggests that responsibility and freedom for determining the matter would occur at an appropriate 'lower' level of decision making in the Anglican Communion (e.g. a province or national church). However, it should also be noted that in Anglicanism if a proposed change is considered amongst the *adiaphora* and is also known to be a matter of significant dispute, there has been a reluctance to proceed. This compares with the Pauline principle (1 Cor 8-10; Rom 14) about not proceeding with actions, even if *adiaphora*, if they cause another to stumble.

21. A problem arises over innovations about which there are different views in the Church concerning the relative weight or significance to be accorded to a matter. Such are the matters in question. How ought the Church to proceed in such situations? A principle here might be that if the dispute is:

    intense (eg. generates high degree of sustained and unresolved debate that threatens the unity of the Anglican Communion; or that requires urgent attention)
    extensive (eg. not confined to one section or region of the Church; has significant implications for mission and ecumenical relations; has a wider social impact) and
    substantial (concerning an actual issue, and not for example, simply being generated by the media)

    then the matter cannot remain simply for the local Church (e.g. the diocese) to handle.

22. A word of caution here. It is not envisaged that the first 'port of call' for disputed matters in the Communion would necessarily be the Primates. Rather, historically Anglicans have dealt with their conflicts in consonance with the principle of subsidiarity[2]. Indeed, Anglicanism has a natural inbuilt reticence to 'stealing' from lower levels the decision making responsibilities that are properly theirs. So it is not the case that strong action from above in a particular case would become the Anglican norm for settling disputes. But if a matter arises of crucial importance to faith and life, or if a matter generates such dispute that it threatens the bonds of the Anglican Communion, the Communion as a whole, through its highest levels of authority, has a responsibility to be properly involved in the handling of the dispute. A process which involves mutual accountability and receives wisdom from the whole of the Communion commends itself in such circumstances.

23. While the processes and structures for dispute settlement in our Church may yet require further development this ought not override the very great moral authority and responsibility of those charged by the church to exercise a 'care for all the churches' in the Anglican Communion (cf. II Cor 11.28). In 1989, for example, Primates endorsed the guidelines set out in the Report of the Eames Commission, and adopted them for the life of the Communion.

24. At this exceptional juncture in our history many are looking to the Primates to hear the call of the churches for the leadership (*paraklesis)* that befits those who hold such a high office. We pray with the Primates that, as they listen for the voice of the Spirit, and are nourished by the Word,

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[1] The judgement of the Court for the Trial of a Bishop in ECUSA in the case of Stanton (Bishop of Dallas) and Others v. Righter (1996), was explicitly based on an understanding of the "core doctrine" of ECUSA limiting it to "the story of God's relationship to God's people". The court found that "there was no Core Doctrine prohibiting the ordination of a non-celibate homosexual person living in a faithful and committed sexual relationship with a person of the same sex."

[2] "Subsidiarity" is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as "the principle that a central authority should have a subsidiary function, performing only those tasks which cannot be performed effectively at a more immediate or local level."

they may be emboldened to find new and fresh ways to exercise the charism of their office (*episcope)* for the common good and peace of the churches.

Three questions for reflection

1. **How crucial to Christian faith and communion are the blessing of same-sex unions, the ordination of non-abstinent homosexual persons to the diaconate and priesthood and the appointment of such a person to the office of Bishop?**

   If these matters are deemed of crucial import to the communion of the churches then they ought to be dealt with beyond the local level of the Communion's dispute settling processes by those who have responsibility for the 'care of the churches' of the Communion.

   If the matters are deemed not essential a second question arises:

2. **How significant is the nature of the disputes regarding these matters?**

   If the Primates decide that the dispute is not that significant in respect to its intensity, extent and substance then the matter has to be handled differently under the operation of the principle of subsidiarity, and decided at the appropriate lower level.

   If the Primates decide that the nature of the dispute is of such significance - with reference to its intensity, extent and substance - that it makes for the disunity of the Church then the matter needs to be addressed at the higher levels of the Communion.

   If the Primates decide that the matters ought to be responsibly dealt with as part of their calling and authority as leaders of the Communion then the question arises:

3. **What processes of accountability, admonition and healing are appropriate in the Communion?**

   It needs to be recognised that in making a judgment as to whether the matter under consideration is of such significance that it is of crucial import for the communion of the churches, or not, the primates, whatever they decide, are already exercising an apostolic authority on behalf of the whole Communion. The making explicit of such an authority may indeed be a significant development in the life of the Communion, but it is evident from the history of the Church that new developments in the exercise of wider authority take place at times of crisis and challenge.

The Commission have for two years been engaged on a study of communion in a fruitful dialogue with members of the Anglican Communion throughout the world, and is continuing to seek to understand more deeply what are the appropriate processes of accountability, admonition and healing in a rapidly changing situation. The urgent need for effective ways to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace so that the Gospel may be preached and God be worshipped in spirit and in truth has at this time given a sharp focus to the wider reflection of the Commission on Communion. In response to the Archbishop of Canterbury's invitation, we offer our theological reflections in a spirit of dialogue under the *paraklesis* of the Spirit, hoping that they will aid the Primates in making their judgement on the demands of communion in Christ at the present time.

Anglican Conciliarity: History, Theology and Practice

Paul Avis

I have been asked to help the Commission to reflect on the theology and practice of conciliarity in Anglicanism and I have been encouraged to draw on the legacy of the pre-Reformation conciliar movement. So first of all I look at the historical background, at the late medieval developments in the concept of conciliar authority which influenced the Reformation and have shaped the churches of the modern world. Then I consider some of the theological principles that underpin the conciliar approach to authority. Next I explore how conciliarity is embodied and expressed in Anglicanism, before moving towards some tentative conclusions. But before we embark on all that, what is meant by conciliarity?

A definition

Conciliarity is a way of ordering the life of the Church as a coherent whole. What drives conciliarity is a longing for wholeness, coherence and unity. The Church in this context is not understood merely as a collection of local congregations that may happen to come together from time to time for their mutual advantage. Rather the Church is understood in a strongly realist sense as the Body of Christ. Conciliarity stands for the whole body of the Church taking responsibility for its mission, where mission embraces doctrine, worship, ministry, discipleship and evangelism. Conciliarity invokes the authority that is dispersed throughout the whole body; it gathers and focuses that authority when the Church takes counsel for its well-being and the advancement of its mission.

Conciliarity provides the theological framework in which all baptised Christians, gathered by word and sacrament as a community, discharge their share of responsibility for the life of the Church according to their various callings. Conciliarity equates to what the Faith and Order Lima text of 1982, *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, called the 'communal' dimension of ministry. Within it the other two dimensions, the collegial and the personal, find their place. So conciliarity provides the broadest context within which other expressions of oversight are located, like concentric ripples on a pond. The collegiality of bishops, with their special responsibility for doctrine, worship and ministry, with each other and with the presbyters who share oversight with them, is exercised within conciliarity. The personal dimension of ministry and oversight (for example, the primacy of archbishops) functions first within the sphere of collegiality and then within that of conciliarity. As the 1968 Lambeth Conference put it: 'the collegiality of the episcopate must always be seen in the context of the conciliar character of the Church, involving the *consensus fidelium*'.

Two models of authority

Two rival models of authority and governance in the Church have dominated Western Christianity for the past thousand years and continue to exist in tension today. We can call them 'monarchical' and 'conciliar' for short. The monarchical and the conciliar models of church authority are stereotypes and are not always found in their pure forms. Elements of each are found in most churches and there are grey areas where they overlap. Neither are these terms straightforward value judgements, so that the monarchical is always bad and the conciliar is always good. Monarchical authority embodies – but distorts – the important principle of primacy, of a personal ministry of oversight. On the other hand, conciliarity is not a panacea; it can become feeble and paralysed where there is a lack of leadership.

Although I am drawing a contrast between them and perhaps, therefore, unintentionally accentuating the differences, it is important to bear in mind that these two models have much in common. In fact they share a set of fundamental assumptions about the nature of the Church. Both are forms of Catholic Christianity; they each express in different ways a Catholic understanding of the Church. That is to say, they presuppose that, although the Church is ultimately a mystery hid in Christ with God, it finds visible expression as a universal, divinely ordained, structured community that is given stewardship of the means of grace. So both models recognise that there is an inescapable political dimension to the Church's life, the dimension of authority.

The monarchical model

The historical exemplar of monarchical catholicism is the Roman Church of the later Middle Ages, in which full authority (*plenitudo potestatis*), untrammelled spiritual and temporal authority, was concentrated in the papacy. Accelerating claims for papal authority were challenged by the conciliar movement in the last quarter of the fourteenth century and for several decades afterwards, but were reasserted with a vengeance when the conciliar movement was effectively defeated in the mid-fifteenth century. An intensification of monarchical authority (in the form of Ultramontanism) marked the Roman Catholic Church's reaction to the Enlightenment, the French Revolution and the rise of nationalism. During the twentieth century, in spite of all that Vatican II said about episcopal collegiality, the papacy became more centralised, all-controlling and authoritarian than it had ever been.

However, the monarchical model of authority is not by any means confined to the history of Roman Catholicism. The history of the Church of England provides abundant examples in the form of high-handed monarchs such as Elizabeth I, James I and Charles I, autocratic archbishops like Bancroft and Laud, not to mention the innumerable company of pompous prelates and self-important parsons through the ages. But Rome remains the classic case of monarchical authority because its model of ecclesiastical governance received elaborate ideological undergirding over many centuries.

Monarchical Catholicism involves a descending ecclesiology with a pyramid structure. Authority flows down from the papacy through the hierarchy. The pope exerts (or claims to exert) unfettered control over the Church as an absolute monarch. In the period before the Great Schism of 1378 canon lawyers and theologians competed with each other to supply the popes with ever more inflated claims in order to bolster their power over against the emperor and other civil rulers. The pope was invested with God's power on earth and there were few theoretical curbs on his authority. There was no higher court of appeal than the pope, not even the emperor, for spiritual power included and exceeded temporal power. The pope could be judged by no one.

In the emergence of monarchical catholicism practical, political developments went hand in hand with the elaboration of ideology. Beginning in the second half of the eleventh century and continuing throughout the twelfth, the papacy was centralised and its administration was made more rigorous, so that the pope took direct control of the Western Church and promoted uniformity of practice, according to the Roman model, throughout the Church. Nomination to various ecclesiastical offices and benefices accrued to the papacy and thus so did a proportion of their revenues. By the thirteenth century papal power was at its height.

Attacks on the Church were already prevalent before the Great Schism; they were not inaugurated by this catastrophic failure of the hierarchy. Its very constitution as an hierarchical system was being widely challenged long before the sixteenth century. What was at stake was the nature of the Catholic Church as a political community, as an ordered society, and particularly its structures of authority. The papacy was evaluated as a human institution and its claims began to be unmasked as forms of human legitimation. This radical, subversive vision formed the premise for ever louder rumblings of discontent and opposition to ecclesiastical privilege and papal interference in Germany, England, Scandinavia and elsewhere in Europe and the legal and constitutional ideas that accompanied them. The conciliar movement in the western Church developed as a challenge to the monarchical structure and as a response to the disasters that it had produced: above all the Great Schism, but also the chronic failure to address urgent issues of reform.

The conciliar model

The conciliar element that was already latent in medieval canon law was given its opportunity by the Great Schism of 1378 which threw Christendom into an unprecedented trauma and was apparently insoluble. The schism was precipated when the college of cardinals became disillusioned with their recent choice of pope, Urban VI, who had alienated them by his arrogance, irrational behaviour and violent temper. Unable to reverse what they had done, the cardinals elected a second pope, Clement VII, but Urban refused to concede. The fact that the same sacred college of cardinals had canonically elected two popes within the space of a few months sent a shock wave, whose magnitude we can hardly conceive, throughout Europe and resulted in a dual

system of popes, cardinals, curia and ecclesiastical allegiances, right down to the parochial clergy.

The empire was under weak leadership and was soon to be divided itself. The schism coincided with the social and economic consequences of the Black Death. It occured, moreover, in the year specified by various seers as that in which Antichrist would be manifested on earth. Little wonder that the schism was often seen in starkly apocalyptic terms (that helps to put the current difficulties of the Anglican Communion into perspective!).

The general clamour for a council to reform, unite and heal the Church began to intensify. Therefore the need to forge a new constitutional instrument that would enable a council to be convened without the normal authority of the pope became urgent. A council should be called by the pope but that was plainly impossible. The cardinals were discredited and divided. The emperor was too weak to do so. From the University of Paris, Conrad of Gelnhausen and Henry of Langestein drew on earlier conciliar practice. They began to invoke the recognised principle that what affects all should be approved by all, and to apply it to the resolution of the schism.

Conciliar thought envisaged authority as both dispersed and focused. Fullness of authority is located in the whole body of the Church and comes to focus and expression in councils – local, provincial and general. The pope is not the source of this authority but its minister. Apologists for the conciliar ideal were able to claim that the conciliar model of Church governance long predated the monarchical model, since councils went back to the beginnings of the Christian Church, to the Council of Jerusalem described in Acts 15. Several General Councils took place before the emergence of papal hegemony in the Western Church. The Council of Nicea in AD 325 was the first General Council after Jerusalem. It was called by the Emperor Constantine who took an active role in its proceedings.

Conciliar theory originated in the fairly routine work of canon lawyers, but underwent accelerated development at the hands of theologians and political philosophers in the spate of writing on ecclesiology that occurred from the early fourteenth century onwards. Not the least of the predisposing factors was the resentment of the episcopate at direct papal intervention in support of the new mendicant orders of friars that traversed dioceses. While the bishops did not question the universal writ of the pope's authority, they maintained that their own jurisdiction was not derived from the pope. These ideological developments were compounded by the increasing weight given to national interests and, at the end of this period, by the rise of nation-state. Emerging nation-states, often supported by their episcopates, began to seek sovereignty and to claim imperial status for themselves.

Conciliar ecclesiology stands, therefore, for an alternative strand within Catholicism and for a different model of authority. Conciliar thought was given a radical expression by Marsilius of Padua and William of Ockham. Pierre d'Ailly, Jean Gerson and Nicholas Cusanus were the leading conciliar thinkers at, respectively, the council of Pisa (1409)

and the General Councils of Constance (1414) and Basel (1431). Conciliar authority was evoked as a response to specific and apparently insoluble problems in the Church. Its premise was that the institution had failed. The very office that was intended to maintain its unity had proved the cause of its fragmentation. As Pierre d'Ailly put it: 'a community is not sufficiently ordered if it cannot resist its own ruin and open destruction.' Conciliarism had a number of distinguishing characteristics.

First, conciliar thought held that the Church means the whole Church, not simply the clergy (it was not unusual in the middle ages for the clergy, the church of Rome, or even the pope to be called the *ecclesia*). It is the whole Church, the community of the faithful (*congregatio fidelium*) that is the source of authority. Its authority comes to executive expression in a representative way through councils, above all through a General Council.

Second, conciliar thought recognised national identities and aspirations, not in any fully modern sense but to an extent that was subversive of an undifferentiated idea of Christendom held together by central authority.

Third, conciliar thought endorsed a kind of subsidiarity in affirming the role of lesser councils and synods: conciliarity should be practised at every level and in every context.

Fourth, conciliar thought employed academic contributions, sometimes giving scholars a voice and a vote in councils, and gave a role (albeit a limited one) to the laity, particularly in the persons of civil rulers.

Fifth, concilar thought invoked the common good as the criterion of decisions and laws. Influenced by Thomism, it held that law found its rationality in being suited to the nature of persons and communities. Law is given to serve the common good, which takes priority over the good of individuals. The whole takes priority over the parts. Natural law, inscribed in the created order, and divine law, revealed in Scripture, are in complete harmony and point to the common good.

Sixth and perhaps above all, conciliar thought promoted three principles of acceptable authority: constitutionality, representation and consent.

Constitutional principles

The three constitutional principles that are apparent in conciliar thought can be seen as explications of the old adage: 'What affects all must be approved by all.' This dictum goes back to antiquity: it was defined by the Christian emperor Justinian; it was incorporated in medieval canon law; it was invoked by the conciliarists and was still very much alive at the time of the Reformation, being quoted by Luther on occasion. It is regarded as an unquestionable axiom.

The principle of *constitutionality* means that the scope and limits of authority are laid down, agreed and acknowledged. This principle is incompatible with a strong form of monarchical authority. Structures of authority need to embody checks and balances. There were no constraints on the late medieval papacy (unless the pope became an outright heretic, in which case it was recognised by the canonists that he could be deposed by a General Council). Limits on authority serve the interests of those who are subject to that authority.

The principle of *representation* means that the authority of the whole body is exercised through its appointed representatives, since all the members of the body cannot physically come together for that purpose. A council consists of the representatives of the whole Church, whether ex officio like the bishops and abbots, appointed like the national delegations, or even elected.

The principle of *consent* means that the governed must agree to how they are governed and have a say in it. Authority is constrained by the need to obtain, in general, the consent of those subject to that authority. Laws that lack general acceptance lose credibility and ultimately lack legitimacy. People cannot be ruled, for an indefinite period, against their will. Authority has to carry conviction and be persuasive if it is to be effective.

Conciliarity and the Reformation

The conciliar movement re-united the Western church by unifying the papacy at the General Council of Constance in 1415, but it failed to effect the reforms which continued to cry out for redress for another century. The Reformation can be seen as a violent outburst of damned up conciliar aspirations. Continental and Anglican Reformers alike appealed to conciliar principles and urged that a free General Council should be called and presided over by the civil magistrate rather than by the pope. Luther and Cranmer both appealed to a future General Council. The calling of a Council was much in the air in the first half of the sixteenth century, but the Council that Luther and Cranmer appealed to turned out to be the Council of Trent! The Anglican Reformers and their successors, the sevententh-century divines, have a great deal to say about the authority of councils. They uphold the classical conciliar ideal of a free and properly representative council to arbitrate on the points of dispute between the churches.

However, the Reformers were definitely not full conciliarists. Conciliarism as a movement had been defeated in the mid-fifteenth century. Setting out to curb the power of the papacy, the conciliarists had over-reached themselves and had been trumped by the pope. By the early sixteenth century conciliarism was a legacy, a living intellectual tradition, and a legend, rather than a political option. The Reformers invoked aspects of the conciliar tradition, but did not adopt it wholesale. They did not accept that General Councils were infallible, any more than popes were (Article XXI). Their supreme source of authority was not the General Council but the Bible. The role of a council was to interpret Scripture. They went further than the conciliarists in ceding ecclesiastical

authority to civil rulers, not simply to initiate the convocation of a Council, but (though it is hazardous to generalise) to govern and reform the Church. And finally, it goes without saying that they saw no role for an unreformed papacy in relation to a General Council. Councils should be convened and supervised by the civil magistrate (the only viable alternative to the pope).

Richard Hooker

Richard Hooker (1554-1600) praises the role of General Councils in maintaining and furthering communion between portions of the universal Church which Hooker portrays as like the seas and oceans of the world, contiguous with each each and often flowing into each other. These 'reverend, religious and sacred consultations', as Hooker calls General Councils, have their place among the 'laws of spiritual commerce between Christian nations'. General Councils are invoked by Hooker as 'a thing whereof God's own blessed Spirit was the author; a thing practised by the holy Apostles themselves; a thing always afterward kept and observed throughout the world; a thing never otherwise than most highly esteemed of, till pride, ambition and tyranny began by factious and vile endeavours to abuse that divine intention unto the furtherance of wicked purposes.' The grievous abuse to which councils have recently been subjected (by the papacy) should not cause us to despair of them, urges Hooker, but rather should spur us 'to study how so gracious a thing may again be reduced to that first perfection' (Hooker, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* [EP], I, x, 14).

Hooker holds to a basic principle of the conciliar tradition that power of governance is vested in the whole body and that consent is therefore necessary for its exercise in matters either temporal or spiritual. Church authority, like political authority, resides in the people, and the bishops exercise it on their behalf, just as the civil magistrate exercises political authority on behalf of the people. The interpretation of Hooker's political theory, like other aspects of his thought, is contested. What is beyond dispute is that Hooker adheres to the basic conciliar ecclesiology that sees the Church in organic and corporate terms, subordinating the hierarchy to the body as a whole and ordering authority by the principles of constitutionality, representation and consent, a General Council being the highest executive expression of the Church's authority.

In more modern times, that is to say around the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, some of the most distinguished interpreters of Anglicanism from an historical point of view, such as R. W. Dixon, Bishop Mandell Creighton and Neville Figgis CR, lamented the failure of the conciliar movement and attributed the tragic divisions and excesses of the Reformation to that failure. They agreed in seeing Anglicanism as an expression and continuation of the conciliar ideal, that is to say, of a reformed Catholicism in the area of authority.

Conciliarity in modern Anglicanism

Anglicanism recognises the authority of General Councils in principle and the creeds of the early councils are normative for Anglican belief. Anglicans would still wish to participate in a truly ecumenical General Council, if one were possible. However, a truly ecumenical General Council is not a realistic possibility today and is unlikely to become more feasible in the foreseeable future. A General Council is an expression of a Church already united in eucharistic communion and taking steps to deal with a common threat or challenge. Such eucharistic communion is, regrettably, not true of the fragmented Christian Church today. The pluralism of faith and practice in the Church is gathering momentum, not diminishing. The number of churches is increasing and the prospect of an ecumenical council could be entertained only at the cost of an arbitrary limitation of what constitutes a Christian Church. Anglican ecclesiology is sometimes noted for its realism. In this case, realism inhibits romantic fantasizing about the chances of a General Council that would adjudicate on controversial issues such as the ordination of women or moral questions of sexuality.

Anglicanism has operated in practice on the premise that, in the absence of a General Council, portions of the Christian Church must practice conciliarity as best they can. Anglicanism is not paralysed by the impossibility of a truly ecumenical council. It believes that provinces gathered into communions should act in a conciliar fashion within the limits imposed by the divisions in the Church. It sets out to extend conciliarity as far and wide as it can until it runs up against the barriers erected by broken communion, rival claims to jurisdiction or serious differences in doctrine or order.

Like the conciliar movement, the Anglican Communion acknowledges national identities and aspirations in its notion of provincial autonomy and recognises the importance of cultural identity in its acceptance of the principle of inculturation. While the authority of Anglican provinces *vis à vis* the cohesion of the Anglican Communion as a whole is a matter that calls for continued hard thinking and heart-searching, there is certainly a degree of continuity to be perceived here with the national ambitions and resentments that helped to fuel the conciliar movement.

Conciliarism was not concerned only with General Councils, but picked up the early medieval precedent of regional and national councils that had fallen into disuse. Though synods are by no means unique to Anglicanism, the Anglican Communion has structures of synodical government at all appropriate levels – typically, deanery, diocesan, provincial and national – as well as participative Church government in the parish. Anglicanism gives a voice in these councils to clergy and laity as well as to bishops. Clergy (mostly theologians and canon lawyers) were involved in the pre-Reformation reforming councils, but the laity were represented mainly by rulers. Among influences on conciliar thought, Marsilius of Padua and William of Ockham were notable for advocating a place for laity.

Conciliarity is grounded theologically on the foundational sacrament of Christian initiation, baptism. Through their baptism all Christians are incorporated into Jesus Christ's threefold messianic identity as prophet, priest and king. By virtue of this royal

priesthood, all the baptised are mandated to play their part in the governance of Christ's kingdom. The 1988 Lambeth Conference affirmed that baptism into the royal priesthood is the foundation of all ministry, lay and ordained. It is the royal priesthood of the baptised that makes it right in principle for lay people to participate in councils and synods.

Anglicanism has universal structures of consultation – though not of jurisdiction or binding decision-making – in place in the Lambeth Conference, the Anglican Consultative Council and the Primates' meeting. It is within this conciliar and collegial context that the office of Archishop of Canterbury functions. The Archbishop of Canterbury has primacy as the incumbent of the most ancient metropolitan see of the Church of England, which for historical reasons serves as a focus of communion and unity for those churches that have links of doctrine, liturgy and polity with the Church of England. The Archbishop has no ordinary jurisdiction outside his own diocese, though he has a certain canonical authority in appeals and visitations. Following the 1988 Lambeth Conference, the Primates and the Anglican Consultative Council, meeting jointly, reaffirmed the role of the Archishop of Canterbury 'as the principal focus of unity in the Communion' and the initiator of new developments. This is the distinctive style of Anglican primacy.

Anglican conciliarity in practice

What makes Anglicanism a communion? The member Churches identify themselves as national or regional churches that are both catholic and reformed. They share a heritage of theology and liturgy, polity and spirituality that goes back to the classical Anglicanism of the seventeenth-century Church of England. They are in communion with one another by virtue of each being in communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury or with the Church of England. One expression of this communion is the Lambeth Conferences, convened by the Archbishop of Canterbury every ten years, for the sharing of insights and problems and the exchange of views, leading, it is hoped, to a common mind on issues of mutual concern, but not to binding decisions.

The Lambeth Conferences have adopted, as it were, a self-denying ordinance, consistently resisting suggestions that they should adopt juridical powers. The first Lambeth Conference in 1867 stated: 'It has never been contemplated that we should assume the functions of a general synod of all the Churches in full communion with the Church of England, and take upon ourselves to enact canons that should be binding upon those represented. We merely propose to discuss matters of practical interest and pronounce what we deem expedient in resolutions which may serve as safe guides.' The Conference of 1948 observed: 'Former Lambeth Conferences have wisely rejected proposals for a formal primacy of Canterbury, for an Appellate Tribunal, and for giving the Conference the status of a legislative synod. The Lambeth Conference remains advisory, and its continuation committee consultative.' Clearly, what unites Anglicans belongs not in the realm of binding authority or juridical structures, but in the more elusive area of relationships grounded in the intention to belong together.

Anglicanism is not a world Church, like the Roman Catholic Church, but a fellowship of self-governing national or regional Churches. The 1930 Lambeth Conference in its Encyclical Letter said: 'This Communion is a commonwealth of Churches without a central Constitution: it is a federation without a federal government.' The same Lambeth Conference affirmed, in contrast to the Roman Catholic position, that 'the true constitution of the Catholic Church involves the principle of the autonomy of particular Churches based upon a common faith and order.'

The Conference of 1878 had already considered the question of 'the best mode of maintaining unity among the various Churches of the Anglican Communion.' It had declared that 'the duly certified action of every national or particular Church, and of each ecclesiastical Province (or Diocese not included in a Province), in the exercise of its own discipline, should be respected by all the other Churches, and by their individual members.' One hundred years later, however, the 1978 Lambeth Conference put the other side of the equation, resolving that on major issues none of the provinces should take action without first consulting the Lambeth Conference or Primates' meeting.

Behind this resolution of Lambeth 1978 lay the question of the ordination of women to the priesthood and to the episcopate which would not only affect relations with other communions, but would also bring about a state of 'impaired communion' between some provinces of Anglicanism. On this issue provinces went their own way and were not prepared to wait for a consensus to emerge at the infrequent meetings of the Anglican bishops. The result of these developments has been a sharpening of dissatisfaction with the Anglican machinery for taking decisions as a communion.

This concern raises the question whether the stress on the autonomy of Anglican provinces is compatible with the nature of Anglicanism as a communion. The argument, much simplified, runs like this: Communion *(koinonia)* is grounded in the mutual relations of the Persons of the Holy Trinity. Autonomy is certainly not an appropriate term to apply to the relation of the Son to the Father, for example. Relatedness needs structures. In authority a juridical aspect is inescapable. There is canonical authority in a diocese or a province: why not in a worldwide communion? To be catholic, the local must maintain communion with the universal. It is not a question of creating the authority: it exists, particularly through baptism and ordination. It needs suitable channels in order to be exercised and the will to do so.

Cardinal Ratzinger once asked slightly sceptically of the Lambeth Conference, 'What sort of teaching authority and jurisdiction belongs or does not belong to this assembly of bishops?' How does Anglicanism measure up to this challenge? It has structures of conciliarity, collegiality and primacy. The authority of the primacy operates pastorally and fraternally. Without the power to take binding decisions at the Lambeth Conference, the Anglican Communion possesses a distinctive kind of collegiality. Collegiality belongs primarily to bishops with jurisdiction. The bishops of the Anglican Communion can offer, but not enforce leadership, outside their own diocese or province.

The strength of the Anglican Communion lies in its experience of informal conciliarity. Its structures are designed for mutual counsel and the sharing of experience and insight, the discipline of seeking together for the mind of Christ. It seems that this does not preclude the Lambeth Conference from making a corporate and decisive judgement on a controversial question by majority vote. That judgement would have considerable moral, but no juridical authority until provinces had debated and approved it by due canonical process. Thus in answer to Cardinal Ratzinger's question, Anglicans may reply that Lambeth Conferences have teaching authority, but that there is no compulsion for the member churches to accept that teaching. They will make up their own minds about it through their own structures of conciliarity in the process of reception. Jurisdiction has it none. Even if it were possible to reverse the whole tenor of the Lambeth Conferences for the past century and a helf, so that they were awarded (presumably by the member churches) juridical authority – canonical powers to take decisions that would be binding on the member Churches – this would be shattered at the first concerted challenge and the Anglican Communion would suffer much more serious disruption than anything it has experienced so far. Anglicans would be wise not to try to go down that road.

The Conference of 1920 was right to envisage the more excellent way of moral authority and charitable persuasion. Long before *koinonia* became ecumenically fashionable, Lambeth invoked its meaning. 'The Lambeth Conference does not claim to exercise any powers of control. It stands for the far more spiritual and more Christian principle of loyalty to the fellowship. The Churches represented in it are indeed independent, but independent with the Christian freedom which recognises the constraints of truth and love. They are not free to ignore the fellowship... the Conference is a fellowship in the Spirit.' Although the member Churches of the Anglican Communion are legally autonomous – they have the integrity and fullness of authority to decide their own destinies – the invoking of autonomy and the claiming of independence are hardly the language of Zion. More appropriate in the speech of Christians and Churches is the rhetoric of communion, bearing one another's burdens and 'speaking the truth in love'. Interdependence should take priority over autonomy. To practise the grace of walking together without coercive constraints is the special vocation of Anglicanism in our pluralistic world.

Towards some conclusions

The conciliar tradition of authority is a development of the Pauline understanding of the Church as the Body of Christ. The body metaphor is both mystical (linked with the metaphor of the bride of Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit) and political (as a visible, ordered community, the Church has various structures of governance and of oversight that can be interpreted by means of secular political theory). Within the range of political options available within the Church's tradition, Anglicanism is an expression of conciliar Catholicism. Its divines have consistently invoked conciliar principles. The conciliar character of Anglicanism applies to the Communion as a whole, as well as to the member provinces, since communion (*koinonia*) is an ecclesial concept. However, in

a plural and divided Christian Church conciliar authority is fragmented and dissipated. It is located within, rather than between churches. This situation pertains to the Anglican Communion as well as to the whole Christian *oikumene*.

Mandatory, binding authority is not the only form of conciliar authority. Conciliarity also involves mutual consultation, bearing one another's burdens and the offering of principled leadership. Conciliarity remains valid, even when its decisions cannot be imposed. Any attempt to move the Anglican Communion to acceptance of a central, 'monarchical' authority with the power to make decisions that would be binding on the member churches is doomed to failure. The vocation of Anglicanism lies in its distinctive approach to questions of authority where primacy, collegiality and conciliarity all have their integrity and are interrelated and mutually constrained.

However, this does not mean that the Communion can never have more than moral authority for its members. Conciliarity that lacks mandatory authority nevertheless has the potential to develop forms of mutual obligation (protocols of consultation, leading to common action or perhaps restraint, together with the sanctions that would apply in circumstances where they are not observed) that are intended to promote the common good. The common good of the Anglican Communion should be seen in ecclesiological and missiological terms, i.e. as the conditions that are required for the Communion as a whole and its member churches to grow in the four dimensions of the Church (unity, holiness, catholicity and apostolicity) and to carry out the mission of the gospel in the world. However, the common good of the Communion would need to be set within the context of the common good of the whole Church of Christ – which means that ecumenical considerations would also be taken seriously.

Such protocols may be freely accepted by the constituent bodies, following their own canonical processes. When so accepted they would become binding unless and until repudiated by a similar canonical process. A majority (threshold to be agreed) of the provinces may insist that membership of the Communion requires acceptance and observance of these protocols. Presumably, the consent of the Archbishop of Canterbury would be required before this condition could be implemented.

Conciliarity presupposes communion. Communion (*koinonia*) is a multi-faceted, dynamic and graduated reality that expresses and sustains the nature of the Church as the Body of Christ. The communion of the Anglican Communion goes well beyond the baptismal communion that pertains (e.g.) between Anglicans and Roman Catholics. Communion between Anglican provinces involves the interchangeability of ministries and therefore of Eucharists (any impairment of this can only be regarded as a temporary anomaly).

Even serious differences between constituent parts of the Church (dioceses or provinces) are not a sufficient reason for breaking communion, unless a diocese or province chooses to elevate that difference to the level of a church-dividing issue of faith or practice, so making acceptance of its position a touchstone of communion. The Bonn Agreement between Anglicans and Old Catholics soundly states that 'Full Communion does not require from either Communion the acceptance of all doctrinal opinion, sacramental

devotion or liturgical practice characteristic of the other, but implies that each believes the other to hold all the essentials of the Christian faith.' We may profoundly, passionately and bitterly disagree with one another without breaking canonical communion.

It is vital that, as far as possible, communion be maintained in order that conciliarity may function, because conciliarity is needed to solve the problem. Sometimes differences held in conscience can be marked in ways that do not involve breach of communion. Breaking communion in a drastic way implies that the Orders and Eucharists of the body that is being disowned are not valid. Questions of validity need to be seen, not only in strictly canonical terms but also in the light of the catholic doctrine that 'the unworthiness of the minister... hinders not the effect of the sacrament' (Article XXVI of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England). The objectivity and 'givenness' of the sacraments and of the sacred ministry as their channel, sustains the Church in communion in spite of many human imperfections.

QUESTIONS

1. To what extent does Anglicanism embody conciliar principles and structures?
2. Could the conciliar axiom, 'What affects all should be agreed by all', be implemented in the Anglican Communion?
3. How might the common good of the Anglican Communion be described?

Background Information Related to the

Decision of the Diocese of New Westminster

(Anglican Church of Canada)

to Authorize the Blessing of Same Sex Unions

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Introduction

The following material provides background information on the actions and decisions of the Diocese of New Westminster:

The Bishop's Proposal Adopted by the Synod of the Diocese of New Westminster on June 14, 2002
This is the Proposal developed by Bishop Michael Ingham and voted on by the Synod of the Diocese of New Westminster. It details the plans for the implementation of the Authorization of a Rite for Blessing Same Sex Unions. At the end of this proposal is the text of the motion as it passed the Diocesan Synod.

Statement by Bishop Michael Ingham to Synod 2002
This is the statement made by Bishop Michael Ingham to the Diocesan Synod in June 2002 following the announcement of the results of the secret ballot on Motion Seven.

Statement by Bishop Michael Ingham to Synod 2003
This is a statement made by Bishop Michael Ingham to the Diocesan Synod in May 2003. It reports to Synod on the implementation of Motion Seven (from Synod 2002).

Episcopal Visitor – Diocese of New Westminster
This is the position description for the Episcopal Visitor authorized by adoption of the Proposal by the Diocesan Synod on June 15, 2002 (Motion Seven).

Conservative Ordinations / Appointments since 1998 in the Diocese of New Westminster
This is a list that details all the appointments of theological conservatives made by Bishop Michael Ingham since 1998.

History of Disciplinary Actions Taken in the Diocese of New Westminster
This is a history of the disciplinary actions taken by the Bishop against clergy in his diocese since the passage of Motion Seven at the Diocesan Synod in June 2002.

The Bishop's Proposal Adopted by the Synod of the Diocese of New Westminster on June 14, 2002

Originally released in May 2002

1. Context

After 25 years of discussion within the Canadian church, our Synod in 1998 and 2001 voted to proceed with the blessing of covenanted same sex unions.

On both occasions, my episcopal consent was withheld. My hope has been to allow time for the development of greater consensus and mutual understanding.

In the 12 months since Synod 2001 it appears the issue remains contentious and far from resolution. Gay and lesbian members of our church feel their pastoral needs are being denied despite majority support from Synods. Other Anglicans express sincere commitment to the church but feel they would be pastorally isolated if I were to give my consent in the future.

2. A Proposal

In order to resolve the impasse, and to enable the highest level of communion to continue within the diocese, I offer the following proposal as a way forward.

a. Appointment of Episcopal Visitor

I will appoint a Canadian bishop from outside this diocese to offer pastoral care to those parishes and clergy who desire it. It is to be understood that this is a temporary measure, renewable annually by vestry vote and with my consent, while the diocese and the affected parishes continue to work toward mutual reconciliation.

The Diocesan Bishop shall retain canonical authority over all parishes and licensed clergy, including jurisdiction in all episcopal acts, while delegating pastoral oversight to the Visitor. The Visitor shall be accountable to the Diocesan. Costs shall be borne by the diocese for an initial period of three years, renewable. Parishes under the care of the Episcopal Visitor shall continue to meet their financial obligations to the diocese.

b. Conscience Clause

No member of the diocese, lay or ordained, shall be required to act against their conscience in the blessing of same sex unions. There shall be no discrimination against any member of the diocese in respect of employment, appointment or advancement on grounds of conscience. No "sunset clause" is intended, although I cannot bind my successors in this matter.

Clergy holding or seeking the bishop's license must honour the conscience of others (as on other matters such as the ordination of women), maintain collegiality including attendance at clergy events, and respect the decisions of Synod. The Bishop's Expectations of Clergy, published in the Diocesan Procedures Manual, shall continue to apply to all diocesan clergy. Failure to

comply may result in the termination of license.

c. Rite of Blessing
I shall approve a rite of blessing, subject to review by the Legal and Canonical Commission. Requests to use the rite must be made in writing indicating the consent of both the Incumbent and the congregation, by vestry vote. Only those parishes meeting these conditions shall be authorised to offer such pastoral services.

d. Episcopal Consent
In order to avoid further contentious and divisive debate on this matter, I shall give my episcopal consent to Motion 9 at Synod 2002 subject to the above conditions. I would like to see the withdrawal of all motions on the issue.

3. Conclusion

This proposal is an attempt to maintain the highest level of communion in our diocese where there is honest disagreement on Motion 9. It recognises the legitimate pastoral needs of different members of the church and seeks to resolve the current state of impasse, allowing everyone to remain in the diocesan family.

It is my hope that the energies and gifts of every member of the diocese can become focused more clearly on the mission of Christ instead of our political and theological deadlock. It will require a measure of tolerance, hospitality and mutual respect from all of us, and a period of continuing work at reconciliation.

Motion that was passed by the Diocesan Synod on June 14, 2002:
THAT this Synod endorse the Bishop's proposal to meet pastoral needs in the Diocese of New Westminster as set out in paragraphs A, B, C and D of the proposal dated May 23rd, 2002.

Moved: The Ven. Barbara Clay
Seconded: The Rev. Kevin Dixon

[Note: A motion that requested the Bishop authorise the blessing of covenanted same sex unions was first passed by Diocesan Synod on May 9, 1998, by a vote of 179 to 170 (51.3 per cent). The Bishop refused consent and later initiated a three-year period of study in the diocese. On June 2, 2001, the same motion passed by a vote of 226 to 174 (56.5 per cent); the Bishop again refused consent. The above motion was passed by a vote of 215 to 129 (62.5 per cent), and the Bishop gave consent.]

Statement by the Bishop of New Westminster – June 15, 2002

The Synod of the Diocese of New Westminster has now made a clear decision about the pastoral care of Anglicans in this part of Canada.

We have voted not to compel but to permit: to permit those parishes that wish to celebrate permanent, intimate, loving relationships between persons of the same sex to do so in recognition of the God-given goodness of their sacred mutual commitments; and to permit those parishes who stand in continuity with the historic practice of the church, and with biblical truth as they sincerely believe it, to do so without compulsion, with full protection of conscience, and with the pastoral support of episcopal ministry.

We take these steps today in full awareness that others in the Anglican Communion may not understand our actions. We hope all will realize that Canadian Anglicans live in a country where homosexual activity was decriminalized thirty years ago; where human rights legislation offers legal protection to gay and lesbian people against all forms of discrimination; and where churches across this great country freely and openly welcome men and women of every language, race and nation, colour, marital status and sexual orientation. We are an inclusive church in a plural, peaceful and tolerant society.

We are not compromising the Christian faith nor relativising its moral teaching. We are extending to gay and lesbian Christians the same freedom that is enjoyed by others to commit their lives to Jesus Christ together, and the same obligation to grow in the costly demands of love. We are calling them to fidelity, permanence and stability in relationships. We are offering them the support of the Christian Community as they grow into the fullness of the stature of Christ through the struggles and challenges of mutual commitment.

No one is being excluded from our fellowship today. We have not taken sides with one group in our church against another. We have chosen to live together in mutual respect. We acknowledge and repent of the pain we have caused in the course of this long process. We are deeply aware that there is much more work to do to build up mutual understanding and reconciliation. In this we ask for the support of the wider church, not condemnation, and patience from those who live in very different social contexts from our own.

We have voted for unity in the midst of diversity. We have decided to embrace faithful Christian believers of differing conscience within the one Body of Christ. We are not taking sides with some members of our church over others, but inviting both to work together to support the mission of the church throughout the world without the scandal of further division.

We do these things in the belief that they are the call of the Spirit to the church everywhere. To the Spirit of God and to the church we pledge our continued loyalty and affection.

Statement by Bishop Michael Ingham
On the Implementation of Motion Seven – May 30, 2003

A few days ago, as you will know by now, a rite of blessing of covenanted same sex unions was issued to six parishes in the diocese who have requested permission to offer these pastoral services.

In issuing the rite, I have now fulfilled the commitment I made to this Synod a year ago. All of the provisions of Motion Seven last year are now complete.

For a time we will be in the spotlight of attention as a diocese, and some us will find it quite uncomfortable. We are in the forefront of a movement of change taking place across the church, and change is never accomplished easily.

In speaking with the Primate yesterday, he reminded me that the way we have reached our decisions in this diocese is particularly Canadian. Canada is a nation where, by and large, public policy changes are discussed openly and in the light of day rather than questionably behind the scenes. We are also a nation where discrimination and prejudice against homosexual people are rapidly diminishing.

This is not true, of course, in every part of the world. The Archbishop of Canterbury has spoken about his sadness at the impact our actions will have and the inevitable tensions that will result. We acknowledge this. In many places around the world homosexual people are still treated as criminals and even worse, and in some instances with the support of the church. We regret this too, and express our sadness and disquiet at their suffering, and hope that our actions in this part of the world may bring some comfort and hope to those millions of people who look to the church for safety and support instead of judgment and condemnation.

We have been weakened in our diocese by this controversy. It has consumed a great deal of our energy. The parishes who left us a year ago have themselves been severely weakened also. Many who remain loyal to us, and are part of our Synod today, do so at personal cost. Their parishes have lost good and faithful members. There is, as with any change, joy in some hearts and pain in others.

Let us acknowledge all this before God. Let us ask God to forgive each of us where we have caused pain to others. Let us ask God to grant us grace to be ourselves forgiving. From this moment on, let us extend the hand of friendship to one another whatever our views, and commit ourselves afresh to the renewing of our church and its mission. We have before us in this Synod the opportunity to take steps to restore the strength of our diocese and renew the work of our parishes. Let us take them. Let us agree to live now with the decisions we have made as a body, trusting them to God, and get on with being the church of Jesus Christ in peace together.

Episcopal Visitor
Diocese of New Westminster

Scope of Responsibilities
The Episcopal Visitor shall exercise delegated pastoral authority and perform such duties as shall be assigned by the Diocesan Bishop. In particular:

1. To visit requesting parishes for preaching, teaching, and presiding at worship.
2. To be available to clergy and members of requesting parishes seeking pastoral care.
3. To participate in and/or preside at Confirmations if requested by the Diocesan Bishop in consultation with requesting parishes.
4. To participate actively in and advise the Diocesan Bishop on the recruitment, selection, and appointment of Incumbents to requesting parishes.
5. To advise the Diocesan Bishop about ongoing needs and opportunities for reconciliation.
6. To work with the Diocesan Bishop and Synod toward fully restored relationships and unity in mission.
7. To attend Diocesan Synod with full privileges of the floor.

Parishes requesting the Episcopal Visitor must indicate such by Vestry vote, confirming this annually, and must continue to meet their financial obligations to the diocese. Only one Episcopal Visitor may be appointed at any time. The Diocesan Bishop retains canonical authority over all parishes and licensed clergy, including jurisdiction in all episcopal acts. None of the duties of the Episcopal Visitor shall in any way exclude or replace the same responsibilities of the Diocesan.

I want to welcome Bishop Hockin to our diocesan family and to express my personal thanks to him for his willingness to assist us in this time of change. I believe his ministry will be a source of strength to everyone across the diocese, and will fulfil the spirit and intention of the decisions made by our Synod. May the Holy Spirit bless and guide him, and lead us all into unity of mission and the bond of peace.

Conservative Ordinations / Appointments since 1998 in the Diocese of New Westminster

1998

February:	James Wagner*, ordained priest and appointed Assistant Priest, St. Matthew, Abbotsford
	Sarah Tweedale, ordained priest and appointed Assistant Priest, St. Alban, Richmond
	John Oakes, ordained priest and appointed Assistant Priest, St. Cuthbert's
	Daniel Gifford appointed Associate Priest, St. John's, Shaughnessy
March:	George Rogers appointed Honorary Assistant, St. Helen, Vancouver
May:	Simon Chin* appointed Incumbent, St. Luke/St. Matthias, Vancouver
June:	Felix Orji* appointed Assistant Priest, St. John's, Shaughnessy
	Philip Der appointed Assistant Priest, Church of the Good Shepherd
July:	Dawn McDonald* ordained deacon and appointed Assistant Curate, Holy Cross, Vancouver
August	Ron Gibbs ordained and appointed Deacon, St. John, Maple Ridge
September:	Barclay Mayo* appointed Incumbent, St. Andrew's, Pender Harbour
December:	Dawn McDonald* ordained Priest and appointed Assistant Priest, Holy Cross, Vancouver

1999

April:	Neville Crichlow appointed Priest in Charge, St. Mary's, Sapperton
September:	Sarah Tweedale appointed Incumbent, St. Clement

2000

March:	Rod Andrews appointed Incumbent, St. Anselm
May:	Dawn McDonald* appointed Incumbent, Holy Cross, Vancouver
May:	Silas Ng* appointed Incumbent, Church of Emmanuel
July:	Katherine Yeo ordained Deacon and appointed Deacon, St. Faith, Vancouver
July:	Colin Goode appointed Incumbent, Holy Trinity, Vancouver
	Peter Klenner ordained Deacon and appointed Assistant Curate, St. Cuthbert
	Paulina Lee ordained Deacon and appointed Assistant Curate, Good Shepherd
	John Oakes appointed Honorary Assistant, St. John's, Shaughnessy
November:	Neville Crichlow appointed Incumbent, St. Mary's, Sapperton
December:	Peter Klenner ordained Priest
	Paulina Lee ordained Priest
	Craig Tanksley ordained Deacon

2001

February:	Craig Tanksley appointed Assistant Curate, St. Laurence
June:	James Wagner* appointed Priest-in-Charge, Holy Cross, Abbotsford
July:	Craig Tanksley ordained Priest

October: Eve Wiseman appointed Priest-in-Charge, St. David's, Delta
November: Ron Barnes appointed Senior Chaplain, Mission to Seafarers
December: Paul Carter appointed Associate Priest (temporary), St. Matthew's, Abbotsford

2002

January: Ron Wickens appointed Incumbent, St. John, Burnaby
May: Paul Woehrle appointed Incumbent, St. David's Delta
July: Don Gardner ordained Deacon and appointed Deacon, St. Matthew's, Abbotsford
Rod Andrews appointed Incumbent, St. Alban, Richmond
August: John Oakes appointed Associate Priest, St. Mark, Ocean Park
Neil Mancor appointed Assistant Priest, St. John, Shaughnessy
Peter Klenner appointed Assistant Priest, St. Cuthbert
Paulina Lee appointed Associate Priest, Jubilee Cluster
Michael Stewart appointed Associate Priest St. Matthew, Abbotsford

2003

January: John Oakes appointed Priest-in-Charge, Holy Trinity, Vancouver
Craig Tanksley appointed Incumbent, St. Alban's, Burnaby
April: Lexson Maku appointed Honorary Assistant, Holy Cross, Vancouver
May: Peter Klenner appointed Incumbent, St. Mark's, Ocean Park
November: Allan Carson appointed Incumbent St. Cuthbert's, Delta

Statistics:

Total number of licensed appointments made since 1998: 147
Total number of licensed appointments listed above: 42

Conservative Regional Deans

Sarah Tweedale, Regional Dean of North Vancouver
Trevor Fisher, Regional Dean of Capilano/Kingcome

Additional Notes

Timothy Cooke appointed Incumbent, St. Martin in January 1997
Roger Simpson appointed Incumbent, Holy Trinity, Vancouver in November 1995
Robert Wismer appointed Incumbent, St. Helen, Vancouver in February 1995
*Indicates those who are now members of the withholding parishes group

History of Disciplinary Actions Taken in the Diocese of New Westminster since 2002

Spring of 2002
Several meetings were held with a group of clergy unhappy about the prospect of the blessing of same sex unions being allowed to proceed in the diocese. Meetings ended weeks before Synod.

June 15, 2002 – Diocesan Synod
After a lengthy debate and via a secret ballot, the members of the Synod of the Diocese of New Westminster approved a motion asking the bishop to authorize a rite of blessing of same sex unions in parishes that wished to proceed with this. See attached copy of the motion ("Motion Seven").

As soon as the result of the vote was announced and before the Bishop gave his consent to the motion, lay delegates and clergy representing eight parishes staged a walkout of synod. There was widespread media coverage of this event. Several of those clergy who chose to leave the synod made statements to the media (radio, television & newspaper).
The parishes involved were:

St. John Shaughnessy	St. Andrew, Pender Harbour
St. Matthias & St. Luke	St. Matthew, Abbotsford
Good Shepherd	St. Martin
St. Simon	Church of Emmanuel

Later on in the proceedings of synod the following motion was passed by those remaining:

> *That this Synod extend to our brothers and sisters a message of sadness that they have felt unable to remain with us at this Synod meeting today, and an invitation to continue with us in prayer and discussion about ways in which we can celebrate our shared commitment to our faith and in which we can work toward reconciliation.*

June 19, 2002
Bishop Michael Ingham wrote to all the individual clergy involved in the walk-out. In the letter Bishop Ingham recognised that they were hurt by the actions taken by the synod and informed them of the motion passed later in the proceedings (see above). The Bishop also said he was 'writing to seek clarification of your intentions'. He asked whether they wished to remain licensed to their current parishes and under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of New Westminster. They were asked to reply in writing to the Bishop no later than July 2, 2002.

July 2, 2002
The clergy involved in the walk-out from Synod responded to the Bishop's letters to them with a group letter. In the letter they stated: "We the undersigned duly licensed clergy, are still part of this Diocese, but that relationship has been seriously strained by the passage of Motion Seven. If it is implemented, we could be put in a position of conflict with our ordination vows of unswerving loyalty to Holy Scripture and the unbroken traditions of the worldwide Anglican

Communion." The letter listed all the clergy who walked out of the diocesan synod but was not signed by any one of them.

July 10, 2002
The Chancellor of the diocese, Mr. George E.H. Cadman, Q.C., wrote to the same individuals in reply to their collective response to the Bishop's letter. In this letter the Chancellor reminded these priests that the initial letter from Bishop Michael sought clarification of their recognition of the Bishop's jurisdiction and authority as their Diocesan Bishop and that they had not provided the Bishop with individual responses. The Chancellor asked these priests to "please be kind enough to reply directly and individually to Bishop Michael no later than July 19th, confirming that you do acknowledge his jurisdiction and authority as your Diocesan Bishop." No responses to this letter were received by either the Bishop or the Chancellor.

Eight parishes began to withhold their assessment payments to the diocese.

August 2002
Diocesan Canons provided that the diocese could no longer process the stipends of the dissenting clergy through the diocesan payroll system as the diocesan assessments of each of their parishes were not being paid. The group developed its own payroll system.

The Bishop appointed an assistant priest to St. John's Shaughnessy and another to St. Matthew's, Abbotsford. Both men had been requested by the parishes involved, and are of a conservative theology.

September 2002
With the appointment of Michael Stewart as Assistant Priest of St. Matthew's, the Rev. Paul Carter's temporary license to St. Matthew's expired. Mr. Carter was placed "on leave without permission to officiate."

September 1, 2002
Visiting Primates and Bishops attended "A Celebration of Global Anglican Fellowship" held at the South Delta Baptist Church near Vancouver. Participating were Primates from Central Africa and South East Asia, plus representatives of the American Anglican Council and Ekklesia. Priests from the dissenting parishes attended and many participated.

January 31, 2003
Timothy Cooke voluntarily resigned as Incumbent of St. Monica's, North Vancouver. Bishop Ingham said he felt Mr. Cooke's decision to resign for reasons of conscience but not attempt to take his parish out of the diocese was "an honourable thing to do."

February 9, 2003
The Rt. Rev. Charles Murphy, bishop and chair of the American Mission in America, was the guest preacher at a "service of solidarity" which involved the dissenting priests at an interdenominational meeting in Vancouver.

February 17, 2003
Bishop Terry Buckle of the Yukon wrote Bishop Ingham and offered to assume "Alternative Episcopal Oversight" for the dissenting parishes. Bishop Ingham replied that for several reasons he did not feel that would be wise, and turned down the offer.

February 24, 2003
Bishop Ingham issued an inhibition against Bishop Buckle warning him not to exercise any ministry within the geographical boundaries of the Diocese of New Westminster and informed the diocese of this inhibition.

March 19, 2004
Despite the inhibition, Bishop Buckle wrote the dissenting parishes and offered alternative episcopal oversight to them "and those parishes from within the Diocese of New Westminster that may wish to join this coalition".

Chancellor George Cadman stated that the letter "is highly irregular, outside the Canonical structure of the Canadian Church, and a direct violation of Bishop Ingham's desire that people engage in a process of reconciliation" within the diocesan structure.

However, at Vestry meetings (full membership meetings), seven of the eight parishes voted to accept Bishop Buckle's offer. (A vote at St. Martin's failed by a small margin.)

March 24, 2003
Bishop Michael Ingham wrote to the incumbents of the seven parishes withholding their assessments. In the letter the Bishop says, regarding the actions of the Right Reverend Terry Buckle 'His action is contrary to Canon Law and my letter of inhibition to him dated February 24, 2003. The actions of the Vestry Meeting are therefore null and void"

The Bishop went on to say the following:
"I now direct that you indicate to me in writing no later than Monday, March 31st

a) Notwithstanding the passage of the Resolution by your vestry, whether or not you reject the jurisdiction of Bishop Buckle.
b) Whether or not you will act upon the offer set out in his letter of March 19, 2003
c) Whether or not you affirm and acknowledge to me your Canonical Obedience as Bishop of the Diocese.

Failure to respond will be taken as agreement with the Vestry's resolution."

March 25, 2003
Chancellor George Cadman wrote to Metropolitan David Crawley to prefer charges against Bishop Buckle.

End of March / beginning of April
All the Incumbents of the seven withholding parishes were phoned or sent email by either the Executive Archdeacon or the Bishop's Administrative Assistant and told that their Bishop wanted to meet with them. Some refused to come in for this meeting

Three of the clergy agreed to meet with the Bishop. These meetings were also attended by

Executive Archdeacon Ronald Harrison, Chancellor George Cadman and an additional representative for the clergy person (either a lawyer, a parish warden, or a parish trustee)

May 29-30, 2003
Diocesan Synod – the withholding parishes failed to send any lay or clerical representatives

July 13, 2003
The Vestry of the Parish of Holy Cross, Vancouver, which has a largely Japanese-speaking congregation, voted to join the group of dissenting parishes, to withhold diocesan assessments, and to accept the Bishop of Yukon's offer of alternative episcopal oversight.

September 5, 2003
In accordance with Diocesan Canon 15, in response to "difficulties or a crisis which in the opinion of the Bishop affects the orderly management and operation of the Parish," Bishop Ingham reorganised the governance structure of the Parish of St. Martin's, North Vancouver, appointing three Bishop's Wardens and a Parish Executive Committee to replace all persons holding office as wardens and other officers of the Parish. The interim priest-in-charge remained. Diocesan Council endorsed the Bishop's action on September 9. By January, 2004, the reorganised parish was able to begin the search for a permanent priest.

September 7, 2003
A second large meeting was held at the South Delta Baptist Church by the dissenting parishes. The Rt. Rev. Terry Buckle, Bishop of Yukon, took a lead role. Included were the Primates of Central Africa and South India, several representatives of the American Anglican Council, Ekklesia, and the American Mission in America.

The dissenting priests sat near the front and accepted a "commissioning" by Bishop Buckle. The Rev. Paul Carter, a priest of the Diocese of New Westminster on leave without permission to officiate, was commissioned as a missioner by Bishop Buckle, apparently to work within the Diocese of New Westminster.

September 21, 2003
The congregation of the Mission Church of Holy Cross, Abbotsford, voted to accept the Bishop of Yukon's offer of alternative episcopal oversight. On October 2, 2003, the administrators of the Anglican Initiatives Fund, the vehicle for funding missions within the diocese, acting upon legal advice terminated the mission's funding. On October 14, 2003, the Diocesan Council voted to recommend that the mission itself be terminated. The Bishop took council's motion under advisement. Following the withdrawal of the Bishop of Yukon (see November 7, 2003, below), the Bishop wrote to the mission's priest-in-charge and lay leaders and asked whether they might reconsider their September motion. Receiving no positive response, the Bishop announced at a meeting of Diocesan Council on December 9 that he was terminating the mission.

October 8, 2003
Archbishop and Metropolitan David Crawley announced disciplinary proceedings against the Bishop of Yukon.

October 15, 2003
Chancellor George Cadman brought forward to the Bishop formal charges against seven incumbents under the Diocesan Canon on Discipline.

Following Canonical procedure, the Bishop called a Commission of Inquiry and directed it to "to make inquiry into the grounds" of the Chancellor's charges, and to report back within three months. This was the first step under the diocesan Canon on Discipline.

October 28-30, 2003
At the national House of Bishops' meeting a motion was proposed that requested Bishop Buckle withdraw his offer to assume episcopal jurisdiction, that Metropolitan Crawley to then stay charges against Bishop Buckle, and that Bishop Ingham stay charges against the dissenting priests. Bishop Buckle initially said he could not comply. The meeting passed the motion for the record. The House also asked the Primate to appoint a Task Force to review the issue of Adequate/Alternative Episcopal Oversight

November 7, 2003
Bishop Buckle reconsidered and in a letter to the Metropolitan stated he had withdrawn his offer of episcopal oversight to the withholding parishes of New Westminster. In response, the Metropolitan stayed charges against Bishop Buckle, and Bishop Ingham stayed the charges against the Incumbents of the withholding parishes.

February 6, 2004

The Most Rev. Robert H.A. Eames
Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland
Via Fax: 011-44-28-3752-7823
Via Email: archbishop@armagh.anglican.org

Dear Robin:

Rather than respond to the questionnaire I thought it would be more helpful were I to send to you to share with members of the Commission a description of some of the workings of the Episcopal Church, pertinent to your deliberations, and also to try to give some sense of how we have come to a point in our life where we find ourselves having given consent to the election and consecration of a man who shares his life with a member of the same sex.

For at least 35 years the Episcopal Church has been engaged in a process of discernment about the question of homosexuality in the life of the church. This discernment began quite naturally on a local level as congregations began to be aware that certain faithful members of their worshipping communities were homosexual. In some instances these persons shared their lives with a partner of the same sex. It also became obvious that the quality of such relationships on occasion matched the mutual care and self-giving that we associate with marriage.

It is important to realize here that in many areas of our church, particularly urban areas, homosexuality is a very ordinary reality. The whole question of homosexuality is widely and openly discussed. And homosexual persons are quite public in areas of politics, sports and entertainment. I realize this is not the case around our Communion but this fact of our culture must be taken into account given that none of us do our theology in a vacuum.

In the gospel Jesus speaks about knowing a tree by the fruit it bears. In congregations where persons known to be homosexual became a part of congregational life, it became obvious that they possessed the fruit of the Spirit: generosity, kindness, and many of the other characteristics that we associate with Christian virtue. I think here of the experience of the church in Acts, having to deal with the fruit of the Spirit working in the lives of those outside the recognized community, in this case the Gentiles. The fact that in many instances good fruit appeared on trees that were condemned by the church obliged many clergy and others to ponder the scriptures afresh in the light of this reality. If the fruit of the Spirit is discerned in the lives of homosexual men and women is that not in some way an indication by God that these people are to be treated and seen as full members of the community and to be entrusted with ministry on behalf of the

community? So, based on the reality around us of men and women who were part of our lives, we continued our discernment.

Over these years homosexual persons, lay and ordained, have gradually become a vital part of our church. And, as a logical development, congregations have extended a pastoral ministry to their gay and lesbian members. In some congregations there has been acknowledgment of same sex commitments.

Then, as a logical consequence of the acceptance of gay and lesbian persons in the life of congregations and dioceses, the church as a whole has been engaging the question of homosexuality, including in the formal legislative context of the General Convention. At the General Convention in 1976 a resolution was passed stating: "…that homosexual persons are children of God who have a full and equal claim with all other persons upon the love, acceptance, and pastoral concern and care of the Church." Ten years ago at the General Convention in 1994 a resolution was passed amending the canons such that "no one shall be denied access to the selection process for ordination in this Church because of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, disabilities or age…"

Our engagement as a church with questions of homosexuality has lead to a series of studies and dialogues which have been broadly undertaken and involved persons of a full range of opinion. These conversations, which have been both very structured and unstructured, from settings such as parish halls to the floors of formal gatherings, have been concerned with the authority and interpretation of scripture, human sexuality as God's gift, the place of homosexual Christians within the life of the church and the theological aspects of committed relationships of same sex couples.

As part of this work, in 1993 the House of Bishops commissioned from theologians representing diverse points of view a series of papers dealing with authority of scripture. The papers reflected different ways in which scripture may legitimately be approached within the context of the community of faith. I realize that some provinces of our Communion have a dominant tradition for interpreting scripture. I would note here that it is part of the reality of the Episcopal Church that we live with divergent points of view regarding the interpretation of scripture and understandings of the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the church. Though we believe "the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and to contain all things necessary to salvation," as it is stated in our ordination liturgy, there is no neutral reading of scripture, and we interpret various passages differently while seeking to be faithful to the mind of Christ. It is therefore important to recognize that people of genuine faith can and do differ in their understandings of what we agree is the "Word of God."

None of our work and prayerful discernment has produced a common mind, and we have managed to live with the tension of diverse opinions on these matters, agreeing to disagree. We were living in a very Anglican way with divergent views until the circumstances of our life, and the canons of our church, forced us into making an *either/or* decision in a very public way with the election of the bishop coadjutor of New Hampshire, and the canonical necessity for giving or withholding of consent. This *either/or* decision did not allow for the middle ground, which the report of the Theology Committee of the House of Bishops (which was submitted to the primates prior to our meeting in Brazil) had sought to establish.

The consent to the New Hampshire election has been a presenting issue in our present strains within the Communion. Therefore I think it is important to acknowledge that there is a diversity of practice in appointing or electing bishops around the Communion and to say something here about the nature of our election and consent process, which is open, democratic, and participatory – flowing out of the life of the community.

The manner in which bishops are chosen in the Episcopal Church involves a protracted search process undertaken by the diocese, lasting usually a year or longer, in which a profile is developed by the people and clergy of the diocese. Names are put forward and a search committee composed of lay and clergy members reviews the names, checks backgrounds, addresses questions to potential nominees and then puts forward a list of names to be considered. The diocese then has an opportunity to meet and ask questions of all the nominees. This was the process followed in the Diocese of New Hampshire, and at the end of that process the diocesan convention elected the Rev. Canon Gene Robinson, someone who had ministered among them for 17 years.

Once a person has been elected, the election must be consented to by a majority of Standing Committees of dioceses and a majority of bishops holding jurisdiction. When an election occurs within 120 days of the General Convention, the consent process takes place within the context of the General Convention, which is precisely what happened in the case of Gene Robinson and nine other bishops-elect.

I think it is very important to be clear about this process. When we met at Lambeth the primates asked me if I couldn't have intervened and stopped the consecration. I made it clear that I could not because of the canonical realities by which I am bound, and that it is my responsibility to uphold the decisions formally made by the church.

I think it is problematic that some view the bishops who participated in the ordination and consecration of Gene Robinson as having performed some unfaithful act. This is to overlook the fact that it was a formal decision made by a majority of bishops with jurisdiction and majority of clergy and laypeople representing the 100 domestic dioceses.

I might say that the very public and open nature of our actions is a factor here. This is both healthy and problematic. Not long ago I was at a meeting in Spain which included Christians from a number of ecclesial communities, one of which had made strongly critical statements about the New Hampshire consecration. I had a long conversation with the bishop representing that church, who castigated me for having allowed the ordination of Gene Robinson to occur. Once he had delivered himself of his anger he surprised me by saying that there were indeed homosexual clergy and bishops in his church, but that it was looked upon as "human weakness" and a private matter between themselves and their spiritual fathers. Only if their homosexuality became public was the church obliged to intervene. I said to him that though I could appreciate capitulation to "human weakness" I was concerned that he was describing a climate of secrecy, and a practice that was tolerated that stood at variance with the public position of the church. Was that not a dishonest stance? Would it not be far more helpful and truthful, albeit difficult, to deal openly with the reality which heretofore has remained hidden? Is not secrecy the Devil's playground? It has been extremely difficult for the Episcopal Church to deal honestly with this

issue, but that is the course we have taken and, as I said, the decision of which course to take – openness or secrecy – was one that was forced upon us.

I believe that part of the strain within the Communion, and the reaction to a decision taken within the Episcopal Church is the disproportionate influence that the United States has in other parts of the world, leading to the fear that whatever happens in the United States will be imposed in some way on other parts of the world. I am well aware of the negative effects of globalization. I need to make plain that because something may appear to be an unfoldment of the Spirit in the life of the Episcopal Church that does not mean that it should or ought to become normative elsewhere. Never would our church wish to impose patterns that may be appropriate within the life of the Episcopal Church on other provinces of the Anglican Communion.

I remember vividly when I visited the Church in Nigeria and was asked if I was coming to tell them they must ordain women. I told them I firmly believed that is a decision they will have to make within the reality of their own context. There is not one right way. Immediately, there was relief on the part of the bishops.

This raises the very important notion of context, to which I alluded earlier. We must ask: are our understandings and applications of the gospel conditioned by the historical and cultural circumstances in which we live our lives and seek to articulate our faithful discipleship? I believe the answer is yes. As one primate expressed it "the Holy Spirit can do different things in different places."

When I think of a way forward, the first thing I think of is the need to be respectful of one another's contexts, to trust one another, and to honor the fact that we are each trying to be faithful in very different circumstances. I pray we can acknowledge to one another that we are each trying, with God's help, to articulate and live the gospel within the givenness of our own context.

There are several other dynamics at work in creating the strains we feel within our beloved Communion which I will briefly mention. One is electronic communication. Events in one part of the world are instantly transmitted across the globe. Our contexts invade one another without explanation. Because our world has become very small we need to remember that our day to day realities are vastly different.

As well, the speed of communication can oblige us to react to situations and events in other parts of our Communion without the benefit of knowing how brother and sister Anglicans were led to a particular decision. I vividly recall being in Uganda driving through a very remote area and having the primate called on his cell phone by a reporter in Canada for his reaction to an event in the Church of Canada.

Electronic communication also makes it easy for misinformation to be spread abroad and take on a life of its own. This is all the more reason for us to deal directly with one another when there are serious questions or concerns, and not rely on interpretations or reports that may be untrue or biased.

Another dynamic is the role members of my own church with a particular point of view have played in shaping opinions, shall we say, since before the last Lambeth Conference. We must openly acknowledge the fact that part of the reason issues of homosexuality have so overtaken the Anglican Communion is because a number of the members of the Episcopal Church – along with individuals and groups motivated by political ideologies rather than theological convictions – have, by virtue of their connections and resources, been able to garner the consciousness of bishops around the world. Their unstinting efforts have made this issue more central to our life than the spreading of the gospel and the living of the Good News of Jesus Christ. We must ask ourselves if this preoccupation with sexuality is truly of God.

I was particularly struck at the conclusion of our meeting in October when one of the primates plaintively said his concerns were not about sexuality but about poverty and disease and civil unrest in his part of the world, at which point several other primates nodded in agreement. It is a great sadness to me, broadly felt throughout our church, that the Episcopal Church in the simple living of our life has added to the burdens that so many primates and bishops bear in other parts of the Communion. It is my hope that in finding a way forward we can simply agree that for any number of reasons we are not in agreement about concerns of homosexuality, and indeed human sexuality more broadly.

A closing thought: Communion, as Archbishop Rowan has made clear, exists on many levels; it is not simply a formal, ecclesial relationship. Therefore, I ask myself and the members of my own church in the midst of this profound and straining disagreement if there is not some invitation or opportunity to live the mystery of communion at a deeper level, as difficult and costly as it may be. Are we not being invited in a more profound way to make room for one another's realities and one another's contexts both at home and abroad? Do we not have things to learn from one another? Do we not all possess, woven into the fabric of our lives in virtue of our baptism into Christ's risen body, dimensions of the truth as in Jesus, who is himself the truth? Are we not being given the opportunity to experience in the depths of the communion we share, which is our participation in the very life of God, the fullness of God in Christ which exceeds all that we can ask or imagine?

I thank you, and the members of the Commission, for your patience in attending to my reflections. Please know of my prayers for all of you as you go about this important work on behalf of the Communion which means so much to us all.

Yours ever in Christ,

The Most Rev. Frank T. Griswold
Presiding Bishop and Primate
The Episcopal Church, USA

cc: The Anglican Communion Office



The Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission
St George's House, Windsor
Monday, 9th February, 2004

A Short Form of Commissioning

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Archbishop will address the Commission members.
In conclusion, he will say:

I therefore charge you with the mandate set out by me on 29th October 2003 at the behest of the Primates of the Anglican Communion, and I request you to be diligent in discharging this weighty task.

Will you endeavour to work together for the good of Christ's Church and for our Communion, and seek to discern God's will in this current situation?
The Commission members respond: **We will**

Will you seek the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit, so that in all your deliberations you may be directed by God's Wisdom and a proper care for the proclamation of his Holy Gospel?
The Commission members respond: **We will**

Will you seek to present to us in the Anglican Communion a model of co-operation in love and charity by your own working so that we may take heart in our own discipleship?
The Commission members respond: **We will**

Then I commend you to God's care, and ask you to undertake this work.

May the God who brought light out of darkness and proclaimed the truth of his love in the gift of his Son bless you and direct you in all your work, and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be with you and remain upon you this day and in all your time together.
Amen.

The Chair of the Commission leads the group in prayer.

Almighty Father, you have called to you a people to be your own, and have sanctified us in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ your Son. We pray for our family of the Anglican Communion. Inspire us with love and charity, guide us with wisdom and understanding, uphold us in truth and with the guidance of your Holy Spirit, and grant that we may be a people united in your service, bound together in your love, and bearing witness to the Kingdom revealed in Christ your Son our Lord, in whose name we pray. **Amen**.

The congregation will pray in silence.

Archbishop :	The Lord be with you.
Response :	**And also with you.**
Archbishop:	Let us go forth in peace
Response:	**In the name of Christ. Amen.**

To the Eames Commission 9 February 2004

Dear Friends

I must begin by expressing my deep gratitude to you for undertaking this most testing of jobs for the sake of the Communion. The Primates of the Communion have repeatedly asserted that they wish to remain a Communion, rather than becoming a federation of churches; and the task of this Commission is to help make this more of a reality at a time when many pressures seem to be pushing in another direction.

The difficult balance in our Communion as it presently exists is between the deep conviction that we should not look for a single executive authority and the equally deep anxiety about the way in which a single local decision can step beyond what the Communion as whole is committed to, and create division, embarrassment and evangelistic difficulties in other churches. The Pauline principle that in the Body of Christ we should 'wait for each other' (I Cor 11.21) at the Lord's Table needs to be thought about in its relation to our present problems.

But we also have to think about what it means to be a Church existing not by human concord or agreement but by the free choice of God: 'You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you' (Jn 15.16) is a word fundamental to the whole being of the Christian Church. The question is how we hold together the belief that membership in the Church is God's gift, so that communion always pre-exists ordinary human agreement, and the recognition that a Church faithful to the biblical revelation has to exercise discipline and draw boundaries if it is to proclaim the gospel of Jesus and not its own concerns.

You will not be dealing with a problem that is simply about biblical faithfulness versus fashionable relativism. There are profound biblical principles involved in all the points so far mentioned, which may point to different emphases and solutions. You will need to be aware of the danger of those doctrines of the Church which, by isolating one element of the Bible's teaching, produce distortions – a Church of the perfect or the perfectly unanimous on one side, a Church of general human inspiration or liberation on the other. Anglicanism has had to deal with such tensions from its beginnings – and indeed, so has the Church overall. You will be drawing on a variety of historical and theological resources from every age in confronting the contemporary challenge.

Countless people in the Communion and beyond will be praying for you, so take courage from that fact. I wish you every blessing and every gift of discernment and courage in your vital work, praying that its results will be for God's glory and the advancement of his Kingdom.

Yours ever in Christ,

+Rowan

The text of the Anglican Mainstream petition

Introduction

The Primates Meeting in October 2003 stated that "recent actions in New Westminster and in the Episcopal Church (USA) do not express the mind of the Communion as a whole, and these decisions jeopardise our sacramental fellowship with each other."

The meeting warned that the consecration of Gene Robinson would put "the future of the Communion in jeopardy" and "tear the fabric of our Communion at its deepest level"

This was a clear plea that the consecration should not go ahead at least until the Archbishop's Commission had been able to work - and a solemn warning of the consequences if it did.

This plea has been ignored and defied with contempt by a minority group in ECUSA.

The Primates set up a Commission to address these dangers and to report in September 2004. In the meantime they unanimously urged Provinces not to act precipitately and therefore agreed to a moratorium on controversial actions in their own jurisdictions. But ECUSA has acted already.

The Primates further called for and guaranteed adequate provision for Episcopal oversight for dissenting minorities in consultation with the Archbishop of Canterbury. Adequate here clearly means "acceptable to the people concerned."

Because of the defiant and pre-emptive action of some in ECUSA, this oversight needs to be in place now. But instead of providing such care as promised by the signature of their Presiding Bishop, some in ECUSA have launched lawsuits and disciplinary procedures which pre-empt the Archbishop's Commission and hold the agreed standstill in contempt.

As the Primates warned, this action could have grave knock-on consequences in relationships around the Communion. The fabric has already been torn by New Hampshire and the whole Anglican family must act to prevent further damage.

We therefore

Applaud the action of those Bishops in North America

- Who are forming a Network of Confessing Dioceses and Congregations as suggested by the Archbishop of Canterbury, within ECUSA and in good faith with its Constitution.

- Who have designated Bishop Robert Duncan as Convening Bishop (Moderator)

- Who will no longer be at the Lord's Table with those who have consecrated Gene Robinson (see below)

Encourage the formation in Canada of a Network of Confessing Churches in Canada to work in concert and in full communion with the ECUSA Network toward a North American Network.

Urge the Archbishop of Canterbury and the other primates individually and severally

- To maintain full Communion with those Anglicans in the USA who comprise the Network

- To recognise Bishop Bob Duncan (Pittsburgh) as the duly elected Convening Bishop (Moderator) of the Network and invite him to all events to which the Presiding Bishop of ECUSA is invited.

- To recognise the Convening Bishop (Moderator) in opening ecumenical conversations with other Christian churches.

- To insist on a moratorium on license suspensions and lawsuits against those who do not accept the election, confirmation or consecration of Gene Robinson or the blessing of same-sex partnerships at least until the Archbishop's Commission completes its work and Primates have considered its outcome.

- To insist that true and acceptable Episcopal oversight (rather than the Presiding Bishop's unacceptable proposal for "Supplemental Episcopal Pastoral Care") be arranged forthwith, and offer immediate oversight themselves until it is in place.

- To accept Letters Dimissory (recognition as licenced ministers) of threatened clergy, including both women clergy and those who will not accept the ordination of women.

- To ensure that no Bishops who attended and signed the consecration papers of Gene Robinson be permitted to serve on any committee or commission of the Communion or, in any way, as official representatives of the Anglican Communion.

We ask all bishops, including primates;

No longer to recognise the ministries of any Bishop who joined in the consecration of Gene Robinson. (See enclosed list).

To support their primates in seeking to implement the actions above.

We ask all parishes

To record their opposition to the consecration of Gene Robinson and to support this statement in writing

To find ways of supporting the historic values of the Anglican Communion in their prayers, mission and stewardship.

We call on all Anglicans to pray:

For the preservation and protection of the Anglican Communion and its historic values
For the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Primates
For their Bishops and clergy
For all who are confused or living in sin
For themselves to live holy and Christlike lives
For an end to confusion in the church.

New Hampshire Consecration

Attending Bishops

Primates

The Most Rev. Frank T. Griswold
Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church and Chief Consecrator

The Most Rev. Martin De Jesus Barahona
Primate of the Province of Central America and Bishop of El Salvador

International

Bishop Krister Stendahl, Lutheran Church of Sweden, Bishop Emeritus of Stockholm and Co-consecrator
The Rt. Rev. Bruce Stavert, Bishop of Quebec (Anglican Church of Canada)
The Rt. Rev. Michael Ingham, Bishop of New Westminster (Anglican Church of Canada)

Episcopal Diocesan Bishops

The Rt. Rev. Joe Burnett, Bishop of Nebraska
The Rt. Rev. John B. Chane, Bishop of Washington
The Rt. Rev. George Councell, Bishop of New Jersey
The Rt. Rev. Thomas Ely, Bishop of Vermont
The Rt. Rev. James J. Jelinek, Bishop of Minnesota
The Rt. Rev. Chilton Knudsen, Bishop of Maine and co-consecrator
The Rt. Rev. James A. Kelsey, Bishop of Northern Michigan
The Rt. Rev. Jack M. McKelvey, Bishop of Rochester
The Rt. Rev. M. Thomas Shaw, SSJE, Bishop of Massachusetts
The Rt. Rev. Andrew D. Smith, Bishop of Connecticut
The Rt. Rev. Douglas Theuner, Bishop of New Hampshire
The Rt. Rev. Orris G. Walker, Jr., Bishop of Long Island

Suffragan, assisting and retired Episcopal Bishops

The Rt. Rev. Craig Anderson, Bishop of South Dakota (retired)
The Rt. Rev. G. P. Mellick Belshaw, Bishop of New Jersey (retired)
The Most Rev. Edmond L. Browning, retired Presiding Bishop and co-consecrator
The Rt. Rev. Roy F. Cederholm, Bishop Suffragan of Massachusetts
The Rt. Rev. Otis Charles, Bishop of Utah (retired)
The Rt. Rev. Steven Charleston, Bishop of Alaska (resigned)
The Rt. Rev. James E. Curry, Bishop Suffragan of Connecticut
The Rt. Rev. Jane H. Dixon, Bishop Suffragan of Washington (retired)
The Rt. Rev. Herbert A. Donovan, Jr., Bishop of Arkansas (retired) and co-consecrator
The Rt. Rev. A. Theodore Eastman, Bishop of Maryland (retired) and co-consecrator
The Rt. Rev. Gayle E. Harris, Bishop Suffragan of Massachusetts
The Rt. Rev. Barbara C. Harris, Bishop Suffragan of Massachusetts (retired) and co-consecrator
The Rt. Rev. Donald P. Hart, Assistant Bishop of Southern Virginia
The Rt. Rev. Harold A. Hopkins, Bishop of North Dakota (retired)
The Rt. Rev. George N. Hunt III, Bishop of Rhode Island (retired)
The Rt. Rev. Edward W. Jones, Bishop of Indianapolis (retired)
The Rt. Rev. H. Coleman McGehee, Jr., Bishop of Michigan (retired)
The Rt. Rev. Wilfrido Ramos-Orench, Bishop Suffragaon of Connecticut
The Rt. Rev. Walter C. Righter, Bishop of Iowa (retired)
The Rt. Rev. Hays H. Rockwell, Bishop of Missouri (retired)

The Rt. Rev. Catherine Roskam, Bishop Suffragan of New York
The Rt. Rev. Bennett J. Sims, Bishop of Atlanta (retired)
The Rt. Rev. Philip A. Smith, Bishop of New Hampshire (retired)
The Rt. Rev. Daniel L. Swenson, Bishop of Vermont (retired)
The Rt. Rev. Arthur Walmsley, Bishop of Connecticut (retired)
The Rt. Rev. O'Kelley Whitaker, Bishop of Central New York (retired)
The Rt. Rev. R. Stewart Wood, Jr., Bishop of Michigan (retired)

Attending but not participating

The Rt. Rev. Michael Mayes of Limerick and Killaloe (Church of Ireland)

Dissenting Bishops

The Episcopal Church

Diocesan Bishops

The Rt. Rev. Keith Ackerman, Bishop of Quincy
The Rt. Rev. James Adams, Bishop of Western Kansas
The Rt. Rev. Peter Beckwith, Bishop of Springfield
The Rt. Rev. Robert Duncan, Bishop of Pittsburgh
The Rt. Rev. Bertram N. Herlong, Bishop of Tennessee
The Rt. Rev. Daniel Herzog, Bishop of Albany
The Rt. Rev. John W. Howe, Bishop of Central Florida
The Rt. Rev. Gethin Hughes, Bishop of San Diego
The Rt. Rev. Jack Iker, Bishop of Fort Worth
The Rt. Rev. Russell E. Jacobus, Bishop of Fond du Lac
The Rt. Rev. Stephen Jecko, Bishop of Florida
The Rt. Rev. Terrence Kelshaw, Bishop of Rio Grande
The Rt. Rev. John Lipscomb, Bishop of Southwest Florida
The Rt. Rev. Edward Salmon, Bishop of South Carolina
The Rt. Rev. John-David Schofield, Bishop of San Joaquin
The Rt. Rev. James Stanton, Bishop of Dallas

Suffragan, assisting and/or retired

The Rt. Rev. C. FitzSimons Allison, Bishop of South Carolina (retired)
The Rt. Rev. David Bena, Bishop Suffragan of Albany
The Rt. Rev. Clarence Pope, Bishop of Fort Worth (retired)
The Rt. Rev. C. William Frey, Bishop of Colorado (retired)
The Rt. Rev. Philip Elder, Bishop Suffragan of Guyana (retired)
The Rt. Rev. Hugo Pina-Lopez, Assisting Bishop of Central Florida
The Rt. Rev. Edward MacBurney, Bishop of Quincy (retired)
The Rt. Rev. Earl McArthur, Bishop Suffragan of West Texas (retired)
The Rt. Rev. Donald Parsons, Bishop of Quincy (retired)
The Rt. Rev. Henry Scriven, Assistant Bishop of Pittsburgh
The Rt. Rev. William Wantland, Bishop of Eau Claire (retired)

Human Sexuality
A Statement by the Anglican Bishops of Canada - 1997

The Background

In 1976 the House of Bishops of the Anglican Church of Canada sought advice as it faced the issue of homosexuality in contemporary society and how the church ought to relate pastorally, and in terms of ordination. A task force presented a lengthy report to the bishops.

By 1979 the bishops had committed themselves to further study and they requested the preparation of study materials to help further discussion at all levels of the church. These materials were published in 1985.

In 1979, as an interim measure, the bishops issued a statement based on the following belief:

> We believe as Christians, that homosexual persons, as children of God, have a full and equal claim with all other persons, upon the love, acceptance, concern and pastoral care of the Church.

As well, the Bishops issued a four point pastoral guideline for themselves as they considered the admission of individual persons to the church's ordained ministry.

1. Our present and future considerations about homosexuality should be pursued within the larger study of human sexuality in its totality;

2. We accept all persons, regardless of sexual orientation, as equal before God; our acceptance of persons with homosexual orientation is not an acceptance of homosexual activity;

3. We do not accept the blessing of homosexual unions;

4. We will not call into question the ordination of a person who has shared with the bishop his/her homosexual orientation if there has been a commitment to the Bishop to abstain from sexual acts with persons of the same sex as part of the requirement for ordination.

In referring to this guideline in the press, Archbishop Scott, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada at that time said,

> Our statement is not meant to be, in any way, legislation or a final doctrinal statement. It is a pastoral statement and we intend it to assist us in the exercise of our pastoral ministry within the Church.

The house held a number of study sessions on the topic of human sexuality through the 1980's. In 1991 a new task force was constituted by the Primate.

At the General Synod of 1992 a major block of time was devoted to an open forum on the topic. More materials were made available for study and by 1994/1995 approximately 170 groups and 2500 people had used the study guide *Hearing Diverse Voices, Seeking Common Ground*.

At the 1995 General Synod, an important report was presented, following a hearing, which lead to a motion being presented and strongly supported which:

> Affirmed the presence and contributions of gay men and lesbians in the life of the church and condemned bigotry, violence and hatred directed toward any due to their sexual orientation.

This report recommended among other things, that the process of dialogue continue; that all of us should, "learn and reflect more about our sexuality as a whole," and that the dialogue should be extended so that the, "whole church family has an opportunity to be involved". The Faith Worship and Ministry Committee of the ACC was given a mandate to provide leadership to the church to ensure a continuation of the dialogue.

All of this effort has fostered a greater understanding of what it is to be a gay man or lesbian in the church and a heightened sense of pastoral concern on the part of the church. Also, as gay men and lesbians have found greater acceptance in the church, they have been enabled to share their experiences in a more public way to the benefit of the whole church which has become increasingly aware of the breadth and depth of their contribution.

At its April 1997 meeting, discussing this topic for the first time in open session, the House of Bishops continued its deliberations and requested the task force to redraft the 1979 guideline in the light of new pastoral awareness while at the same time retaining the original intent of the guideline. In undertaking this task we seek to articulate how far we have come, as well as to acknowledge those areas where continued study and dialogue is necessary. Theological reflection and pastoral action in the Church since 1979 have focused on four key areas, and it is these that shape our considerations in this statement. The church has reflected on the place of gay and lesbian persons in society; the place of gay and lesbian persons in the church; the significance of committed sexually active relationships between people of the same sex and the significance of such relationships for ordination of gay and lesbian persons.

Gay and Lesbian Persons in Society

As Christians we believe that homosexual persons are created in the image and likeness of God and have a full and equal claim with all other persons upon the love, acceptance, concern and care of the church. As an expression of this love and care, the gospel of Jesus Christ compels Christians to oppose all forms of human injustice and to affirm that all persons are brothers and sisters for whom Christ died. It is on the basis of these theological insights, which remain pertinent irrespective of any considerations of the appropriateness or otherwise of homosexual acts, that the Anglican Church of Canada has affirmed that gay and lesbian persons are entitled to equal protection under the law with all other Canadian citizens. Thus, this House supported the passage of bill C-33 that made sexual orientation a prohibited ground for discrimination under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. We call upon the church and all its members to continue to work to safeguard the freedom, dignity and responsibility of every person and to seek an end to discrimination.

Gay and Lesbian Persons in the Church

We are thankful to see a new sensitivity emerging towards gay and lesbian persons in the Church. No longer can we talk in the abstract. We are experiencing a growing awareness that the persons of whom we speak are here among us. They are our sons and daughters. They are our friends and relatives. This recognition has not always been present. The story of the Church's attitude to gay and lesbian people has too often been one of standing at a distance, even of prejudice, ignorance and oppression. All of us need to acknowledge this, and to repent for any part we may have had in creating it. In our baptism we covenant to seek and serve Christ in all persons. We now call the church to reaffirm the mutuality of that covenant, a covenant that encourages and enables us to love others as Christ loves us. This covenant will no longer allow us to regard those among us whose orientation is homosexual simply as "needy objects" for

pastoral care. Instead we are partners, celebrating together the dignity of every human being, and reaching out together for the wholeness offered to us in the Gospel. The church affirms its traditional teaching that only the sexual union of male and female can find appropriate expression within the covenant of Holy Matrimony. However, we recognize that some homosexuals live in committed sexual relationships for mutual support, help and comfort. We wish to continue open and respectful dialogue with those who sincerely believe that sexuality expressed within a committed homosexual relationship is God's call to them, and we affirm our common desire to seek together the fullness of life revealed in Christ.

Blessing of Covenanted Relationships

We continue to believe that committed same sex relationships should not be confused with Holy Matrimony. The house will not authorize any act that appears to promote this confusion. There is, and needs to be, ongoing discussion about how to respond appropriately to faithful and committed same sex relationships. In the context of the ongoing debate this would necessitate respectful listening and learning about the nature of such relationships and their meaning for the persons involved in them. We recognize that relationships of mutual support, help and comfort between homosexual persons exist and are to be preferred to relationships that are anonymous and transient. We disagree among ourselves whether such relationships can be expressions of God's will and purpose.

While consensus may be unlikely in the near future, we believe that study and dialogue continue to be fruitful. As we continue to listen together to scripture, tradition, and reasoned argument based on the experience of the Church, including and especially the experience of its gay and lesbian members, we grow in our recognition that our disagreements reflect our attempts to be faithful to the Gospel in our different personal and pastoral contexts.

As long as such dialogue continues to be fruitful we believe it should continue. We are not ready to authorize the blessing of relationships between persons of the same sex. However, in interpreting the Gospel, we must always reflect on the context to which it is addressed. We are, therefore, committed to ongoing study of human sexuality and of the nature and characteristics of human intimacy and family life as it exists in our society.

Ordination of Gay and Lesbian Persons

Among our clergy there are some who are gay or lesbian. Their ministries are often highly dedicated and greatly blessed. God has endowed them with many intellectual and spiritual gifts and we give thanks for their ministries. We reaffirm that sexual orientation in and of itself is not a barrier to ordination or the practice of ministry within the church. Within the wider parameters of suitability, it is the manner in which sexuality is expressed that must be considered. Our intimate relationships are an expression of the most profound possibilities for human relationships, including our relationship with God (Eph.5:32). At ordination, candidates promise to live their lives and shape their relationships so as to provide a "wholesome example" to the people of God (BCP, 642). Exemplary behaviour for persons who are not married includes a commitment to remain chaste.

Conclusion

Our discussions over the past few years have taught us much. We do not have a common mind on all things. We see in part and we know in part. Where we disagree we need to continue to read the scriptures together and to engage in dialogue, that we might listen for what the Spirit is saying to the Church today.

The Lambeth Commission on communion

A submission from the Executive Committee of Affirming Catholicism

The essence of communion

1. We begin by noting the prominence given to the language of 'communion' in ecclesiology in recent decades. Prompted in part by its deployment in the documents of Vatican II, and in part by other developments (see, for example, the now rather-neglected work of Lionel Thornton[i]), communion, or *koinonia*, has become almost a master concept in ecclesiology. Its significance in ecumenical dialogue was highlighted particularly in the Final Report of ARCIC I: "Fundamental to all our Statements is the concept of *koinonia* (communion)…Although '*koinonia'* is never equated with 'Church' in the New Testament; it is the term that most aptly expresses the mystery underlying the various New Testament images of the Church."[ii] ARCIC II developed this emphasis further, in its Agreed Statement, *Church as Communion*, the purpose of which was "to give substance to the affirmation that Anglicans and Roman Catholics are already in a real though as yet imperfect communion and to enable us to recognise the degree of communion that exists both within and between us".[iii] The World Council of Churches signalled the importance of this concept at its Seventh Assembly at Canberra in 1991, issuing in the Canberra statement, *The Unity of the Church as Koinonia: Gift and Calling*. If the Canberra statement appeared to amplify the scope of the term almost to indistinctness, nevertheless its attraction has been evident even in intra-Anglican discussion. Indeed, the Virginia report draws on this newly-established tradition of language in its second chapter, 'Theology of God's Gracious Gift: the Communion of the Trinity and the Church': "Communion with God and one another is both gift and divine expectation for the Church".[iv] The report goes on to deploy, without explicit discussion of the link, the language of communion in a context primarily devoted to issues of organization and authority.[v] Yet through the ecclesial use of the term 'communion' runs the more fundamental connotation of the shared life of believers in Christ, a life which draws us into a relationship (a participation, a communion) with the life of God as Trinity: "Union with God in Christ Jesus through the Spirit is the heart of Christian *koinonia*", affirmed ARCIC I.[vi] It is impossible to consider the present difficulties of the Anglican communion without taking cognizance of this substratum of meaning within the term 'communion'.

2. Yet what is often not sufficiently apprehended is that, in its very wide and substantial use in contemporary ecclesiology (and especially ecumenical ecclesiology), 'communion' is not so much a foundational or definitional term, as a reflexive one. It is not one that seeks, in other words, to define comprehensively the basis on which descriptions of the extraordinarily complicated nature of intra- and inter-church relations can be erected. Rather, it tries to capture the spirit of an already-existing set of church relationships. This is usually in order, first, that something may be grasped of the nature of unity (however impaired) that already obtains in the situation under scrutiny, and, second, that ways of identifying and promoting a greater degree of unity than already exists may be adopted. 'Communion' is, then, a heuristic device, as much as anything else. It follows from the recognition that a person or group of people, as an ecclesial body, are indeed 'Christian', however much they may differ from us in specific matters of doctrine, worship and life. Hence the very plasticity of the term.

Communion and church division

3. Pressure to use the term 'communion' and its cognates occurs particularly in discussion about church unity and division, because it is here that the very question of the extent to which those who disagree nevertheless are in some sense 'in Christ' requires clarification and, possibly, consequent action. Anglicans may perceive significant bonds of unity across a dazzlingly broad and diverse range of Christian communities, all of which relations justify the perception of some degree of

'communion'. Let us set aside, for our purposes here, the complicating question of whether or not traditional Trinitarian doctrine is a sufficient warrant for application of the description 'Christian'. If we concentrate instead on relations with those ecclesial communities that do, explicitly or otherwise, accept Trinitarian doctrine, then the plasticity of the term 'communion' is evident at once. It does surely follow from the uncontroversial contention that Quakers are Christians, for example, that Anglicans, however much they may disagree with them on sacramental doctrine, authority, and ecclesiology, nevertheless do have communion at some level with their fellow Christians who happen to be Quakers. They would not normally say they are 'in communion' with Quakers, of course, but that is because the language of communion so easily slips from the broader, reflexive use, highlighted above, to a juridical or organizational one. Yet the two uses cannot be sundered absolutely.

4. There are similar ambiguities in the connotations of the term 'communion' in relation to Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs). Here, it is often the case that church communities from different denominations combine, or work together, in so many complementary ways that it is obviously possible to recognize some sense at least in which they are 'in communion' with each other. In some places, this goes very far indeed. Christ the Cornerstone, Milton Keynes is one such example – perhaps the best known. Here one church congregation, meeting in one building, sharing morning Eucharistic worship as well as other services, with a common baptismal policy, and shared elements of pastoral provision, comprises Anglicans, Baptists, United Reformed and Methodists.[vii] Each denominational element remains in good standing with its own historic ecclesial community. Yet the Church of England is not formally, at a national level, in communion with the Baptist Union of Great Britain, the United Reformed Church, or the Methodist Church of Great Britain. The canon that governs the operation of LEPs, B44, does not of course use the language of 'communion' as such, but the range of shared services that may be approved by the relevant diocesan bishop goes a long way towards establishing a special relationship of communion between formerly separated churches at the local level. The disparity between what 'in communion' in an organizational or juridical sense connotes, and the reality it seeks to describe locally, could hardly be more evident.

5. The language of communion is thus a tensed language. On the one hand it captures significant relations between groups of Christians who nevertheless diverge to varying degrees on various subjects. But on the other hand it embodies an implicit assumption that this very identification of difference should subserve the greater purpose of realizing the true unity of the Church. How is it used most often in practice? It is both descriptive and normative, but rarely both in equal measure. As descriptive, it tends towards a sociology of church difference, marking the nature and extent of unity in the face of difference. As such, it need not imply or require particular organizational initiatives that seek to change the situation under review. As normative, however, it presumes that any categorization of difference must be evaluated according to the ultimate goal of church unity (however defined). Here, then, it is seemingly an implication of the language of communion that specific organizational form should be given to aspirations for closer relations or a more complete expression of church unity.

6. It is vital that Anglicans keep a weather-eye on the slipperiness of the language of communion, namely its susceptibility to use by different people for different purposes. This is precisely because of the risk that insufficient clarity of use will conceal what in fact are mutually incompatible ecclesial agendas. Anglicans, speaking of the Anglican 'communion', sometimes seem to presume that it is an adequate description of a federated system, with autonomous provinces bound together in a common recognition of basic doctrine and order. In this mode, the emphasis is often placed on diversity, and on the non-coercive nature of the exercise of authority within the communion. No particular proposal for closer bonds of unity need be implied. But Anglicans are also quite capable of speaking of the 'Anglican Communion' with an emphasis on common identity. In doing so, they imply that the Anglican churches constitute what is in effect one distinct denomination within the

range of denominations that make up world Christianity. In this mode of language, the further implication is also often present that the real unity and communion that Anglicans share ought to be served and promoted by formal instruments of authority, and perhaps even with a measure of coercive effect. It is arguable that the development of worldwide instruments in Anglicanism in the post-colonial era – the formation of the Anglican Consultative Council, for example, and the institution of regular Primates' meetings – has thus signalled a shift from the former use to the latter. If this is so, it should at least be noted that it represents a substantial change in the nature of Anglican polity that has not been as widely acknowledged or discussed as it might have been. Before then, the Anglican churches worldwide were wary of taking steps that might suppress dissent at the cost of strengthening central instruments of authority. It could be argued that the Anglican Communion was in fact founded on conflict – the Colenso dispute is a case in point. At the same time, it should also be noted that the first view – the federal view – is itself a relatively modern development, albeit consonant with the description of Anglican authority proffered by the 1948 Lambeth Conference as 'dispersed'.[viii]

7. It is not the aim of this paper to explore thoroughly the ecclesiological implications of these contrasting applications of the language of communion. Noting the reflexive use of 'communion', however, it is at least possible to sketch a perspective on Anglican polity that could in theory accommodate significant differences between Anglican provinces. Rather than begin from an assumption of absolute unity in identity (whatever that might mean), it suggests that disagreements between Anglican provinces have to be set in the context of the wide range of ecumenical relationships that Anglicans currently sustain. Starting from the recognition that Anglicans share communion in some sense at least with all Trinitarian Christians, it is possible to discern an ascending scale of doctrinal agreement and ecclesial convergence. Of course, the image of a scale has to be used with caution, as it could be taken to imply a hierarchy of value, or a greater or more consistent unit of comparison than is realistic. But it does at least help to clarify the extent to which Anglicans can consider themselves 'in communion' with different bodies of Christians to significantly different degree, and it may also accommodate intra-Anglican diversity of opinion on this. At one end of the scale would be a relationship of communion based on certain common, basic beliefs, and this would seem to embrace all Trinitarian churches or communities of believers. Anglicans see themselves as part of the community of Christians worldwide. Yet they also share the conviction that the Church has embodied, institutional presence in history, and that that is marked above all by baptism. Anglicans are, then, in a more intensive relationship of communion with some communities of Christians (those in which Trinitarian baptism is practised) than with others. And so one could go on, enumerating the commonalities of doctrine, order, history and practice that Anglicans share with other churches, and with each other. At the summit of this scale would lie relations between the Anglican churches themselves, where patterns of order, liturgy and doctrine are in many cases almost identical. Yet scope for some difference remains. In this perspective, even sharp differences between Anglican provinces on particular issues that fall outside the constitutive structures of order need not obscure the basic observation that so much else is shared that the language of communion is applied justly in the Anglican context more intensely than would be true of other sets of inter-church relationships.

Communion and jurisdiction

8. We are well aware that the perspective outlined above will not necessarily be reassuring to those who see recent developments in some Anglican provinces over the question of homosexuality as a fundamental challenge to the apostolicity and catholicity of Anglicanism. For them, presumably, the apparent readiness of some provinces to breach what they take to be biblical norms constitutes so fundamental a violation of the bonds of communion that it would be inappropriate to apply the term 'communion' to relations with the churches at question – at least, in the sense currently appropriated to 'Anglican communion'. The conflict is seemingly insoluble. One side claims that

the principle of provincial autonomy enables the retention of the current pattern of bonds of communion despite disagreement, embodied in differing ecclesial practice, over the acceptability of homosexuality. It does not deny the central authority of the Bible within Anglican polity, but its case does rest on the supposition of greater scope or latitude accorded to biblical interpretation than would be the case on the other side. It presumably assumes that the question of homosexuality itself falls into the category of *adiaphora*, and does not issue in a basic denial of scriptural warrant. The other side, on the contrary, appears to restrict the scope of acceptable interpretation, to the point at which no latitude can be left for embodying an acceptance of homosexual relations in a change of ecclesial practice. It is not easy to see how these conflicting claims can be reconciled, except by long consideration of basic issues of biblical hermeneutics and ecclesial authority. But we would like to point out that, even accepting for the moment the force of the position of those opposed to greater recognition of homosexual relations, it need not follow that the bonds of the Anglican Communion are irreversibly breached. Following on from the reflexive perspective indicated above, it should surely be possible to accommodate acknowledgement of a *de facto* loosening, or redefinition of the bonds of communion within the worldwide family of Anglicanism, without a corresponding attempt *de jure*, as it were, to excommunicate or expel particular provinces, or to assign them to a subordinate status.

9. Such an outcome would presumably require concessions on both sides. One side would have to accept that redefining the bonds of communion would entail a renewed emphasis on provincial autonomy – an emphasis that would sit uneasily with the concluding sections of the Virginia report. We note that the report itself, however, contains some hints in this direction. On the Anglican Consultative Council [ACC], for example, it acknowledges that "to be effective and credible, the [Communion's] Secretariat must be governed by a *reference* group [the ACC] which is informed, has continuity *and is also representative of the Communion's diversity*".[ix] This proposal can only be made here in a general way. The precise implications it carries for the Lambeth Conference, the Primates' meetings, and the Anglican Consultative Council would require more detailed substantiation, naturally. We make the proposal, however, firstly to reject the possibility that particular provinces might be placed in a different relationship from others *vis a vis* the Anglican communion as a whole. Secondly, we make it in order to reject the prospect of the creation of permanent, alternative episcopal (or archiepiscopal) jurisdictions within provinces. On the issue of the interchangeability of ministries, our proposal need not imply any departure from current practice, since it is currently the case that there cannot be absolute interchangeability across the Anglican communion, when particular provinces do not accept the practice of other provinces in respect to the ordination of women. Interchangeability, in other words, appears to be to some extent a matter of provincial determination. The other side would have to accept, as a *quid pro quo*, the continued participation of provinces that, in their view, had departed from Biblical warrant on the matter of homosexuality, at significant levels within the communion. It would also have to accept that – again in the context of worldwide Anglicanism's ecumenical relationships – the bonds of communion, even between Anglican provinces apparently so divided on an important matter of principle, remain close and strong.

10. We have taken this view, in order to accent a possible way forward for the Anglican Communion as a whole. It does not represent, we are well aware, a resolution of the underlying conflict over the question of homosexuality. Nor does it presuppose indifference on our part, or lack of warmth, towards arguments in favour of according much greater public recognition of homosexual relations within the Anglican churches, amongst clergy as well as laity. Affirming Catholicism contains a range of views on that question, but overall it would probably be true to say that the sympathies of its members mostly lie with a willingness to see the traditional position modified. But we recognize the impasse the communion appears to have reached. We believe the unity of the communion is precious, and we are aggrieved to see it threatened. Our proposal is put forward in a spirit of hope, as well as realism. It need not imply a permanent alteration in the

character of the Anglican Communion. Indeed we hope very much that any such change would be temporary. That is because we remain convinced that the shaking of the bonds of communion between the Anglican churches is not by any means irrecoverable. If our unity is valued by all, despite difference, there will be a determination on the part of all to heal division, and to grow in mutual understanding and respect.

Executive Committee of Affirming Catholicism, United Kingdom – 05.05.04

Notes:

[i] See especially L.S. Thornton, *The Common Life in the Body of Christ* (London, 1942).
[ii] ARCIC I, *Final Report* (London, 1982), pp. 5-6.
[iii] ARCIC II, *Church as Communion* (London, 1991), p. 8.
[iv] Report of the Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission (the 'Virginia Report'), in J.M. Rosenthal & N. Currie (eds.), *Being Anglican in the Third Millennium* (London, 1997), p. 238.
[v] The connection is evident in the simple affirmation made at the beginning of the third chapter: "Anglicans are held together in a life of visible communion", the nature of which it proceeds to specify: ibid., p. 243,
[vi] ARCIC I, *Final Report*, p. 6.
[vii] We have not included the Roman Catholic Church in this list, simply because, although it is represented in the congregation of Christ the Cornerstone and in its ministry, for reasons of Eucharistic discipline its relationship to the other covenanting churches is somewhat different in nature from that of their mutual relations. We do not mean thereby to diminish the intensity of the Catholic Church's commitment in this particular LEP.
[viii] "Authority, as inherited by the Anglican Communion…is thus a dispersed rather than a centralized authority having many elements which combine, interact with, and check each other"; *The Lambeth Conference 1948* (London, 1948), pp. 84-5.
[ix] Virginia Report, p. 278. Italics inserted here for emphasis.

North American Secretariat

June 30, 2004

Dear Archbishop Eames and Members of the Lambeth Commission on Communion:

The Executive Committee of Affirming Anglican Catholicism submits this statement in support of the Episcopal Church of the Unites States of America's (ECUSA) action with respect to the consecration of the Rt. Rev. V. Gene Robinson and, specifically, in response to the following "key questions" enumerated by the Commission as the focus of its inquiry:

I. Affirming Anglican Catholicism respectfully suggests that ECUSA's action with respect to the diocesan election of the Rev. Canon V. Gene Robinson as Bishop of New Hampshire and his subsequent confirmation at General Convention is an expression of the true catholicity of the universal Church as it seeks to respond to a local Church representing the Body of Christ in a particular place at a particular time, not a "communion-breaking" event.

From its establishment in 1789, ECUSA has been both resolutely and unwaveringly catholic in its theology and, at the same time, determinedly democratic in its polity.

This distinctive character of ECUSA – holding in creative tension the essential tenets of the historic catholic faith and the necessary qualities of a democracy as reflected in the American state - was largely conceived by the Rev. William White, Rector of Christ Church, Philadelphia (who, at the same time, was serving as Chaplain to the new nation's Congress, a fact that was to inform his work in shaping ECUSA's governing structure significantly).

By 1792, White had succeeded in creating a federal form of polity for ECUSA which embodied those democratic values– a polity that remains essentially unchanged today – and, at the same time, established the primary authority of Scripture by providing for its interpretation within the historical teaching and tradition of the Church through reason and interpretation discerned through dialogue within the community of faith.

In seeking an historical ecclesial model for ECUSA, White rejected the medieval and contemporary centralized forms. Rather, he turned to the patristic Church, finding there an example of the fullness of *koinonia* displayed in the various autonomous local churches assembled around their bishops, a structure in which the local churches freely but voluntarily cooperated with one another. In the words of the 19th Century Chicago Lambeth Quadrilateral, the standard for American ecumenical endeavors, the patristic model of the "historic Episcopate, locally adapted" proved to be ideally suited to the newly organized church in the newly formed democratic federation.[1]

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Today, ECUSA continues to be governed according to essentially the same model as originally conceived by White at its founding: acting as the General Convention on the national level, and locally in the diocesan convention, where the community of faith (representing bishops, priests and the laity) participates directly and prayerfully in the governance of ECUSA in accordance with fundamentally American democratic principles.

The decision to elect Canon Robinson as Bishop was made by the local community of faith assembled in the Diocese of New Hampshire in accordance with the polity of that Diocese and confirmed, after prayerful consideration, by the General Convention, in compliance with its canons, rules and regulations.

Such a lawful decision, as an exercise of human reason, after democratic dialogue and prayerful consideration, in no way can be considered a "communion-breaking" event – particularly when there is no contrary established doctrine of the Church "necessary to salvation" at issue.

In seeking to make any statement which might be construed as establishing or articulating authoritative Church doctrine with respect to the particular underlying issues of human sexuality, both the principle of catholicity and the long accepted Anglican belief that scripture on the one hand and tradition and reason/experience on the other mutually inform each other recommend a reserve in the rush to judgment.

The Church is only at the beginning of understanding the huge complexities of human sexuality as it relates to the doctrine of the Trinity and the Incarnation. Time is needed to test whether homosexuality might not be more than a tolerated but diminished form of divine imaging in the human person.

This theological work on the reception of the full-range of human experience and its correlation to the "deposit of faith" is hardly complete and in many areas it has hardly begun. It is a virtue of Anglicanism to allow these disputed questions a "long lead." Only with time for reflection can the contours of God's catholicity for the Church – ever before us – be fully explored and our understanding of Christian personhood be expanded.

II. Affirming Anglican Catholicism respectfully maintains that ECUSA, having acted in accordance with its laws of polity as a particular local church established with its distinctive democratic principles of governance, is, therefore, not properly subject to any discipline or other form of intervention by the Anglican Communion or any commission appointed by it.

The universal Church is but a web of particular local churches and the principal of local autonomy among those local churches is well-established. It has long been accepted within the Communion that the local church is independent, "enjoying an authority and freedom to govern itself according to its own constitutional and canonical system."[2] Indeed, there is no formal Anglican canon law globally applicable to and binding upon member churches of the Communion. Furthermore, "no central institution exists with competence to create such a body of law."[3]

In fact, intervention by another church of the Communion or entity acting on behalf of the Communion in the affairs of ECUSA for actions which have been taken lawfully in accordance with its polity, pertaining to wholly parochial matters of governance within a diocese of ECUSA, and not in contravention of any established articles of faith of the Church, would be decidedly un-Anglican and violate those long-established and respected principles of autonomy.

According to its democratic principles of governance, ECUSA trusts that the decisions of the communities of faith in the local churches of its several dioceses, arrived at after dialogue, prayerful consideration and, finally, democratic vote in compliance with the relevant canonical laws, rules and regulations, reflect the graced presence of the Holy Spirit in their midst. It recognizes that the United States of America is a vast country, in its own way as culturally diverse in some respects as some nations of the Communion are from one another.

ECUSA's federal form of polity accommodates that diversity and yet holds the national church together in the General Convention where local decisions are confirmed and national policies are established through a process of discernment, prayer, consensus and, ultimately democratic vote. From time to time, ECUSA, in the course of deciding issues of church governance, is called to evaluate changes in the culture in particular locations by consulting with the communities of faith of local churches through the democratic process.

The election of Canon Robinson as Bishop of New Hampshire by the people of New Hampshire was such an event: the lawful action of a local and autonomous church within ECUSA's federal system reflecting a cultural change. ECUSA's confirmation of New Hampshire's action does not conflict with or violate the autonomy of any other church of the Communion. Consequently, there is no basis for any act of censure or reprimand to be taken against ECUSA.

III. Affirming Anglican Catholicism respectfully suggests that ECUSA's action is wholly consistent with being in communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury and, indeed, celebrates that relationship.

If to be in communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury is to trust and respect each other to respond authentically to what the Holy Spirit is saying to the local Church in pursuit of its mission, then ECUSA's action should be regarded as a celebration of its participation in the Communion and not as an attempt to impair or break its relationship with the See of Canterbury or any other member of the Anglican Communion.

The Anglican Communion is not a legal entity. It is a "fellowship, within the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, of those duly constituted dioceses, provinces and regional Churches in communion with the See of Canterbury." More particularly, it is a fellowship of churches that have affirmed their mutually accountability in certain matters of faith and doctrine as set forth in the Lambeth Quadrilateral and adopted at the Lambeth Conference of 1888, while at the same time affirming the member churches' autonomy with respect to their own governance.[4]

More than anything else, the Communion relies on mutual respect and trust for its very existence, especially in times of disagreement and conflict. Indeed, we recognize that the Anglican value of autonomy and its simultaneous commitment to cohere in a Communion will inevitably lead to such tension, especially during times of cultural or social change in the local provinces.

However, the principles and tradition that lie at the heart of Anglicanism and, indeed, form the foundation of ECUSA suggest that it is precisely at such times that the need for dialogue is paramount. Equally important is the need for patience: the passage of sufficient time for the dialogue to occur, for reason and understanding to ripen, for the experience of cultural change to mature among the people, for the Holy Spirit to work its ultimate will – and for this to happen without the stigma of reproach, reprimand, abandonment or censure or unseemly grasps at power.

ECUSA has and is engaged in that process of dialogue - within itself and within the wider Communion. Within ECUSA, each diocese is finding its way – in its own time, at its own pace and in its own particular way – to respond to the changes that are reflected in the American culture with respect to issues of human sexuality, many of which invariably and necessarily affect the life of the local community of faith. As a national church, ECUSA is and will continue to work to hold those local and autonomous dioceses together as a strong worshipping community as they work to discern the will of the Holy Spirit for them as a community of faith and continue to seek to understand the full meaning of catholicity with respect to the issues that face the universal Church today.

ECUSA is and will remain an Episcopal church, fully embracing the catholic faith, consistent with its belief in the principles of Christian liberty as embodied in its polity and steadfastly affirming its commitment to the Anglican Communion.

We submit that ECUSA will be best able to achieve these goals if it is permitted to continue its work with respect for its autonomy and in recognition of its continuing respect for its relationship with the Anglican Communion.

Respectfully submitted,

The Executive Committee of Affirming Anglican Catholicism, N.A.

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1 *See,* Prichard, Richard, *A History of the Episcopal Church,* Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 1991, pp. 84-103.

2. Doe, Norman, *The Canon Law in the Anglican Communion: A Worldwide Perspective,* New York: Oxford University Press Inc., New York, 1998, p.339.

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.,* p.340

The Lambeth Commission on Communion - Documents

Submitted by the Anglican Communion Institute, prepared by Dr Andrew Goddard in consultation with ACI colleagues, August 2004.

A PROPOSAL FOR AN EXTRAORDINARY MINISTRY TO BE EXERCISED BY THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN THE HIGHEST DEGREE OF COMMUNION POSSIBLE IN THE LIFE OF THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION

1. THE CONTEXT & PRINCIPLES

1.1 At the 1998 Lambeth Conference the Archbishop of Canterbury was invited to appoint a Commission to consider "the exceptional circumstances and conditions under which, and the means by which" the Archbishop of Canterbury might "exercise an extraordinary ministry of episcope (pastoral oversight), support and reconciliation with regard to the internal affairs of a province other than his own" (Resolution IV.13). Following a paper prepared by John Rees for the emergency Primates' Meeting at Lambeth in October 2003 this was incorporated within paragraph 3 of the Commission's mandate.[1] Such a ministry would mark a significant development within the Anglican understanding of provincial autonomy – although one already confronted in the first Lambeth Conference of 1867 with respect to Natal, which called on the Archbishop to do just this, and which eventually was a recommendation followed concretely, if cautiously. It is not, in other words, a recent innovation, and one considered only in theory to this point.

1.2 The principle of "autonomy" as often applied in the Communion does not presume each province has total independence. Rather, it is generally understood that provinces are able to order their own internal affairs so that " autonomy is a form of limited authority: an autonomous body is one which is capable only to make decisions for itself in relation to its own affairs at its own level".[2] It follows that "as autonomy is the right of a church (province) to govern its own internal affairs, it follows that no external body may intervene in *these* affairs".[3]

1.3 Traditionally, a central outworking of this understanding of provincial autonomy is the respect of jurisdictional boundaries, a principle from early in Christian history that has frequently been reaffirmed by Anglicans in relation to life in Communion.[4] This, along with respect by churches for decisions reached in other member churches, was emphasized in the Second Lambeth Conference as among the "certain principles of church order which, your Committee consider, ought to be distinctly recognised and set forth, as of great importance for the maintenance of union among the Churches of our Communion".[5]

1.4 Such a commitment to provincial autonomy does not, however, make a ministry of "extraordinary episcope" impossible to conceive within Anglican polity. This is because the principles of autonomy are intimately related to other principles of life in Communion, in particular respect by provinces for the limits of their autonomy. The need to set respect for the integrity of diocesan and provincial boundaries in a wider context derives from the practice of the primitive church of the first four centuries.

The Nicene Canons not only bear on issues we conceptualise in terms of "autonomy" (e.g. Canons 15 and 16) but also the need for common agreement over discipline and excommunication (canons 5 and 19) and universal criteria for the priesthood (Canons 9 and 10) among priesthood common discipline. Furthermore, Nicea – calling itself the "Great Synod" – saw its decisions in these matters as superseding the authority of provinces and any decisions of lower synods by adjudicating among them on matters of common concern. It is these principles of the primitive church that lie behind the permissions and restraints constituted in the early Lambeth conferences where the intention was to order communion life "in accordance with the ancient laws and usages of the Catholic Church".[6]

1.5 It is therefore clear that not all matters are internal matters. Doe has provided the following account and definition of the Anglican understanding: "some ecclesiastical acts performed within an autonomous church may be understood to have a wider nature and effect; they may be classified as *communion acts*: acts which may be seen as acts of the whole communion or of the church universal, or as acts which touch or affect relations with the Anglican Communion, ecumenical partners, and the church universal, such as ordination, or scriptural interpretation".[7] He further notes that it is arguable that in relation to such acts a church may be left to decide on its own but only " provided that church acts compatibly with the interests and instruments of the wider communion".[8]

1.6 It has thus been a principle of the Anglican Communion – clearly if painfully implemented in relation to permitting women to enter orders within the Communion – that "The Conference advises member Churches not to take action regarding issues which are of concern to the whole Anglican Communion without consultation with a Lambeth Conference or with the episcopate through the Primates Committee".[9]

1.7 Developments in recent years (at least since the irregular consecrations in Singapore and in Denver[10] and most starkly in the events leading to the creation of the Lambeth Commission and developing during these past months[11]) have confirmed that indeed these principles cannot be divorced from each other: non-intervention in the internal affairs of a province is only realistic if each province ensures that its "communion acts" are compatible with the mind of the wider Communion and that it refrain from innovations in such acts until, through consultation, such innovations are acceptable within the Communion.

1.8 There is a strong theological basis for this conjunction of principles, and it is founded in the fact that Anglican provinces primarily understand themselves to be part of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church. They are not simply national denominational churches. The principle of legal autonomy is therefore only able to be upheld when " autonomous" bodies recognize their dependency upon the wider body of Christ and the subordination of juridical authority within a province to the (non-juridical) authority of Christ mediated through the Scriptures and the universal church. Thus, the Anglican Communion defines the "true constitution of the Catholic Church" as involving "the principle of the autonomy of particular Churches *based upon a common faith and order*"[12] and emphasises that the Communion is "bound together

not by a central legislative and executive authority, but by mutual loyalty sustained through the common counsel of the bishops in conference".[13]

1.9 This understanding of the church and the relationship of individual provinces to the wider Communion is also legally enshrined within the constitutions of many individual national churches, thereby formally and legally acknowledging the limits to their provincial autonomy which arise because of this theological self-understanding.[14]

1.10 "Autonomy" in Anglicanism is therefore akin, within political theory, to the principle of subsidiarity.[15] In the institutional structures of the Anglican Communion there is no superior extra-provincial body with legal powers. There is, however, a recognition on the part of each province that there are matters which are not their concern alone and that there exist relationships of mutual responsibility and accountability between the autonomous provinces that must be respected if each province is to be free from interference on the part of other provinces.

1.11 If a situation arises in which provinces believe that common faith and order are being disregarded by a province, then the principle of autonomy – which is based on that common shared gift – will be undermined. If the common counsel of the bishops in conference is disregarded, then mutual loyalty (one of whose expressions is non-interference in other provinces[16]) will not be sustained and the bonds of the Communion will thereby be loosened or even cut.

2. THE NECESSARY CIRCUMSTANCES AND CONDITIONS

2.1 The Commission's mandate (and Lambeth Resolution IV.13 on which it is based) speaks of the possibility of an extraordinary ministry for the Archbishop of Canterbury in a province other than his own being considered in part "for the sake of maintaining communion…between the said province and the rest of the Anglican Communion". *It is therefore clear that among the necessary 'circumstances' and 'conditions' for such ministry is the imminent threat or reality of a serious impairment of inter-provincial communion.* One sign of such a situation would be the threat or reality of other primates and bishops being willing to intervene in the internal affairs of another province. Such unilateral actions – even when justified by reference to that province's disregard for the Communion – can only weaken rather than repair the bonds of Communion.

2.2 Given that territorial integrity is not absolute, when parts of the Communion believe it is no longer right to respect the jurisdiction of other bishops, extra-provincial ministry may be right but the demand for such ministry cannot be a sufficient condition. Rather, the Communion must find a means by which it can judge in any particular instance whether such proposed intervention is indeed justified and, if it is, to provide an orderly means by which it may be implemented.

2.3 Although a generally novel response within the contemporary setting of the Communion, it would be compatible with the principles of the Communion to argue that such intervention may be justified when the Communion determines that a province has exceeded the limits of its proper autonomy by unilaterally introducing innovations in a matter of concern to the whole Anglican Communion without regard

to the Communion. Thus Doe writes, "As a general rule, autonomous bodies have a right to freedom from intervention of the wider community in relation to the *internal* affairs of that autonomous community (ie those affairs which do not affect others outside); but if an autonomous community trespasses on matters of shared concern to the wider community of which it forms part, then external intervention is permissible".[17]

2.4 The *rationale* for this is that by trespassing on matters of shared concern to the wider community and ignoring the fact that "the mutual interdependence of the provinces means that none has authority unilaterally to substitute an alternative teaching as if it were the teaching of the entire Anglican Communion",[18] a province threatens communion both within the province and between the province and other provinces. In particular, those in the province who are unwilling to accept such innovations and the overturning of Communion teaching and practice, and who feel duty-bound to abide by the demands of their own ecclesial constitutions, will rightly seek support – including where necessary adequate alternative episcopal ministry – from those in the wider Communion. It is for that reason that ministry 'in regard to the internal affairs' of such a province may become necessary. It is *not* that any minority in any dispute over an internal matter can seek extra-provincial intervention in their province's internal affairs. It is rather that when a province seeks to perform 'communion acts' in disregard of the Communion then the Communion must concern itself with both the external and internal impairment of communion that results from such misuses of the province's autonomy.

2.5 Within the instruments of unity as currently constituted, the natural body to make a judgment as to when such a situation has arisen is the Primates' Meeting (unless a Lambeth Conference is imminent). It is that instrument of unity to which reference was made in the 1978 Resolution concerning consultation with the Communion[19] and in 1988 the Lambeth Conference asked that the Primates' Meeting take 'an enhanced responsibility in offering guidance on doctrinal, moral and pastoral matters'.[20] In 1998 this was not only reaffirmed but the Meeting was asked to 'include among its responsibilities…intervention in cases of exceptional emergency which are incapable of internal resolution within provinces, and giving of guidelines on the limits of Anglican diversity in submission to the sovereign authority of Holy Scripture and in loyalty to our Anglican tradition and formularies".[21] This gradual accrual of authority to the Primates' Meeting within the Communion grants it legitimacy in addressing situations such as those outlined above.[22]

2.6 We must note, in this context, the present reality that the actual gathering of the Primates' Meeting itself has now been placed under threat by the sense that the shared concerns of the Communion are no longer being respected by member Primates themselves. In the face of this reality, it is clear that the Archbishop of Canterbury's pastoral and directive role in maintaining the ongoing integrity of the Primates' Meeting is paramount and cannot be ignored without throwing into grave doubt the future existence of both these central Instruments of Unity themselves.

2.7 The *circumstances* and *conditions* in which such a ministry of "extraordinary episcope" by the Archbishop of Canterbury could be exercised would then be the

following: a decision by the Primates' Meeting (based perhaps on an appeal from bishops within the province and Primates of other provinces) that a province (or in some cases a diocese within a province) had exceeded the limits of its autonomy by performing 'communion acts' without due consultation with the Communion or respect for its teaching and moral authority. Furthermore, that these actions have been so corrosive of communion within the province and between that province and other provinces of the Communion that the Communion has been placed in a case of exceptional emergency in which it must act collectively in relation to the internal affairs of that province.

2.8 Should the Primates judge that such an exceptional emergency does not exist, provinces could not claim authority to intervene in the said province's affairs. Any such actions (now in clear contravention of Communion principles of catholic order) would therefore be clearly understood to represent an undermining of the Communion and may result in the intervening province's own status within the councils of the Communion being reduced.

2.9 Should the Primates judge that such an exceptional emergency situation does exist, the province concerned should be given a - strictly limited - period in which it would be asked to revoke its actions and to make a clear re-commitment to act only within the bounds of provincial autonomy in a manner determined by the Primates' Meeting.

2.10 Should the province fail to comply with this request and yet not willingly withdraw itself from the Communion as a 'fellowship, within the one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, of those duly constituted dioceses, provinces or regional Churches in communion with the See of Canterbury'[23], then it would thereby be accepting a new exceptional status within the Communion and a new relationship with the See of Canterbury.

2.11 In this new and exceptional status – which would effectively be one of 'under discipline' and which could not continue indefinitely - its role within the councils of the Communion would be diminished.[24] Furthermore, the Archbishop of Canterbury would be authorised – on behalf of the Primates – to exercise 'an extraordinary ministry of episcope (pastoral oversight), support and reconciliation with regard to the internal affairs' of that province.

3. THE MEANS OF AN EXTRAORDINARY MINISTRY

3.1 The *means* by which the Archbishop of Canterbury would do this could take a form such as the following: Given its unwillingness to bring the Communion's state of exceptional emergency to an end by either revoking its actions or leaving the Communion, the province would be required – as an aspect of its desire to remain in the Communion in this exceptional emergency - to accept one or more representatives of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The representative(s) would minister in the province on behalf of the Archbishop and be appointed by the Archbishop after consultation with the Instruments of Unity and the Primate of the Province.

3.2 The Archbishop of Canterbury's representative(s) would be authorised by the Communion and accepted by the province as exercising an extraordinary three-fold ministry of episcope (pastoral oversight), support and reconciliation with regard to the province's internal affairs. This would be in order to maintain Canterbury's communion with the province, communion within the province, and between the said province and the rest of the Anglican Communion (not least by preventing other provinces seeking unilaterally to act in relation the province's internal affairs).

3.3 In order to accomplish this the representative(s)

- Would be committed to bringing the exceptional emergency to an end by persuading the province to take the actions necessary to return the life of the province and the Communion to normality.
- Would be invited to attend and able to speak at meetings of the province's House of Bishops, provincial and, where relevant, diocesan synods.
- Would liaise with the province's Primate concerning the province's relations with other provinces in the Communion
- Would personally provide or arrange episcopal oversight for those in the province who requested it, keeping their diocesan informed of all such provision but not requiring the diocesan's permission (see 3.5 below for further details).
- Would communicate with those bishops committed to their Province's action about their relationship with the Communion and what was needed for them to return to full communion status.
- Would convene regular meetings with those bishops who dissociated themselves from their province's decisions and who committed themselves to the life and teaching of the Communion.
- Would attend Primates' Meetings with the status traditionally given to the Primate of the province.
- Would report regularly to the Instruments of Unity on the relationships within the Province.

3.4 In relation to alternative episcopal oversight within the province, the ministry of episcope that the Archbishop of Canterbury would exercise through his representative(s) could take a form such as the following:

- Any parish or priest in the province whose bishop did not dissociate themselves from its actions would be free to inform their bishop that - in order to remain in full communion with worldwide Anglicanism and adhere to its teaching - they were seeking episcopal oversight from the Archbishop of Canterbury's representative. Obviously, no parish or priest would be required to do this or to receive ministry from other than their diocesan bishop.
- When such requests are made, all the episcopal functions traditionally performed by the diocesan – visitation, confirmation, appointments, ordination etc – would automatically be arranged by the Archbishop of Canterbury's representative (using bishops of the province committed to the Communion – in office and retired – and perhaps bishops from elsewhere in the Communion).
- The diocesan and the Archbishop of Canterbury would be informed of all such ministry and the Archbishop's representative(s) would meet with any such

diocesan but the diocesan would not be able to determine or prohibit such ministry.

- If a diocesan changes his stance and dissociates himself from the province's actions – either through a personal repentance or through election of a new bishop – then he has thereby brought an end to the exceptional emergency in relation to his diocese. All parishes in that diocese would therefore automatically be returned to the diocesan's episcopal care by the Archbishop's representative

3.5 The *rationale* for this form of ministry would be that in a situation judged by the Primates to be an exceptional emergency, there will be Anglicans within the province wishing – in accordance often with their own provincial constitution - to remain committed to Communion teaching and in full communion with other Anglican provinces and the Instruments of Unity. Communion with the wider catholic church is established through bishops. Any bishop of the Province who rejects the Communion's appeal that the province desist from the actions judged to have impaired communion, thereby unjustly impairs communion with the wider Communion for all under his/her jurisdiction. In taking such a view of autonomy and rejecting the teaching, appeals and disciplines of the Communion (yet not wishing to depart from the Communion), bishops can no longer automatically claim or legitimately enforce sole episcopal authority (ie monarchical rule) within their diocese, something which the Communion has traditionally upheld. This apparent anomaly in catholic order is based on the fact that episcopal authority is related to the bishop's position within the catholic church's college of bishops and his/her commitment to uphold the church's teaching. If one embraces a pluriform view of truth and a particular view of autonomy within the catholic church then there cannot be adherence to a monopolistic view of episcopal authority within a geographical unit (or rather such adherence is only possible if authority is divorced from truth and the wider church catholic and based on some form of crude legal positivism).

3.6 By developing such a ministry, the Communion's *intention* would be that, in accepting the necessity of being the focus for such an extraordinary ministry, the Archbishop of Canterbury would be seeking to maintain the highest degree of communion possible and to prevent diverse and multiple offers of support from other provinces which risk further disintegration and disorder. He would also be authorised to work for the full reintegration of the province into the life of the Communion and an ending of the emergency situation. Should such reconciliation prove impossible, the Communion would – in the form of those under the Archbishop of Canterbury's extraordinary oversight and those bishops who had dissociated themselves from their province's actions – have an ecclesial structure that could be recognised by the wider Communion as a new province. While the exceptional situation continued, each province could determine what level of communion it wished to maintain with the said province as a whole and with those receiving the ministry of the Archbishop. Should the ministry succeed, the Primates would be able to declare the emergency situation brought to a close and the province could return to function fully within the life of the Communion and the anomaly of the Archbishop of Canterbury exercising a ministry in a province other than his own be brought to an end.

Submitted by the Anglican Communion Institute, prepared by Dr Andrew Goddard in consultation with ACI colleagues, August 2004.

[1] Rees, "Some Legal and Constitutional Considerations", especially 8.4 & 8.5.

[2] Doe, "Communion and Autonomy in Anglicanism: Nature and Maintenance", p26.

[3] Doe, p34. Cf. Principle 5.3 of proposed principles of canon law common to churches of the Communion – "No particular church, or any authority or person within it, shall intervene in the internal affairs of another church without the consent of that other church given in the manner prescribed by its own law`" (Doe, n271, p36)

[4] The most recent reaffirmations of this at Lambeth Conferences are found in 1988 LR 72. The importance of this is seen in that, in 1998, not only did the Lambeth Conference reaffirm LR 72 but it requested the Primates 'to encourage the bishops of their Province to consider the implications of Resolution 72 of the Lambeth Conference 1988" (1998 LR V.13). The issue is also discussed in the Lambeth Primates' Statement of 2003 ("we reaffirm the teaching of successive Lambeth Conferences that bishops must respect the autonomy and territorial integrity of dioceses and provinces other than their own").

[5] "There are certain principles of church order which, your Committee consider, ought to be distinctly recognised and set forth, as of great importance for the maintenance of union among the Churches of our Communion. First, that the duly certified action of every national or particular Church, and of each ecclesiastical province (or diocese not included in a province), in the exercise of its own discipline, should be respected by all the other Churches, and by their individual members. Secondly, that when a diocese, or territorial sphere of administration, has been constituted by the authority of any Church or province of this Communion within its own limits, no bishop or other clergyman of any other Church should exercise his functions within that diocese without the consent of the bishop thereof. Thirdly, that no bishop should authorise to officiate in his diocese a clergyman coming from another Church or province, unless such clergyman present letters testimonial, countersigned by the bishop of the diocese from which he comes; such letters to be, as nearly as possible, in the form adopted by such Church or province in the case of the transfer of a clergyman from one diocese to another" (1878 Recommendation 1).

[6] 1878 Lambeth Conference Encyclical Letter, 1.6, Recommendation 2.

[7] Doe, p28.

[8] Doe, p28.

[9] LR 1978:11.

[10] On these see the Letter of the Archbishop of Canterbury (17th Feb 2000) and the Porto Communique and the discussion in Rees, section 7.

[11] In addition to the situation in New Westminster, a number of dioceses in ECUSA have already seen 'interventions' without the consent of the diocesan (e.g. Ohio confirmations and the departure of parishes to the jurisdiction of other provinces in West Tennessee (Kenya) and Los Angeles (Uganda)).

[12] LR 1930:48, italics added.

[13] LR 1930:49.

[14] Both of the provinces explicitly mentioned in the Commission mandate – ECUSA and Canada – have statements in their constitutions which emphasise this and draw on and many other provinces explicitly recognise the limits which arise from their Communion status. See, for further examples and discussion, Doe, p7ff.

[15] Doe, p27.

[16] LR 1988:72 on episcopal responsibilities and diocesan boundaries ends by noting that "With the number of issues that could threaten our unity it seems fair that we should speak of our mutual respect for one another, and the positions we hold, that serves as a sign of our unity". Once mutual respect is undermined, unity is further threatened. Once the relational bonds of communion are undermined, the institutional structures are drained of their life-blood.

[17] Doe, p26.

[18] Lambeth Primates' Statement, Oct 2003.

[19] 1978 LR 11 (cited above).

[20] 1988 LR 18.2(a).

[21] 1998 LR III.6.

[22] The move to an annual meeting of Primates in recent years, combined with the Lambeth Resolutions noted above mean that "its influence is immense, notwithstanding its lack of legal authority" (Rees, 4.14, p12). Owen Chadwick's comments on the Lambeth Conferences increasingly apply also to the Primates' Meeting – "meetings start to gather authority if they exist and are seen not to be a cloud of hot air and rhetoric. It was impossible that the leaders of the Anglican Communion should meet every ten years and not start to gather respect; and to gather respect is to slowly gather influence, and influence is on the road to authority. It continued to have that absence of legal authority which some of its founders wanted and which of necessity was denied to them. But in most Churches some of the most important parts of authority are not based upon the law"(quoted Rees, 4.6, p10).

[23] 1930 LR 49. This language is taken up in the Preamble to the Constitution of ECUSA.

[24] The possible forms of this have been discussed in some detail in *To Mend the Net*, *To Hold The Helm*, and the earlier ACI submission, *Communion and Discipline*, especially in chapter six and appendix 2.

The Lambeth Commission on Communion - Documents

Submitted by Tim Bradshaw

EQUITY FREEING THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION

These very brief paragraphs concern the procedures and principles relevant to the Anglican Communion and its legal constitution. In particular it is suggested that the strand of Equity law, very characteristic of the English, American and Commonwealth legal traditions, should be considered as an important and very appropriate model for use by the Anglican Communion. It is appropriate because the Anglican Communion breathes the practical jurisprudential air of the English legal traditions, rather than the codified 'Continental' legal tradition and the entail of strict, centralised statute law, the Roman Law rooted in the Institutes of Justinian, revisited by the Code Napoleon and now the EU. But it is also appropriate, ecclesiologically, since the Anglican Communion deliberately resisted the model of the post 1870 Roman Catholic Church, with a basis in centralised canonical statute law, echoing Justinian and, for example, the imperial *rescripts* and *senatus consulta*, promulgating authoritative, detailed legal decisions out to far flung corners of Empire and then Church. The English legal tradition, well known for its case law and precedent, resembles the river rather than the canal, and this should gladly be regarded as utterly apt for the Anglican Communion, theologically, historically, and jurisprudentially.

The Anglican Communion found itself in being naturally, and resisted the Roman model of global black-letter law as a basis and form. It existed quite happily as a kind of family of Christians across the globe, far more like the Eastern Orthodox family than the Roman type of legally established corporation, after 1870. The Anglican Communion felt no need for a *codex juris*, it existed as a family and so behaved as such. We must agree with the judgement of Professor Norman Doe, therefore, when he affirms at the outset of his paper to the Lambeth Commission that 'there are principles of canon law common to the Churches within the Anglican Communion', 'principles' being the key word. And we can extrapolate that there are principles, rather than black-letter canonical laws, governing the Anglican Communion itself. Turning to the end of the other official legal paper supplied to the Commission, by Dr John Rees the Provincial Registrar of Canterbury, we can all approve of his final sentence pointing us to 'self-discipline' and 'a trust which is as yet only imperfectly manifested both interprovincially and within separated provinces of the Anglican Communion', principles arising not from a *codex juris* but from the monastic 'rule' of Benedict, a pastoral rather than legal document hence in tune with the Anglican way.

Given that the Anglican Communion wisely did not opt to ape the Roman model of canon law and that it managed for a century or so without a written rule book at all, we are pointed to principles and to natural justice, in fact to the tradition of Equity and fairness in law characteristic of English speaking lands, as the primary model for Church order globally. The law of Equity grew up centuries ago in England by way of providing fairness when statute law, rigidly applied, could lead to injustice. Equity, is, as the Encylopaedia Britannica puts it:

Justice according to fairness, especially as distinguished from mechanical application of rules under common law. Courts of equity, also called chancery courts, arose in England in the 14th Century in response to the increasingly strict rules of proof and other requirements of the courts of law. Equity provided remedies not available under the old writ system. Often these remedies involved something other than damages, such as specific performance of contractual obligations, enforcement of trust, restitution of goods wrongfully acquired, imposition of an injunction, or the correction and cancellation of false or misleading documents. The equity courts eventually established their own precedents, rules and doctrines and began to rival the courts in power. The two systems were united in 1873. Courts of equity also developed early in the U.S history, but by the early 20th Century most jurisdictions had combined them with courts of law into a single system. Modern courts apply both legal and equitable principles and offer both legal and equitable relief.

The English-speaking legal tradition embodies not only the characteristic common law of building up precedent interwoven with Parliamentary statute law, but also this equitable tradition enabling remedies when the letter of the law fails. In the case of the UK, of course, we might point to the current constitution which is famously unwritten to a large extent, and to the phenomenon of EU law, directed from 'Brussels', into British law and interweaving with it. For the legal traditions rooted in the English, rather than Roman, tradition, the law is more like an organism developing than an absolute written code, serving a family or commonwealth rather than a strictly legally established corporation. And the way of the Anglican Communion is developing as a family. As both legal papers indicate, the Communion does clearly have its 'instruments', which can, do and have expressed their intention on various contentious matters. The question apparently being discussed by the Lambeth Commission now is how these instruments and principles impact on the acts of ECUSA in its attempt to consecrate Gene Robinson as a bishop to be recognised globally in the apostolic succession of the Church.

Here I would presume to take issue with Dr John Rees's paper and its repeated basic assertion that because there are no formal statutes, laws or canons in a codex of the Anglican Communion to take sanctions against member Churches which take actions in violation of clear Lambeth Conference Resolutions, therefore there is no 'law' applicable to such situations. This argument depends upon a strictly 'statute law' view of the way the Anglican Communion orders itself. This presupposition however is weak and certainly not necessary. In fact, the Anglican Communion works on 'principles' akin to a family rather than a nation or business corporation established by statute based law.

When we turn to the principles of 'Equity', that is fairness and justice, we find considerable help, and indeed help which relates directly to Christian principle and practice. We find 'trust' and 'good faith' to be central to the concerns of equity. We find the principle that a trustee cannot act in his or her own interest against that of a beneficiary which he or she serves. We find that 'equity looks to the substance and not to the form'. We find that Equity will not allow one to profit from his own dishonesty. And in the law of charitable trusts we find that the 'spirit and intendment' of the trust is crucial. Such equitable principles apply admirably to the family of the Anglican

Communion, and stop a perverse application or result of the letter of the law – *and in particular absence of such black letter statute* – preventing fairness and equity being achieved against the expressed intention of the family and its regular gatherings at Lambeth. Equitable principles act against frustration of proper remedies, and against hiding behind some kind legal mechanism to prevent fairness.

Lambeth 98 clearly yielded the mind of the global Anglican Communion on the question in dispute, notwithstanding intense argumentation. We know the mind of the family of the Anglican Communion on the ethical issue. But we also know its mind, its spirit and intendment, as to the need to develop more central control over members who choose to fly in the face of the Communion. The acceptance of the principles of the *Virginia Report* at Lambeth 98 makes that very clear indeed. There is a clear need for all members of the family to exercise self-discipline in this light, as the final paragraph of Dr Rees's paper enjoins.

A particular principle of fairness and equity, surely, is that people should not be allowed to profit from the benefits of membership of the family while breaking its clearly stated resolutions and operating a way reckless to its future integrity and coherence as a body. Here we cannot but note that the Presiding Bishop of ECUSA, at the meeting of Primates prior to the ' consecration' of Gene Robinson, signed the common document 'regretting' this act – then flew home to participate enthusiastically in that ritual act. Equity looks carefully at the behaviour of a party, its effects, and how it affects that party's standing and status in the dispute. Principles of equity would dismiss appeals to some narrow, technical defence of such actions within the Anglican Communion, as duplicitous and undermining of simple justice. The 'consecration' was carried out purporting to be more than a merely local act for a merely local ministry: the claim is that this consecrates Gene Robinson as a bishop in the worldwide Anglican Communion, into the Church catholic. Hence there is real conflict, a claim to the status of a catholic bishop globally, while radically contradicting the absolutely clear mind and duly constituted resolution of that global Anglican body. There is an overwhelming equitable argument to be made here against the legality of the consecration as Anglican. My point here is that Dr John Rees's argument, based on a lack of Anglican Communion statute, merely an argument from silence, fails to use a sufficiently wide jurisprudential lens by focusing on black-letter law alone as relevant. There are other powerful, and very appropriate, models and strands of law and remedy available.

Appeal to the absence of black-letter, codified statute law in the Anglican Communion, in other words, is inappropriate to the family, too narrow, and far from decisive in adjudicating this crisis. Far better, more authentic, and legally proper is appeal to principles of Equity in just this situation. Lambeth 98 spoke on the substantive issue of homosexual ordination. It also spoke clearly on the desirability of developing sanctions against provinces claiming the benefits of full status in the global Communion while damaging its integrity and coherence by reckless actions known to be divisive internally, and ecumenically. Claiming the benefits of the Communion, and the global recognition of that family, while acting in violation of its clear intention offends legally acknowledged principles of fairness, justice and equity. Another way of putting this might be that the Primate of ECUSA was a trustee, perhaps a 'constructive trustee', of the global Anglican Communion, breaching trust by acting in favour of its own local

interest alone, without attending to his wider responsibilities globally, hence he forfeits his status as a global trustee along with the province he heads – that could be a very fair remedy against this inequitable behaviour, protecting the Communion and its declared intention. The primates and Archbishop of Canterbury, functioning as the board of trustees, can and should take the necessary action against the trustee who has shown 'bad faith' with regard to the trust.

Another aspect to this breach of equity and good faith emerges since the Eames/Lambeth Commission began its work to reach some reconciliation of the crisis, potentially fatal to the very existence of the global family, and its credibility as a global ecumenical dialogue partner. ECUSA has been pressing ahead with its own contradictory local agenda, rather than complying with the spirit of the Commission process to allow space for peace to be secured.[1] But more than this, it has increasingly been denying clergy who disagree with its gay agenda parochial employment. Oppression violates principles of equity, and ECUSA is claiming freedoms against the global body while denying freedom of traditional faith and practice to others at home. This is now well known throughout the Communion, but my point is that it is arguably actually unlawful according to Equity, and so is more than a matter of hand-wringing and frustration of aim. Anglican Communion leaders, the Primates and the Archbishop of Canterbury, can and should act accordingly. The whole strand of the law of Equity arose from appeal to the person and office of the Lord Chancellor centuries ago, and he took action in the name of fairness and right against their frustration and contradiction on technicalities. In our case, these principles arising from the need for remedies against oppression and unfairness coincide well with the Anglican way of reasonableness and moral rectitude. ECUSA has shown no intention of seeking peace in the Anglican Communion, but has pushed on with their local agenda in flagrant violation of all proper efforts at mediation, even when they have been very generously treated. They have shown no 'good faith' throughout this crisis, and 'one who comes to equity must come with clean hands'.

The kind of remedies developed by the court of Chancery are exemplified by injunction and estoppel, preventing parties from committing inequities that might take place 'legally'. This is precisely what might be expected in such claims against unfairness and injustice, and these are the sorts of principles and remedies to which the Communion must look legally. The contested 'consecration' was purportedly into the Church catholic, not a very local exception, and hence needs adhesion to the Anglican Communion 'College' of bishops to make this remotely credible. Given the inequitable behaviour of ECUSA in regard to the Anglican Communion and its duly declared mind, spirit and intent, some version of estoppel or injunction should apply. Given that the Anglican College of bishops does not claim to be 'the' sole college worldwide, but part of such a catholic college, the estoppel or injunction equivalent applies a fortiori, since the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox episcopates are wholly opposed to homosexual practice and to ordaining or consecrating people avowedly pursuing such a lifestyle. It is no counter argument to say that these other two Churches deny the Anglican episcopate on other grounds anyway – this new act puts new and deeper difficulties in the way of ecumenical reconciliation, and so again is not in good faith as regards the world-wide Anglican Communion.

In conclusion, my point is that there always was a legal resource of great importance that could have untied the hands of the Primates in dealing with this crisis and prevented frustration of the global Communion's intention, in the absence of some code of canon law in the Anglican Communion. The principles and remedies of Equity are very appropriate for the Anglican Communion, and should be applied. The Communion, more like a family than a legal corporation, has the 'instruments' already in place in the Primates and Archbishop of Canterbury, a personal and equitable mode of flexible remedy. These principles prima facie call for unreasonable behaviour, reckless to the very existence of the Communion globally, to be dealt with calmly but firmly, and with total confidence in its existing rights to act for the good of the family. An equivalent to an injunction should be served on the offending provinces, and if not complied with will result in a status equivalent to a 'contempt of court' and so self-exclusion from the benefit of owning the identity conferred by the Anglican Communion, until that contempt is duly purged and respect for the family restored. It is arguable that such action should already have been taken by the Primates, as trustees, in the interest of the continued existence of the body, or family, for which they hold a global responsibility and on which they all depend for world-wide catholic credibility. It is certainly a strong question to ask, in Equity, why such action is still being frustrated and delayed when it could so easily and justly be remedied by a declaration by those responsible for the continuing existence of the Communion. Equity seems to require a swift remedy, delay compounding the crisis and the inequity being rewarded.

[3] The Commission is evidently aware of this, witness the exchange of letters between Archbishops Gomez and Eames, respectively May 7th and 14th this year. Archbishop Eames' reply contained the phrase ' homosexual persons', an apparent break with the resolution of Lambeth 98 which specifically cautioned against this kind of ontologising of the homosexual condition into personal identity. The final paragraph of the report on Human Sexuality, pages 94-95, reads:

'There can be no description of human reality. in general or in particular. out- side the reality of Christ. We must be on guard, therefore, against constructing any other ground for our identities than the redeemed humanity given us in him. Those who understand themselves as homosexuals, no more and no less than those who do not, are liable to false understandings based on personal or family histories, emotional dispositions, social settings and solidarities formed by common experiences or ambitions. Our sexual affections can no more define who we are than can our class, race or nationality. At the deepest ontological level. therefore, there is no such thing as "a" homosexual or "a" heterosexual; there are human beings, male and female, called to redeemed. humanity in Christ, endowed with a complex variety of emotional potentialities and threatened by a complex variety of forms of alienation.'

It is to be hoped that this vital point in the whole debate is not being missed.

Tim Bradshaw, Regent's Park College, Oxford 5th July 04

The Lambeth Commission on Communion - Documents

A submission by Changing Attitude, the Lesbian and Gay Clergy Consultation and the Church of England General Synod Human Sexuality Group

We are writing as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender [LGBT] members of the Church of England, lay and ordained. We are Christians who are actively involved in local congregations and the life of our national Church. We are Anglicans by conviction. The Church of England has been by tradition a broad, tolerant and generous Church, open to change, often adventurous in theology and in responding to the movement of the Holy Spirit in our culture and in a changing society.

The Lambeth Commission has been mandated to investigate issues of authority and structure in the Anglican Church. In theory it is not directly concerned with the theology or place of LGBT people in the Church. But, in reality it is, because this is the issue that has caused the Commission to be formed. We, LGBT members of the Church of England, are among those whose future in the Church is being discussed, questioned and thrown into doubt.

We who are members of an Anglican church in the 'west' are semi-privileged people. We are members of a Province where the place of LGBT people is at least an open and active issue, and in parts of the Church we are welcomed. This is also true for Scotland, Wales, the USA, Canada, South Africa, New Zealand and parts of Australia. In many of these countries there are moves by the secular state to recognise, protect and give legal equality to LGBT people, including the registration of partnerships.

We LGBT people in the United Kingdom recognise our dignity and worth as children of God, called by God into faith and into his Church. We know from personal experience that discrimination, injustice and prejudice against LGBT people is often fuelled by the Church both in England and in other parts of the Anglican Communion. This prejudice is demonstrated by individuals, congregations, ministers, priests, and the institutional Church, through policies and opinions expressed by synods, bishops and church leaders.

The legal and theological implications flowing from the consecration of Gene Robinson are not restricted to the effect on church order and law. Lesbian and gay and same-gender loving priests are ordained in every province of our Communion. The legal and theological position of the church also affects the human rights, dignity and safety of every same-gender loving person. In other cultures where the identity of people as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender are unfamiliar concepts, homosexual men may identify themselves as 'men who have sex with men', and homosexuals of both genders as 'same gender loving people'.

The legal and theological implications flowing from the ECUSA decision affect more than the historic formularies and doctrine of the church and the Anglican Communion's order and unity. They also affect the ability of the church to pastor lesbian and gay people and formulate appropriate policies and pastoral strategies to respond to the specific needs of a minority group.

- **We call on the Anglican Communion to develop a theology of human sexuality in conversation with lesbian, gay and same-gender loving people.**

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in the UK have often experienced themselves as being in a state of uncertain or broken communion with the national church as a result of published church documents and policies about LGBT people and General Synod debates about us. These have often expressed the views of hostile heterosexuals who, unaware of our experience, construct their views from a particular understanding of scripture. The attitudes expressed have made us feel unwelcome and have persuaded some to leave the church because it had become an institution with which they did not feel in communion any longer.

- **Impaired and broken communion is not simply a state of being determined by national and international church bodies. It is a state experienced by individuals on both sides of this dispute when the church becomes an unfriendly, hostile or unrecognisable place.**

As LGBT members of the Church of England we believe ourselves to be part of the worldwide Anglican Communion and have worshipped at services and received communion when we have travelled to a different Province. The views expressed by the majority of bishops at the Lambeth Conference in 1998 and at subsequent meetings and in published reports now reveal the Anglican Church in other Provinces to be a very unsafe and unwelcome place for us, and in some instances a place of danger to our physical, emotional and spiritual health and well-being.

- **We want to belong to an Anglican Church where in every Province we will find an open welcome for us, lay and ordained, as LGBT people who may be visiting with our partners.**

The experience of the Act of Synod in England in responding to the requirements of those opposed to the ordination of women to the priesthood provides an unhappy precedent. If the Lambeth Commission proposes a solution based on the model of alternative episcopal oversight and the formation of a third province, implicit in this will be the institutionalisation of impaired communion. We urge the Commission to resist a proposal in which being in communion with other provinces and individual members of the church is in any way impaired.

- **We do not want a solution which results in the orders of same-gender loving, lesbian and gay priests and bishops being unrecognised in individual Provinces or dioceses within the Communion.**

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and same-sex loving people in the majority of provinces of the Anglican Communion which are hostile to lesbian and gay experience are unlikely to have any individuals or representative bodies which will prepare a submission for the Commission. Their voices will not be heard by the Commission.

LGBT and same-gender loving members in these Provinces have an equal need for pastoral oversight, support and reconciliation as individuals. This needs to be weighed

against the desire to maintain the relationship of each Province with the Archbishop of Canterbury and with other Provinces.

- **There is an urgent need to provide pastoral support for lesbian and gay members of the Anglican Church in every Province of our Communion.**

24 August 2004

Submission to
the Lambeth Commission
from
The Church of England Evangelical Council (CEEC)

The Church of England Evangelical Council is the democratically constituted voice of Evangelical Anglicanism in England, which last autumn held a major National Evangelical Anglican Congress. CEEC is also part of the Evangelical Fellowship of the Anglican Communion and EFAC's conference in Kenya last summer made a lengthy statement on the issue before the Commission. Bishops from around the world were present at both conferences. This submission, then, has active knowledge of the thinking of national and international Anglican Evangelicalism behind it.

1. Our understanding is that this submission should be brief and focussed, and it thus runs the risk of appearing trite, uninformed or uncaring. In particular, we have not rehearsed our position on biblical interpretation, nor of appropriate pastoral guidelines for local congregations. If the Commission sees fit, we would happily expand our arguments.

2. The current crisis has been provoked particularly by the election and consecration of Gene Robinson to the Diocese of New Hampshire, but it is not limited to that. We have in mind the actions of the Diocese of New Westminster, and the decision of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada to "affirm the integrity and sanctity of committed adult same sex relationships." We also most recently have in mind the extraordinary appointment of the Reverend Canon Jeffrey John as Dean of St. Albans. In our own country this highlights the particular concerns because it was made in direct opposition to the Archbishop's request that no controversial appointments be made until the Commission has reported. It becomes another clear example of provocation by a liberal and revisionist elite on an orthodox and unsuspecting Church. It raises the problem of how the solution the Commission arrives at ought to be workable at a Diocesan as well as a Provincial level. Thus every reference to ECUSA and a Province below could and should be read as having relevance to other referents, albeit outside the strict terms of the Commission.

3. In itself this restricts the options open to the Commission, for the issue is not merely Gene Robinson, and will not be resolved by his resignation, or the declaration of his election or consecration as invalid. Whatever the merits of those actions in that case (and while the first is simply improbable, the last two are open to substantial legal challenge), they only provide a temporary solution to one aspect of the crisis. The consecration of Gene Robinson is likely to be a precedent, as the crisis in Oxford Diocese last summer showed.

4. We want the Commission to note, first, that the seriousness of this debate should not be underestimated. We are aware that for both sides the issue is salvation, and that the two understandings of the meaning of salvation are incompatible and mutually exclusive. Our concern on this issue is therefore not fundamentally ecclesiological, sacramental, doctrinal, nor biblical, (critical though all those issues are) but pastoral, for in classic Christian teaching, homosexual actions leave the actors facing God's judgement without Christ's mediating work. Teaching which encourages such behaviour is profoundly cruel, as it encourages people to sin and, in defiance of the gospel, to call that sin an act of grace. Toleration of such teaching is equally cruel, and makes one complicit in the sins of both the actor and the teacher. This issue matters to us because people matter to us, and both heaven and hell are genuine alternative destinies.

5. A note on questions of Jurisdiction

5.1 Our starting-point is that the Provinces of the Anglican Communion are part of the one universal apostolic Church whose head is Jesus Christ, and that

accordingly neither the Communion as a whole nor any Province within it has any power or jurisdiction either to ordain or to permit anything contrary to the will of God.

5.2 This entails that any rules, laws or practices amongst the Communion or by its constituent Provinces must be in accordance with the will of God expressed in Holy Scripture.

5.3 As part of the apostolic Church, ECUSA has no jurisdiction or power to institute the practices it has, for God has forbidden this throughout Scripture.

5.4 As part of the apostolic Church, the rest of the Communion not only has no jurisdiction or power to permit these practices, but rather has a positive duty to discipline ECUSA for the purpose of restoring it to a loving obedience her head.

5.5 Some deny that explicit *legal* instruments exist amongst the members of the Communion to regulate the exercise of this disciplinary jurisdiction. However, this must be challenged. First, a *formal* jurisdiction is necessarily implicit in the position given to Holy Scripture by the Lambeth Quadrilateral, even if it is not legally expressed. Further, any legal instruments of the separate Provinces of the Communion are subordinate only, designed to further our common life to the glory of God. They must therefore be set against the background primarily of Holy Scripture and secondly of the traditions of the Church on earth.

5.6 Such *legal* instruments as exist are thus a partial expression of a wider range of *formal* instruments, such as invitations to the Lambeth Conference, and those are in turn an expression of the authority and duty of the Church to govern itself under God's authority.

5.7 Holy Scripture and the tradition of the Church on earth alike testify to a residual jurisdiction to discipline those in error even without any explicit subordinate legal mechanism. In the case of Holy Scripture, St. Paul both rebukes his fellow apostle, and also corrects churches of which he is no longer a member. In the case of the tradition of the Church on earth, discipline has been consistently exercised even against erring bishops by those outside their sees. This is evidenced in the case of Paul of Samosata, Origen's role in the Dialogue with Heraclides, the Arian controversy, but most strikingly in Cyprian's Letter 67. Cyprian is frequently cited as upholding Diocesan or Provincial autonomy, but there he and others subordinate that consideration to the need for a wider discipline.

5.8 This residual jurisdiction cannot be revoked by desuetude, for the Church has no authority to revoke it at all. Nor can it be repudiated by the Provinces of the Communion without an implicit repudiation of their apostolic inheritance. If the objection that there are no secondary legal mechanisms for the exercise of this jurisdiction be accepted, this only entails that a range of mechanisms be forthwith be created for the purpose of the proper pastoral care of ECUSA by discipline. These may or may not include legal mechanisms.

5.9 The objection that this amounts to retrospective legislation is fallacious since the Scriptural prohibition on homosexual genital practice is clear and express, as is the historical submission of Christ's church on earth to this injunction. Similarly the existence of both Scriptural and traditional residual jurisdictions for the exercise of discipline is well-attested. Both substantive law and residual jurisdiction are therefore not being retrospectively created. ECUSA can only claim to have been either ignorant of these things, or to have disregarded them. Neither ignorance nor disregard abolish either law or jurisdiction, but go only to challenge ECUSA's claim to be authentically part of the Communion.

Unworkable solutions

6. Following from point 4, those churches that have broken or suspended communion with ECUSA are therefore simply insisting on the maintenance of Biblical standards of discipline that they would apply equally to any individual within their dioceses, or to any church seeking communion with them. This is done for the eternal security of the individuals concerned.

7. We submit that tensions on this subject are running so strong internationally that either ECUSA will split further, or the Communion will split entire. Indeed we can see no alternative to that choice, and foresee that any solution which fails to take the seriousness of the charge made against ECUSA with full force, will be anything other than temporary.

8. Furthermore, we question any model which seeks to resolve the problem of two Provinces being in impaired or non-Communion by means of seeing them as only being indirectly related via their primary Communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury. It would be appealing, but the logic of the orthodox means it will fail. They will be out of Communion with anyone who is in Communion with Gene Robinson, and that must include the Archbishop of Canterbury himself if the logic of Communion is followed. The only route out of that dilemma is for the Archbishop to declare himself in at least impaired Communion with ECUSA.

9. We are in frequent contact with a range of traditionalists in ECUSA, and they report considerable irritation with the rhetorical technique of being provided with a form of words to which a number of (mutually contradictory) meanings can be given or where loopholes can be found. The Commission must take pains to express itself unambiguously if it is to win the traditionalists' confidence. This is not a case where a quasi-balanced attempt to hold everyone together will succeed

10. The rhetoric of liberalisation needs careful unpacking as well, for too often it implies that the traditionalist case is of its essence thoughtless and unreflective, a product of naïve and inadequate theological depth. A good example here is the comments made by the Bishop of St Alban's in his Presidential address to his Diocesan Synod, 12th June 2004. Commenting on the response to the appointment of Jeffrey John he said, "One of the saddening features of my postbag, over the past few weeks, has been the way in which biblical texts have been used. It is not that they are quoted - that is not the issue - but it is as though all the thinking and study that has gone on in the Church during the twentieth century concerning the Bible has simply not been recognised". Granted that there are thoughtless and unreflective people on all sides of this argument, and we cannot comment on the Bishop's postbag, it is matter of record that at its best, the traditionalist case has been made, on numerous occasions, with considerable academic rigour and theological sophistication.

11. Similarly, traditionalists in ECUSA - and we - are familiar with committees which claim a theologically neutral (or theologically superior) stance from which it can see that both sides are equally at fault. We strongly repudiate that this double and equivalent fault is the case, and deny the claimed theological superiority that sees it.

12. Evidence of that technique already being in place is the equivalence being placed on (alleged) toleration of polygamy in some African Provinces, and homosexual expression in (some) Western Provinces. We urge the Commission to study the Constitutions of those African Provinces with great care before such toleration of polygamy is assumed or described. The Anglican Church of Kenya, for instance, has a lengthy description of the disciplinary procedures to be followed for a polygamist, and they are deeply offended to see their pastorally nuanced discipline wrongly described as toleration.

13. This is itself evidence of the continued bureaucratic domination in the Communion by the white West and North, despite the numerical domination of the global South. So high are feelings running over this, that we fear many think that if the Communion will not adhere to orthodoxy, and discipline members in line with its stated position, then its *raison d'être* has ceased beyond being a remnant of the British Empire, and will be sloughed off with as little concern.

14. We also suggest that the technique of dealing with the two views as equivalents, imparts a spurious equality between two views which are disparate in the strength of their claims to tradition, catholicity, unity, and Scriptural interpretation. The novelty and self-consciously communion-breaking nature of the consecration of Gene Robinson must be recorded, as must its distortion of the Lambeth Quadrilateral in pitting one element, episcopacy, against the others. We note the disdain with which the Diocese of New Westminster treated the Primates' Statement. Equally, the Bishop of St Alban's has shown similar contempt for the Archbishop of Canterbury's call for calm. It is breathtaking that the Bishop can make this appointment and simultaneously expect those who oppose it to submit to his Episcopal authority as a mark of authentic Anglicanism.

15. In that some people have manipulated rightful authority to their own ends, and are enforcing those ends on others, the consecration of Gene Robinson was also an abuse of power, albeit under a democratic form, and therefore an act of ecclesiastical tyranny. By the same token, however, the refusal to offer adequate oversight for orthodox Christians thus marginalized is equally an abuse of power by the non-exercising of rightful authority.

16. The matter of justifiable Scriptural interpretation is especially critical at this point, because, as the recent report *Some Issues in Human Sexuality* from the English House of Bishops notes, and notwithstanding the few caveats the Report itself lists, 'the consensus of biblical scholarship still points us in the direction of the traditional reading of the biblical material' (4.4.71).

17. There is therefore no parallel with the debate over women's ordination where there are significant texts which can be used by both sides. The liberalizing case has consistently been judged a misinterpretation, by General Synod, the Lambeth Conference and the Primates' meting in Brazil, to name but three. Therefore the means to resolve, or at least to live with the tensions caused by, women's ordination cannot be used to solve our crisis. We therefore reject any model based on a process of reception, development, emergence, or of the provision of a Second Province, and the Commission should think beyond such suggestions.

18. For all that the traditionalist case has been on occasion overstated, misstated, or expressed unlovingly or untheologically, such should not be confused with the case in itself, nor have such occasions been the normal or desired self-expression of the case. We ask the Commission to avoid caricaturing both sides by their worst expressions (or by the other side's caricatures), but instead deal with them in their most consistent and authentic forms. This will inevitably mean that the traditionalist case is described as the overwhelmingly majority voice of Anglicanism, past and present, and indeed the overwhelmingly majority voice of Christianity, past and present. We do not discern the need for a new Word from God on this subject, as we do not find any theological confusion or pastoral inadequacy in the scriptural provision.

19. Finally, we submit that a proposal based on the loosening of provincial ties and giving greater autonomy will not work. It is necessary to recognize the theological and ecclesial maturity of churches across the communion, and that they are no longer client states, but the problem is too complex for that alone to be adequate. On one level, it is simply the issue of one Province or Diocese flouting of the mind of the Communion, but it is simultaneously the question of the responsibility of the wider Communion for those within that Province or Diocese who repudiate that flouting.

Proposal

20. Our suggestion is that there be a reversible suspension of representatives of ECUSA from being invited to the Lambeth Conference, the Primates meeting, ACC or indeed any event where the Archbishop of Canterbury is acting in the chair. A clear exception should be made for all those who have publicly distanced themselves from the consecration of Gene Robinson, and who can rightly claim to be in communion with the majority mind of the most recent Lambeth Conference.

21. At the same moment, there should be provision of sanctioned oversight for the marginalised orthodox, and it is necessary that such oversight should be provided without the primates feeling the necessity of obtaining the permission of the Province or Diocese in question. This action is legitimate precisely because the abuse of power that has led to this crisis is illegitimate, and Provincial or Diocesan consent is unnecessary, and to a great extent undesirable, because it serves to legitimate the abusers.

22. These sanctions should come from the Primates' meeting rather than residing in the office or person of the Archbishop, since mutual discipline is a collegial matter.

23. The Primates who meet to enact this should simultaneously discuss whether there are other Provinces or Dioceses where such oversight must also be needed, with particular reference to ACC, the Diocese of New Westminster and the Diocese of St Alban's.

24. The essentially reversible nature of this is a reflection of the theology of the discipline exercised in 2 Corinthians, where the final goal is neither marginalisation nor exclusion but reconciliation. The proximate means to full reconciliation, however, is neither dialogue nor creative tension but reversible expulsion. This is consistent with Paul's expressed goal of love (2 Cor 2:8) and avoids the divisive consequences either of disobediently refusing to confront error or of denying the salvific and reconciling goal of discipline.

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The Lambeth Commission on Communion - Documents

Drawing the Line

The following was submitted to the Lambeth Commission by:

The Rt Revd Mouneer Anis, Bishop of Egypt
The Rt Revd Wallace Benn, Bishop of Lewes & President of Church of England Evangelical Council
The Revd Mario Bergner, Redeemed Life Ministries
The Rt Revd Pete Broadbent, Bishop of Willesden
The Revd John Coles, Director, New Wine
The Rt Revd Dr. Michael Fape, Bishop of Remo, Nigeria
Dr Philip Giddings, Anglican Mainstream
The Rt Revd John W. Howe, Bishop of Central Florida, ECUSA
The Rt Revd Michael Kyomya, (Ph.D.) Bishop of Busoga, Church of Uganda
The Rt Revd Alpha Mohammed, Bishop of Rift Valley, Tanzania & Anglican Communion Institute
The Rt Revd Edward Muhima, Ph.D., Bishop of North Kigezi, Church of Uganda & Team Leader Director of African Evangelistic Enterprise in Uganda
The Revd Professor Stephen Noll, Vice-Chancellor, Uganda Christian University
The Revd Mike Parker, Scottish Episcopal Evangelical Fellowship
The Rt Revd Edward Salmon, Bishop of South Carolina, ECUSA & Anglican Communion Institute
The Revd Professor Christopher Seitz, President, Anglican Communion Institute
The Rt Revd James Stanton, Bishop of Dallas, ECUSA & Anglican Communion Institute
The Very Revd Philip Turner, retired Dean, Berkeley Divinity School at Yale & Anglican Communion Institute
The Revd Dr Chris Wright, Langham Partnership International
The Very Revd Dr Paul F.M. Zahl, Dean, Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry, USA

May integrity and uprightness protect us, because our hope is in you.

Redeem Israel, O God from all their troubles (Psa. 25:21-22).

We write as bishops and theologians within the Anglican Communion to the Lambeth Commission to express our thanks for the important work which you are doing on our behalf as you respond to the current crisis within the Communion. We hold you in our prayers as you work to clarify for us the nature of Anglican discipline and make proposals for a way forward which will maintain among us the highest level of communion. Such communion and godly unity is our desire also. Yet we need to express our grave concerns about possible outcomes that might shortly be proposed by the Commission.

- We write as persons convinced that the only way forward for the continuance of the Communion is for the Primates to exercise some form of discipline upon innovating provinces. The arguments for such a 'restorative' discipline, together with concrete suggestions for the shape of that discipline, have been given in

previous submissions. [1] We believe that the arguments in these submissions summarise well the concerns of the vast majority of Anglicans in the Communion, including much of the Two-Thirds World. For the present dispute does not derive from some conflict of local cultures, but is truly about right Christian teaching and common life understood in a 'catholic' sense (that is, throughout the world).

- There is, however, a danger that the voice of that vast majority may not be heard. We note that, while there have been some significant contributions from the Two-Thirds World, these are still few in number. This is surprising since (as Appendix 1 shows) the churches of the 'Global South' make up over well over half of the Anglican Communion. We know that the membership of the Commission is as representative as it can be, but we trust that it will not be misled by this 'accident' in its sources. Regrettably many in the Global South may find the methodology of such a Commission culturally alien and therefore be hesitant to contribute to this process. There would then be the danger that the important work that you are doing and which all of us support might be perceived as a bureaucratic discussion amongst those of us who live in the 'West'. Should this turn out to be the case, it would not be surprising if the Commission's advice and proposals were not heeded. We must emphasize that the churches of the 'Global South' have an important a voice and a strong intention which will be ignored at great cost. We trust that the Commission is fully apprised of this political reality and therefore of the inevitable consequences of failing to make recommendations that adequately reflect this.
- The argument for discipline is hard to refute. We trust that the Commission is now fully aware that the present crisis cannot be resolved through adopting a simple process of 'reception' (as with women's orders). For we have already entered an evident process of rejection, not reception. Primates and bishops throughout the Communion have therefore repeatedly urged for such discipline.[2] If this request is ignored, then plainly we have reached the end of the Anglican Communion in its present form. Indeed, given that many in the Global South have been asking for an even stronger response (namely 'repentance or complete expulsion'), it is clear that this category of 'restorative discipline' is the only viable middle-ground that might possibly preserve the Communion. Even then it will require persuasion *on both sides*: not only will innovating provinces need to accept its strictures, but Global South provinces will need convincing that it is a sufficient response and not a subtle means of evading or postponing the hard issues. For many provinces are set in contexts where this distinctively Christ-like concept of 'restorative discipline' (giving time for 'amendment of life' and upholding both truth and grace) would be dismissed as weak or erroneous. The key point remains, however: anything *less* than discipline is a non-starter.
- So our chief concern now is that the Commission might be tempted to seek to accommodate this call for 'discipline' by proposing instead some form of 'associate status' as an alternative to 'communion'. The argument here would be that, if the overwhelming majority of Anglicans are pressing for ECUSA and Canada to be 'disciplined' (as the only way of preserving the Communion), perhaps instead these two provinces (and any others that overturn biblical and traditional teaching on human sexuality) can be given an alternative status—a

'looser' relating to Canterbury. Some have spoken of an 'inner' and 'outer track', some of a 'federation'. In such a way it is hoped our present crisis can be side-stepped and the provinces of North America can avoid the painful 'loss of face' and legal vulnerability associated with being 'under discipline'.

- At first sight this may appear an attractive proposal, even (in a caricatured sense) very 'Anglican'—in its attempt to comprehend within a single institutional structure what appear to be logically irreconcilable positions. Within this proposal both 'sides' in the argument might be 'affirmed' in some way, and they might even learn to live alongside one another under some 'still-Anglican' umbrella. But the reality on the ground is quite different. This proposal is wrong in principle and unacceptable in practice.
- In Appendix 2 we list some of the reasons why this is so, which cover matters of theological principle, practical procedures and real politics. In many ways this 'federation' model, it will be noted, only pushes the problem down a level—from inter-provincial relations to those within provinces and dioceses. It does not actually resolve anything, but leaves the issue to worm its divisive way down into every layer of the Communion's life. Another concern is that, if there were ever occasions when the 'inner and outer tracks' were required to gather together, then this would place an intolerable strain on the consciences and patience of those who have consistently expressed their principled objection to revisionist teaching. Hence the insistence in various recent proposals that provinces 'under discipline' wouldnot be represented at the Primates Meeting and the Lambeth Conference.
- The key problem, however, is that those provinces of the Global South that have already declared a state of 'impaired communion' (as well as orthodox Christians and churches in the North) will not wish to be in some ambiguous kind of relationship with ECUSA and Canada. For the sake of their own mission (often in Muslim lands) there needs to be a clear and *publicly recognised distinction* between the continuing Anglican Communion and thoese provinces whose witness diverges from the Communion. In some instances this may be because Communion churches they do not wish to see their recent church growth compromised by association with unbiblical standards; in others (more soberly) because the very survival of any Anglican presence in their local context depends on this clear severance—it is, *too literally, a 'life and death' issue*. We urge you to note this key reality 'on the ground'. The provinces of North America must therefore be seen and known to be a quite separate church or denomination. This means that:
- They must not be able to use the label 'Anglican' in a way that identifies them as part of the Anglican Communion.
- Their relationship with Canterbury (if it is to continue at all) must be of a qualitatively different kind from that which Canterbury will maintain with (what will become) the continuing Communion. They would need to have a clearly 'diminished' status, the details of which would need to be worked out

The major point here is critical: *if there is to be no accepted discipline within the Communion, then there must be appropriate distance from the Communion.*

- It should also be noted that the 'federation' model is a proposal which necessarily signals the end of the Communion—a tacit acceptance that an irretrievable breakdown has occurred within our common life. It should also be quite plain which provinces are responsible for this dissolution of our Communion. Indeed it seems odd and even irresponsible that the Communion as whole should be being asked to reorient its common life in a fundamental manner around the actions of a few provinces bent upon such dissolution.
- If the 'federation' model were pursued, then orthodox provinces, we trust, would be clearly and securely within the continuing (though depleted and smaller) Communion—the 'inner track'. They would also, of course, keenly hope that they might continue to be in the same valued relationship with Canterbury that they have known up to this point. The problem with the 'federation' proposal arises when the status of the provinces in the 'outer track' needs to be defined. For if Canterbury sought to confer some legitimate 'Anglican' status upon these provinces, then many who have seen Canterbury as the focus of their Anglican unity and identity would find that relationship placed under intolerable strain. This awful possibility does not arise from any desire for independence but from a firm commitment to the Communion as it has been known and understood until now. Loyalty to Canterbury is (and always was) expressive of a loyalty to the biblical and apostolic faith as received and of which Canterbury is called to be steward and guardian. If Canterbury (as the effective 'gatherer' of the Communion) or the central Instruments of Unity should somehow attempt to compromise at this point, they must not be surprised at the principled resistance of those wishing to maintain an authentic biblical witness in our confused world. In any family, if the offending party refuses to be disciplined, then the alternative is polite removal from the family. And if they refuse to be removed, then the main family will itself need to consider other options, including relocation.
- These plain, perhaps even solemn, statements of the church-political realities at stake on this issue cannot be ignored. They also help then to clarify what the realistic and viable options are for the status of the provinces of North America: membership in the Communion (in conformity with its teaching), 'membership under discipline' or non-membership. There is no fourth category. Talk of 'federation' is effectively a device to open up such a new category. It is a new and ecclesially vague status, specially designed for these provinces so that they can *appear* to have been distanced and disciplined (to the supposed satisfaction of the orthodox) whilst conveniently retaining their Anglican status and their treasured links with Canterbury. But this is giving them the privileges of membership without any matching responsibilities (of conformity to the Communion's teaching). No institution can survive if it seeks to play such a game.
- In this submission we seek to make it quite clear that orthodox 'members' of the Communion will not accept such a compromising move there is no magical way to 'square the circle' and keep all current members of the Communion satisfied, despite the irreconcilability of their views. A 'compromise' in the direction of an inclusive federation.It may appear a brilliant device which magically 'squares the circle'—keeping everyone happy—but it is theologically wrong, morally questionable, ecclesiologically disastrous - and totally unworkable in practice.

Orthodox bishops will reserve the right to resist false teaching and to preserve a Communion that is essentially theological. A response that is primarily a matter of structural re-arrangement is doomed. So the Commission should be under no illusion that this might be a practicable solution. During the last 12 months we have seen people taking actions, despite warnings, who then claim to have been surprised by the storm they have created—as though this might then excuse them for their actions. We trust a similar blindness to clear consequences will not mark the final deliberations of the Commission.

- We therefore offer our own proposal of a way forward to the Commission. And we do so at this time as the gathered voice of a host of traditional Anglicans from around the world, standing in steadfast unity with our brothers and sisters in the Global South—indeed in the Communion as we have received it. We propose that the Commission recommend the Primates to act in some such way as this:

The Primates should address the House of Bishops (or specially convened General Convention or Synod) of the provinces of ECUSA and Canada with this *SOLEMN DECLARATION*, requiring a response within a set period:

In the light of your recent synodical decisions which have knowingly flouted Communion teaching on matters of human sexuality:

A) We hereby declare that your provinces have entered a period of restorative discipline, the purpose of which is to provide time for your reconciliation to the larger Communion and its teaching. This discipline will have implications for the presence of your representatives in the councils of the Communion and includes the adequate provision of episcopal oversight for clergy and congregations in your midst who wish to remain in communion with us. While this discipline is in force, there will be quite naturally an impairment of sacramental fellowship and a restriction on the interchangeability of ministries.

B) We hereby pronounce that this discipline will come into force with immediate effect for a setperiod lasting up to 2 years. It will only be rescinded during this time if your provinces publicly renounce your recent decisions and take practical steps to rescind your actions.

C) We hereby also give warning that, should you refuse to respond by renouncing these decisions during the set period (B) or even by refusing to accept the discipline imposed (A), then either of these two refusals will be taken as a clear and conscious signal that you yourselves are unwilling to continue as constituent members of the Anglican Communion. Instead we shall recognise that 'communion' to exist with those from among you who declare their commitment to our common teaching and life.

The rationale behind this declaration is that these provinces be presented with a clear and reasonable choice (as above), namely: full membership of the Communion (B), 'membership under discipline' for a set period (A) or non-membership (C). It closes the door on any fourth option, by clearly stating that the alternative to discipline is

distance: if they are not content with 'observer status' within the Communion, they shall have *no* status within the Communion. It also makes clear that they cannot remain forever in the 'disciplined' category (A) but must sooner or later either return to full Communion membership (B) or leave the Communion (C). This status of 'membership under discipline' is thus not to construed as a perennial condition, another 'vague' place where ambiguities can be left unresolved, but is precisely a purposive category which allows 'time for amendment of life' and/or for clear decisions to be made. Previous proposals for discipline, through not defining the real threat of non-membership, may have been insufficiently clear at this point and thus been liable to misinterpretation.

It may be that these provinces will wish to pursue the claim to be offering the Communion a 'prophetic' vision. Our argument is that, if so, then they must speak their voice 'from outside' the Communion's structures—so that we may 'test the spirits' and observe whether their prophetic stance is true or false. Should the provinces wish to pursue this 'prophetic' role (C), then:

- They would be required to reconstitute themselves, acknowledging that they are no longer 'Anglican', adopting some alternative denominational name, and rewriting their constitutions in a way that excludes their previous claim to be 'in communion with Canterbury'.
- After an agreed length of time there would be a review of their relationship with the Communion as a whole.

Meanwhile those bishops and congregations who continued to oppose the innovative teaching in sexual ethics would be duly recognised, legally and constitutionally, as the continuing expression of the Anglican Communion within these provinces—able to nominate their own 'presiding bishop' and other officers (to represent them in wider Communion affairs) and ensuring appropriate episcopal oversight for those within their province. We would trust that other matters (e.g. property matters governed by civil laws) would be amicably sorted out, according to the imperatives of the Gospel, in the light of these new constitutional arrangements.

- We see the above as a reasoned and reasonable proposal, which honestly acknowledges the depth of division that has now broken out within our Communion. Most importantly, however, it adequately does justice to the clear, principled and repeated concerns of the overwhelming majority of faithful Anglican Christians. Why do the majority have to be troubled for so many years by the insistence of such a tiny minority? How long can any institution—let alone the Church of Jesus Christ—continue in this indecisive manner, limping endlessly between two opinions? For How much longer can we see our financial and spiritual and material resources being haemorrhaged through incessant debate and acrimony on this point? For the sake of the Church and for our communion in Christ, the time has surely come for decisive action, for clear speaking and, if there is no change of heart, for a clean break. It is time to draw the line.

1 September 2004
Signed:
The Rt Revd Mouneer Anis, Bishop of Egypt
The Rt Revd Wallace Benn, Bishop of Lewes & President of Church of England Evangelical Council
The Revd Mario Bergner, Redeemed Life Ministries
The Rt Revd Pete Broadbent, Bishop of Willesden
The Revd John Coles, Director, New Wine
The Rt Revd Dr. Michael Fape, Bishop of Remo, Nigeria
Dr Philip Giddings, Anglican Mainstream
The Rt Revd John W. Howe, Bishop of Central Florida, ECUSA
The Rt Revd Michael Kyomya, (Ph.D.) Bishop of Busoga, Church of Uganda
The Rt Revd Alpha Mohammed, Bishop of Rift Valley, Tanzania & Anglican Communion Institute
The Rt Revd Edward Muhima, Ph.D., Bishop of North Kigezi, Church of Uganda
The Revd Professor Stephen Noll, Vice-Chancellor, Uganda Christian University
The Revd Mike Parker, Scottish Episcopal Evangelical Fellowship
The Rt Revd Edward Salmon, Bishop of South Carolina, ECUSA & Anglican Communion Institute
The Revd Professor Christopher Seitz, President, Anglican Communion Institute
The Rt Revd James Stanton, Bishop of Dallas, ECUSA & Anglican Communion Institute
The Very Revd Philip Turner, retired Dean, Berkeley Divinity School at Yale & Anglican Communion Institute
The Revd Dr Chris Wright, Langham Partnership International
The Very Revd Dr Paul F.M. Zahl, Dean, Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry, USA

Appendix 1

Some statistics of the Anglican Communion

The enormity of the problem facing the Anglican Communion should be plain from noting the responses made by other Anglican provinces to ECUSA's General Convention last August (with its resolution C-051) and then to the consecration of Gene Robinson in November.

Already by the end of January the Primates of 17 provinces had issued statements (using a variety of expressions) which confirmed that their province was now in some form of 'impaired communion' with ECUSA; they renounced those who had consented to Robinson's election and denied Robinson the status of a bishop within the Anglican Communion. Although, naturally, there were different assessments of what this 'impairment' might involve in practice, there should be no doubting the seriousness of these resolutions. On the contrary, the fact that these resolutions were passed during the period of 'restraint' requested by the Archbishop should instead give a clear signal of the greater potential for conflict that exists once that period of restraint has passed.

These provinces are highlighted in the following list in bold type. The statistics are revealing. The total number of Anglicans world-wide is estimated as 76.6 million. The

17 highlighted provinces (which we shall call Group A) represent just over half of that total, some 38,495,000 Anglicans worldwide.

Concerning Group B —that is, the other provinces who have not yet declared this 'impaired communion'—the following can be noted:

- The only non-'Western' provinces with a membership exceeding 100,000 in this category are: North India, Burundi, South Africa and Melanesia. Of these the first two have since met to express their disagreement. There have also been clear statements from diocesan bishops within South Africa in opposition to ECUSA's actions (e.g. the Bishops of Swaziland, Port Elizabeth and Christ the King), though their Primate has made more positive responses.
- The 'Western' provinces total 33,540,000. Of these, 26 million are listed as under the 'Church of England'—though, in fact, only some 1.2 million are regular communicants. When this discrepancy between nominal Anglicanism and actual church attendance is taken into consideration, the total of practising Anglicans in these Western provinces must realistically drop substantially, perhaps to between as few as 4 to 5 million. If allowance is made for this nominalism within 'Western' Anglicanism, it would mean that the overall total for Anglicans worldwide drops immediately to about 48 million. Of course, nominalism is not confined to the Western church. Yet if it is not so great in non-Western churches (with societies less afflicted by secularism), then the proportion of *practising* Anglicans world-wide who are in Group A is probably very much greater than the 50% cited above; they could well represent something more like 75% of the whole.
- Within the Western Church and Group B, there are many who wish to maintain traditional biblical sexual ethics, though their Primates have not announced any impaired communion as such. Recent statistics (see www.bsu.edu/web/dsumner) suggest, for example, that the bishops within ECUSA who opposed Robinson's consecration represent a third of all Episcopalians (735,000 out of a total of 2,223,000). Moreover, the dioceses of these 'non-consenting' bishops, when taken together, have slightly increased their membership since 1995, whilst the dioceses of 'consenting bishops', taken together have lost 101,711 baptized members (c.7% in 6 years).
- The contrasting size of dioceses should also be noted. In many provinces a diocesan bishop will represent more than a 100,000 baptized Anglicans (in Nigeria this figure rises to 227,000, in Uganda it is 280,000!). However, a diocesan bishop in ECUSA represents on average just 23,000 Anglicans. The bishop of New Hampshire represents even less—just 16,628 Anglicans.

This means that, if we work with the figure (above) of 76.6 million members of the Communion (whether practising or nominal), then the diocese at the centre of this present controversy represents less than one-fifth of one percent (0.21%) of Anglicans. Meanwhile ECUSA, in its entirety, is just 3.13% of the Communion, and Canada just 0.96%.

Given these figures, it is hardly surprising if those wishing to maintain biblical teaching on sexual ethics within the Anglican Communion have some major questions as to why

the very future of their historic Communion is being jeopardized by the wishes of such a miniscule minority.

Membership of the Anglican Communion

	Dioceses	Members
Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia	9	220,659
Australia	23	3,998,444
Bangladesh	2	12,500
Brazil	7	103,021
Burundi	5	425,000
Canada	29	740,262
***Central Africa**	12	600,000
Central American Region	5	13,409
Ceylon/Sri Lanka	1	52,500
***Congo**	**6**	**300,000**
Cuba	1	3,000
England	44	26,000,000
Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui	3	29,000
Indian Ocean	5	90,486
Ireland	12	*410,000
Japan	11	57,273
Jerusalem (Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East)	4	10,000
***Kenya**	28	2,500,000
Korea	3	14,558
Melanesia	8	163,884
Mexico	5	21,000
Myanmar	6	49,257
***Nigeria**	77	17,500,000
North India	26	1,250,000
Pakistan	8	800,000
Papua New Guinea	5	246,000
Philippines	5	118,187
***Rwanda**	9	1,000,000
Scotland	7	53,553
***South East Asia**	4	168,079
South India	21	2,000,000
Southern Africa	23	2,000,000
***Southern Cone of America**	7	22,490
***Sudan**	24	2,000,000
***Tanzania**	17	1,379,366
***Uganda**	28	8,000,000
United States of America	111	2,400,000
Wales	6	93,721
***West Africa**	12	1,000,000
***West Indies**	8	770,000
Bermuda	1	24,800
Lusitanian Church	1	5,000

Spanish Reformed Episcopal Church	1	5,000
Regions:43	**630**	**76,650,449**

Appendix 2

An Anglican 'Federation'—Somekey considerations

A. ANALYSIS OF THE TERM 'FEDERATION'

1. There has been some recent speculation that a form of 'federation' is a possible (and perhaps even the best) solution to the current crisis within the Anglican Communion. There is, however, little clarity as to what this means or what form any 'federation' would take. In terms of the government of states it has been both a way of increasing the power of the centre (as in the 1789 American Constitution replacing the Articles of Confederation) and a way of reducing it (as in the German Basic Law of 1949). It is noteworthy that the English term 'federalism' is avoided in debates within the European Union because of the ambiguity of its meaning.
2. In the current ecclesiastical context 'federation' is seen as particularly attractive by those wishing to emphasise 'provincial autonomy' and to see greater diversity and plurality within Anglicanism - especially over the pressing matters concerning sexuality.
3. This itself highlights one of the dangers in proposing significant structural reforms at this time: any changes are liable to be evaluated more for the way they to relate to the counsel of Lambeth I.10 within provinces, rather than on the grounds of their intrinsic merit.
4. Clearly, if by 'federation' all that is meant is a clearer *legal* definition of the Communion (in contrast to the current ambiguities of conventions, bonds of affection, mutual accountability and moral authority etc), then this is probably both inevitable and desirable.
5. Thus the proposals made by Norman Doe (to give some legal definition in each province's canon law to the limits of autonomy within communion and to the structures and disciplines of interdependence within inter-provincial relationships) are a helpful way of seeking to articulate current practice and so strengthen communion. Such proposals give greater clarity and legal force to existing conventions and should therefore not be seen as a move away from 'communion' towards a 'federation' model.
6. By contrast, the sort of 'federation' model generally implied is one that, far from giving greater force to the existing implicit understandings of the nature of communion, sets out to loosen those existing understandings. It would appear to treat existing provinces as independent governmental entities who may accept among themselves some limited extra-provincial structures of fellowship but which insist on maintaining significant independence from any accountability or responsibility to each other even while maintaining a shared Anglican identity.

There are a number of major difficulties arise with this model.

B. DIFFICULTIES AND DANGERS

Matters of Theological Principles

- 'Federation' appears to deny any significant sense of there being a concrete, visible witness to the 'one holy catholic and apostolic church'. This witness is currently evident in the existence and structures of the worldwide Communion with its 'mutual loyalty sustained through the common counsel of bishops in conference'.
- 'Federation' treats *provinces* (largely defined in terms of nations) as the primary locus of the church. It does so without any justification for this presumption or recognising any serious counterweight to national independence that would highlight the global *inter* dependence, unity and mission of the Church of Christ.
- 'Federation' seeks to define relationships between Anglican bodies in terms of a form of *legal/political* contract between self-governing national churches (which would presumably delineate legal powers and responsibilities). This contrasts with the more biblical pattern of organic thinking in terms of *familial/genetic* relationships developed over time (which pattern has historically marked the Communion).
- 'Federation' ignores the work of God in history in the creating, sustaining and developing of worldwide missionary Anglicanism. It therefore marks a radical departure from the traditional self-understanding of Anglicanism.

Matters of Process

- It is most unlikely that there could be agreement as to who would be eligible to *join* any new entity and what would *define* any new federation. For example, there are many who claim t o be Anglicans (such as CESA REC, AMIA) who are not currently part of the Communion yet who in the eyes of many would have more credibility to be members of an Anglican federation than ECUSA of the Anglican Church of Canada. Who would decide on membership?
- It is unlikely that there could be agreement on EITHER how powers should be divided between dioceses, provinces and extra-provincial/federation structures OR the duties and responsibilities expected towards other Anglicans within any federation. The current difficulties in these areas would remain.
- It is difficult to see how mutual recognition of orders or respect for jurisdictional integrity would have any place in a looser federation. Instead, a federation would likely entail acceptance of a widespread pattern of overlapping jurisdictions.
- At the heart of the current crisis is the conduct of certain dioceses and provinces which means that many of the traditional expectations of communion are no longer feasible (especially in such areas as mutual recognition of ministries and respect for jurisdiction of Communion bishops). The consequence is that EITHER the *membership* OR the *duties*of the Communion needs to be reconfigured. A 'federation' model does not resolve this but restates the problem in a new, less satisfactory way.

Matters of Politics

1. The Archbishop of Canterbury has repeatedly (and very recently) made clear that the Communion has not wanted to become a federation. So, for example, his July 2003 letter to the Primates states: "At our meeting in Brazil [May 2003 Primates' Meeting], the question was raised as to whether we really wanted to be a Communion, or just a federation of local churches; and the feeling of that meetings was very strongly that we wanted to be much more than a federation." Similarly, in his charge to the Lambeth Commission in February 2004 he stated that the primates "have repeatedly asserted that they wish to remain a Communion, rather than becoming a federation of churches." And in an interview with the London *Times* (May 26th 2004) he reaffirmed that "a Communion isn't just a kind of loose international federation"; "I do feel that federation (loose parallel processes) are less than what we've got, less than what we could have and, in the very long run, less than what God wants in the Church".
2. It is clear that the majority of Anglicans are in provinces that agree with this assessment and are eager for strong communion bonds rather than a looser federation. Were such a federation to be proposed they would EITHER not wish to join it OR would probably decide to create new structures of communion to run alongside it (replacing the current Communion, but maintaining the current expectations of mutual accountability). Federation is, therefore, a recipe for fragmentation and will not prevent major realignments.
3. Even in a 'federation' it appears clear that a majority of Anglicans wish to distinguish between those upholding orthodox Christian sexual ethics and those who have departed from them. For those committed to Lambeth I.10 there would have to be some form of clear structural asymmetry rather than equivalence between those taking different stances on this issue even in a looser 'federation'. In particular, it is unlikely that provinces in the Global South would allow the provinces of North America to retain the label 'Anglican', since they would insist on an appropriate distance between themselves and those provinces for the sake of their own mission and (in some cases) for their very survival.
4. Moving to a looser federation model at the international/provincial level will have effects within particular provinces. Parishes and/or dioceses who disagree with innovations within their provinces or neighbouring dioceses will seek to strengthen their bonds with those in other provinces at the expense of their unity within their own province.
5. In short, a loosening of bonds within the Communion by a move to a federation will lead to a loosening of bonds within certain provinces. This is certain to happen in North America and may well occur elsewhere, including in the provinces of Canterbury and York. Thus a looser federation may appear to offer a solution and less conflict at the international level. Yet, even it were to secure this (which is highly doubtful for the above reasons), it will simply push the difficulties to a lower level and lead to competing and rival Anglican structures within particular countries as churches seek to affiliate with alternative international Anglican structures that are part of the Federation and/or a newly focussed Communion.

C. A BETTER WAY

We thus favour a 'communion alternative', which retains the historic focus on the role of Canterbury, in the following way:

- Currently, and historically, a central defining feature of the current Communion is being in communion with the see of Canterbury.
- The nature of the current crisis can be seen, however, in legal terms in the following: ECUSA defines itself as 'a constituent member of the Anglican Communion, a Fellowship…of those duly constituted Dioceses, Provinces, and regional Churches in communion with the See of Canterbury' (Constitution Preamble); meanwhile the Anglican Church of Nigeria is in "communion with the See of Canterbury and with all Dioceses, Provinces and regional Churches which are in full Communion with the See of Canterbury" (Constitution I.III.1). This highlights that (given the current state of impaired communion between Nigeria and ECUSA) EITHER Canterbury must distance itself in some manner from ECUSA (or at least innovating dioceses within it) so it is not in 'full communion' with ECUSA OR the Nigerian church will have to redefine itself constitutionally. This will mean that its bonds of communion are no longer simply defined in relation to those in full communion with Canterbury through being part of the Anglican Communion. At this point there may be a strong temptation to establish new inter-provincial structures that will define the bonds of communion more clearly and which will bypass Canterbury.
- The heart of this problem, then, is that no clear statement has been made as to what is entailed or meant by being 'in (full) communion with the See of Canterbury'.
- One option is for the status of communion to be maintained during a period in which ECUSA is in a state of 'discipline within communion'. This situation, however, must have a *terminus* for discipline by which time either there is restoration to full communion or relationships of communion are formally ended (see Main Paper).
- During this time of discipline it would be possible for Canterbury to make clear what obligations are entailed by being in communion with the See of Canterbury and a constituent member of the Anglican Communion.
- These obligations could be expressed in terms of a Communion canon (such as proposed by Doe), the incorporation of which into the canon law of any province would be required if that province wished to keep its status of being in communion with Canterbury and retaining membership of the Communion.
- Any provinces that did not accept these responsibilities of mutual accountability and interdependence would, in effect, be reduced to some such category as 'ecumenical partners' (i.e. not in full communion with Canterbury and therefore no longer members of the Anglican Communion). This would necessarily entail ECUSA, for example, in then rewording its constitution (as quoted above in E.2) and relinquishing its status as the representative of the Anglican Communion within the United States.

[1] E.g. those submitted by the ACI and CEEC, available on the web respectively at: http://www.anglicancommunioninstitute.org/articles/Communion_and_Discipline.pdf and http://www.anglicancommunion.org/ecumenical/documents/pdfs.cfm?fname=200407ceec.

We also note the significant argument that Gene Robinson's consecration could be deemed invalid because it lacks 'catholic intention' (anglicancommunion.org/ecumenical/commissions/lambeth/ documents/200406dgecclesiology.pdf); also the paper by Dr Tim Bradshaw, revealing how the Anglican Church, in the light of the common sense English legal tradition of 'equity', does have principles and precedents which can be enacted in this present crisis (anglicancommunioninstitute.org/ articles/Equity_Freeing.htm).

[2] See e.g. *Steps of Discipline* (Nairobi, Sept 2003) and the Nairobi CAPA statement (April 2004); see

- http://www.ekk.org/articles.php?id=13&PHPSESSID=83a7916370a64ca68581f2882640ea30 for these and other statements from the 'Global South'.

[3]ECUSA, according to the preamble of its constitution, is a 'constituent member of the Anglican Communion, a Fellowship within the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, of those duly constituted Dioceses, Provinces, and regional Churches *in communion with the See of Canterbury*'. Meanwhile the first General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada made its solemn declaration that this Church is 'in *full communion with the Church of England* throughout the world'.

Fulcrum Submission to the Lambeth Commission on the Anglican Communion[1]

Key Questions 1 and 2: Implications of Recent Decisions? There are Limits to Mission Inculturation

The 'inculturation' of the Gospel is essential to its planting, growth and flourishing. The good news does need to be earthed deeply in local cultures, so that people feel at home and that they know that the good news comes from God, rather than from another country. However, there are key limits, and often these limits are best seen by outsiders.[2] In engaging with gay cultures in the USA and Canada, it is appropriate that Anglicans from other cultures, as well as those from these countries, question whether these recent decisions go beyond the limits of inculturation. We consider that they do.

Key Question 3: Autonomy and Communion? Interdependence not Independence

We agree with the analysis of Norman Doe in his recent article 'The Meaning of Autonomy'[3] that 'provincial autonomy', historically and canonically, does not mean that provinces may do whatever their wish irrespective of the expressed concerns of the Anglican Communion.[4]

Key Question 4: Relating without Full Communion? A Reduced Lambeth 2008

Meeting together is crucial and the cross involves sacrifice. Not all who meet together, however, should necessarily have voting rights. A series of gradations of discipline,[5] which could include 'observer status,' is now needed for those who defy the expressed concerns of the Anglican Communion. We strongly recommend that the Lambeth Conference in 2008 is held. If the South African location proves to be unacceptable to many bishops from the Global South, then another location in Africa, e.g. Nairobi, should be found. The conference should be smaller than that of 1998, with the ratio of bishops invited reflecting the number of Anglicans in each province. Gene Robinson, a particular focus of disunity, should not be amongst those invited nor any other practicing gay bishops subsequently consecrated.

Key Question 5 and 6: Communion within Individual Churches? Alternative Episcopal Oversight not Parallel Provinces

A separate province for 'conservatives' in ECUSA, or in the Church of England, is a retrograde concept and would lead away from a united church to parallel provinces. Parallel lines do not meet. We recommend, instead, 'Alternative Episcopal Oversight' which goes beyond the 'Delegated Episcopal Pastoral Oversight' offered currently by ECUSA in that ordinations would be included.

Key Questions 7 and 8: Canterbury Intervention? Appeal Court and Gradations of Discipline

Rather than a move to 'Curial Centrism' on the one hand or to a loose 'Federal Network' on the other, we recommend that the 'Communion' model be developed further.[6] In the search for an appropriate metaphor for intervention, we suggest 'healing the wounded body' as both biblical and organic. This would be in line with the document 'True Union in the Body'.[7] The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Primates should have an appeal court to consider particular cases, which could invoke gradations of discipline regarding invitations, and speaking and voting rights at meetings. Genocide in Ruanda, and human rights abuses in Zimbabwe are the sort of historical examples which could be considered as well as the recent actions of ECUSA and of the diocese of New Westminster.

Concluding Comments

We have kept the above submission deliberately short as requested. We attach an appendix of four key quotations by Adrian Hastings, Robert Runcie, Max Warren and Philip Jenkins, which have informed our thinking.

Fulcrum Leadership Team:
Revd Dr Francis Bridger (Chair), Canon Tim Dakin (Vice Chair), Dr Elaine Storkey (Vice Chair), Canon Dr Graham Kings (Theological Secretary), Revd Simon Cawdell, Revd Dr Andrew Goddard, Revd Elisabeth Goddard, Rod Green, John Martin, Revd Dr Ian Paul.

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[1] For details of Fulcrum: renewing the evangelical centre, including a short article by Graham Kings, 'Anglican Communion: Long Term Solutions not Dissolution', see www.fulcrum-anglican.org.uk

[2] It was considered by most members of the European Council of Churches that the Serbian Orthodox Church had gone beyond the limits of inculturation in giving backing to Serbian Nationalism in the campaign for 'Greater Serbia'. This resulted in the fragmentation of the former Yugoslavia and the Bosnian and Kosovo wars. See also the quotation by Philip Jenkins in our appendix.

[3] Norman Doe, a canon lawyer, is a member of the Lambeth Commission. 'The Meaning of Autonomy' may be seen on www.anglicancommunion.org/ecumenical/commissions/lambeth/documents/autonomy.pdf

[4] See also the quotations on 'autonomy' from Adrian Hastings and on 'interdependence' from Robert Runcie, in our appendix.

[5] The document, if not the non-organic metaphor, 'To Mend the Net' has many helpful insights, in particular its suggestion of a gradation of disciplines. Drexel W. Gomes and Maurice W. Sinclair (eds), *To Mend the Net: Anglican Faith and Order for Renewed Mission* (Carrollton: The Ekklesia Society, 2001).

[6] See the quotation on 'power' from Max Warren in our appendix and the perceptive article by Philip Turner 'Tolerable Diversity and Ecclesial Identity', *Journal for Anglican Studies* 1.2. Dec 2003, pp.24-46.

[7] For *True Union in the Body*, see www.anglicaninstitute.org/trueunion/true-union.pdf

Appendix
to Fulcrum Submission to the Lambeth Commission on the Anglican Communion

The following four quotations have informed our thinking for the submission:

1. Prof Adrian Hastings on Provinces Losing Some of Their 'Autonomy'

> Traditional Anglican theology placed almost all of its eggs in the bishop and the diocese. There was neither a theory nor a practice of the province and yet what has developed over the last century or so is a network of 'autonomous churches' or provinces, not of dioceses. While diocesan bishops certainly have authority, it has been cut down in a fairly unCyprianic way by the development of provincial authority. If dioceses lose a great deal of their autonomy by the development of provinces, it is certainly possible for provinces to lose some of theirs through the development of a genuinely interprovincial and international authority. Reluctance to take that step may reflect the innate nationalism of the Anglican tradition rather than anything genuinely theological.[1]

2. Dr Robert Runcie's Opening Sermon at the Lambeth Conference 1988[2]

> As you enter this cathedral, your eye is caught by its massive pillars. In their strength, they seem to stand on their own feet, symbols of strong foundations and sturdy independence. Yet their strength is an illusion. Look up and see the pillars converting into arches, which are upheld not by independence but through interdependence…
>
> Are we being called through events and their theological interpretation to move from independence to interdependence? If we answer yes, then we cannot dodge the question of how this is to be given 'flesh': how is our interdependence articulated and made effective; how is it to be structured? Without losing a proper – but perhaps modified – provincial autonomy, this will probably mean a critical examination of the notion of 'dispersed authority'. We need to have confidence that authority is not dispersed to the point of dissolution and ineffectiveness… Let me put it in starkly simple terms: do we really *want* unity within the Anglican Communion? Is our worldwide family of Christians worth bonding together? Or is our paramount concern the preservation of promotion of that particular expression of Anglicanism which has developed within the culture of our own province?… I believe we still need the Anglican Communion. But we have reached the stage in the Growth of the Communion when we must begin to make radical choices, or growth will imperceptibly turn to decay. I believe the choice between independence and interdependence, already set before us as a Communion in embryo twenty-five years ago, is quite simply the choice between unity or gradual fragmentation.' [3]

3. Canon Max Warren's Perspectives on Power and Unity

In his autobiography, Max Warren reflected in precise, incisive philosophical mode on the issues of unity and diversity. He had aptly headed his chapter on the ecumenical movement with a quotation from the poet, philosopher and theologian Samuel T. Coleridge: 'The individuality is most intense where the greatest dependence of the parts on the whole is combined with the greatest dependence of the whole on the parts':[4]

> The more I thought over this issue the more I am convinced that it was really bound up with how we envisage the dynamic character of society. If a society is to be genuinely dynamic then it must accept the inevitability of tension. But too much tension makes administration impossible. This means that a society like the Christian Church must make provision both for co-ordination of activity and for diffusion of power. How this is to be done is the great difficulty. At bottom it raises the whole issue of power. The desire to co-ordinate activity almost inevitably leads to the pursuit of power. Diffusion of power can degenerate into anarchy. I think that a possible solution can be worked out empirically, *not* theoretically, by drawing a distinction between organs of co-ordination and organs of voluntary action. Organs of co-ordination are necessary. Without them no community can exist beyond the smallest unit. But those who serve on these organs of co-ordination must be, in general, people whose 'bent' and 'spirit' drives them in the direction of co-ordination. It is an outlook on life which is a valid one and quite indispensable if the complexity of our world is to be brought under any effective control at all – if, theologically speaking, it is to be 'baptised into Christ'.
>
> On the other hand, organs of voluntary action must exist if there is to be spiritual experimentation and initiative. The complexity of our world needs not only the co-ordinating mind. It also needs the critical mind. The critic, by definition, is the agent of judgement. And by virtue of this role of judgement new experiments are initiated. These organs of voluntary action call for a rather different temperament and attitude.[5]

4. Dr Philip Jenkins on the Global South and North and Church Expectations

> I would make a caveat about what we might call the usefulness of the rising churches of the global South and their relevance to the ecclesiastical debates in the North. As I tried to argue repeatedly in the book,[6] the Southern churches will define themselves according to their own needs and interests. In understanding recent rhetorical uses of the Solid South – for instance, within the Anglican Communion – I describe what I call the "two dreams" that have dominated Western Christian approaches over the past half century or so. One is the Liberation Dream, the idea that the new Third World Christianity would deploy the radical texts of the biblical tradition in the service of insurgent liberation theology. The other is the Conservative Dream, the more modern idea that the conservative churches of the South would cling to fundamentalist readings of the Bible and help restrain liberal trends in the North, especially in matters of gender and sexual orientation. My argument is that both expectations, liberal and

conservative, are substantially wrong. Each in its different ways expects the Southern churches to reproduce Western obsessions and approaches, rather than evolving their own distinctive solutions to their own particular problems.

As an analogy, I like to imagine the situation in the eighth or ninth century in what was still, numerically and culturally, the Near Eastern heart of Christianity, in Syria or Mesopotamia. I imagine a meeting of church leaders who have gathered to hear a report from a traveler from a not so antique land, from the remote barbarian world of western Europe. The traveler delights his listeners by telling them of the many new conversions among the strange peoples of England and Germany, and the creation of whole new dioceses in the midst of the northern forests. Impatiently, the assembled hierarchs press him to answer the key question: this new Christianity coming into being, is it the Christianity of Edessa or of Damascus? How do they feel about the crucial issues of the day, about Monotheletism or Iconoclasm? When the traveler tells them, regretfully, that these issues really do not register in those parts of the world, where religious life has utterly different concerns and emphases, the Syrians are alarmed. Is this really a new Christianity, they ask, or is it some new syncretistic horror? How can anyone not be centrally concerned with these issues? Is not this what Christianity is all about? So Syrian Christianity carried on debating itself to exhaustion, while the new churches of Europe entered a great age of spiritual growth and intellectual endeavor.[7]

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[1] Adrian Hastings, 'Michael Ramsey, Donald Coggan and Robert Runcie' in Edward Carpenter, *Cantuar: The Archbishops in their Office with a new introduction and additional chapters by Adrian Hastings* (London: Mowbray, 1997), p. 543.
[2] Adrian Hastings commented that 'this was probably the most authoritative single piece of teaching [Runcie] ever developed.' ibid p 545.
[3] Hastings ibid pp. 544-5, citing Adrian Hastings, *Robert Runcie*, (London: Mowbray, 1991) pp. 154-5.
[4] Samuel T. Coleridge, *Hints Towards the Formation of a More Comprehensive Theory of Life* (London: John Churchill, 1848) cited in Warren, *Crowded Canvas: Some Experiences of a Life-time* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1974), p. 147.
[5] Warren, *Crowded Canvas*, p. 157.
[6] Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (Oxford: OUP, 2002).
[7] Philip Jenkins, 'After the Next Christendom.' *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, Vol. 28, No. 1 Jan 2004, pp. 20-22.

Called to Witness and Fellowship

This paper has been commissioned by Archbishop Drexel Gomez as a submission from the Global South to the Lambeth Commission and was produced in Nassau Bahamas May 31-June 3.

Church as Communion

1.The content and central emphasis of the biblical and apostolic faith we hold as Anglicans is that God desires that all people be reconciled to Him and be his friends. God longs for our salvation and the renewal of his creation. God's Son and our Saviour Jesus Christ broke the barrier of sin and opened up the possibility of divine-human reconciliation and friendship. This central truth has the most profound implications for the nature of mission, which involves reconciling people to God, as well as for the nature of the church, which involves the uniting of people to each other in a loving fellowship that is in fact a family brought into being by the Holy Spirit. In other words, the fellowship or communion among Christians is grounded in the self-giving life of the Blessed Trinity.[1]

Foundations

2. According to Scripture, true Christian fellowship grows out of a centring in the apostolic teaching and practice — from the sharing of the word, from corporate prayer and worship, from the breaking of bread, and in mutual service.[2] Our unity does not centre merely on liturgy or corporate worship but grows out of a common faith in the self-giving love of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. There is no foundation other than the foundation the apostles have already laid.

3. Far from being strange and new to Anglicanism, this biblical and apostolic emphasis is basic to it. For example, a primary canon of the Church of England places Scripture and obedience to it at the centre of the church's common life.[3] The will of God and the history of salvation are definitively read from Scripture, not merely from nature or human experience. Scripture is the foundational and ultimate authority for God's church.

4. Scripture teaches that humanity's relationship with God began in innocence but soon suffered brokenness and alienation. Because of the love of God, this relationship is restored through Christ's loving and obedient willingness to pay the price for human sin and take upon himself sinful humanity's fundamental alienation from God. God's work of salvation must be understood in Trinitarian terms: the love of the one God for the world is extended and realized in the world through the mutually reinforcing work of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The self-giving love of the Divine Persons is expressed in their relationship with each other. It is equally expressed in their sacrificial relationship

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[1] 2 Corinthians 5: 19; Ephesians 2: 11-22; 1 John 1:3
[2] Acts 2:42
[3] Canons of the Church of England

with the world.[4]

Order

5. The church not only teaches the mutual self-giving and relationality of the Trinitarian God as a matter of doctrine; the true church must reflect them in its practice and in the form of its common life. God by his nature is Three Persons in One God. The church by its nature is many members and one body. The Scriptures are replete with the theme and constant interplay of many local churches and members, on the one hand, and the universal church, on the other. Faithfulness to our biblical and apostolic inheritance and identity depends on the proper interrelationship of the local and the universal church.[5]

6. The universal church is from and of the local churches. The local church is the universal church in a particular place. However, this can be so only when any particular local church is in communion with other local churches that make up the universal church. In addition, this communion or mutual belonging depends on a shared commitment to right believing (biblical and apostolic doctrine), a shared commitment to right behavior (biblical and apostolic practice and church order), and a shared commitment to discipline when there are open and deliberate departures from right believing or right behavior.[6]

Development

7. This understanding of the nature of Anglican belief and communion is not merely traditionalist and antiquarian. Rather, it fully embraces the possibility and necessity of development in the church's life and teaching. From one generation to the next, and from one context to the next, the apostolic faith is constantly being shared, received, and shared again. New generations and contexts must not merely accept but inwardly receive, digest, and appropriate the apostolic faith, applying its transforming power to the totality of their situation. Some truths cannot be merely received. There has to be a fresh understanding and presentation of some truths, in part because of new knowledge and experience. The church is ancient but not a prisoner of antiquity. Impelled by God's love for humanity, and assisted by the Holy Spirit, we seek to present the Gospel in a way that communicates it in terms that are intelligible and compelling to our neighbors.

8. Yet such authentic and faithful development, grounded in Scripture as the chief touchstone, requires careful discernment, especially by those with particular responsibility for leadership in the church. John Henry Newman's tests of the authentic development of doctrine — such as vigor of the original idea, continuity of principles, and anticipation of the future — may be helpful. Less helpful is the frequently heard appeal to "Scripture, tradition, and reason" as the sum of Anglican method in this area. In fact, Article 20 of the Thirty-Nine Articles makes scripture central to discernment in the process of doctrinal development, not merely one of three co-equal criteria. In short, we

[4] Romans 8 1-8
[5] Ephesians 4: 4-16
[6] 1 Corinthians 5: 9-13

must connect the Gospel to each new situation but also re-hear and reaffirm the basic and unchanging call of Christ and His Word in that situation.

Crisis

9. There is a new dynamism in the Anglican Communion that is part of the worldwide resurgence of Christianity. Consequently, Anglicanism has never been more worldwide, more diverse, more ecumenical, and more extensive in its impact — in spite of scarce resources and inadequate structures. This portends a future for the worldwide Anglican Communion that is set to exceed the bounds of even the present remarkable expansion. Such a future should give us hope and encouragement as well as confronting us with challenges.

10. Against the background of this resurgence, we have nevertheless been made mindful of new and provocative developments in the Anglican Communion in the West that compel us to raise fundamental questions about the continued unity of the church. In that connection, we view with acute dismay the unilateral and divisive actions by the Episcopal Church of the USA, the Anglican Church of Canada and certain developments in the Church of England to adopt policies that threaten the whole of the worldwide Anglican family. We believe it is urgent to ask whether these actions and policies are a result of authentic development or whether they are departures from the apostolic witness to revealed truth that require discipline.

Discipline

11. We believe that it is clear that those responsible for these actions and policies have made little or no effort to show how they could be authentic developments of doctrine grounded in Scripture. Any claim for an authentic insight, personal or communal, drawn from experience or culture must be consonant with the revealed teaching of Scripture and with the sense of faith down the ages and across the world. We believe that these claims and actions involve public departures from both our common apostolic faith and our common apostolic practice including the proper ordering of our apostolic and catholic church.

12. In particular, we believe that the recent actions by the Episcopal Church of the USA and the Anglican Church of Canada attack the church’s witness to the Gospel and God’s gift of salvation in Jesus Christ. They confuse and divide the church at its most essential points — namely, in its witness to apostolic and catholic teaching, practice and structure. These departures are deliberate, public, and sustained despite opportunities for correction and repentance. As such they are so serious that they necessarily damage communion and fellowship and imperil people's spiritual health.

13. We are saddened to observe that by their deliberate, persistent and unilateral actions they have torn the fabric of our communion “at its deepest level”. They have rejected appeals to adhere to the common faith and practice — including the mutual charity — that bind the members of God’s family to each other and to God himself. In that sense,

the rupture or “realignment” of the Anglican Communion has occurred already. It is not an agenda or proposal to be implemented but a fait accompli that is now to be recognized. "The schismatic is the one who causes the separation, not the one who separates".

Pledge

14. The challenge is how to respond to this reality in full accordance with our apostolic and biblical faith. How should Anglicans who affirm the apostolic and biblical faith respond if the central structures of the Anglican Communion fail to respond biblically and apostolically to these actions — that is, through the exercise of appropriate discipline. Above all, the many who remain in the Anglican family and continue to pass on the apostolic faith in different contexts and cultures require support and encouragement. Indeed, as we have noted above, we have witnessed an extraordinary expansion and reinvigoration of the Anglican Communion across the world, for which we rejoice and give hearty thanks to God. Adequate structures will need to be developed to support the many parts of the Anglican family — the vast majority — who have remained faithful to Anglicanism as a valid expression of the church of the Apostles.

15. We call on those responsible for the instruments of unity of the Anglican Communion, such as the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Primates Meeting to respond biblically and apostolically to these actions through the full exercise of appropriate discipline. Failure of these instruments to act will call into question both their viability and legitimacy as instruments of Communion. We commend those who remain in the Anglican family and continue to pass on the apostolic faith in different contexts and cultures. We are aware that they require support and encouragement. We pledge ourselves to provide adequate care and oversight for all those in north and south who find themselves alienated and abandoned.

We endorse and attach the enclosed paper on "The Current Crisis in the Anglican Communion - what are the Ecclesiological Issues involved?" prepared by a group of eminent theologians in the Communion.

Signatories

Archbishop Drexel Gomez (West Indies)
Archbishop Bernard Malango (Central Africa)
Bishop Gideon Githiga (representing Archbishop Benjamin Nzimbi- Kenya)
Bishop Amos Madu (representing Archbishop Peter Akinola - Nigeria)
Archbishop Josiah Idowu Fearon (Kaduna, Nigeria)
Bishop Robert Duncan (Pittsburgh, USA)
Bishop Robinson Cavalcanti (Recife, Brazil - representing Latin America)
Bishop Michael Nazir Ali (Rochester, England)
Bishop James Stanton (Dallas, USA)
Professor Lamin Sanneh (Yale, USA)
Professor John Pobee (Ghana)
Canon Dr Vinay Samuel (India)

Canon Martyn Minns (USA)
Canon Bill Atwood (USA)
Canon Dr Chris Sugden (England)
Dr Timothy Shah (USA/India)
Mr Craig Nauta (USA)

SUMMARY ARGUMENT FROM THE IATDC's 'COMMUNION STUDY'

Anglicans value being part of a world Communion, but successive controversies have made it increasingly unclear what it is that they have in common. The contention of this document is that Anglican 'communion' will be maintained and nurtured, not just by preserving existing ecclesiastical structures but through a renewal of the theological tradition which brought the Communion into being.

A theological crisis

Previous Doctrine Commissions have begun this task. *The Virginia Report* (1998) especially developed the notion of *koinonia* as an analogy of the Trinity. For various reasons the argument which TVR presented has not yet been absorbed into the way members of the Anglican Communion think about their relationships with each other. Further consideration needs to be given to two key points of the case which was made: the adequacy of the theological analogy itself, and its connection to the treatment of Anglican institutional order which it presented.

Regrettably, it has been the institutional section of the report which has been given most attention so far. Now, with a potential failure of 'the instruments of communion' to deal with disputes over homosexuality (among other things), it would seem that a significant change in the institutional arrangements of the Anglican Communion is likely. Theology, not just organisational considerations, must guide responses to this changing situation.

The argument which is being developed by the present Commission now supplements the Trinitarian model of communion with increased attention to the Christological, Pneumatological and eschatological elements of God's work of redemption. It does this by grounding the actual experience of 'communion' in the promise of covenant-love reiterated throughout the Hebrew/Christian scriptures, and (taking one example) from the Epistle to the Ephesians, describes the task of maintaining unity in the Church between the act of reconciliation at the cross and a vision of all things being restored at the end of the age. Ecclesiologically, this offers a description of the church more ready to cope with the realities of struggle and growth, conflict and change in the life of the people of God. It was pointed out by the authors of *To Mend the Net* – among others – that too close an identification of the doctrine of the church with that of God in Trinity idealises institutional decisions made by particular ecclesial bodies. It runs the danger of confusing a theological *is* with an empirical *ought.* There is always a tendency for history to get lost in ideology, especially at times when the interpretation of a historical tradition is disputed.

Anglican ecclesiology has always been delineated in response to specific contingencies of history. It describes a theologically identifiable group of particular, regional churches which embody reformed, catholic faith, and trace their original existence and inspiration to the mission or ministry of the Church of England, or churches closely associated with it. The Anglican Communion developed as a fellowship of churches which recognised themselves in that description.

The diversity of cultures in which these churches are now found, and remoteness from the historical circumstances in which their fellowship was originally grounded, means that the tradition which drew them together in the first place is under severe strain, and at many points shows signs of breaking up. This situation is not only a result of particular ethical or doctrinal disputes, it also reflects major realignments which have taken place within world Christianity during the last decades of the twentieth century. The IATDC is undertaking a serious reflection on central elements of the Anglican tradition and the polarisation of opinion over key features within it. It especially notes changes which are taking place as a result of the shifting 'centre of gravity' in the Christian movement towards the global south.

The renewal of Anglican tradition

The Communion Study, the Four Key Questions circulated to every diocese and theological centre in the Communion, and ensuing debate on The Six Propositions which developed from this process have revealed deep divisions in approaches to many of the features which have traditionally held Anglicans together.

- **The centrality of Scripture** – the controlling place of scripture in the reasoned development of Anglican tradition is generally acknowledged, but the role of the Bible in determining the outcome of specific controversies is unclear. Through the twentieth century processes of rapid social change from pre- to post-modernity have meant that Christians in the same church now find they are living in different cultural worlds, and the ways in which scripture is utilised in each of them appears to be different as well. Yet during the last decade a renewed emphasis on the unity as well as the diversity of scripture means that listening to the Bible together can be a restorative as well as disturbing experience for the Christian community. Reading 'in communion' is not simply a matter of sharing a common lectionary! Cranmer's conviction that hearing scripture in the context of ordered worship permits (and indeed creates) an acceptable degree of diversity in the church is something that needs to be rediscovered at just the time when it is recognised that no contemporary 'Act of Uniformity' can achieve that end. Corporate reception of scripture is actually the way in which communion will be nurtured and sustained in the church, as well as described or defined as a theological concept.

- **Moral Theology** – Anglicans have repeatedly sought to link personal beliefs with public outcomes. Ongoing conversation (not always amicable) between church and state has been a feature of Anglican order from the earliest period of Christian faith and practice in Britain, but was exemplified in the seventeenth century by the way Richard Hooker sought to integrate the continuity of God's purposes with radically changed intellectual, social and political circumstances. The Anglican tradition has always seen theology as an agent of moral transformation, and ethical assertions as requiring theological validation. The gospel is seen essentially as it confronts personal and corporate sin. This tradition continues today with important Anglican contributions to thinking about international debt, justice and peace issues, and the HIV/AIDS pandemic. There is no reason why similar attention should not be given to issues of human sexuality, including homosexuality (which are intellectual, social and political as much as personal in origin) under the present circumstances in which the Communion finds itself. This will involve more than theoretical considerations. A holistic Anglican tradition will seek to combine the best elements of traditional moral philosophy with the practice of theological ethics, involving spiritual issues of vocation and discernment. This will need first, an appreciation of the interdependence of 'command ethics' and 'human flourishing' (the debate between so-called deontologists and consequentialists). Secondly, attention must be extended to the way in which innovations in Christian belief and practice can be understood, evaluated and judged within an Anglican fellowship. What is not possible is that the discussion of belief and practice, doctrine and ethics, should be carried on independently of each other.

- **Context and culture –** the historicity and particularity of Anglican understandings of the church means that it takes questions of context seriously. At its best – as in the 1978 Lambeth Conference treatment of 'inculturation' – context and culture are considered within the framework of catholicity. It involves a two-fold encounter, during which the church discovers something about its own inner reality as a community of the resurrection, and also discovers resources for attending to the needs of the world. Consequently Anglicans are always open to the possibilities of a 'local option' in the way they fulfil their calling, but will insist that the 'local' is held in a dialectic tension with

'universal' opinion, as far as that can be ascertained. This interplay between the one and the many follows directly from the theological model outlined earlier. Without it there is a further danger of confusing 'is' and 'ought'. It emphasises the way in which the grace of the covenant is constant, yet renewed, restored and realised throughout the pilgrimage of God's people as they move towards its completion. The once-for-all character of Christ's coming must be appropriated by succeeding generations in each and every place. On this understanding the dominant theme of inculturation is not the *incarnation* (as is often assumed) but an implication of the *Pentecost* experience – hearing about the scandalously particular works of God in the mother tongue of new converts, who are thereby incorporated into membership of a single multi-cultural and cross-generational community. On that basis it might be argued that the Anglican experience of companionship links, partnerships in mission, inter-Anglican networks and religious orders (not to mention the availability of cheap air travel and the Internet) can all act as significant 'instruments of communion', almost irrespective of more formal ecclesial structures. Indeed the consultative, 'bottom-up' methodology adopted by the IATDC study is beginning to offer theological articulation to new dimensions of *koinonia* which are emerging in the new world (and church)-order.

- **Limits of diversity —** the existence of covenantal religion requires decision-making. Throughout the biblical narrative and the history of the church, decisive choices have been made about significant issues of Christian faith, order and practice. Such a demand means that there is always a possibility of serious disagreement in the church. Some disputes are peripheral, and differences of opinion about them can be accepted relatively easily, but some are crucial – and must in due course be decided upon, if the church is to retain its unity, holiness and claim of catholicity. In times of controversy, vital questions arise about how to tell the difference between peripheral or local disputes, and those which are crucial, normative and universal?

  In the present debate on human sexuality many participants are looking for the a list of fundamental doctrines which guarantee Anglican identity, or a catalogue of acceptable practices, 'lines in the sand', which define the limits of Anglican fellowship.

  - The Commission is persuaded that the while numerous attempts have been made by Anglican theologians to identify core doctrine or fundamental articles, that quest has never been settled beyond dispute. In the present intellectual climate it is even clearer that such a strategy will conceal even more foundational problems of authority. Who decides the content and extent of such doctrines? And how could they be used to resolve contentious issues in the life of the Communion? One suggestive analogy has been offered: the Anglican understanding of the church is not that it is like a balloon which deflate (or explodes) once its fabric is in any way punctured, it is more like a bird's nest – which can consist of different numbers or arrangements of ecclesiological 'twigs' and still be fit for its purpose.
  - The latter quest, for issues that can be excluded by definition from Anglican fellowship, appears to contradict the unconditional nature of the covenant. It is not possible to exclude any area of human life or behaviour from theological scrutiny: any issue can become crucial for the maintenance of the church's faithfulness. The example of flags being displayed in the sanctuary of a church is an instructive case which has been considered by the Commission. Normally that would be regarded as a peripheral issue *(adiaphora)* – until such time as the flags bore a swastika and the churches concerned were in Nazi Germany. Some members have pointed to other situations when a flag can represent the threat of 'unopposed Empire' or xenophobic nationalism. Such examples illustrate the way in which previously unconsidered things, in a changed context, can present vital challenges to Christian confession. Key questions for the church's faithfulness today have to do with human sexual activity, that of hetero- as well as homosexual orientation.

Despite its reluctance, *a priori*, to exclude any opinion or practice, Anglicanism is not in principle unable or unwilling to make costly decisions. Indeed decisive points in the establishment of Anglican 'communion' presume that the discernment of God's will and purposes is a constant and ongoing process. Thus the Lambeth Quadrilateral does not (as it is sometimes erroneously supposed) define the boundaries of Anglican fellowship, but it does commits Anglicanism to a series of normative practices: scripture is *read*, tradition *received*, sacramental worship is *offered*, and the historic character of apostolic leadership is *retained*. From this interplay the Anglican community is nurtured and sustained. Anglicans may be willing to extend the benefit of the doubt to disputed opinions, but only while genuine doubt remains. From such patient but determined approaches to resolving internal disputes, *The Virginia Report* derived a doctrine of 'reception'. Like Newman's idea of 'development', this notion cannot be limited to bureaucratic procedures, but is related more to the growth and vitality (even the survival) of the church. The one thing that Anglicans cannot permit in times of controversy, is for disputants to refuse to allow their opinion to be submitted to theological scrutiny. This means that those involved in disputes must not only listen to each other, but also attend to the wisdom of the wider Christian community.

- **Accountability and competence –** but who are the scrutineers? The Commission has already advocated the importance of mutual accountability *(paraklesis)* for the maintenance of communion in the church. This involves comfort, encouragement, exhortation and direction, as well as the word into which it is usually translated, 'admonition'. It is something which should function at every level of church life, and there seems no reason why, in a fellowship of autonomous churches, such accountability should not be exercised between as well as within each of them. To the question of competence we have introduced the criteria of intensity, substance and extent: the more these characteristics feature in a controversy, the wider the scope for a ministry of mutual admonition. It is held that the current dispute deserves consideration at the level of the relationship between Provinces, at present embodied in the Primates' Meeting.
  It must be clear that this is not to be seen as a bureaucratic or merely organisational response to resolving disputes. The process is theological throughout, and the 'admonition' should not be seen as a matter of institutional censure, but corporate submission to the gospel, in the pursuit of a common mind.

  For various reasons, some participants in the present debates seem intent on reducing the Communion into something more like a confederation – becoming 'cousins, not brothers and sisters'. Politically, this appears to amount to a refusal to accept the possibility of external criticism; theologically, it dilutes Anglican fellowship from something grounded in covenant love, to a matter of administrative convenience.

- **Structures for communion –** for Anglican unity to be maintained in this way, it will be necessary to overcome deep seated suspicions about centralising power in the Communion. *The Virginia Report* pointed to the need for greater clarity in the relationship between the instruments of communion. This can be achieved by clearly differentiating the roles of Lambeth Conference, Anglican Consultative Council and Primates' Meeting as aspects of (respectively) collegial, communal and personal authority in the church. The Archbishop of Canterbury holds the unique office of gathering the Communion in its representative parts, and speaking for it while consensus is achieved. If it is urged that an 'enhanced role' be adopted by the Primates (a proposal which the IATDC has supported under certain circumstances) then this must be paralleled in additional responsibilities undertaken by each of the other instruments as well. What is essential is that the different charisms of guidance and discernment exercised by each of the instruments must deliberately and consistently act together. Too often meetings of the decision-making bodies appear, to outsiders, to be pre-occupied with their own, apparently unrelated, programme objectives; at worst, they may seem intent on merely

winning time, in the hope that seemingly intractable problems will go away. Mutual accountability and communication are needed for communion to function. The working of the whole body must amount to more than the sum of its separate parts. The purpose of 'dispersed authority' is to draw to itself the *consensus fidelium.*

Changing patterns of *koinonia*

It is much to be hoped that the Lambeth Commission, chaired by Archbishop Eames, will be successful in finding institutional or canonical ways to hold the Communion together at this time, even while significant differences over homosexuality exist within and between its churches. If that is possible, the future stability of that agreement will depend even more on a deepened sense of commonality, and this can only come from a theological renewal of the Anglican tradition, associated with the elements outlined above.

Part of the difficulty in sustaining that vision is derived from hierarchical views of power and authority, so prominent in social, managerial and political life, which are pressed on the decision-making bodies – both by an uncomprehending media, and by knowing manipulators of arguments within the church itself. An emphasis on covenant, Christology and the work of the Spirit seeks a different frame of reference. Attention is drawn to the classic discussions of the Anglican Communion at the 1920 and 1930 Lambeth Conferences. In the second of these, two prevailing types of ecclesiastical organisation were described: 'that of centralised government, and that of regional autonomy within one fellowship'. It is the latter form which Anglicans share with Orthodox Churches and others. Self-governing churches of the Communion grew up 'freely, in their own soil'. Even then the term 'Anglican' did not hold racial or geographical connections but was grounded in 'the doctrines and ideals for which the Church of England has always stood'. The radical implications of this self-understanding need to be re-appropriated for an affirmation of Catholicity (and the claim to catholicity by a sub-tradition of Christianity) in the post-modern dilemma in which Anglicanism now finds itself.

It is for historical reasons, the formative experiences of the Church of England, rather than institutional order that 'communion with the See of Canterbury' is significant for Anglican provinces today. Attention to this history, with its associated doctrines and ideals, along with a re-consideration of the comparison drawn from Orthodox ideas of autocephalicity and communion, informs the IATDC's thinking at this stage of its study. Orthodoxy offers a way of deepening understanding of what Anglicans have learned to call, somewhat unsatisfactorily, 'impaired communion'. Theological tradition, Orthodoxy, not any form of institutional unity is what gives the Eastern churches their identity. Orthodox churches can be notably contentious. Severed relationships and even an excommunication of the Oecumenical Patriarch – Orthodoxy's first among equals – have all been known in recent years. Yet the impulse towards unity within the tradition also holds out the possibility of the restoration of communion after a period in which it has been breached. It is the existence or non-existence of communion which is crucial for Anglicans. More is involved that establishing minimal conditions for a fraternal relationship.

'The highest possible degree of communion'?

While the rhetoric of schism should be avoided during the present tensions, the possibility of serious disruption to the Anglican Communion has to be contemplated. The existing 'instruments of unity' are capable of theological (not just managerial) development and as such should be utilised more effectively to address questions about legitimate diversity. But if there is not the time or *will* to achieve this, it appears that Anglicans will become increasingly marginalised and fragmented as a movement within world-Christianity.

Even if the worst fears of Anglicans who value their fellowship and solidarity are realised, the Anglican tradition will not disappear. Communion functions at a number of different levels. The IATDC has identified theology, canon law, history and culture, communication, and voluntary commitment rather than coercion, as essential aspects of communion. Yet real communion can exist in many of the elements separately. The Commission is persuaded that 'thick' ecclesiology, concrete experience of the reconciling and healing work of God in Christ, should take priority over 'thin', abstract and idealised descriptions of the church. Communion 'from below', is real communion – arguably the most vital aspect of *koinonia* with God and neighbour, and it is from 'below' that the Commission has worked in its conversations with the churches, and in the theological construction it is developing now.

What is needed next is a clearer understanding of how these different aspects of communion exist at different levels or horizons of the church's experience. The obligation to seek 'the highest degree of communion possible' within the Church is a laudable ambition, a vocation even. Yet without specifying what sort of communion is anticipated for congregational, local, regional or global fellowship, the terminology can be used merely to justify higher level organisational arrangements without ever analysing how they contribute to communion itself.

If Anglican fellowship at the level of shared doctrines and ideals or common participation in mission is unable to sustain the support of coherent, structural communion 'from above', then it will be a weaker and more fragile thing as a global fellowship than might otherwise have been the case. In the light of the gospel weak and fragile things are not to be despised. But the Anglican theological tradition cannot be content with any claim to communion which separates the gospel of Christ from the reality of his Church.

Summary recommendations

1. The nature and maintenance of communion between Anglican churches is primarily theological rather than organisational in character.
2. Concentration on the Anglican theological tradition should be the strategic priority in the present situation in which the Anglican Communion finds itself.
3. Serious attention needs to be given to the way in which the traditional 'instruments of communion' act together and are mutually accountable to each other.
4. The consultative, 'bottom up' method of the IATDC's study should be extended for its 'communion building' potential to other Anglican institutions – especially in relation to the Primates' theological education initiative, IASCOME's 'Communion in Mission' project, missiological and companionship links between Anglican churches, and other ecumenical relationships and theological studies.
5. The IATDC report to be completed in 2006 will include recommendations for its promulgation and implementation. It should be incorporated in preparations for the 2008 Anglican Gathering and Lambeth Conference including, at the Archbishop of Canterbury's suggestion, a formal relationship with the design group for those meetings.

This document represents a statement of progress on the IATDC's Communion Study. It was originally intended as a working paper to assist the production of an Interim Report at the meeting of the Commission which had been anticipated in 2004. It has been reworked after circulation among members of the IATDC as a basis for further consultation, conversation with the LCC, and probably, more widely throughout the Communion.

Dr Katherine Grieb, as a theologian in the US in the present context, dissents from one example given: "In my view the question of the display of national flags is the exact opposite of 'adiaphora' since in Paul's language 'the truth of the gospel' is at stake". Otherwise she supports this working document.

The Lambeth Commission on Communion - Documents

Press Release – 1 July 2004

On the eve of the installation of the Very Revd Jeffrey John as Dean of St Albans the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement have issued the following open letter.

An appeal to the Bishops of the West supporting the Bishops of the Global South.

1 July 2004

Fathers in God,

The majority of homosexual people in the world are not engaged in the present dispute over the ordination of lesbian and gay Christians.

They live in some 80 countries which persecute LGBT people through their penal codes with punishments ranging from death to mutilation and imprisonment.

For these millions, mostly in the Global South, preserving their life and liberty is their daily concern and it is on their behalf we now appeal to you for help.

You have a unique position to help homosexual people. Few, if any of you, would advocate these terrible punishments in your own countries, and we ask you to use your influence to persuade your brother bishops to help remedy these injustices in their homelands.

Canon Gregory Cameron recently informed the Canadian Church Synod that Christians in the Global South had come under attack merely by being associated with the inclusive Canons and actions of ECUSA. This violence is deplorable, but it is only a shadow of the life-threatening violence LGBT people experience in those same communities where homophobia is public policy and sadly, often supported by religious leaders.

Situations such as this are fraught with danger, the spiral of violence and hatred towards homosexuals easily escalates. Because people fear "guilt by association" they try to demonstrate their position by ever increasing homophobic comments and actions. In fear of their own lives they can find themselves driven to extreme acts to demonstrate they are not "tainted". The murderous consequence of this to homosexuals are obvious - and a present reality.

Unguarded remarks from some Global South bishops who have said LGBT people are "dogs" or "worse than beasts", inflame an already explosive situation. In many places homosexuals are seen as "sub-human" and killing them is seen as a purifying act. In some cultures new popular songs encourage the murder of homosexuals.

Historically homosexuals have been invisible victims, along with those with learning difficulties, mental illness and the chronically sick elderly, we have been amongst the

first to be swept away in times when democracy is weak or totalitarian regimes hold sway. We have also been among the last to see our persecution acknowledged and our liberties restored.

LGBT people often hear from Christians that they themselves are loved, it is only their sinful sexual practice that is at fault. They are asking you now to show that love in a practical and positive way to stop their suffering.

Through your support for the Global South you have an influence that could save many lives. To do nothing is to be complicit in these crimes against humanity.

Yours,

Richard Kirker Revd
General Secretary of the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement

A list of some countries and maximum penalties follows:
Nigeria - 14yrs prison
Jamaica - 10 yrs prison
Sudan - death
Kenya - 14 yrs prison
Uganda - Life in prison
Tanzania - 14 yrs in prison
South India - Life in Prison
Pakistan - 100 lashes/death
Bangladesh - Life in prison
North India - Life in Prison
Ceylon - 10 years in Prison
Botswana - 10 yrs in Prison
Mozambique - 3 years hard labour
In many other countries homosexuality is illegal but the codes do not set a tariff leaving it to the local courts to decide.

(Individual copies of this letter have been sent to :1. those bishops in England who opposed The Very Revd Jeffrey John's nomination as a bishop;2. the bishop of Pittsburgh and the other bishops in the USA who have combined in opposition to the ordination of Bishop Gene Robinson; 3. the Primate of New Zealand; 4. the archbishop of Sydney.)

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A membership based international ecumenical organisation open to all irrespective of sexual orientation challenging homophobia in the Churches and other Christian communities.

We offer support, counselling, publications, groups, conferences and networking opportunities focussed on creating an inclusive Church and welcoming congregations.

Registered Charity No 1048842

LGCM Submission to the Anglican International Commission

Summary
LGCM affirms the process for an Anglican *ius commune,* which aims at bringing parity in addressing significant communion matters. Far from being restrictive it allows for legitimate dissent within a canonical framework that recognises diversity but affirms the difference between **general** and **specific** issues of authority.[i] The issue is the nature of Law in the Communion and the place of doctrinal development and legitimate boundaries for dissent. Here a parallel may be draw between a Roman Catholic approach to Definitive and Non Definitive Doctrine.
This approach recognises that we can live together with our differences where validation is developed retrospectively through the ***census fidelium*** and the ***doctrine of reception***. We argue that there is an authentic way for expressing theological development, which respects differences, in a canonical framework that provides for permissive forms of dissent that is consistent with the present custom of Anglican ecclesiology.

Sources of Canonical Development

All authority is derived from God, the Holy Trinity,[ii] and uniquely encountered in Jesus Christ.[iii] Within an understanding of dispersed authority, order is facilitated, first, through two approaches.[iv1] Such a structure will always involve tension in any decision making process. The Lambeth Conference has made a statement on same sex relationships; which is of a persuasive moral authority as indicated by the continuing debate in 'Some issues in human sexuality.'[v] This concept of tension/anomalies is also explores by David Trustin, in relation to the dialogues between Anglicans and Lutherans.[vi] He argues for the legitimate right for tailor-made solutions to each local context, whist keeping an eye on 'basic general principles.'

Legitimate Development

Within the context of a Trinitarian dymanic of interrelated love expressed in mutuality and complimentarity, we argue for a broader orthodoxy. The nature of development, like the Reformation, is that it does not initially obtain universal consensus. Moore ably maps out this area.[vii] Within first and second order issue of doctrine, ethical issues are seen as not being timeless but related to a cultural context. This in turn is related upon our timeless understanding of God in Trinity. The *Kuala Lumpur Statement* is wrong in seeing sexuality as a first order principle. The litmus test for Orthodoxy does not lye in biblical fundamentalism that sees itself as a narrow stream, but a broad river. Here Baum proposes a five point approach to legitimate development where there is a creative cognitive dissonance between doctrine and love. This is an active process that leads to a synthesis that overcomes contradiction and doesn't reject an interactive scriptural authority, interpreted by such guiding principles as the Summary of the Law, Beatitudes and the creeds.[viii]

A legitimate course of action has been taken, when a member Church of the Communion abides by Official (Definitive) forms of Anglican teaching and exercises their own canonical norms for doctrinal development. This does not invalidate either their Sacramental orders or inclusion in the Anglican Communion.[ix] Historically this is evidenced in both the Ordination of women to both the Presbyterate and Episcopate. Furthermore inclusion in the world wide Anglican Communion has never been dependent upon a universal recognition by all member churches but only by invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury. To date only the North American Anglican church is not in Communion with Canterbury.

Legitimate Dissent

It is possible to have permissible legitimate dissent in world wide Anglicanism, if a member church undertakes this mindful of both Official teaching and due canonical process of law making. Comparisons with the RC 1983 Code of Canon Law are helpful. There are levels of *public dissent,* to non-definitive doctrine where there are persuasive or sufficient reasons (*ratio).*[x] The Anglican principle of *gravamina* (serious argument*)* reflects this.[xi] A fuller development of this area is given in *A Canonical Understanding of Dissent.* [xii] Where member churches of the Anglican Communion obey all canonical norms in relation to both process and Definitive and Non Definitive matters, there must be an implied right of dissent from issues that are pan Anglican. The only possible exception could be where the particular churches tie them to the definitive interpretation of Canterbury.

The Rev. Canon Derek G Belcher

End notes

[i] Paul Avis Authority, Leadership and Conflict in the Church (1992) p.7.
[ii]Lambeth Conference, *Report*, Part II, (1948) p.84.
[iii] K. Rayner 'By What Authority? A Reply', *Theology*, January 1987. p.8.
[iv] First, the episcopate and synodical government of clergy and laity. Here the individual autonomy of member churches of the Anglican Communion are bound together by their commitment to the Lambeth Quadrilateral.(*Lambeth Conference of 1888*, Resolution II) Secondly, by many voices of authority from each member of the Anglican Communion.(S. Sykes *Authority in the Church of England, in* R. Jeffrey (ed) *By What Authority* (London & Oxford, Mowbray 1987)). The 1948 Lambeth Conference saw Definitive or Official teaching as distributed between Scripture, Tradition (Ancient Teaching); 1662 BCP, the witness of the Saints and the Consensus Fidelium and the Lambeth Quadrilateral. Non Definitive Doctrine is of a persuasive authority mediated through Lambeth Conferences, Synodical Government and the work of Doctrine Commissions
[v] *Lambeth Conference* 1998- Resolution calling homosexual sex "incompatible with Scripture."; *Some issues in human sexuality guide to the debate* (CIO 2003)
[vi] David Trustin *Anglicans and Lutherans move from Dialogue to Shared Mission*, Martin Memorial Lectures May 2001, College of Emmanuel & St. Chad, Saskatoon.
[vii] Gareth Moore OP *A Question of Truth, Christianity and Homosexuality* (Continuum 2003)
[viii]See Michael Ingham, Conference Address *Reclaiming Christian Orthodoxy* (Accessed 2003 www.lgcm.org.uk/Halfway To Lambeth/Speeches/Ingham.htm.)
[ix] *39 Articles of Religion.* (BCP 1662), Article 26.
[x] Sullivan F.A SJ 'The Response due to Non-Definitive exercise of Magesterium, Canon 752' 23 *Studia Canonica*(1989) 267.; Doe N. 'Obedience to Doctrine in Canon Law: The Legal Duty of Intellectual Assent' *Denning Law Journal*; Shafer I.H. *Dissent and Dialogue in the Church* (Association for the Rights of Catholics in the Church Web Site, 1996)
[xi]Church of England: Canon H1 s3, s4.
[xii] Derek Belcher *A Canonical Understanding of Dissent*, A short paper outlining some comparisons between the Roman Catholic Church and The Church of England. 2004.

March 2004

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Submission from the Modern Churchpeople's Union to the Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission

From the Modern Churchpeople's Union, 20 July 2004

The Modern Churchpeople's Union believes it would be a major error to apply any sanctions with respect to the appointment of a gay bishop or the approval of same-sex marriages.

We concur with the view, already expressed in other submissions, that the Anglican view of authority is best described as a balance between Scripture, reason and tradition. The MCU was founded in 1898 largely to defend this theological tradition, and has now had just over a century's experience of promoting it in debates over a wide variety of issues.

In our experience the value of this approach has been proved in the way contentious issues have, in fact, been resolved. Time after time, when new ideas have been promoted, their opponents have appealed to biblical proof texts or elements of the church's tradition in order to defend the status quo. Far from being sufficient to conclude the debate, however, these appeals have contributed to it, alongside other considerations such as new knowledge and concern for human well-being. Satisfactory resolutions have, in practice, resulted from periods of open debate in which different sources of authority are compared and weighed.

Examples are numerous. When the MCU was founded the dominant issues were the theory of evolution and literary-historical studies of the bible. Since then many of our members have taken leading roles in a variety of debates including women in the ordained ministry, remarriage after divorce, capital punishment and contraception. In each of these issues the majority Anglican view has changed. In each case the process of change took time. The time was made available because church members, including bishops, had the freedom to express views at variance with the inherited position. Nor is this true only of the twentieth century; further back in time one might instance the debate about the slave trade, where again supporters of the status quo had biblical texts on their side but nevertheless a Christian consensus against it emerged.

We believe that this granting of time and freedom, within which a consensus can slowly arise or change, is justified by the Anglican understanding of authority. Central to the traditional balance of Scripture, reason and tradition is the recognition that no single authority is infallible and we therefore need them all to balance each other. This makes Anglican theology *open*, in the sense that every age has the potential to discover new insights. The methodology is inductive rather than deductive; absolute certainty is not given to us, so theological reflection should be done with humility and creativity. Within the church divergent voices need to be heard, or our ears will be blocked; churches at their best are *inclusive*.

We recognize that many are attracted by a contrasting approach which appeals to a single source of authority and employs deductive processes to establish doctrines. Such an approach offers a greater sense of certainty and is *closed* in the sense that it provides no place for new insights. However, churches in this tradition characteristically become *exclusive* by, for example, excluding from teaching or leadership roles those who deviate from their inherited teaching. When such exclusions fail to resolve differences of opinion, the history of modern western Christianity illustrates all too amply how easily splits occur and sectarianism develops. We would not wish this to be the fate of Anglicanism.

The view that the Communion should refuse to acknowledge Bishop Robinson's status as a bishop, because his stance disagrees with inherited Anglican teaching, implies that currently inherited doctrine is the only legitimate position and that diversity of opinion among the Communion's leadership is not acceptable. We understand this to be an example of an *exclusive* ecclesiology based on a *closed* theology, and therefore inappropriate to Anglicanism. To impose sanctions on ECUSA, or Bishop Robinson, or priests who wish to be open about their gay or lesbian sexualities, would suppress the debate and constitute a major change in Anglicanism's decision-making processes.

We see no reason why Anglicanism should not remain united while disagreeing about the ethics of homosexuality. However, it cannot remain united if there is no consensus about how to make decisions. Anglicanism's traditional balance of Scripture, reason and tradition, with its openness and inclusivity, has enabled it to manage change creatively and consensually, and needs to be protected.

We therefore propose that the current public debate should be allowed to take its course without any sanctions against those who disagree with the traditional view.

The signatories

Members of MCU Council

Jonathan Clatworthy
Joan Dorrell
Rosalind Lund
Clare Nicholson
Gill Cooke
Patrick Lewin
Pat Boyd
Elizabeth Darlington
John Goldsmith
Will Baynes
Pam Freeman
Mary Roe
Nick Henderson

MCU Conference attenders

Dorrie Johnson
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Alan Sheard
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Graham Johnson
Paul Brett
C Gibbs
Anne Lindsay
Donald Barnes
Lindy Taylor
Ann Watts
Bob Torrens
Marianne Atkinson
Jonathan Robinson
William Frend
Leslie Wilman

The Lambeth Commission on Communion - Documents

Submission from the Central Trustees of the Worldwide Mothers'Union

The Mothers' Union (MU) has more than 3.5 million members in 75 countries world wide. The MU shares the struggles of the wider Anglican Communion as it seeks to reconcile ecclesial authority and collective responsibility with local autonomy and pastoral care and outreach. The MU supports fully the aim of this Lambeth Commission on Communion in finding new ways forward from within the Anglican Communion.

The Trustees of the Mothers' Union believe that the phrase "diversity within unity" can only be realistic if the values that unite us are greater than the issues that drive us apart. There is much diversity in the way that the MU functions world wide, including flexibility in criteria for membership and appointing of leaders. The overarching value that unites us is belief in, and support of, Christian marriage and family life world wide, as a means of mission in our world.

We are well aware that it is not the brief of the Lambeth Commission to address human sexuality directly, but it is this issue that has precipitated the current difficulties in the Communion and led us in the MU to consider how we too should address this issue. A previous Trustee Board had directly affirmed the 1998 Lambeth Resolution in respect of human sexuality. The current Trustees recognised that a new, wider and more compre-hensive approach was essential if the MU was to resource its world wide membership in empowering and enabling members to take a proper place in the debates within the Anglican Communion.

Three years ago, the Board of Trustees mandated the Prayer & Spirituality Unit (P&S) to begin researching sexuality issues as a result of a local pastoral issue that threatened relationships between the MU and the Church in that diocese. P&S produced a research paper on a wide variety of sexuality issues, questions for identifying the way forward in the MU, and prayer and worship material.

Our research shows that some of the most difficult challenges the Church faces regarding sexuality are as much about heterosexual as homosexual behaviour. We are very concerned about the increasing attitudes and practices of sexuality as purely consumerist or recreational in many cultures. Education in the home, schools and the Church is desperately lacking or at best inconsistent. Yet where the elements of meaningful, interpersonal relationships and commitment are lacking, and sexuality is treated with less respect, abuses at all levels and among all age groups are now rife.

It was in this context therefore, that the Unit then provided a facilitated Day on sexuality issues for the Trustee Board (led by Revd Canon Dr Gavin Ashenden, Sussex University Chaplain.) in 2003. This was followed by a presentation at our World Wide Council to Diocesan Presidents later that year; further research; and a second Day (again facilitated by Dr Ashenden) at our 2004 World Wide Council, which widened the debate to include marriage, cohabitation and divorce.

One consequence of these sessions is that P&S are presently producing a series of accessible booklets for our wider membership to discuss in their own dioceses. These are:
An Introductory Booklet exploring the relationships between interpretations of the Bible, cultures and traditions; one's identity, faith, sexuality and spirituality; Church governance and Government legislations; the Anglican Communion as a whole and local autonomy; the power of the Press; and critically, the way forward for the MU.

A Study Guide exploring how to manage discussions at a diocesan level with questions for reflection. We are using a Reconciliation model for learning to live with different opinions rather than trying to find agreement at all costs. This is accompanied by prayers, reflections, Scripture, further reading and resources, and ways to offer pastoral support.

Special Issues Leaflets which will focus on specific issues in detail. They will include different viewpoints, scenarios and questions to explore the issues as widely as possible and with prayers and scriptural reflections. They will be accompanied by suggested further reading and resources, and should be used with both the above booklets to support the discussions.
Special Issues will include: homosexuality, marriage and cohabitation, divorce and remarriage, single people, intersex issues, gender equality, IVF and reproductive technology, abortion and euthanasia.

With these booklets we hope to widen the sexuality debate so that informed and prayerful dialogue can begin among MU members at grass roots levels; and that sexuality is not reduced only to homosexuality or the Anglican Communion reduced purely to a division about homosexuality.

The P&S Unit will continue to research and monitor sexuality issues but we have three specific views in respect of matters put before the Lambeth Commission on Communion:

1. We hold to the view that the values that unite MU members around the world are far greater than any single issue which might divide it, even though our research already tells us that MU members' views on sexuality are as diverse as those within the Anglican Communion.
2. We hold to the view that the disagreements of dioceses on governance should be prevented from fragmenting the broader relationship between differing dioceses at all costs. The principle of autonomy and authority of individual parts of the Anglican Communion should not be greater than the desire for, and principle of, wider unity of the Anglican Communion as a whole.
3. We hold to the view that the inability to find peaceful and reconciling tools to help live with disagreements will seriously undermine our collective authority outside the Communion, let alone the internal, ecclesial authority and koinonia that are beginning to erode. This inability will also undermine our collective ability to fight for global injustices. It will fundamentally divert us from both our proper calling to build up the kingdom and by diminishing key priorities such as poverty, AIDS, and violence.

Practically MU members are already dealing with differences between dioceses, and with a predominantly female membership we strive to offer non-confrontational approaches to resolving these complex issues. We are actively engaged in many peace, reconciliation, conflict prevention and conflict reconciliation programmes. For us therefore, it is essential that this debate is conducted as peacefully as possible.

The Lambeth Commission on Communion's Final Report will have a significant impact on families world wide and our work at grassroots levels in and among those families. We are actively participating in the debates not in order to find common agreement or unanimity within the MU, but to find ways of respecting and living with our different opinions and local concerns.

Pastoral sensitivity, wise theological reflection, constant prayer and listening to God are for us critical in this journey. We in the MU want to walk forward together within the Anglican Communion but in a spirit of informed honesty. We want to learn to live with our differences in God's name before our koinonia is beyond repair. We continue to pray for God's guidance and grace on the Lambeth Commission on Communion.

The Lambeth Commission on Communion - Documents

Notes on the submissions to the Lambeth Commission on Communion

Overview of submissions from groups and individuals received between 12 June and 3 September 2004

As far as possible, the themes and views expressed in the submissions are outlined under the appropriate key question below. As with previous submission, few correspondents responded directly to the questionnaire of the Lambeth Commission and the headings serve only loosely as captions for people's comments. The number of submissions articulating a particular point is stated, however, similar views may have been implicit in other submissions.

Whilst schism was considered inevitable in a significant number of the earlier submissions, a prevalent hope expressed in the more recent submissions summarised below was that unity could and should be sustained, both within ECUSA and among the Anglican Communion. This hope was not wholly constrained to those accepting the actions of ECUSA and the Anglican Church in Canada but was also expressed by some individuals opposed to these actions and by groups whose membership represents a broad spectrum of views:

"We hold to the view that the values that unite MU members around the world are far greater than any single issue which might divide it, even though our research already tells us that MU members' views on sexuality are as diverse as those within the Anglican Communion" Central Trustees of the world-wide Mothers' Union

" …as an organisation, we have taken no position on the confirmation [of Bishop Robinson]. What unites us across our many individual beliefs is Unity itself. All of us are committed to working to keep everyone at the table because we continue to believe that what we share is far greater than what separates us." Via Media USA

The notion that 'whilst we may not be of one mind, we could be of one heart' was taken a step further in many submissions which considered the holding together of difference to be both characteristic of and important to the Anglican Communion. Images of 'family', 'trinity' and 'parts of the Body of Christ' were used.

"Neither Primates nor bishops speak for all the souls in their care, and until recently conscientious dissent was considered an acceptable, faithful activity within our church. Even today the majority of ECUSA is perfectly willing to break bread with those who conscientiously dissent from our Convention's actions."

The via media was endorsed as a powerful part of Anglican heritage, serving not as a "compromise for the sake of peace, but, as the collect for the feast of Richard Hooker reads, 'a comprehension for the sake of truth'."

Several submissions considered the Anglican approach to theological method[1] and reflected that past experience illustrated the value of open debate, with balanced appeal to Scripture, Reason and Tradition in order to resolve contentious issues.

“For Anglican Christians, the ongoing and mutually affecting exchange between theological texts and ethical practices transpiring in a community of faithful inquiry provides the only appropriate context for dealing with potentially divisive points of disagreement, including the diversity of opinion concerning human sexuality…Unfortunately, most of the objections to the actions taken by ECUSA and the Diocese of New Westminster treat decisions about sexuality as the *exception* to how Anglicans engage in theological reflection on other issues. These objections usually offer no explicit rationale for the uniqueness of sexuality in ecclesial deliberations and the reasons implied by these objections bear virtually no resemblance to what can be considered historically ‘Anglican’in Christian theology.”

In many of these later submissions, dissenting groups and networks, and bishops offering their ministry beyond their own jurisdictions, came in for particular criticism, eg

“If there is ‘chaos within ECUSA’, it is confined to those relatively small areas influenced by ‘orthodox’leaders such as Bishop Duncan. The vast majority of Episcopalians are living with the decisions made by the 2003 General Convention, whether they agree with those decisions or not."

Such comments were off-set to a degree by submissions from those who understood breakaway groups to be up-holders and protectors of orthodoxy:

“I am looking forward to becoming part of an Orthodox Anglican Parish if the ECUSA does not repent of its sins and go back to orthodox beliefs. I simply cannot support a denomination that has been seduced by the devil.”

Disaffection continued to emerge as a theme, if not in volume of submissions then in strength of appeal:

“We are not members of any special-interest groups within the church…But we do approach a point of decision that relies upon your Commission to clarify to us and to all that there is a place in the Anglican Communion for the theologically orthodox Anglicans in North America.”

“We ask the Commission to avoid caricaturing both sides by their worst expressions…but instead deal with them in their most consistent and authentic forms. This will inevitably mean that the traditionalist case is described as the overwhelmingly majority voice of Anglicanism, past and present…”

The testimony of one correspondent provided a glimpse into the broader context of human experience within which the current controversy is only a part:

“Last October, my wife, our daughters who were 5 and 12 at the time, and I had our world violently and perhaps permanently wrenched from us by the suicide of my wife’s 44 year-old sister, a death that came 15 months after the suicide of her 17 year-old daughter. So on November 2nd of last year when Gene Robinson was invested as a bishop in the Episcopal Church, I gave perhaps a passing thought to what was happening in the Diocese of New Hampshire, but only a passing thought, as I tried to help my wife cope with her unspeakable grief, and as I watched our beautiful daughters caught up in a senseless devastation they could not possibly understand. And while I still fundamentally believe that what was done in New Hampshire that November day is diametrically opposed to the teaching of Scripture, I can also tell you this much – if Bishop Robinson came to my home today to offer any sincerely felt comfort and solace to my family and me, if he could bring ‘the peace of God which passeth all understanding’ to my wife and children, I would not care a whit about his current sexual orientation, motives or politics…[What counts] is this simple directive, “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”That is what matters.”

1. What are (a) the legal and (b) the theological implications flowing from ECUSA’s decision to appoint a priest in a committed same sex relationship as one of its bishops? (See LC 1998 Res. I.10)

(a) the legal

The activities of the ‘American Anglican Council’ (AAC) and the Network are more hazardous to unity than the recent actions of ECUSA’s General Convention (and of New Westminster) since they threaten both governance and the broad core of Anglican faith. 5 submissions

The minority voices within ECUSA who are calling upon other churches in the Communion to interfere with, and take issue with, the order of ECUSA's democratic polity are denying its basic constitution. 4 submissions

Congregations affiliating to such as the Anglican Communion Network/leaving the diocese should be able to stay in its buildings. 3 submissions

Given its voting structure (no deputation can cast an affirmative vote with less than 75 per cent of the approval of each order with the deputation), it is clear that votes taken at General Convention with respect to the Bishop-Coadjutor of New Hampshire represented an overwhelming majority of the Episcopal Church. 2 submissions

ECUSA has not taken any legal action to remove itself in any way from full communionwith the rest of the Anglican Communion. 2 submissions

Bishops who presume to exercise jurisdiction in another diocese or Church do more violence to catholic order than the decision of an autonomous Church to address a pastoral issue within its own body. 1 submission

A narrow, insular perspective, sanctimonious posturing and an implicit condemnation of those opposed marked the process of the ordination of the Bishop of New Hampshire. 1 submission

(b) the theological

The theological (and social) argument that homosexual activity is sinful is insecure and should be further explored. 11 submissions

"In the scholarly community today, there is no longer a consensus (whatever Lambeth 1998 said) that all homosexual relationships are contrary to Scripture. Too many good, wise and learned Anglicans have come to re-evaluate the church's traditional teaching on homosexuality to pretend that the 1998 Lambeth Resolution should be given the weight of law, and that anyone who opposed it…should no longer be part of the Communion."

"We submit that the current debate on human sexuality is part of the work of the Holy Spirit as he leads us further into the truth about our own human nature. In the light of the Holy Spirit's work, the first Christians acknowledged the limits of their own vision, redefined their understanding of scripture and welcomed Gentiles into the body of Christ…We believe this is analogous to the present situation."

The Bible is clear on the sinfulness of homosexual activity. 10 submissions

"The matter of justifiable Scriptural interpretation is especially critical at this point, because, as the recent report Some Issues in Human Sexuality from the English House of Bishops notes, and notwithstanding the few caveats the Report itself lists, 'the consensus of biblical scholarship still points us in the direction of the traditional reading of the biblical material'."

A balanced and integrated appeal to Scripture, Reason and Tradition is needed in order to resolve contentious issues. 5 submissions

There is a need to widen the sexuality debate: attitudes and practices of sexuality (heterosexual or homosexual) as purely consumerist or recreational are becoming more prevalent in some cultures. 3 submissions

The decisions in ECUSA and New Westminster do not threaten core doctrines. 1 submission

2. What are (a) the legal and (b) the theological implications of the decision of the diocese of New Westminster to authorise services for use in connection with same sex unions?

(a) legal

Choices made by the people of the Diocese of New Westminster through their own duly considered canonical process should be respected and honoured. 1 submission

(b) theological

If the ABC corrects the error, there will be no theological implications. If he hesitates, it will be the end of the Anglican Communion. 1 submission

When relationships, and the communities that support them, are grounded in Christ's love and compassion, both marriage and same-sex unions can "bear good fruit" in witness to love. Both should be appropriately celebrated and recognised by and within their Christian communities. 1 submission

"In my [homosexual] friend's case, just considering the possibility of entering into a blessed, permanent, committed, monogamous relationship has transformed the way he relates to possible partners."

3. What are the canonical understandings of (a) communion, (b) impaired communion and (c) broken communion? (What is autonomy and how is it related to communion?)

(a)communion

Diversity and inclusivity are defining characteristics of the Anglican Communion. 12 submissions

"An Anglican approach…acknowledges the grace of communion by which we are made into the Body of Christ and, at the very same time, the differences of opinion in knowing the mind of Christ with clarity, which in no way obviates the grace of being in communion with each other, which comes only from God."

"The Communion is bound by mutual tolerance, respect and support and has long allowed local variations in practical and liturgical matters which do not affect core doctrines but strengthen effectual witness in each society and culture where it is present."

In spite of deep divisions in our understanding of biblical authority and the role of the church concerning social issues, Anglicans have been, and are, held together by *koinonia* and our sharing in the Eucharist. 6 submissions

"It is God who makes and protects sacraments, with even the best of us little more than damaged vessels for their delivery… Through celebration of the Eucharist, we separate ourselves from the world for a time to come into God's presence. We hear the witness of our ancestors and apply it to the present moment. We pray for our needs and shortcomings, and we repent of our sins. We are forgiven, and we are at peace. We walk again amidst God's mighty acts, and we participate in his last supper as his brothers and sisters. In receiving his body and blood, we are in communion – that is, in unity with God and one another. Finally, we are sent into the world to serve God utilising our particular gifts. In the end, there is unity whether we acknowledge it or not."

"The theology and sociality of Anglicanism are intrinsically connected with a polity whose purpose is to provide the conditions for people to move toward each other, and toward all people, in moving to the kingdom of God. By episcopal and democratic means, unity is achieved not by superior authorities acting for people in predefined ways, but by people mobilised through the service of those who continuously assist them to move toward each other – and to all people in the world – to bring unity in the kingdom of God."

Without critique from people of other cultures who share Anglican basics, we are abandoned to a culture-bound gospel. 1 submission

The Anglican Communion should understand itself as a family, kept together by bonds of affection rather than a defined 'essence'of belief. 1 submission

(b) impaired communion

We have communion or we do not. To pretend that there is some sort of 'impaired' state confuses the issue. 1 submission

(c) broken communion

Broken communion runs counter to Paul's vision of the Body of Christ. 3 submissions

Those churches that have broken or suspended communion with ECUSA are simply insisting on the maintenance of biblical standards. 1 submission

4. What is autonomy and how is it related to communion?

Each member Church in the Anglican Communion is an autonomous body in terms of its own governance but we are joined in bonds of affection and in our common unity with the See of Canterbury. 3 submissions

"If we are a Communion of Churches, and not one Church structure, ie, the difference between the Anglican and Roman understandings of catholic order, then there must be a mutual respect, not only of the order of each Church set up for its own functioning, but for the ability of each Bishop to exercise his/her jurisdiction as Ordinary of a geographical Diocese without his/her brother or sister Bishops intervening in that jurisdiction."

The legal autonomy of each province should remain inviolable. 2 submissions

Autonomy is the antithesis of communion. 1 submission

Once a group of autonomous bodies decide to be in communion with each other, they must be prepared to renegotiate the terms and understanding of communion. 1 submission

"Autonomy is independence and communion is interdependence and the relationship between the two is dynamic and ever-changing; never fixed and stationary. It is this salient nature of the relationship that requires constant attention and renegotiation."

5. How (do and) may provinces relate to one another in situations where the ecclesiastical authorities of one province feel unable to maintain the fullness of communion with another part of the Anglican Communion?

Full support should be given to the aim of the Lambeth Commission on Communion to find new ways forward without dividing the Anglican Communion. 6 submissions

Provinces are not required, in the case of serious theological error, to maintain and relate to each other. ("Someone must be true to God's word"; "We must follow the Book") 2 submissions

Unity should not be at the expense of LGBTQ persons. 2 submissions

"I hope and pray that this Commission can find ways for our Communion to continue together without resorting to models of unity that harmonize our cacophony through a mere loss or removal of voices."

Those provinces most disturbed should simply remain out of communion with ECUSA and New Westminster while permitting individuals from dissenting dioceses to receive the Sacrament in their churches. 1 submission

African Primates have been courted and directed by the American conservative bodies but ultimately cannot deliver control of the Episcopal Church. 1 submission

ECUSA must be declared no longer Anglican (with the hope of repentance and restoration). 1 submission

6. What practical solutions might there be to maintain the highest degree of communion that may be possible, in the circumstances resulting from these two decisions, within the individual churches involved? (eg [alternative] episcopal oversight when full communion is threatened)

Tensions arising from differing views should be resolved in the Anglican/Episcopal tradition by prayerful and temperate discourse, with any agreed results being effectuated pursuant to the Constitutions and Canons of that church, or of the diocese involved. 5 submissions

AEO would contradict the core values of the Communion. It would exacerbate the impaired communion it is meant to redress (and fall short of the trinitarian theological insights that have shaped Anglican traditions). 3 submissions

"…institutionalizing disagreement – which is effectively what alternative episcopal oversight would accomplish –circumscribes the scope of Christian hope by insisting

that there is nothing left to learn from sharing in Eucharistic communion with those with whom we disagree."

"Allowing bishops from one geographical Province to oversee congregations in another geographical Province, in effect, results in a congregational system of only loosely-linked churches with virtually no oversight."

"The AAC's and Network's insistence that a parish be able to redirect its financial support to the diocese providing oversight effectively transfers the parish out of its own diocese. The result here will be to pack the diocese with distant parishes unable to participate in diocesan life, but able to distort diocesan votes. The segregation by belief that AEO fosters would also halt interactions between parishes within a diocese that do not agree on everything, but nonetheless share in ministry. These interactions are very effective in breaking down misunderstanding and fear, and in maintaining the via media we cherish."

AEO arrangements should be made both ways, ie, available to non-dissenting parishes in Network dioceses, and to Network parishes in non-dissenting dioceses. 2 submissions

The ABC should renounce the primates and others involved in these two decisions as heretics. 2 submissions

"If the church will not accept the truth, then remaining in communion is a moot point (even Satan offered Christ, as he tempted him, a "communion" – He could have been king of the world, instead of our saviour)."

Congregations should be able to choose to belong to another church entity, in communion with Canterbury. 1 submission

The AAC is a well-funded special-interest group representing a small minority of American Episcopalians. 1 submission

There are many parishes within the eight dioceses that have joined the Network, and many individuals with the Network parishes, who do not agree with its theological and political positions. 1 submission

There is a significant majority in the Church who can reason together and find new ways forward; they should not be undermined by a dissatisfied minority. 1 submission

The Bishop of New Jersey, USA, is implementing DEPO in a truly Christian and pastoral way. It should be a model for use in the American Church. 1 submission

There may be a limited role for Lambeth to facilitate AEO within the province, with the consent of that province. 1 submission

7. What practical solutions might there be to maintain the highest degree of communion that may be possible, in the circumstances resulting from these two

decisions, as between the churches of the Anglican Communion? (eg [alternative] episcopal oversight when full communion is threatened)

All parties should step back from the use of combative language, threats and ultimatums in order to sit at table with one another. 3 submissions

Finding the highest degree of communion might begin with an affirmation of trust: that everyone in this moment of controversy believes in and loves Jesus and is seeking to serve him as their hearts, minds and spirits direct. 2 submissions

Bishops and archbishops should meet, meet soon, and exercise radical hospitality towards one another. 2 submissions

"When asked what holds the Anglican Communion together, South African Archbishop Emritus Desmond Tutu answered that 'We meet'."

A 'core covenant' of some sort would facilitate authoritarian control over the beliefs, dogmas and practices of the Communion and would be detrimental to filial bonds and the via media. 2 submissions

"…proposals dealing with authority and discipline, especially the wish for a new centralized authority for the Anglican Communion …confirm observations about power and authority in social and political – and ecclesial – institutions. When there is general agreement about what is to be done by whom (whether in formal law or informal consensus), authority structures are seldom invoked and power need only rarely be exercised to compel someone to behave in a particular way. Conversely, when there is little agreement, there is a tendency to turn to legal remedies and force… Such a move to consolidate institutional power in the face of instability is common outside the church as well as inside. Liberation movements of all sorts have long recognized that power does not give itself away; but perhaps this could be different for followers of Jesus Christ. I invite the Commission to consider this factor in determining how we are to strengthen our 'bonds of affection'without strangling one another."

The means to full reconciliation is neither dialogue nor creative tension but reversible expulsion, consistent with Paul's expressed goal of love, 2 Cor 2:8. 1 submission

For the sake of maintaining unity, different parts of the Anglican Communion should be allowed to have their own standards of acceptability for clergy ministering within their particular jurisdictions. 1 submission

The Lambeth Conference could establish a statement of faith and practice as a standard to determine which bishops are, or are not part of the Anglican Communion. Where there is no signature or inconsistent conformity, there will be no communion and AEO should then be recognised by the Conference, the See of Canterbury and all the instruments and agencies of the Anglican Communion. 1 submission

Then a national church breaks with the Anglican Communion on a basic issue, it must lose its membership in that communion. 1 submission

Historically, and in reality, the canonical limit of church authority is at the national level. However, the provinces might choose to set aside the loose and informal Instruments of Unity and authorise the creation of a synodical body, with representatives from each province. 1 submission

In time, homosexual African clergy may seek AEO from North America. 1 submission

8. Under (a) what circumstances, (b) what conditions, and (c) by what means, might it be appropriate for the Archbishop of Canterbury to exercise an extraordinary ministry of pastoral oversight, support and reconciliation with regard to the internal affairs of a province to maintain communion between Canterbury and that province? (see LC 1998, Res. IV.13)

The ACiNW submitted a detailed 'case for alternative episcopal oversight: an overview of the crisis in the diocese of New Westminster and its impact on the worldwide Anglican Communion', which has not been summarised here. See S-3-167.

The planting of churches or activities across diocesan or provincial borders by bishops without the permission of the local bishop and the ABC should draw the intervention of the ABC. 3 submissions

Where a bishop or archbishop of a province does not act, then the ABC must act. 2 submissions

The strongest possible sanctions should be imposed against ECUSA and support given to the Network of Anglican dioceses and parishes. 2 submissions

The ABC should only intervene in extreme circumstances, such as the breakdown of administration or apostasy, having first sought consensus for his actions among the primates. 1 submission

The ABC should have the right to intervene when requested so to do by a substantial and representative body (eg, the Network) – with moral authority but with no power to bring sanctions to bear. 1 submission

The ABC could provide extraordinary pastoral oversight, delegated to an alternative bishop, priest or deacon, thus extending accessible pastoral care to those with a *bona fide* objection of conscience to their local hierarchy. 1 submission

The Anglican orders providing alternative pastoral care could have an organisational structure like that of the Jesuits (ie, directly under the supervision of the ABC rather than local bishops), thus centring unity on Canterbury. 1 submission

Dissenters within a province should be directed by the ABC to dissent within the canonical structures of the province. 1 submission

There should be provision of sanctioned oversight for the marginalised orthodox and it is necessary that such oversight should be provided without the primates feeling the

necessity of obtaining the permission of the province or diocese in question. This action is legitimate precisely because the abuse of power that has led to this crisis is illegitimate. 1 submission

9. Under (a) what circumstances, (b) what conditions, and (c) by what means, might it be appropriate for the Archbishop of Canterbury to exercise an extraordinary ministry of pastoral oversight, support and reconciliation with regard to the internal affairs of a province to maintain communion between that province and the rest of the Anglican Communion? (see LC Res. IV.13)

It would be an error to apply any sanctions or realignment in response to recent actions in ECUSA and the Anglican Church in Canada. 3 submissions

The provinces involved in the two decisions must be sanctioned in order to defend the faith. 1 submission.

As 'first among equals', the ABC does not have the legal authority to establish oversight over the various provinces, yet his words and actions carry great weight; he should constantly call us to honesty, transparency and to break bread together. 1 submission

There is currently no structure for adjudication of this sort of dispute. A process for formulating an international polity, framed as a discussion about unity, could be a forum for lively discussion among the provinces. (Richard Hooker's Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity would serve as a foundation for such a discussion.) 1 submission

"…a reactive single-issue polity decision will not move us to the larger discussion we must have."

Other comments

Concerning mission:

The inability to find peaceful and reconciling tools to help live with disagreements will undermine our collective ability to fight global injustices, in particular poverty, HIV/AIDS and violence. 1 submission

It seems unlikely that mission will be damaged by impaired communion. Ordinary Christians will simply continue their work for the Kingdom. 1 submission

Three submissions were received from members of the medical profession offering their particular considerations concerning homosexuality. See S-3-128, S-3-153 and S-3-155.

Submissions from individuals to the Lambeth Commission on Communion, from June to September 2004

Document	Document

No.	
S-3-106	Central Trustees of the world-wide Mothers' Union
S-3-107	Anna Thomas-Betts, UK, Member of General Synod, C of E
S-3-108	Gerard K Hannon, New York
S-3-109	
S-3-110	Julia Christian, Associate Rector, California, USA
S-3-111	Rick Matters, San Joaquin, USA
S-3-112	Donna Bott, Moderator, Episcopal Voices of Central Florida
S-3-113	The Very Revd James E Carroll, San Diego, USA
S-3-114	The Revd Michael B Russell, San Diego, USA
S-3-115	Via Media Dallas, USA (Ron Whitehead, Convenor)
S-3-116	Jack Gerlach, Diocese of Texas, USA
S-3-117	Christopher I Wilkins, Facilitator, Via Media USA Steering Committee
S-3-118	C West Jacocks IV, Sumter, USA
S-3-119	Douglas A Kerr and Carla C Kerr, Dallas, USA (2)
S-3-120	Kenneth Murray, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand; Martin Murray, North Eastern University, Shenyang, People's Republic of China
S-3-121	Judy Wright Mathews, Diocese of Florida, USA
S-3-122	Eric Hyom, Roman Catholic, UK (2)
S-3-123	Nigel Renton, Berkeley, California, USA
S-3-124	Via Media USA (Christopher I Wilkins)
S-3-125	Progressive Episcopalians of Pittsburgh, USA (Lionel Deimel, President, et al)
S-3-126	Mrs Mary J Wright, Metro Area Multi-Church Prayer Group, Alexandria, VA, USA
S-3-127	Modern Churchpeople's Union, UK
S-3-128	Barbara Nicol, MD, FACOG
S-3-129	Christopher Evans, Berkeley, California, USA
S-3-130	Antoine Johnson, Colorado Springs, CO, USA
S-3-131	Jay Emerson Johnson, Visiting Professor of Theology, Pacific School of Religion, California, USA
S-3-132	The Revd Arthur Lee, Florida, USA
S-3-133	Gavin White
S-3-134	George Danz, Suffolk, VA, USA
S-3-135	Ian Montgomery, Rector, Menasha, WI, USA
S-3-136	John Thorp, Professor in the Dept of Philosophy, University of Western Ontario, Canada
S-3-137	The Very Rev Thomas B Woodward, Rector, Salinas, CA, USA

S-3-138 Tim McMichael, Annandale, VA, USA
S-3-139 Douglas Starr, DMA, Pittsburgh, PA, USA
S-3-140 Jane Little, Diocese of Pittsburgh, USA
S-3-141 Tobias S Haller, BSG, Vicar, Bronx, NY, USA (2)
S-3-142 The Revd Chris Todd, Big Pine Key, Florida, USA
S-3-143 The Rev Earle Fox, Emmaus Ministries, Alexandria, VA, USA
S-3-144 Executive Committee of the Anglican Gathering of Ottawa, Canada (Chair, Frank Johnson)
S-3-145 The Executive of Inclusive Church .net (The Revd Richard Thomas)
S-3-146 Brian D Lott, Haywards Heath, UK
S-3-147 Canon Dr John S Nurser, Sudbury, Suffolk, UK
S-3-148 Cecil L Powers, Jr, Pace, Florida, USA
S-3-149 The Revd John Banks, Nottingham, UK
S-3-150 The Ven D Bruce Bryant-Scott, Diocesan Executive Officer, Anglican Synod of the Diocese of British Columbia
S-3-151 Loren Williams, Diocese of Western North Carolina, USA
S-3-152 Submission commissioned by the Bishop of New York and prepared by a committee of priests and professors at General Theological Seminary NY, USA
S-3-153 Articles from the British Medical Journal forwarded by Dr John Pike
S-3-154 Fort Worth Via Media (Marvin Long, President)
S-3-155 Doris Caitlin Odlozinski, Canada
S-3-156 Bishop J Jon Bruno & Canon Mark R Kowalewski, Los Angeles
S-3-157 Peter T Manzo, Rector, New Jersey, USA
S-3-158 Jon M Spangler, San Francisco, USA
S-3-159 Albany Via Media (John Sorensen)
S-3-160 Dr Virginia Hyde, Washington State University, USA
S-3-161 Church of England Evangelical Council
S-3-162 Liz Zivanov, Hawaii, USA
S-3-163 David W Powell, Washington, DC, USA
S-3-164 Dawn McDonald et al, Canada
S-3-165 Dr Pamela W Darling, Philadelphia, USA
S-3-166 Concerned Episcopalians of St Lawrence Deanery, USA (A Grimmke)
S-3-167 'A Case for Alternative Episcopal Oversight' submitted by ACiNW
S-3-168 Fernanda Harrington, New Hampshire, USA
S-3-169 Progressive Episcopalians of Pittsburgh (Lionel Deimel), USA
S-3-170 Britt Thompson, Texas, USA
S-3-171
S-3-172 Mary Reath, Princeton, USA

S-3-173 John Harrington, New Hampshire, USA

S-3-174 Professor Daniel W Hardy

S-3-175

[1]**S-3-131 Jay Emerson Johnson, S-3-150 D Bruce Bryant-Scott and S-3-171 a submission commissioned by the Bishop of New York and prepared by a committee of priests and professors at the General Theological Seminary NY, USA, offered extensive reflection on the method and tasks of theology which cannot be summarised adequately in this résumé. These three submissions have been made available to members of the Lambeth Commission, as have all submissions received from individuals and groups.**

The Lambeth Commission on Communion - Documents

Wed 7/21/2004
Subject: Comment received via the Anglican Portal
Name: Mary Reath
Location: Princeton, NJ, USA

Subject: **Lambeth Commission on Communion**

Your work is very important for the whole world, at this high water mark moment of individualistic expression. Don't be afraid to ask difficult things of people. The popular perceptions are not true. (I know this from serving on vestries at St. Luke in the Fields, in Greenwich Village, NYC, and Trinity, Wall Street.)

We are not nearly as divided along cultural lines as the media asserts and there's a growing discomfort from feeling alienated from anything but the self. Our intensely connected world doesn't know yet how we are meant to live together, as we try to understand the give and take between the local and the global, with how to 'think for ourselves but not by ourselves.' Find language that will help people to connect the head and the heart and inspire religious confidence.

Appeal to people's higher, braver natures ('putting the interests of others above one's own') and describe a future church that they can recognize themselves in. People will want to do the right thing if your appeal makes sense to them. You are rebuilding respect for authority and authentic authority begins with a common sensical appeal and then slowly seeps into the imagination.

Notes on the submissions to the Lambeth Commission on Communion 2004

Overview of submissions received as at 12 June 2004

Of the 105 submissions received to date[1], relatively few respond directly to the complete set of the Commission's key questions, tending instead to focus on particular issues – some of which do not fall specifically within the Commission's mandate (eg, the morality or immorality of same-sex relationships) but which are noted below.

The submissions represent a broad spectrum of theology, opinion and perspective but reveal a significant degree of polarity.

> "Anything that is contrary to the teachings of the Bible and Church Doctrine is a heresy. Please do as the Early Church did and get rid of the heretics."

> "I hope your commission will call upon all of us to confess our self righteousness and our judgement of one another. There are a whole lot of boards knocking over and hurting one another in efforts to remove splinters in others' eyes."

Polarity extends to the interpretation of Scripture, which is a prime topic in the submissions. The majority of correspondents consider that the teachings of Scripture have been rejected in the actions of ECUSA and New Westminster, and often appeal to particular texts in order to expound scriptural prohibitions of homosexual relationship, eg, Lev 12:13, 18:22-23, Deut 23:17, Mark 7:14-23, Rom 1:26, 1 Cor 5:1-2,9-11, 1 Cor 6:9-10, 1 Tim 3:1-2 (See, for example, S-1-058 Stanley T Case).

> "[ECUSA] have chosen to follow their own interpretation of the Scriptures and reject the interpretation of the Scriptures of the majority of the Anglican Communion… they have chosen to step out of communion with the Anglican Communion… We believe that the apostolic teaching as it is revealed in Scripture and the historical tradition of the Church are not only essential to our faith but hold us in communion with each other."

> "We want to emphasise that our protest is not against homosexually inclined persons, but rather against a section of church leadership which, through this consecration, is attempting to change the fundamental teachings of the Christian faith… The written word of God, which is the Bible, remains the criterion to regulate our life."

A lesser number of submissions consider that the teachings of Scripture have been interpreted responsibly in the recent actions of ECUSA and New Westminster. These submissions tend to reflect on the broader brushstrokes of the Gospel and consider that the interpretation of scripture needs to be informed by contemporary understandings of homosexual orientation.

> "…when the Episcopal Church voted in 2003 in a democratic election to make the Revd Eugene Robinson bishop, it was a decision that was the result of years of deliberate study of the Bible and the doctrines of the Church. The process was totally consistent with what the worldwide Anglican primates proposed in 1998 Lambeth Conference (Resolution 64) for 'deep and passionate study of the question of homosexuality, which would take seriously both the teaching of Scripture and the results of scientific and medical research.'

[1] The submission from Anglican Mainstream is a collation of a significant number of responses, gathered through their website and forwarded to the Lambeth Commission for consideration. Several other submissions have multiple signatures.

> "If faithful Anglicans are involved in long-term, stable and loving relationships with a person of the same sex, I believe that Jesus, as demonstrated in his teachings of love, blesses such relationships through his spirit…People in such partnerships deserve the full and open acceptance of the church."

> "…homosexuality is a matter of inbuilt orientation and not a human choice (a fact heretofore known only anecdotally but now beyond scientific dispute)…It seems utterly inconsistent to frame the matter of homosexual acts in other terms than those for heterosexuality. To deny sexual activity to homosexuals is to deny them relationship; and it is relationship which lies at the heart of the Trinitarian God. And it is precisely the possibility of rich human relationships which conquers egoism and gives life; it guarantees participation in the Trinitarian Love of God. To deny this possibility is itself sinful."

(The doctrine of the Trinity is explored by a number of submissions, typically concluding that it supports a broader orthodoxy. See S-2-060 'Homosexuality in a trinitarian context', the Revd William Coats.)

The foreword of a group response - the group comprising clergy and laity in a Church of England diocese - sums up the dilemma of differing scriptural interpretation and how this impinges on communion:

> "If we were to name one presenting issue on which we could not agree, it would be the interpretation of Scripture. Broadly we would all agree that Scripture was authoritative but agreement on its interpretation eluded us. This disagreement was so profound that we could not see how 'full communion' could continue between those who hold to Traditional or Evangelical church teachings and those who hold to Innovative or Revisionist church developments."

While the focus of key questions 5 and 6 is positive ('What practical solutions might there be to maintain the highest degree of communion…), many submissions, for the most part expressing conservative or 'orthodox' views, expound or assume the inevitability of schism, eg:

> "I believe that a realignment is the only alternative. The two churches can continue to grow apart as they have been doing for 30 or 40 years. With a realignment the conservative members can continue to remain in the Anglican Communion and not feel that they have to compromise their conscience to do so."

> "The 'Anglican Communion' – this fraternity of national churches which happen to share certain historical origins – currently embraces two faiths, two religions... Between these two opposed faiths there is not, and cannot be, spiritual unity or communion."

A lesser number of submissions considered that diverse views could be held together within the Communion:

> "Amongst the members of Women and The Church (WATCH) as in the wider church there are a variety of views as to the appropriateness or otherwise of same sex relationships within the Christian community. Some are not at all happy about the practice, which seems to them to be contrary to Scripture. Others believe that committed and faithful relations between people of the same sex should be accepted gladly within an inclusive and welcoming church. On both sides these views are held with great passion and seriousness. We are, however, at one in believing that such differing views must be held together within the church in a loving, understanding and caring way. We are totally opposed to any situation where one group threatens to leave the church unless their view is the only one which is accepted."

> "Our experience is that legalising splits in communion makes communion impossible. Each problem needs to be owned and lived through in Grace in context. No voice should be silenced."

A number of submissions express the opinion that the Lambeth Commission's 'areas of study' are missing the nub of the issue, which is variously considered to be:

- the need for an agreed formula for 'Communion'
- the roles of the different elements of the Quadrilateral in formulation of doctrine and practice.
- the cultural degradation of the West which underlies the present doctrinal erosion
- the failure of American bishops to identify and correct destructive ideas
- whether or not Bishop Robinson is an "evil minister" (in the words of Article XXVI)
- how much of the biblical comment on homosexual practice is based upon cultural understandings as opposed to the divine will
- whether the Church will decide if homosexual men and women are fully human creatures made by God on the basis of human knowledge two and three millennia ago or on the basis of human knowledge today

The majority of the submissions are from North America and the UK. Submissions have also been received from Egypt (1), Ireland (3), Australia (1), Brazil (2), Uganda (1), Singapore & West Malaysia (1), Cayman Islands (1), Guatemala (1), Brazil (1), Cameroon (1), Taiwan (1), Nigeria (1), Switzerland (1).

As far as possible, the themes and views expressed in the submissions are outlined under the appropriate key question below. The number of submissions articulating a particular point is stated, however, similar views may be implicit in other submissions.

Many of the submissions are evidently the fruit of considerable reflection and theological deliberation. Some are personal testimonies from gay and lesbian Anglicans who look for the inclusive love and welcome of the Church. Others are from correspondents who now feel painfully alienated from a church which has departed from traditional orthodoxy. This résumé attempts only to gather together the main points communicated in the submissions.

1. What are (a) the legal and (b) the theological implications flowing from ECUSA's decision to appoint a priest in a committed same sex relationship as one of its bishops? (See LC 1998 Res. I.10)

(a) legal

The phrase "ECUSA's decision to *appoint* a priest…" is incorrect. (These submissions described the democratic polity of ECUSA). *2 submissions*

In abandoning Scripture, tradition, and proceeding without the approval of the broader Communion, ECUSA (and, in some submissions, the Diocese of New Westminster) has excluded itself from the Anglican Communion. *28 submissions*

Provision should be made for the protection of freehold, property and assets for clergy, parishes and dioceses which are unable, for doctrinal reasons, to accept the pastoral oversight of their bishop or archbishop. *9 submissions*

Bishops who depart from the traditional teaching on homosexual practice should be declared out of communion in order to preserve the faith and unity of the Church, the authority of Scripture, evangelical witness and catholic orthodoxy. *7 submissions*

The sacramental office of priest and bishop should be respected in accordance with the discipline and constitutions of the Church (the morality and even theology of the ordained is not the crucial element in the validity of the sacrament). *5 submissions*

ECUSA's action goes against the historic formularies of the Anglican Church (the 39 Articles, the BCP, the Ordinal) *3 submissions*

ECUSA has ignored Lambeth resolutions 1.10, 3.2 and 3.6 in contravention of ECUSA's foundational documents which do not permit departure from 'the doctrines of the Gospel as now held by the Church of England'. *2 submissions*

Resolutions emanating from the Lambeth Conference are advisory in nature, therefore there are no legal implications. *2 submissions*

A legitimate course of action has been taken, when a member Church of the Communion abides by official (definitive) forms of Anglican teaching and exercises their own canonical norms for doctrinal development. This does not invalidate either their Sacramental orders or inclusion in the Anglican Communion. *2 submissions*

Careful consideration of the issues within a canonically legal framework, open discussion and transparent decision-making have demonstrated due respect for the non-binding but morally authoritative Lambeth resolutions. *1 submission*

Provision should be made for compensation for those who wish to remain within historic Anglicanism but who, for theological reasons, are unable to receive the alternative episcopal oversight offered. *1 submission*

(b) theological

The hierarchy of moral imperatives proclaimed by Jesus in summarising the whole law, suggests that the same criteria should be applied to both homo- and heterosexual relationships, that they reflect the steadfast love of God. *8 submissions*

Homosexual behaviour is intrinsically destructive and contra the Scriptures. Repentance is essential. *5 submissions*

There is room for differing views and vigorous debate as we strive to discern the leading of the Spirit. *4 submissions*

Within first and second order issues of doctrine, ethical issues are not invariably timeless but often related to a cultural context (the Kuala Lumpur Statement is wrong in seeing sexuality as a first order principle). *4 submissions*

Within the context of a Trinitarian dynamic of interrelated love expressed in mutuality and complementarity, there is an argument for a broader orthodoxy. *3 submissions*

For the Bible and for the early Fathers, there was no understanding of homosexuality as an orientation; rather, homosexual activity was understood to be the deviant behaviour of heterosexual persons. *3 submissions*

As with other issues (eg, slavery, apartheid, the status of women, and Galileo and Darwin's theories in the past), the present argument over the full acceptance of homosexual people pits an old and dying definition, supported by appeals to scripture, against an emerging new consciousness. *3 submissions*

Reason cannot be allowed to prevail if it is in clear conflict with scripture and tradition. *2 submissions*

Jesus did not say anything directly about homosexuality. This most probably reflects acceptance of an established norm, which was the rejection of homosexuality. *1 submission*

ECUSA's decision demonstrates a different theological foundation from that of Lambeth Resolution I.10 – that scripture does not teach unequivocally that homosexuality is wrong, there

being hermeneutical considerations which question the level of definitiveness of biblical injunctions for the present age. *1 submission*

The liberalising of Holy Scripture within our Church is opening the way for all kinds of heretical beliefs and sinful practices to flourish. *1 submission*

The recent actions in the USA and Canada go beyond the limits of inculturation. *1 submission*

'The Lord's mercies for gay men do not include ordination.' *1 submission*

Other comments

Issues of personality type are evident in the conflicting views surrounding this issue, eg: some by temperament need certainty, while others are content to trust in the love of God leading them into an unknown future; some are not able to understand easily how people using a different personality template or pattern could possibly be equally correct and will not surrender themselves (their egos) to a 'foreign' personality type. *3 submissions*

ECUSA is acknowledging that there are gay clergy and bishops already and is no longer 'pretending' that they are not there as long as they stay 'quiet'. *2 submissions*

Dr Jeffrey John should not have been appointed as the next Dean and Rector of the Cathedral and Abbey Church of St Albans in view of his advocacy of a form of same sex marriage. *2 submissions*

The American Anglican Council (AAC) is well-funded by a Christian special in interest group but represents only a minority of American Episcopalians. *2 submissions*

Conservative Episcopalians in the USA and conservative bishops abroad are aligning with the well-funded, political and cultural radical right. *1 submission.*

2. What are (a) the legal and (b) the theological implications of the decision of the diocese of New Westminster to authorise services for use in connection with same sex unions?

(a) legal

This action questions the universal application of the Lambeth Conference resolution which "cannot advise" such blessings. However there are no legal implications because of the autonomy of dioceses within the Anglican Communion. *1 submission*

(b) theological

NW's action suggests a theological understanding that the following are acceptable to God: new forms of personal commitment outside of heterosexual marriage; commitment for mutual support, sharing and love without the possibility of procreation. *2 submissions*

Jesus loved everyone but hated what some of them did, especially the religious leaders. If the leadership of our church is preaching a gospel that is no longer Christian, then we must love them enough to call them back to true faith. *1 submission*

Communion among provinces cannot exist appropriately when a province develops a liturgy that moves away from the mutual giving and doxological relationship with other provinces, which is the basis for common life and belief. *1 submission*

This action does not breach the principles of unity established in Lambeth Conference Resolution 18 which are posited on shared approaches to and practices of worship. It is an incidence of a "transgressive practice" within the Church which forces change from the "grass-roots". *1 submission*

To maintain communion with New Westminster and ECUSA would be to sanction not diversity of practice but contradiction in theology and practice. *1 submission*

3. What are the canonical understandings of (a) communion, (b) impaired communion and (c) broken communion? (What is autonomy and how is it related to communion?)

(a) communion

Communion entails common beliefs, shared liturgical practices, agreement on essential doctrines and discipline. *10 submissions*

Communion is a gift from God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit – wherein we are drawn into a relationship with the life of God as Trinity. *3 submissions*

The Anglican Communion is a family in Christ, bound to the body of Christ through the sacraments. *3 submissions*

Institutional communion without spiritual communion is meaningless. *2 submissions*

The Anglican Communion, and who belongs to it, should depend less on narrow doctrinal issues and inherited structure and more on a multi-dimensional *koinonia*, understood in terms that are as broad and inclusive as the life of God. *2 submissions*

Theologies and their practical expressions in canonical practice are grounded in a recognition of commonalties. This has some obvious common-sense and practical advantages but leaves unrealised the depth of our tradition that envisions a communion achieved through difference, not despite difference. *2 submissions*

The canonical understanding of communion can be defined within the parameters of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as the revealed Word of God; the Apostles' and the Nicene Creed as the sufficient statement of faith; the two sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, ministered according to the institution of Christ; and the historic episcopate, locally adapted according to different circumstances and needs. Whatever autonomy an Anglican Province may have, the decisions and actions of each province must be governed by at least these four parameters. Local autonomy may allow flexibility in matters of church order, but not in matters of faith and doctrine. A Province that continues to choose to have scripture as it's ultimate authority is not able, as a matter of fact, to relate to a Province that has chosen to reject this ultimate authority. *1 submission*

The Lambeth Quadrilateral makes clear the basic requirement for Communion. *1 submission*

Lambeth Resolution 1:10 promised to be a basis for unity within the Anglican Communion. *1 submission*

The Canons of the General Convention of ECUSA 2000, Titles III.10, 11 and 12 provide for three different understandings of interchangeability of clergy (and therefore sacraments) and might be labelled 'Broken communion', 'impaired Communion' and 'Communion'. *1 submission*

Unity on the basis of a "faith once delivered" is no longer possible…The carriers and receivers of the faith, both within and without particular cultures, have differently understood Anglican sensibilities about just how to be Christian in the world. *1 submission*

(b) impaired communion

If communion is a reality founded in Christ and definitive of the identity and being of the Church, is it possible to speak of 'impaired' or 'broken communion'? *1 submission*

Impaired (rather than broken) suggests a breaking off of relationship until such time as various issues have been explored – and could therefore be seen as a positive opportunity to explore contemporary issues, resolve differences and come to deeper understanding. *1 submission*

(c) broken communion

The intentional separation of one diocese from others breaks the spirit of communion. *2 submissions*

Autonomy

Autonomy is the right of a bishop in council of a diocese to govern affairs and meet pastoral needs, according to conditions, circumstances and means appropriate to that diocese, whilst actively fostering relationship with the rest of the Anglican 'world'. *2 submissions*

> "Autonomy and community are linked in a kind of dialectic, by which the meaning of one is disclosed in its association with the other. Within our communion the tension of this relationship between these two polarities is borne in a number of ways. The office of bishop has a crucial part to play in carrying this tension: called to guard the autonomy of their own diocese, but also charged to be concerned with the unity of the communion. When Lambeth resolutions seem in some quarters conservative or even reactionary, the tension out of which they have emerged has to be realised and respected."

Autonomy and communion are contradictory. *1 submission*

Provincial autonomy, historically and canonically, does not mean that provinces may do whatever they wish irrespective of the expressed concerns of the Anglican Communion. *1 submission*

4. How (do and) may provinces relate to one another in situations where the ecclesiastical authorities of one province feel unable to maintain the fullness of communion with another part of the Anglican Communion?

Where a larger number of provinces is not in communion with one or more other provinces, then they can agree that the offending provinces are not part of the Communion. *2 submissions*

Make some initial provision for pan-Anglican church discipline which can exercise due authority in matters of gross violation of doctrine. *1 submission*

Establish a fund for poorer provinces (such as Uganda) which do not want to accept contributions from ECUSA. *1 submission*

A province breaking communion with another province because of perceived heresy should not break communion with those other provinces which continue to remain in communion with it. Thus each remains in hopeful communion with the Anglican Church. *1 submission*

Separation and division is not the scriptural response. Rather stay together and refute those who argue that homosexual activity is in accordance with God's will for some Christians. *1 submission*

Practise autonomy but remain in dialogue, deliberately creating opportunities for regular and frequent discourse. *1 submission*

Explore the methodologies for discourse used in exchanges between provinces. A starting point could be a mutual sharing of the cultural and historical foundations for any particular stance, rather than an examination of what constitutes difference. *1 submission*

Provinces have continued to relate to one another even though impaired communion exists as the ministrations of women priests and bishops are not accepted throughout the Communion.

Provinces should find similar ways of relating over the matter of openly gay and lesbian priests and bishops. *1 submission*

'Observer status' at meetings is needed for those who defy the expressed concerns of the Anglican Communion. *1 submission*

Gene Robinson, a particular focus of disunity, should not be amongst those invited to the Lambeth Conference nor any other practising gay bishops subsequently consecrated. *1 submission*

5. What practical solutions might there be to maintain the highest degree of communion that may be possible, in the circumstances resulting from these two decisions, within the individual churches involved? (eg [alternative] episcopal oversight when full communion is threatened)

The ABC should recognise a completely new Anglican province in the US (eg, comprising the Network of Confessing Dioceses) – not a parallel or overlapping province, but rather a complete replacement. *12 submissions*

Alternative episcopal oversight is needed for the traditional and 'orthodox'. *14 submissions*

Dioceses, parishes or individuals might choose to align themselves with an alternative province/diocese or parish. *7 submissions*

Parallel jurisdiction/alternative episcopal oversight/a 'third province' would not make for a more Christ-like church but would further institutionalise schism. *4 submissions*

> "[Following the ordination of women to the priesthood] Arrangements in the Church of England for *Extended* Episcopal Oversight, ie, episcope tied to the diocesan bishop, have drifted into *Alternative* Episcopal Oversight, with all its unfortunate consequences of disrupted communion and the fostering of a ghetto mentality, which frustrates any opportunity for growth in understanding, fellowship and love."

God's table must be open to all baptised Christians. *3 submissions*

The highest degree of communion with those who have excluded themselves from the Anglican Communion (through 'heterodoxy') would be the same as that accorded other non-Anglican organisations. *3 submissions*

An extra-provincial body is required to protect the traditional and 'orthodox'. *2 submissions*

Delegated episcopal pastoral oversight will not provide what is needed; the Lambeth Commission and the Primates' Meeting should reject it as an insubstantial and merely cosmetic response to a deepening crisis of both Faith and Order. *2 submissions*

Alternative episcopal oversight is a rejection of the principle of Article XXVI. *2 submissions*

Seek reconciliation by communicating with groups of Anglican/Episcopal congregations that have left ECUSA. *1 submission*

Alternative episcopal oversight is needed for those embracing radical change. *1 submission*

The Communion could evolve into an 'Anglican Union' for conservatives looking for a closer communion in which all parts of the church are mutually accountable to each other for their actions, and an 'Anglican Federation' for liberals looking for a looser federation that will allow for innovation and adaptation. *1 submission*

Since Anglicanism relies on the territorial integrity of jurisdiction of incumbents in their parishes and bishops in their Sees, acts which fly in the face of this (such as the Singapore consecrations or the imposition of flying bishops in England) are arguably a greater breach of Anglican unity than

the consecration of Canon Robinson which was legitimate as far as the constitution and practice of ECUSA were concerned. *1 submission*

Make use of the Anglican Religious Orders and communities since these groups traditionally operate across diocesan lines and have their own requirements regarding lifestyle, etc. They could serve as gathering points for like-minded clergy and lay people. *1 submission*

Provide theological/educational materials to sharpen discussion of the issues and study opportunities on a regional/deanery basis to broaden understanding and foster discussion. *1 submission*

6. What practical solutions might there be to maintain the highest degree of communion that may be possible, in the circumstances resulting from these two decisions, as between the churches of the Anglican Communion? (eg [alternative] episcopal oversight when full communion is threatened)

Increased 'table talk'. (A Lambeth Conference every ten years is insufficient; most bishops do not make two Lambeth Conferences.) *3 submissions*

Avoid invective, threat and ultimatums and media 'beat-ups' which exacerbate differences, distort expressed opinions and amplify fears. *2 submissions*

Investigate a congregational model that is less centralised. *1 submission*

The Anglican Communion should remain decentralised and devolved. *1 submission*

The office of 'ombudsman' could be created. *1 submission*

There could be a two-part Communion, liberal and conservative, each offering observer status to the other and working together on programmes for those in need, etc. *1 submission*

Practical resolutions should not be allowed to erode or override the present correct and orthodox position of the worldwide Anglican Communion. *1 submission*

Impaired or broken communion may not find expression in any meaningful way between nation churches and may therefore lose impetus. *1 submission*

Anglicans have an earlier history of considering the possibilities that a higher synodical authority and central council of reference might offer – see S-1-005.

7. Under (a) what circumstances, (b) what conditions, and (c) by what means, might it be appropriate for the Archbishop of Canterbury to exercise an extraordinary ministry of pastoral oversight, support and reconciliation with regard to the internal affairs of a province to maintain communion between Canterbury and that province? (see LC 1998, Res. IV.13)

The Archbishop of Canterbury should not exercise authority by himself but rather with the agreement of a commission of primates. ("He should not act like a Pope.") *4 submissions*

The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Primates should no longer recognise those who have 'abused their authority' ('to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrine contrary to God's Word' Consecration of Bishops 1662 BCP). *5 submissions*

The ABC should intervene in the internal affairs of any church in the Anglican Communion if specifically invited to do so by that church. *2 submissions*

When a diocese or province threatens to leave the communion, the ABC may offer his ministry as a mediator (not as arbitrator). *2 submissions*

The ABC and the Primates should have an appeal court to consider particular cases, which could invoke gradations of discipline regarding invitations, and speaking and voting rights at meetings. *1 submission*

The ABC needs to be perceived as an active participant in this process instead of simply handing things off to commissions. *1 submission*

The South African conflict of the late 1800s suggests how the ABC's pastoral oversight can and should be used. *1 submission*

The ABC intervened in Sudan in a pastoral emergency; the present context is even more serious. *1 submission*

The Commission should use great restraint with respect to any recommendation regarding any intervention in the affairs of those portions of ECUSA that are proceeding in due accord with the established bases of governance of that organisation. *1 submission*

If the ABC is to be afforded disciplinary authority with power to bring into line errant sections of the Anglican Communion, then he must also have universal jurisdiction, appointing the bishops and archbishops whom he may subsequently discipline under his disciplinary authority. *1 submission*

With respect to the Church of Ireland: The significance of the principles contained in the Preamble and Declaration prefixed to the Church Constitution of the Church of Ireland (1870) would suggest a legal question as to what extent an external authority could be accepted. *1 submission*

8. Under (a) what circumstances, (b) what conditions, and (c) by what means, might it be appropriate for the Archbishop of Canterbury to exercise an extraordinary ministry of pastoral oversight, support and reconciliation with regard to the internal affairs of a province to maintain communion between that province and the rest of the Anglican Communion? (see LC Res. IV.13)

Such intervention is necessary where the leadership of a particular province imposes doctrines and practices that are considered to be heretical. *5 submissions*

The authority of the ABC (by virtue of Primates' Meetings and Lambeth Conferences) should extend only to official reconciliation, recognition or de-recognition of provinces by the Anglican Communion. *1 submission*

Consider the example of the Eastern Orthodox communion which has been maintained without the hierarchical Roman Catholic approach yet has maintained a cohesive body. *1 submission*

Conditions might include suggesting a time-frame for a particular practice to be examined/reviewed; inviting learning from another province with a similar set of experiences; commissioning scholars of different theologies to meet for prayer dialogue, haring until reconciliation is reached, even if that reconciliation is an agreement to differ, wile still valuing our unity. *1 submission*

Ecumenical and interfaith issues and concerns

> "…this decision [by ECUSA] will unquestionably damage our interfaith relations with our Muslim friends among whom we live. It will also have a negative impact on our relations with

the Orthodox and Catholic Churches in our area… We will definitely be seen by them now as heretical."

The Rt Revd Dr Mouneer Anis, Bishop of the Episcopal Church in Egypt, North Africa and the Horn of Africa

"Anglican churches continue to be in full communion with two Old Catholic churches which have authorised similar services to those in New Westminster. The fact that Anglican churches feel able to continue this relationship, considered in the light of their commitment to the Bonn Agreement, implies to us that they consider such services to belong to the sphere of 'doctrinal opinion…or liturgical practice' which may be disputed without breaking communion, rather than to the 'essentials of the Christian faith' (Bonn Agreement, paragraph 3). The implication is therefore that such services are matters of local autonomy and should not be considered as involving or being binding upon other churches in communion."

The Anglican and Old Catholic Society of Saint Willibrord

"I would…suggest…an Anglican Ecumenical Synod…at least 2 months in length for exhaustive debate to take place. The synod could be held in place of Lambeth 2008 with the years between…spent in preparation. Commissions could finally do the work on fully defining Anglican Ecclesiology."

"ECUSA has a long and vaunted history of being a leader in ecumenism and interfaith dialogues. Just as our stand on the full inclusion of women into all orders of ministry challenges our conversations with many of our ecumenical and interfaith partners in ministry, so is our fuller inclusion of the GLBT baptised into the Body of Christ a challenge. The Episcopal Church as it currently exists is up to the challenge, is committed to the conversation and is convinced that the goals that unite us a people of faith are ultimately more compelling than the issues that threaten to divide us."

"There was an ecumenical gathering of Christians in China between the Wars… at which they decided to Agree to Differ, Resolve to Love, Unite to Serve. Does the Eames Commission need to do better than that?"

Submissions from individuals to the Lambeth Commission on Communion, February 2004

Document No.	Document
S-1-001	The Bishop of Egypt, the Rt Revd Dr Mouneer Anis
S-1-002	The Bishop of Port Elizabeth, Southern Africa, the Rt Revd Bethlehem Nopece
S-1-003	Lee Tuck-Leong and others, Dioceses of Singapore and West Malaysia
S-1-004	Convention of the Diocese of Washington
S-1-005	The Revd Canon Robert Wright, New York, USA
S-1-006	Bruce Garner, Atlanta, USA
S-1-007	The Anglican and Old Catholic Society of Saint Willibrord
S-1-008	Submissions collated by Anglican Mainstream
S-1-009	The Revd Philip Wainwright, St Peter's Episcopal Church, Pittsburgh USA
S-1-010	Canon Fergus King, USPG, London, England
S-1-011	Dr M J World, Church of England
S-1-012	Paul Walter, Newbury, England
S-1-013	The Rev James B Shumard, Savannah, Georgia, USA
S-1-014	Joseph Conover, Quincy, IL, USA
S-1-015	The Rev Canon Charles B King, Jr, Diocese of Albany, USA
S-1-016	The Revd Ron Hart, Holt, England
S-1-017	The Council of Forward in Faith, North America (The Revd Canon Warren Tanghe)
S-1-018	The Anglican Communion in New Westminster (The Rev Dr Trevor Walters, Chair)
S-1-019	Douglas A Kerr and Carla C Kerr, Dallas, Texas, USA
S-1-020	The Rev William Press, Belfast, N Ireland
S-1-021	The Revd Patrick Coleman
S-1-022	David Houlton, member of the Anglican Church of Basel, Diocese of Europe
S-1-023	Keith Myers, Diocese of New Jersey, USA
S-1-024	Professor C J G & Dr P D M Turner, Vancouver, British Colombia, Canada
S-1-025	Canon Clive West, Belfast, N Ireland
S-1-026	Raymond F Kennedy, Hassocks, West Sussex, England
S-1-027	The Rev Ralph N McMichael, Jr, St Louis, Missouri, USA
S-1-028	The Very Rev George L W Werner, 31st President, House of Deputies, USA
S-1-029	The Revd William Locke, Diocese of Rhode Island, USA
S-1-030	The Rev Michael C Hunn
S-1-031	The Revd David W Griffith
S-1-032	Andrew Starkie, John Bull, Kit, Frank Knaggs, Rick Simpson, Newcastle Diocese, England
S-1-033	Philip Hobday, Church of England ordinand
S-1-034	The Rev Charles Walthall, Diocese of Springfield, USA
S-1-035	William Morris, Minnetonka, USA
S-1-036	The Revd Nicholas Sykes, Church of England in the Cayman Islands
S-1-037	Paul Mikulak, Diocese of Bethlehem, Honesdale, Pennsylvania, USA

Document No.	Document
S-1-038	Episcopal Women's Caucus, Integrity and concerned observers of the AAC's Convention, USA
S-1-039	The Revd Susan Russell, Integrity President, Pasadena CA, USA
S-1-040	Keating Willcox, Hamilton, MA, USA
S-1-041	Dave Backs, Donelson, TN, USA
S-1-042	Statement of the Episcopal Church of Guatemala on the participation of the Central American Primate in Gene Robinson's consecration
S-1-043	Select Vestry of St Elizabeth's, Dundonald, Belfast, Down & Dromore, Church of Ireland
S-1-044	Mark Harris, author of *The Challenge of Change: The Anglican Communion in the Post Modern Era*, USA
S-1-045	Mario Ribas, Rector, Brazil
S-1-046	Michael Hopkins, Rector, USA
S-1-047	Sybille Ngo Nyeck, Yaounde, Cameroon
S-1-048	Christopher Senteza, VP, Integrity Uganda
S-2-049	Terrence Walker, USA
S-2-050	William C Spencer Jr, USA
S-2-051	Robert C Gast, USA
S-2-052	Christopher Hall, England
S-2-053	Desmond Tillyer
S-2-054	Hugh Tracy, England
S-2-055	Bruce Earl Atkinson
S-2-056	R Patterson, Church of Ireland
S-2-057	William and Caroline Prickett, Maryland, USA
S-2-058	Stanley T Case, Spartanburg, South Carolina, USA, a member of the vestry of St Christopher's Episcopal Church
S-2-059	W Guth (submitted articles by John Shelby Spong and Francis Gray)
S-2-060	William R Coats, New Jersey, USA
S-2-061	The Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement (LGCM)
S-2-062	Forward in Faith International, submitted by Geoffrey Kirk, Secretary
S-2-063	Michael Earl Ridgill, South Carolina, USA
S-2-064	Ian Bastable, St Michael's Anglican Church, Umhlanga Rocks, South Africa
S-2-065	David A Richardson, Rector, Arizona, USA
S-2-066	Edmund Etheridge, Virginia, USA
S-2-067	Curtis Caldwell
S-2-068	Eric Hyom, UK
S-2-069	Christopher Heying, Texas, USA
S-2-070	Dee Townsend, Iowa, USA
S-2-071	Francisco Sales, Secretary for Brazil OSF/SSF
S-2-072	Michael Kennedy, General Synod, Church of Ireland
S-2-073	Robert Pettigrew, Virginia, USA
S-2-074	Ian George, Archbishop of Adelaide, Australia
S-2-075	Bill Carpenter, Minneapolis, USA
S-2-076	Simon Taylor, Bristol, UK
S-2-077	Gerard Hannon, New York
S-2-078	Roger Harper, Walsall, UK
S-2-079	Steven Schäufele, Taipei, Taiwan

Document No.	Document
S-2-080	Donna Bott, Central Florida
S-2-081	Executive Committee of Affirming Catholicism, UK
S-2-082	GRAS (Group for the Rescinding of the Act of Synod)
S-2-083	Michael Lessard, Arizona
S-2-084	WATCH (Women and the Church)
S-2-085	John Harding Price, Lincoln, UK
S-2-086	PCC of Christ Church, Accrington, Diocese of Blackburn, UK
S-2-087	Elizabeth M Kaeton, President of the Board of Directors for the Episcopal Church Publishing Company
S-2-088	Select Vestry of St Nicholas, Carrickfergus, N Ireland
S-2-089	Members of the Diocese of San Joaquin, USA
S-2-090	PCC of St Andrew's Leyland, UK
S-2-091	Lorraine Cavanagh, Cardiff University chaplaincy
S-2-092	Mark Adams Brown, Texas, USA
S-2-093	Enver Rahmanov
S-2-094	Brenda Harrison, Church of England
S-2-095	Rowland Jide Macaulay, Nigeria
S-2-096	The Revd Dr Jay Emerson Johnson, California
S-2-097	Tobias S Haller, BSG, New York
S-2-098	Gary Flowers, US
S-2-099	The Revd Christopher Gaze, England
S-2-100	The Rev M A Collins, San Diego, USA
S-2-101	David Houlton, Switzerland
S-2-102	Michael Russell, Rector, San Diego, USA
S-2-103	Open letter signed by 1700 church leaders, USA
S-2-104	The Rector and Wardens of St Martin's Episcopal Church, Houston
S-2-105	Canon Beaumont Stevenson, Oxford, England

A SUBMISSION TO THE EAMES COMMISSION
FROM THE VERY REVD COLIN SLEE
DEAN OF SOUTHWARK
June 2004

INTRODUCTION

I am addressing this to the Commission because I was at the heart of the events of the summer of 2003 when my colleague Canon Jeffrey John was put under pressure to resign his acceptance of the nomination to the Bishopric of Reading. I both witnessed and experienced the nature of that nomination and resignation and believe that close experience places me in a privileged position to make some observations which will I hope be helpful to the Commission.

I am not addressing the events of that summer in detail for the Commission, as I do not believe that is the Commission's remit. If, however, the Commission would like a paper cataloguing my perception of the events of that summer, then I will offer one.

I know the Commission has not asked for evidence from Canon John, although I am aware it has heard evidence from some who fiercely opposed his appointment. I feel it would be worthwhile if the Commission asked him to contribute as a matter of objectivity and balance, and a matter of concern if it does not. He is, after all, an acknowledged theologian and teacher.

CENTRAL ISSUES

The events of the summer of 2003 are not the central concern. Disagreement about the status of homosexual people within the Anglican Church is an extremely limited agenda. The central issues for maintaining a Communion are concerned with ecclesiology, exegesis and history.

Historical precedent

Scripture itself has ample evidence of divisions between the disciples in the New Testament. We would not have either the epistles or the Revelation to St John the Divine if it had not been for deep divisions within the early church. The disciples are recorded as competitive and bickering in the gospels. It is plain that St Peter and St Paul represented polarised positions in the early church. The New Testament only records them meeting three times and each time, they had a row. Nevertheless, they also - and significantly - recognised the veracity and authentic discipleship of each other's views; they were 'in Communion'. The Reformation, the Enlightenment, the Free Church Movements, are all periods of challenging debate and upheaval within the church. In some cases people left and probably in all, in some there was institutional schism.

The present debate has a very selective view of history within the church. Many of the people on either side of the present debate would, in different circumstances, describe the old divisions of the churches as sinful, a bad witness to the world, a source of shame; they will be people who regard ecumenical co-operation as a good thing to pursue; they will have voted for agreements at Meissen and Porvoo and yet some of them are at the same time threatening 'schism' (I would argue they are actually sectarian) from those with whom they disagree on one issue.

Nobody today would defend the religious persecutions and martyrdoms of the Reformation or later disagreements when bishops were simply unfrocked because they acted according to their conscience. Nevertheless, many people who express their horror at the conduct of our predecessors espouse a doctrinaire Anglican Church which, for example, demands public repentance (a feature of Reformation persecutions and a demand laid against Canon Jeffrey John several times last summer), or engages in condemnation and clearly discriminates against certain classes and types of people with regard to membership and status within the church. The claims of organisations like Reform, "...we are defending true Anglican orthodoxy..." have to be examined thoroughly.

I hope the Commission will find the time to address the difference between 'schism' (which was often referred to in the Press during the course of the past year) and 'sectarianism', whereby relatively small groups break away, or Provinces declare UDI according to their own definition of their faith. In particular, the Commission could assist the Communion by exploring who is the sectarian: the one who breaks or the one who stays with the parent church.

Doctrinal unity

History shows that what is held in common is greater and more firmly central to faith than what differentiates. The common lesson of most of the religious conflicts within the churches in the past has been that the most destructive and divisive events occur when what is held in common has been swamped by what differentiates believers. The beginning of the Reformation may be an exception to this rule in that it was initially a campaign against ecclesiastical corruption in various forms; it became politicised and more theological as freedom of religious expression was discovered. There is a deep

historic irony that those who exercised the freedom of religious expression sometimes became the very people who insisted on religious uniformity to their perspective and so in turn became oppressors and persecutors. We are witnessing a similar degeneration of freedom within the Anglican Communion at present.

The Anglican Communion needs to re-claim a doctrinal ecclesiology that recognises the irreducible centre of our creed as the common baptismal basis of membership and permits interpretation in matters that surround the central core of faith. Anglicans will differ in their approach to both baptism and the creeds; there are those who take the creeds literally; those who 'pick and mix', accepting some clauses and struggling (or ignoring) others; those who see them as an agenda upon which the faithful work for their entire life in the faith but, providing they are so working, they are clearly taking the creeds very seriously indeed as an article of faith.

I would welcome the Commission pointing the entire Communion back to a study of the creeds, to baptismal membership, to what we hold in common and to the capacity for diversity around that core.

A GREATER HONESTY ABOUT THE ANGLICAN INHERITANCE

I spent two years working for the Anglican Church in Papua New Guinea (PNG). The Province of PNG is now numbered among those that have espoused a very traditional interpretation of Anglican teaching with regard to homosexuality.

During my time there, I worked with a number of homosexual clergy, not all of whom were wholly celibate. I watched as all the churches in PNG benefited from an agreement made between the World Wars which divided the country into zones so that denominations were no longer in competition but accepted responsibility for certain regions exclusively; the Comity of Churches. When boys from the school where I worked went to study in another region, we wrote to the pastor or priest commending them to their care, they were in communion on the basis of baptism and *vice versa*. The Province owes much to a mutual respect of central beliefs, baptism and acceptance of doctrinal difference within and between the churches. It is a Province which, no matter what its present declared 'policy' might be, was the beneficiary of the dedicated and fruitful ministry of priests whose sexual orientation was very different from that which is at present claimed as 'orthodox'. I believe that, almost by definition, because of the demands upon missionaries in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, this pattern may be applicable very widely, for example in Nigeria or in South America.

It is my hope, therefore, that the Commission will point to an honest appraisal of the historical indebtedness of the Church to diversity with integrity throughout the Church's development, particularly in those parts of the world where policies are being declared by those who are less than candid about their own foundations.

The countries of the mother church, especially England, have been guilty of a 'post-colonial, neo-patronising missiology' by adhering too strongly to a principle of independence in new Anglican Provinces. Greater provincial independence and governance has led to theological development and training being sadly neglected by the parent churches in the younger, emerging Provinces. The result, in many cases, is the perpetual re-cycling of an early 20th and sometimes 19th century, theological training. The catholic and liberal theological schools of the Anglican Communion within the churches of the 'north' have failed to address these circumstances most. Evangelical and fundamentalist elements of the Church have always had a stronger missiology and adapted more quickly to newer patterns of need. On the other hand, it might be argued (as I note Lord Carey's recent autobiography does) that they are very weak indeed on ecclesiology. The present disagreements are not only marked by radically disparate theological perceptions but also by ability and expression, as was clearly evident at the meeting of Anglican Primates at Lambeth in 2003, a theological 'time warp' has been exposed which the entire Communion must address.

It is my hope that the Commission will commend to the Anglican Communion a careful, penitent and honest appraisal of its own history within the architecture of the present disagreements.

For example: the penal colony at Sydney Cove, Australia, in the 18th and 19th centuries received many convicts from the Irish rebellion. It was very far from communication and regulation, its chaplaincy was supplied by clergy who themselves had reason to wish to be away from England. There was therefore the mixture of tyranny and oppression with political hatred labelled by religious affiliation. Understanding the roots of the present intolerant Puritanism manifesting itself in a most un-Anglican way in the Sydney diocese (as recently discussed very widely in the media), requires recognition of Sydney's particularly unfortunate foundation and the effect of strong Irish connections. The conduct of the present Archbishop and his brother the Dean, may be giving cause for

special concern within the Communion as being unrepresentative of the Anglican tradition to the point of being un-Anglican. It must be clearly recognised, nevertheless, that the present situation is the result of very many years of Anglican sectarianism there. Archbishop Michael Ramsey denounced the bigotry of the Sydney diocese from the pulpit of Sydney's Anglican cathedral forty years ago.

The divisive churchmanship and rivalry of the missionary societies in different parts of Africa and South America are directly linked to the traditions and perspectives of the churches they established.

It is my hope that the Commission will commend to the missionary societies and the Communion at large, a radical re-appraisal of the inheritance they have given to the churches of the developing world. The Communion must aim to recover the energy and commitment of the churches with financial, historic and theological training resources to assist a more coherent, less partisan, theologically grounded, biblically stringent and doctrinally thorough scholarship throughout the Communion. The Provinces without those resources must learn the capacity to accept such help, and vice versa*.*

Theological study and training

I am in close contact with clergy, bishops and trainers as far apart as Brazil, Ethiopia, South Africa, New Zealand, Australia and Zimbabwe. In most of those countries, the Church struggles to maintain the breadth of scholarship that is readily available in the northern hemisphere because facilities, access to teachers, scholars and records, is so much more limited.

The advent of the World Wide Web may in part be remedying this, providing there is adequate access to it. One feature of much that was said from the so-called 'Global South' (which usually, it should be noted, ignores South Africa, New Zealand and Australia) is that any attempt at theological argument during the past year has been notable for a very limited theological perspective.

I would welcome the Commission devoting time to consider theological training in the Anglican Communion world-wide, greater exchange programmes, greater attention to dissemination (via electronic media) of the widest spectrum of debate and enabling access to that material in the poorer parts of the Communion.

THE EVIDENCE BEING USED

In the present disagreement, the Commission will need to make some very carefully balanced judgements about the objective weight of some of the arguments that are being put to it.

The numbers debate

The Diocese of Southwark has six archdeaconries. In just one of them (Wandsworth), there are 423,571 signed-up, communicant Anglicans, not counting children or people who prefer not to join the church rolls (who number many more). The Province of the Southern Cone has 22,490 communicant Anglicans - 5% of just one Southwark archdeaconry, so an archdeacon in south London has responsibility for twenty times more souls than the Archbishop of the Southern Cone. Yet the Archbishop of the Southern Cone receives attention commensurate with his status, which bears no relation to the numbers he represents. The Bishop of Kingston, a suffragan bishop in this diocese, has two archdeaconries, i.e., over a million Anglicans in his care, counting children and those not on church rolls. It is very clear that suffragan bishops in the U.K. have more parishes, more clergy and more complexity of governance in Synod than many diocesan bishops and many primates in other parts of the world. To rank the Archbishop of the Southern Cone and the Bishop of Kingston on a numerical basis must make the Bishop of Kingston more significant by many criteria, but he is not so ranked in the Councils of the Church. Equally therefore, when dissention occurs within the Communion, it cannot be judged according to numerical predominance.

The Archbishop of Nigeria claims to represent 17.5 million Anglicans. This is not a valid comparative in terms of democratic weight. Nigeria is a tribal country; membership of certain denominations is almost obligatory according to tribe. Likewise, certain tribes are Muslim and certain tribes are Christian, dividing the country north and south. These divisions have been all-too-evident in the wars within Nigeria in past decades. To lay claim to 17.5 million Anglicans in Nigeria is therefore not something that is remotely comparable to Anglican membership in, for example, the U.K. or Canada. The Archbishop of Nigeria cannot show evidence that his method of counting has any evidential basis comparable to that of other Provinces and certainly not the Church of England's system.

I have many Nigerians in my present congregation; not only were they deeply ashamed of the Anglican Church in Nigeria during the course of last summer but they repeatedly explained that being a Christian in Nigeria is completely different from the free choice that exists to be, or not to be, a Christian in the U.K.

In the Councils of the Anglican Communion, the Archbishop of the Southern Cone and the Archbishop of Nigeria carry equal weight, the numbers argument simply does not stand up as a basis of the Communion's governance.

Those who employ the numbers argument cannot have it both ways: either numbers give them an influential position, or they take away influence if applied properly. It is my submission that the numbers arguments so frequently deployed in the present debates are entirely spurious and intentionally misleading. I would also submit that they are theologically un-sound in the light of all that Holy Scripture has to teach about the remnant, the oppressed minority, the alien and the stranger.
I hope the Commission will give due consideration to the argument that there is a statistical fraud being perpetrated whereby the Provinces of the Communion are given equal status for unequal membership on entirely variant criteria, both in debate and in the councils of the Communion. The numbers argument must be seen to apply fairly if it

is to be used as a criterion for participation at all. If it is not a criterion, then Provinces cannot be permitted to 'use' it in debate as a source of influence and authority.

The Commission could consider advising the Communion to treat any discussion based upon numerical weight as deeply flawed theologically.

The Anglican Communion very properly needs to build structures for relationship, understanding and 'democratic' synodical decision making. These need to be based upon sound foundations, rather than curious accidents of Provincial development and disproportionate influence that is unrepresentative of the entire Communion's make-up or the responsibilities within each part of it. There is a strong case for abolishing the present Lambeth Conference as too expensive and altogether un-representative of the nature of the Communion as a whole. A smaller conference, a development of the Primates' Conference, limited to diocesan bishops (without spouses), would be a more effective tool for leadership, feeding-in to regional provincial conferences ('mini-Lambeths') financed by and within each region.

I will give one further example. Policy statements have been made on behalf of the 'African' Anglican church that clearly do not reflect the position of the South African Province. The Primate of South Africa has personally told me of meetings of African bishops to which he has not been invited. I recently spent three months in South Africa, while there I had a two hour interview with the Bishop of Somerset West (a suffragan bishop of Cape Town), he is openly gay, he lives a celibate life, he was consecrated by Desmond Tutu with clear statements of his sexual orientation at the time and a clear majority in his election. He tells me he has received only one poisonous letter in the ten years he has been a suffragan bishop. That also indicates that those who say the Archbishop of Cape Town (and his predecessor) are out of step with African opinion and their pronouncements are wildly inaccurate.

The Commission will be alert, I have no doubt, to the serious mis-representations of opinion that have been - and are being - generated; and to the serious misrepresentation of opinion that is being 'engineered' by mailing campaigns and 'bulk' of letters, petitions and submissions.

The consecration of Bishop Mervyn Castle in 1994 created no furore in the Anglican Communion. It is hardly known in many parts of the Communion that he is openly homosexual and celibate. There are, of course (and always have been), other bishops who are homosexual but have not openly declared themselves to be so - I am aware of at least two who have been consecrated in Southwark Cathedral by the former Archbishop George Carey during my time as Dean.

The question must therefore be asked: 'What created the disagreements and high temperature of the summer of 2003?' With what purpose? Was it planned and co-ordinated? I believe there is evidence that it was. The Commission may wish to ask itself why, by whom, and how it was financed.

THE FINANCE DEBATE

Financial power has become a tool for coercion within the Communion. There are credible and repeated allegations of bribery of bishops to vote a certain way at the last Lambeth Conference. These have been mentioned several times in the Press; it is notable that no denials have been issued and no actions have been taken against those making the allegations.

We have seen finance used as a lever in the debate about the ordination of women to the priesthood in the U.K. and elsewhere, with people and parishes threatening to withdraw their giving. In the Diocese of Southwark, it was used when the Cathedral hosted a service for the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement, six parishes refused to pay their quota, exerting a pressure on the diocese but none at all on the Cathedral, this was widely publicised at the time. What was not publicised was their confidential payment of their quota some months later. The parishes used financial withdrawal as a leverage device whilst benefiting from diocesan structures and then submitted to those structures in order to avoid any disciplinary measures.

Conservative evangelical groups have propagated the notion that they carry serious financial power and could cripple the Church by exercising that power. This argument has been clearly utilised within England, in the U.S.A. and Canada. It is a flawed argument theologically: churches are in communion, they cannot be partly in communion on conditions. It is also fiscally doubtful that the case would stand up to true financial analysis. A snapshot of the largest donor parishes in this diocese to the diocesan share revealed, to some people's surprise, they were equally balanced between evangelical and catholic parishes.

It is a deeply flawed, sinful, use of Mammon. It is notable that, with a few recent exceptions, the churches of the 'liberal west': Canada, the U.S.A., the U.K., New Zealand and Australia, have continued to send money to the churches of the developing countries even when their disagreements have been intense. A very large contribution from a well-known catholic parish in New York was the bedrock contribution which financed the most recent Lambeth Conference, which then passed motions on homosexuality and world debt relief with which the Vestry of that church strongly disagreed; the parish did not ask for its money back.

If finance is to be accepted within the Communion as a legitimate bargaining tool, then the weight of authority clearly lies with those churches who contribute most to the Communion. This is not an argument I would advocate but the figures speak for themselves. The Anglican Consultative Council publishes accounts showing that, over four years, the Church of England has given £1,357,731, the U.S.A. £1,314,378, whereas Nigeria only £70,148, the West Indies £48,268, Australia £431,807 and Papua New Guinea £5,128. (This is in addition to Mission giving from the U.K. and U.S.A. churches.) The direction of the misuse of finance as a weapon for debate has been from conservative 'evangelical' groups within the Communion against the wider, central and liberal 'catholic' parts of the Communion. This is deeply un-scriptural, despite the frequently declared loyalty of those parts of the communion to scripture. There is an excellent paper and exegesis of this policy by the Bishop of Thetford, David Atkinson, published in the Diocese of Norwich last summer. It is a notable ecclesiological distinction that the 'threat' to use financial leverage has almost never been employed in the opposite direction within the Communion against conservative and evangelical Provinces or parishes.

Within the church in the U.K., wealthy evangelical congregations are nearly always suburban. Withdrawal of financial support is at the expense of the maintenance of the

ministry of inner urban or rural, deprived parishes. This raises significant questions about the teaching of ecclesiology and exegesis in the prosperous parishes.

The Press in the U.K. and elsewhere believe they have identified the donor of large sums of money which finance relatively extreme conservative evangelical organisations; organisations whose constitutions are not representative of the Baptismal, Episcopal and Synodical tradition of the Anglican Communion and Anglican doctrine of the church. If the Press are accurate in their identification, then the donor's known personal views are evidenced as at wide variance to the Anglican tradition; this raises further questions about subverting the tradition intentionally.

It is my hope that in its recommendations for the future conduct of the Communion, the Commission will address the misuse of finance as a weapon for coercion, examine the theological implications of this development, the sources from which finance is accepted by lobby groups, the obligations of recipients both towards donors (who clearly may have an agenda) and towards the Church and Communion as a whole.

ECCLESIOLOGICAL QUESTIONS

There are major ecclesiological questions and differences to be addressed, most particularly: hierarchy, governance and democracy.

It is my personal opinion that there are Provinces and organisations within the Anglican Church dedicated to accepting anything they choose to like while rejecting and subverting anything they dislike; there is a breakdown of discipline and an erosion of 'Communion'. There is clear evidence of this from the debate concerning the ordination of women to the priesthood. In the U.K., the strategy for a divided church was actually institutionalised by the Act of Synod. Those who chose to reject the validity of women's orders were given the privileged position of remaining within the church (and in many cases continuing to subvert it), whilst rejecting its carefully debated path. These people and parishes are from *both* catholic and evangelical traditions.

In New Zealand, the church established the first 'flying bishops' with the establishment of the separate Maori constituency and episcopacy. This action not only acted as a precedent for the Act of Synod in England (which, it may be argued, institutionalised dissent) but may also be open to question as a racist action when its motives were no doubt the exact opposite.

There were many Anglicans, both in the U.K. and throughout the Communion, who do not represent the evangelical perspective he epitomised, who found Archbishop George Carey's appointment difficult to accept for several reasons but they were loyal, there were no stratagems to undermine him or campaigns against his appointment, or organisations financed and dedicated to subvert his teaching.

It is a matter of ecclesiology and obedience to the process and governance that the Communion as a whole accepts the integrity and mutual inter-dependence of each individual part.

The very proper independent governance of separate Provinces is conducted with relatively little reference to the effect of decisions in respective Provinces upon the whole Communion.

It is my hope that the Commission will give serious attention to the sociological and governance changes that have occurred within the Communion which have made occasions of disagreement so powerfully divisive, when previously the Communion could accommodate disagreement with greater charity.

I hope the Commission will examine the (sometimes deeply flawed) distinctive ecclesiologies throughout the Communion. Holy Scripture is very clear about the way different parts of the body are not free to reject one another.

The Commission will also need to address the difficulty of a Bishop acting 'in Synod' in countries covering vast geographical areas, with poor communications and little finance where synods meet rarely and bishops, almost inevitably, adopt quasi dictatorial roles.

MIS-INFORMATION AND ORGANISED DISSENT

It became abundantly clear to me during the course of the highly sophisticated campaign against Canon Jeffrey John during the summer of 2003 that there are organised networks dedicated to subverting the due processes of the Communion.

One example is the network that now emanates from the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, based at Wycliffe College Oxford; another is Anglican Mainstream. The mobilisation of e-mail campaigns, letter writing and telephoning were, in organisational terms, impressive. The objective was the reversal of a decision properly taken within the open and public structures of a given Province, with the Archbishop's consent and the approval of the Crown; more openly and consultatively than in the appointment of any other suffragan bishop (of which I am aware) in the U.K. An individual was pilloried by mass communication generated from a relatively small but highly organised group; the Archbishop was effectively subverted, the statistics, when assessed dispassionately, bear this out because the numbers of communicant Anglicans who were not threatening actions to force Canon John's resignation enormously outweighed the numbers that were. It is a known statistical phenomenon that people write objections much more than they write approvals, the case for submitting to the campaigns from objectors is therefore always extremely doubtful on moral grounds. Overseas archbishops and bishops were recruited (by what mechanism?) to interfere in the proper processes of an independent Province, thereby creating the crisis the Commission must now address.

Ill-informed attacks were purposely generated; the Archbishop of Nigeria could not possibly have been concerned with Canon John's nomination had he not been recruited (as with other primates in, for example, the West Indies and Southern Cone of America). The Archbishop of Nigeria's outbursts in the newspapers always assumed Canon John either to be in an active relationship or a liar, either the Archbishop chose to adopt this slander or he was partially advised in order that he did so. His statements are also evidence for the argument used above that there are widely varying standards of theological debate within the Communion. The Archbishop of Canterbury was intentionally undermined to the point at which he asked Canon John to withdraw from an appointment that he had personally told me he welcomed, in order to maintain the unity of the Communion. Principle was sacrificed to expedience.

The nature of some of the campaigning groups is highly congregational and even anti-episcopal. Rule by majority among the laity is a tradition of the Protestant free churches; it is not an Anglican theology of churchmanship.

Inevitably, the more liberal and catholic parts of the Church are setting about the same exercise with the creation of movements such as Inclusive Church but it will not reach the levels of sophisticated lobbying because it is by definition, contrary to their liberality and obedient tradition of ecclesiology.

The Commission will need to ask: 'What is the intention of these pressure groups (the true intention as distinct from the stated intention), and whether that intention is fully in accord with the teaching and governance of the Anglican Communion?'

The Commission will have a difficult task discerning whether the inclusive tolerance of the Anglican tradition has unknowingly harboured a significant minority who have no belief in the Apostolic succession, episcopacy, Orders and synodical processes and may genuinely be said to be outside even the wide boundaries of a tolerant Anglicanism.

The Commission will wish to address a world-wide doctrine of priesthood and episcopacy in the Anglican Communion, this is implicit in a 'Communion' but manifestly not systematic, as can be seen in the conduct of many.

BISHOPS

This view that bishops are above all else, a focus for unity gained increased significance during the primacy of George Carey who saw it as a *sine qua non* of membership of the bench of bishops. It has a scriptural basis, not least in St Paul's letters to Timothy and should be addressed with reverence.

The Church has, nevertheless, at times of deep division and schism made huge strides in its structures, governance, doctrine and approach to scripture. For example, it is perhaps worth observing that some of the bishops of the Church of England opposed the abolition of slavery in England!

Church polity cannot be driven by a 'unity at all costs', which ultimately compromises truth in scripture, reason and tradition.

I express the earnest hope that in its deliberations, the Commission will address the customary view of bishops as a focus for unity.

It is my hope that the Commission will give attention to the need for bishops to face up to disunity as a part of their leadership of the flock and the searching after truth.

SCRIPTURE, REASON AND TRADITION

It is my hope that the Commission will draw the attention of Anglicans throughout the world to the Anglican heritage of Scripture, Reason and Tradition. Much of the present difficulty lies in imbalances between these elements of the inheritance.

In debates concerning women's ordination, lay presidency, divorce and homosexuality, there has been evidence that some parts of the Communion place emphasis on Scripture at the expense of Reason and Tradition while others appeal to Reason and could be said to give inadequate attention to Scripture. Reason is not only an intellectual tool in discerning meaning and doctrine but also in responding to the climate and social demands of the present era. These will differ from country to country. It is perfectly possible to hold the Communion together if the Communion can discern these three elements of its inheritance as in a constant dynamic dialogue by which each enriches the other and in different proportion in different parts of the world and at different times.

Scriptural exegesis lies at the heart of many of the most divisive debates. One of the most distressing features has been the way that people who claim to teach the scriptures seriously are hugely selective in the manner they use scripture.

For example: Our Lord had direct and firm things to say in the gospels about divorce but nothing about homosexuality. It is normally accepted that the gospels have a certain scriptural pre-eminence as a source. Yet the present Bishop of Winchester argued in the General Synod of the Church of England for a more compassionate approach in the Church's discipline towards divorce, using scripture and the spirit of reconciliation and forgiveness within scripture as a whole, whilst at the same time he was participating in the campaign against homosexuals in the church, objecting to Canon John's nomination to Reading, in a campaign that made highly selective use of passages in the epistles and was planned in secret, contrary to Holy Scripture.

There are so many examples of the selective use of scripture in debate that they cannot be easily enumerated. I remind the Commission that scripture was at one time used (the 'mark of Cain') by the Dutch Reformed Church to justify Apartheid. Scripture is a very powerful weapon and its abuse by selectivity and partiality is a matter of the gravest concern.

It is my hope that the Commission will be able to point Provinces of the Communion towards a more respectful, serious and comprehensive use of scriptural exegesis than is displayed in many parts of the Communion at present.

The concept of Tradition is as difficult as an agreed and common approach to Scripture unless that concept is maintained within the lessons from history and experience.

The 39 Articles are a clear example. Famous ecclesiastical cases in law, such as against Michael Ramsey when Bishop of Durham with regard to the wearing of vestments, show that the tradition of the Church of England is much broader and more flexible than any narrow application of literalism to the 39 Articles. They remain a body of order within the Church of England to which clergy 'assent' upon ordination. Clergy assent that they exist, that they were formative in the Anglican Church, that they represent a statement of the conduct of the church at the time. Clergy are not asked to say they 'believe' them.

It is commonly believed that the Anglican Church has no tradition of sacramental confession to a priest and yet, at the heart of *The Book of Common Prayer* Visitation of

the Sick it can be found; it is perfectly legitimate to argue that individual sacramental confession has never disappeared from the Anglican tradition.

Likewise, the place of bishops within the Church is central to its unique role as both catholic and reformed. It is an episcopal church with synodical processes. The governance is by the Bishop in Synod. When, therefore, issues are debated and resolved within that process, loyalty to the Anglican Communion requires that Anglican communicants adhere to the disciplines thereby declared, whether they fully agree with them or not.

I hope the Commission will recall the Communion to the historic building blocks of its inheritance and the application of Scripture, Reason and Tradition within its councils and debates and to obedience to the Councils of the Church.

VOCABULARY

In recent years, we have witnessed words being 'kidnapped' for purposes which are not reflective of their true meaning. So we have movements and organisations which claim they are 'traditional', 'orthodox', 'mainstream', 'Reform', 'Forward in Faith' and so on.

It is a matter of mis-representation. For example, the ecclesiological and doctrinal inheritance of the Anglican Church is both catholic and reformed. It is its unique gift to Christian history that its polity has been balanced in this way and has permitted of inclusiveness for all people of goodwill with great generosity. Therefore to seek to label any organisation narrowly 'mainstream' when it does not represent these traditions, or narrowly 'catholic' (which is an oxymoron) or reform is to seek to hijack the inheritance for a limiting purpose of exclusion. Similar arguments can very easily be adduced for the other examples I give above.

The Commission might consider the growing manipulation of vocabulary. It is my hope the Commission will warn the church to avoid this tendency as it carries within it the seeds of sectarianism.

I assure the Commission that they are in my prayers and the daily prayers of the congregation at Southwark Cathedral.

The Commission has been delegated with a role within the Communion which may be said to be quasi Episcopal. The ordinal for bishops in *Common Worship* says,

> 'A bishop is called to lead in serving and caring for the people of God and to work with them in the oversight of the Church. As a chief pastor, he shares with his fellow bishops a special responsibility to maintain and further the unity of the Church, to uphold its discipline, and to guard its faith. He is to promote its mission throughout the world. It is his duty to watch over and pray for all those committed to his charge, and to teach and govern them after the example of the Apostles, speaking in the name of God and interpreting the gospel of Christ. He is to know his people and be known by them. ... He is to be merciful, but with firmness, and to minister discipline, but with mercy. He is to have a special care for the outcast and needy...'

It is my firm conviction that the present discord within the Communion can be redeemed and turned to good purpose under God. I pray, nevertheless, that this is not done by postponing disagreement to another day and disguising it as diversity. With respectful attention to the Ordinal, we seek from the Commission: leadership, service, care; furthering unity, guarding faith; mission, teaching and governance; merciful firmness and discipline; with a special care for the outcast and needy.

I look for clear guidance from the Commission for the Communion about its honesty, use of power and finance and for charity towards one another under God.

Colin Slee

The Lambeth Commission on Communion - Documents

From: PETER TOON
Sent: 28 August 2004
Subject: Fostering by African Bishops

ADOPTION – ecclesial, Anglican style

Fatherly Bonds between Africa and America

There is a growing trend amongst conservative evangelical and charismatic (and even anglo-catholic) ECUSA and ACC (Anglican Church of Canada) congregations. It is to declare themselves " fatherless" and looking for an adoptive father in Africa who has a black face – looking for an African bishop or archbishop as a "father in God" who is in a province that is part of the Anglican Communion.

Several African bishops seem happy to take on this role as father of mostly white children and in doing so they have caused distress in the House of Bishops of the ECUSA and of the ACC. Emphasizing the Anglican Primates' agreement that "bishops are to respect the boundaries of one another's dioceses and provinces," the Presiding Bishop of ECUSA, Frank T Griswold, recently sent a letter of concern to the Archbishop of the Church of the Province of Uganda, Henry L Orombi, after a third Southern California congregation recently aligned with the Ugandan Diocese of Luweero.

Presiding Bishop Griswold also issued the following statement to the media:

"I am saddened by the action of clergy and members of three congregations in the Diocese of Los Angeles and their desire to separate themselves from the life of the Episcopal Church. I know how assiduously Bishop Bruno has sought to be a minister of reconciliation and a pastor to those of all views within the life of the Diocese of Los Angeles and its 147 diverse congregations.

"I have written to the Archbishop of the Church of the Province of Uganda expressing my concern that he claims jurisdiction within the boundaries of the Episcopal Church. The bishops of the Anglican Communion and the Primates in their statement of last October have made it clear that bishops are to respect the boundaries of one another's dioceses and provinces. Living in communion with one another involves not only the sharing of a common faith in the Risen Lord but how we treat and respect one another in the Body of Christ."

Technically, Griswold is right. The African bishops of Uganda and elsewhere are breaking the rules and this is especially poignant since the Archbishop's Commission looking into the sexuality crisis has not yet reported (due October 04). Why could they not wait until November?, it is being asked.

The African bishops justify their action, apparently, on the basis that the ECUSA in general, and specific bishops in the USA and Canada in particular, are encouraging the

blessing of gay partners and ordaining persons in gay commitments. And this itself is against the Bible and against agreements at the Lambeth Conference and in the Primates' Meetings. The promotion of the Gay agenda locally in the USA or Canada leads to a conservative parish in Los Angeles or Vancouver breaking with its local bishop and becoming "fatherless"; and then it looks for "a father in God" from those who are the most outspoken against the LesBiGay agenda of the ECUSA and the ACC, the African bishops of Africa but north of South Africa.

Comments:

1. This looking for an adoptive Father in God from Africa will probably continue and if the Archbishop's Commission (as is expected) says little that is truly practically realistic and helpful, then it will cease to be a few and will become many parishes.

2. We are surely to believe that this Adoption is not permanent but is more like Fostering. Let us think of the African bishops as foster fathers to these congregations, and being so until they find a way in the not too far distant future to integrate into some genuine Anglican diocese in North America with its own local bishop.

3. We have to view this development with some concerns and I list several of them below.

First, the Anglican scene in the USA and Canada is being controlled more and more by centrifugal forces as it is becomes more divided. There are few genuinely centripetal forces at work to bring reconciliation, cooperation and commonality. We can all agree that individual congregations with bishops far away is not an ideal situation.

Secondly – and here I hope not to be misunderstood – the African bishops are terrific on such themes as biblical authority, evangelization, church extension, joyful service and opposition to active homosexuality. In fact, they tend to see homosexuality as so wrong that anyone who like them opposes it is a friend, whatever his actual views on the Trinity, the Incarnation, Grace and Salvation.

In general, the bishops so point to the Bible that they take for granted that the Prayer Book being used in any Anglican dioceses is fine (the reason for this is that their background is the use of the classic BCP 1662 in English or in a local African language). Thus they see the title "BCP" on the ECUSA Prayer Book and they assume it is doctrinally in accord with the classic BCP of 1662. How wrong they are! They do not realize that this American book has all kinds of deficiencies in terms of what may be called historic Anglican standards of doctrine of God, Christ and Salvation (see further Tarsitano & Toon, Neither Orthodoxy nor Formulary. The 1979 Liturgy , from 1-800-727-1928 orwww.anglicanmarketplace.com). The African bishops do not seem to be aware just how much the ECUSA was infected with heresy and error before the homosexual agenda prevailed in 2003.

Thirdly – and here I hope once again not be misunderstood – the African bishops do not realize (and I suspect do not really want to know) just how deeply the divorce culture has affected even the "conservative congregations" in North America and also

that the clergy serving them are in the same boat. If they did they would surely call for some obvious moves to turn this around and to set the churches on a more wholesome view and practice of sexual relations. Further, they do not seem to see the connection between the presence of the divorce culture as a preparing of the way for the entrance of the LesBiGay culture.

Fourthly, there is an over-use of the word "orthodox" used by the conservatives of their own position in opposition to the local ECUSA or ACC bishop. They would be better using the word "conservative" for, as I have sought to demonstrate elsewhere, neither the ECUSA 1979 Prayer Book nor the Canadian BAS of 1985 are by classical standards "orthodox" and in general the conservative congregations use these books for their worship and as their standards of doctrine. Opposing the LesBiGay agenda makes one a conservative not necessarily an orthodox churchman!

Let us all pray that in God's providence there will come out of the present huge mess of Anglicanism in North America a unified witness. Happily there are sanctified souls in all of the fragmented parts praying for the revelation of the glory of the Lord and unity in his Name and for his sake.

Let us pray specifically that the Archbishop's Commission will at this late hour be given heavenly wisdom to offer practical solutions based upon sound principles and which honor the Lord our God.

August 28 2004

The Rev'd Dr. Peter Toon M.A., D.Phil. (Oxon.),
Christ Church, Biddulph Moor & St Anne's, Brown Edge

The Lambeth Commission on Communion - Documents

Albany (New York) Via Media

Striving for Inclusion and Tolerance in
the Episcopal Diocese of Albany, ECUSA

18 Trinity Place, Plattsburgh, New York 12901
1229 Baker Avenue, Schenectady, New York 12309

August 30, 2004

The Reverend Canon Gregory Cameron
Commission Secretary
Lambeth Commission
Lambeth Palace, England

Dear Most Reverend Sir and Members of the Commission:

Introduction.
The Episcopal Church USA is under attack by a determined minority of conservative Episcopalians. Some parishes have lost members and money, and some of our dioceses are torn by dissention and strife. Critics trumpet this disarray as proof that Bishop Gene Robinson's consecration is wrong and sinful. Closer to the truth, the ecclesiastical damage is the result of a tactically brilliant ecclesiastical warfare, waged in the name of Christ, by those dissidents intent on victory. Our church is wounded.

The attempt to rally the worldwide Anglican Communion to change, discipline or replace the Episcopal Church is a violation of the Reformation principles by which we were founded. It is a dangerous affront to the Anglican ethic which respects individual conscience. To give Primates authority to meet and make decisions or pronouncements to or for the rest of the Communion is without precedent in Anglicanism. It is against the Reformation practice of allowing individual provinces to make administrative, ethical and ecclesiastical decisions for themselves. Some are forgetting the whole purpose of the founding of the Church of England by Henry VIII and Archbishop Thomas Cranmer. England was freed from the authority (and the tyranny) of the Pope and the College of Cardinals. Whether or not the Church of England always made good decisions, their choices were their own.

The interpretation of Biblical sexual ethics is the moral responsibility of individual Anglicans, who gather in parishes and dioceses to live out faithful Christian lives. Provinces make canonical provision for respecting the moral conscience of individual dioceses and parishes within the culture of each independent province. Difference and nuance are expected; new innovations are adopted slowly. Church ethical innovations in divorce, gay marriage or gay ordination share process similarities with the Reformation struggle for clerical marriage, so that, for example, the innovative Archbishop Thomas Cranmer married Bishop Osiander's niece in Holland before the practice was allowed in his own "province". The sixteenth century English Church

claimed authority over divorce laws within the borders of the Church of England, irrespective of pronouncements from Rome, and that right of Provincial decision remains today in each of our provinces.

Therefore, the commission should not make any recommendations that subvert the power of individual provinces to interpret scripture and make moral decisions for their common life. The primates as a group have no constitutional authority in the life of the Anglican Communion beyond the authority each individual primate has in his own province. The Anglican Communion already allows individual provinces to craft canons respecting marriage, divorce, as well as moral behavior expected of candidates for ordination. Conservative dissidents who break communion with those with whom they disagree on these issues, function less like Anglicans and more like the Roman Catholic Church we separated from almost five hundred years ago. The church must not capitulate to threats of ecclesiastical violence.

The questions of the Archbishop of Canterbury.
We would now like to specifically answer some of the 2004 Lambeth Commission's *Key Questions* , from the Archbishop of Canterbury, from the point of view of the Albany Via Media movement within the Diocese of Albany[1] in the United States of America.

Question 1. *What are (a) the legal and (b) the theological implications flowing from ECUSA decision to appoint a priest in a committed same sex relationship as one of its bishops? (See LC 1998 Res. I.10)*

The erroneous assumption of the first question demonstrates the canonical diversity of various Provinces. No diocesan bishop is "appointed" in the American system. Bishops are elected, and such elections are not easily overturned in a diocese in the American Republic, nor will the American church be intimidated by threats against its elective system.

Legally, in the American Province, the decision regarding moral fitness for ordination is left up to the individual diocese. Dioceses differ as to their interpretation of the requirement that candidates live "sober, honest and godly lives." Theologically, this variety of interpretation is seen as a gift of spiritual diversity when discerning the mind of Christ; Paul noted that we only "see through a glass darkly" in this life. We believe that new ethical interpretations must be allowed to proceed in course without threat of ecclesiastical violence, sanction or excommunication from the rest of the communion. A diversity of practice is preferred over the threat of oppression by the church, such as the violence against translator William Tyndale, or Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, or the sanctions against the scientist Galileo.

Question 3. *What are the canonical understandings of (a) communion, (b) impaired communion and (c) broken communion? (What is autonomy and how is it related to communion?)*

There is no legal means to impair communion within the Anglican Communion, except when a Province chooses to impair its own communion with Canterbury or chooses to impair its relationship with another province. Such impairment would be relational, not

legal. Such brokenness violates Paul's vision of the Body of Christ (we cannot exclude others from the Body, nor remove ourselves from it) and Jesus' Johannine metaphor of all of us remaining attached to the Vine of Christ. Basically, we're stuck with each other even when we do not agree.

Question 4. *How (do and) may provinces relate to one another in situations where the ecclesiastical authorities of one province feel unable to maintain the fullness of communion with another part of the Anglican Communion?*

In the Anglican Communion, a province or diocese that is convinced that another province has erred should express its dissatisfaction, concern and the reasons thereto. It is the work of the official meetings and groups of the Anglican Communion, such as the Lambeth meeting of Bishops and the meetings of the Anglican Consultative Council to provide such a forum.

If a province or some of its ecclesiastical authorities believe they must impair communion with another province or diocese, then the Anglican Communion has no mechanism to prevent this. At that point, their relationship with the affected province exists only by virtue of both province's relationship with Canterbury, and not directly with each other. If the Anglican Communion or the Archbishop of Canterbury had a means to force communion or force ethical compliance, it would no longer be the Anglican Communion but an Anglican Papacy.

Furthermore, in the current matter too much authority and voice have been given Provincial Primates in their individual protestations against actions of the American Episcopal Church. The very fact that the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Lambeth Commission will be reporting to the Primates, as though they [the Primates] had authority, is a concession to threats of schism and an affront to existing decision-making structures in the Anglican Communion. The strategy of ECUSA dissidents to use the Primates as a new power structure within the Anglican Communion is an innovation that violates the very ethos of our founding.

In the English Reformation the church in England freed itself from the tyranny of Papal authority. King Henry VIII was glad to insist that England – and the English church -- must have the right of self-governance, free from meddling by Spanish and Italian Princes and Prelates. We wonder how Thomas Cranmer, King Henry VIII's Archbishop of Canterbury would view this scenario: Anglican bishops from the West Indies, Africa and the Southern Cone, claiming the right to overturn marriage innovations in the English Church. We find it no improvement to replace the tyranny of the 16th century Pontiff with the presumption of the 21st century Primates.

Question 5. *What practical solutions might there be to maintain the highest degree of communion that may be possible, in the circumstances resulting from these two decisions, within the individual churches involved? (eg [alternative] episcopal oversight when full communion is threatened).*

Alternate Episcopal Oversight can only be allowed when it is managed by and agreed to within the province affected, between the bishops concerned. There may be a

limited role for Lambeth to facilitate alternate Episcopal Oversight using Episcopal resources within the province, with the consent of that Province. Canterbury must not put itself in the position of subverting the authority of a province with its own member congregations.

Question 7. *Under (a) what circumstances, (b) what conditions, and (c) by what means, might it be appropriate for the Archbishop of Canterbury to exercise an extraordinary ministry of pastoral oversight, support and reconciliation with regard to the internal affairs of a province to maintain communion between Canterbury and that province? (see LC 1998, Res. IV.13)*

Since the Archbishop is already in communion with the Provinces and their elected authorities, there is no circumstance, condition or means by which the Archbishop could exercise oversight in a province that does not seek his help. There is no legal authority structure for a Canterbury role as judge or arbiter between a province's dissenters and its authority, except as noted in (5) above. Dissenters within a province should be directed by Canterbury to dissent within the canonical structures of the province.

Question 8. Under (a) what circumstances, (b) what conditions, and (c) by what means, might it be appropriate for the Archbishop of Canterbury to exercise an extraordinary ministry of pastoral oversight, support and reconciliation with regard to the internal affairs of a province to maintain communion between that province and the rest of the Anglican Communion? (see LC Res. IV.13)

This question seems to assume that a Primate of *the rest of the Anglican Communion* has the authority to declare his entire province "out of communion" with another province. We do not accept the notion that any single bishop has this power in Anglicanism.

There is no circumstance, condition or means by which the Archbishop of Canterbury would need to exercise oversight to force communion between Provinces. Provincial members are such by heritage and its members remain such by choice. Those Anglicans who wish to force conformity by violence or threat of schism or by intervention in the matters of another province – such as Uganda's recent incursions into the Los Angeles diocese, are betraying the values of our Anglican foundations in the sixteenth century. Archbishop of Canterbury Thomas Cranmer lost his life in the pursuit of theological freedom of conscience, and no illusion of communion should be forced at the expense of provincial conscience. An artificial unity that sacrifices provincial autonomy is a new tyranny. Conservative dissidents in the American Episcopal Church believe they have the support of the current Archbishop of Canterbury in their dissent. We hope that he will use the power of his office to encourage dissenters to work within the power structures of their own provinces.

We, the undersigned members of Albany Via Media, thank the commission for the opportunity to present our opinions in this matter.

The Very Rev. Dr. John T. Sorensen, Trinity Church, Plattsburgh, and

The Rev. Dr. James Brooks McDonald, St. Stephen's, Schenectady, Co-Presidents, Albany Via Media (New York). The Rev. Charles W. Sheerin Jr, Albany, NY; The Rev. Christopher Smith, St. Ann's, Amsterdam; Jack Luscombe, Esq. and Hallett Luscombe, Sheila Rowland, Trinity Plattsburgh; The Rev. George Easter, Lyon Mountain, NY; Gay Gamage, St. Stephen's, Schuylerville; Robert Dodd, PhD, James Rice, PhD, Saranac Lake, NY;

Claire and George Stahler, St. James, Lake George, NY; Keith St. John, Esq., the Rev. Dr. David McSwain, St. George's, Schenectady; The Rev. Judson Pealer, St. Eustace, Lake Placid.

No one is spared the threatening rhetoric of the bellicose right, whose plan to win or destroy extends to the whole of the Anglican Communion. To quote Bishop Duncan of Pittsburgh, convener of the Network of Anglican Communion Parishes and Dioceses (*What Would Intervention Look Like?*), speaking to the Plano rally in October 8, 2003, and hoping to intimidate Archbishop Williams before the 2003 Primates meeting: "The Archbishop of Canterbury would become little more than the titular head of a moribund and declining British, American and Australian sect. The dynamic Anglicanism of Africa, Asia and Latin America would realign with a "first among equals" whose see might have a movable name, including places like Lagos or Nassau or Singapore or Buenos Aires. I believe that Archbishop Rowan Williams understands precisely this reality, and that "muddling through" this time will not be good enough. The last English empire is his to loose."

[1] The Diocese of Albany, New York, is a member of the "Anglican Communion Network."

July 16, 2004

The Reverend Canon Gregory Cameron
Commission Secretary
Lambeth Commission
Anglican Communion

Dear Most Reverend Sir and Members of the Commission:

The members of Via Media USA (VMUSA) are appreciative of your invitation to add our voice to the many you have already heard. We are also appreciative that you have posted so much of the received material on your website. We will briefly share our experience and position with you.

Via Media USA was formed in March 2004 as an alliance of twelve groups from eleven dioceses with strong ties to the emerging "Network of Anglican Communion Dioceses and Parishes." Each VMUSA group formed out of its deep love for the Episcopal Church and the conviction that the calls for realignment and punitive action against the Episcopal Church were disproportionate and inappropriate as responses to General Convention 2003.

VMUSA's allied groups are made up of the full spectrum of positions within the Episcopal Church. There are those who oppose the decision made to confirm Bishop Robinson and those who welcome the decision as a courageous acknowledgment of what has long been a matter of secret practice. But, as an organization, we have taken no position on the confirmation. What unites us across our many individual beliefs is Unity itself. All of us are committed to working to keep everyone at the table because we continue to believe that what we share is far greater than what separates us.

VMUSA believes that the *via media* is a powerful part of our Anglican heritage: not a "compromise for the sake of peace," but, as the collect for the feast of Richard Hooker reads, "a comprehension for the sake of truth." We embrace our heritage of the middle way, which has found a generous and charitable path to unity based upon our deepest values, even in times of bitter controversy. We hope that the Commission will help us, along with all Anglicans, find the *via media* in this moment of controversy.

Finding the *via media* requires that all parties step back from the use of combative language and from precipitate action, especially threats and ultimatums, in order to sit at table with one another. We hear cries of pain and hurt, but the truth is that when they are cloaked with threats, there is almost no chance to resolve the most important question of whether or not people of the same faith can abide with each other through their differences. VMUSA trusts that everyone, in this moment of controversy, believes in and loves Jesus and is seeking to serve him as their hearts, minds, and spirits direct. We would hope that, as the Commission seeks to find the highest level of possible communion we might share, it might start with such an affirmation.

The Commission's mandate rightly acknowledges this extraordinary moment in the life of the Communion. There is no formulated, agreed upon international polity for our Communion; indeed, there is no process in place for formulating polity, much less for defining policy. A policy may well be needed now, and VMUSA believes that a call to create an international polity could be a forum for a lively and vigorous discussion among the provinces of the Communion. However, at the moment, there is simply no structure for adjudication of this sort of dispute.
We believe that the formation of an international polity is most properly framed as a discussion about unity, akin to the one that brought forth the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral. Everyone must be at the table to ask, among other things: What are the essentials of the faith that must be believed to be

Christian? How do reason, scripture, and tradition work together to provide authoritative decisions? How will we bring into harmony the issues that derive from our multiplicity of cultures and their particular challenges? How will we respect our differences in our forms of internal polity, some provinces embracing the laity in decision-making and some not? How will we hold one another accountable? Who will judge whether we have done so effectively? We have, of course, our own Richard Hooker's *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* as a foundation for such a discussion. Richard Hooker's work is every bit as relevant to this time of controversy as it was in the latter sixteenth century.

The present atmosphere, however, is the worst possible one for making international polity. In the absence of any polity, making one in reaction to specific incidents is counterproductive in the long run. The actions of the US and Canadian Churches may have pushed us to this place, but a reactive single-issue polity decision will not move us to the larger discussion we must have. VMUSA entreats the Commission not to fall prey to the passions of the moment, but to create a process to discuss the deeper issues outlined above, rather than rehashing precipitating events. We would invite the leaders of those who feel aggrieved, especially those who feel aggrieved on behalf of God, to offer leadership by emulating Christ's sacrificial love. We believe that a non-anxious, loving, and encouraging witness best exemplifies Christ's own ministry and would allow the enmities now present to be shed.

Finally, we believe that a clear statement on the validity of sacraments in disputed times should be developed. It is God who makes and protects sacraments, with even the best of us little more than damaged vessels for their delivery. Anglicans have always based their identity and sense of unity within their worship, and VMUSA believes that this is still a powerful place from which to grow and renew. Through celebration of the Eucharist, we separate ourselves from the world for a time to come into God's presence. We hear the witness of our ancestors and apply it to the present moment. We pray for our needs and shortcomings, and we repent of our sins. We are forgiven, and we are at peace. We walk again amidst God's mighty acts, and we participate in his last supper as his brothers and sisters. In receiving his body and blood, we are in Communion – that is, in unity with God and one another. Finally, we are sent into the world to serve God utilizing our particular gifts. In the end, there is unity whether we acknowledge it or not.

VMUSA hopes and trusts that Lambeth will help us find the sacramental route through this field of controversy. We, who represent the broadest spectrum of people in the Episcopal Church, know that this is possible in our small fellowship, and therefore possible in larger ones. You are constantly in our prayers.

Yours Faithfully,

Via Media USA
Christopher I. Wilkins, Ph.D., Facilitator

The Lambeth Commission on Communion - Documents

To: The Primates and Moderators of the Anglican Communion

From: Archbishop Robin Eames, Chairman of the Lambeth Commission

29 April 2004

Dear colleagues,

As Chairman of the Lambeth Commission established by the Archbishop of Canterbury following the meeting of Primates and Moderators at Lambeth Palace last October I want to give you an update on our work.

I thank you for the many messages of prayerful support and for the submissions we have received from different parts of the Anglican Communion. As we continue our work in your name I do not under-estimate the complexities of our tasks nor the difficulties which face the Commission. However I am greatly encouraged by the sense of common direction and purpose already evident in our work. I pay tribute to the depth of work currently being undertaken by the members of the Commission.

Following preparatory work and the first full meeting of the Commission in Windsor we are at present engaged in extensive study of certain key areas which we have identified and already agreed must be addressed in our Report. These issues concern such as the nature of autonomy, the practice of communion and relationships of interdependence as they have developed in the history of the Anglican Communion, the current status of the traditional Instruments of Unity and their relationship to each other and the interpretation of authority as we have witnessed it in the life of the Anglican Communion. The conclusions of these studies will be considered by the Commission when it meets at Kanuga, North Carolina, in June.

Prior to the first meeting in Windsor I visited the United States to meet with several groups who had expressed their concerns at the decisions of the General Convention of ECUSA and the Commission will meet representatives of differing constituencies in ECUSA during our June meeting. We have received a large volume of submissions and material from different parts of the Communion and plans are being made to meet others who have expressed opinions on the current crisis from the Anglican Church of Canada and Provinces in Africa. With the constraints of time available it is impossible for us to meet personally with all who have expressed their position on the issues but I can assure you that our analysis of opinions is both thorough and extensive.

However there are several aspects of the current situation which I feel I must emphasise.

First, the Commission needs and I believe deserves space to do its work. Actions and statements however well intentioned which express definitive positions on relationships within the Anglican Communion run the danger of limiting the opportunities and options available to the Commission. I am grateful to my fellow

Primates for remaining within the letter and the spirit of our Statement last October despite the obvious differences of opinion at present throughout Anglicanism. The recent assurance of support following the meeting of the CAPA Primates has been a great encouragement to the Commission.

Second, I feel it is important that without prejudice to the Report of the Commission, we maintain the highest possible degrees of communion among those who adopt differing views at this time. In that regard those in North America who feel obliged to object to developments in the General Convention of the Episcopal Church or in the Diocese of New Westminster are still to be regarded as faithful Anglicans or Episcopalians so long as these dissenting groups do not initiate schism in their own Churches. On my visit to the United States I was impressed by those who expressed a desire to remain within ECUSA despite the strength of their feelings. Their initiatives to finding a way of maintaining communion within the Episcopal Church (USA) and the Diocese of New Westminster is further evidence of that desire but I feel such schemes will only be successful if dissenting groups are afforded sufficient support to feel their place within our Anglican family is secure. I would also hope that the wish of the Primates expressed last October that such schemes would be undertaken in consultation with the Archbishop of Canterbury will be observed.

Third, it is obvious to the Commission that if any groups, either dissenting from the decisions of General Convention in ECUSA, or from the forthcoming decisions of the General Synod in Canada, initiate definitive beaks from their parent church, then a different situation will arise for our deliberations. The Commission would have to regard such decisions as a serious development. But until the Commission has come up with proposals for the way in which we may handle such divisions together as a Communion, the support or encouragement of other provinces or dioceses would seem to be itself a further damaging of trust and mutual life and of the very clear guidelines concerning jurisdictional boundaries that we have agreed to adopt as a Communion at successive Lambeth Conferences.

While I cannot at this stage predict the form of the Commission's Report I recognise that the Primates and the Anglican Consultative Council together with the Provinces will have to reach decisions which will have defining and widespread consequences. It would be my hope that once the Report is published we can take such decisions as necessary in a manner which is unrushed, in Christian charity and by means of due process. It is my prayer and earnest hope that the Report we are preparing will enable the Anglican Communion to move forward together in ways which will stand the test of time whatever difficulties may arise in future years for our world family.

Wishing you God's blessing in your leadership and service.

Yours very sincerely,

+ Robert Armagh.

ECCLESIOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE CURRENT SITUATION IN THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION IN THE LIGHT OF ARCIC

Report of the ad hoc sub–commission of IARCCUM
presented to the Most Reverend and Right Honourable Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams and to the President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Cardinal Walter Kasper
June 8th, 2004

I. Introduction

1. The Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church have been committed for almost forty years to 'serious dialogue which, founded on the Gospels and the ancient common traditions, may lead to that unity in truth, for which Christ prayed' *(Common Declaration of Pope Paul VI and Archbishop Michael Ramsey*, 1966*)*. Over these decades, remarkable progress has been made towards the 'restoration of complete communion of faith and sacramental life' called for by the 1966 *Declaration*. The importance of steady movement towards this goal was emphasized by Pope John Paul II and Archbishop Robert Runcie in their *Common Declaration* of 1989:

> Against the background of human disunity the arduous journey to Christian unity must be pursued with determination and vigour, whatever obstacles are perceived to block the path. We here solemnly re-commit ourselves and those we represent to the restoration of visible unity and full ecclesial communion in the confidence that to seek anything less would be to betray our Lord's intention for the unity of his people…
>
> We also urge our clergy and faithful not to neglect or undervalue that certain yet imperfect communion we already share.... This communion should be cherished and guarded as we seek to grow into the fuller communion Christ wills.

The Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops who gathered in Mississauga in May of 2000, after reviewing the extensive progress made both in theological agreement and in practical relationships since the Second Vatican Council, confidently observed that the communion we already share is 'no longer to be viewed in minimal terms'. It is 'a rich and life-giving, multi-faceted communion. We have ... moved much closer to the goal of full visible communion than we had at first dared to believe'.[1]

2. It is a significant confirmation of the progress we have made, and of the importance of our common commitment to the goal of full ecclesial communion, that the appearance of a fresh obstacle to achieving that goal has led to a common initiative to address that difficulty. The question raised by the episcopal consecration in New Hampshire is immediately an Anglican concern and is being addressed by the Anglican Communion itself. However, consultations with the Roman Catholic Church led the Archbishop of Canterbury to take the initiative of inviting Cardinal Kasper of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity to join him in setting up a special sub-commission of the

[1] *Communion in Mission*, nn.5-6.

International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission (IARCCUM) to address the ecclesiological concerns raised by the event. As members of this sub-commission, we are grateful to be given an opportunity to contribute to the process of discernment within the Anglican Communion. We believe that the invitation to make this ecumenical contribution illustrates how close our two communions have come to each other, and reflects the fact that what one communion does has consequences for the other. Cardinal Kasper said of the present situation that Catholics do not see themselves simply as observers: because of our close relationship, there is no such thing as an entirely unilateral decision or action. He added that it was precisely in the midst of problems that dialogue was most necessary.

3. Our theological dialogue of the past decades, carried out through the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC), has been principally concerned with doctrinal issues, but it has also dealt with moral matters, and in the process, has shown how closely the two are interconnected. The Agreed Statement, *Life in Christ: Morals, Communion and the Church* (1994), claimed that:

> despite existing disagreement in certain areas of pastoral and practical judgement, Anglicans and Roman Catholics derive from the Scripture and Tradition the same controlling vision of the nature and destiny of humanity and share the same fundamental moral values. (*Life in Christ*, 1)

Our sharing in this common Apostolic heritage enables us to give shared witness and to speak prophetically on moral questions. Recent developments, however, call into question the extent to which we in fact share a moral vision. The episcopal consecration in New Hampshire raises two areas of concern: one relating to the moral teaching involved; the other to the ecclesiological difficulties deriving from the course of action taken. With regard to the moral aspect, the Roman Catholic Church holds a firm position on homosexuality, which is set out, for example, in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nn.2357-2359. The consecration, following the endorsement of the General Convention, has caused Roman Catholics, and many Anglicans, to question, however, whether the churches of the Anglican Communion can sustain a coherent teaching and practice in this area, since the action was taken in spite of Resolution 1.10 of the 1998 Lambeth Conference and the statement of the meeting of Primates in October, 2003. This very fact simultaneously highlights the major ecclesiological questions that have been raised.

4. The Lambeth Commission has not been asked to address directly the question of homosexuality but rather to focus on related ecclesiological issues. In like manner, our sub-commission has been asked specifically to give attention to the ecclesiological implications arising from the recent developments in the Anglican Communion, particularly in the light of, and with reference to, the relevant Agreed Statements of ARCIC. The major focus of our report, therefore, will be to draw out of the ARCIC texts pertinent signposts which relate to the current situation in the Anglican Communion, in the hope that they may help the Lambeth Commission in addressing the questions before it. In order to contextualise the contributions from ARCIC, showing them to arise both out of our ancient common traditions, and out of recent ecclesiological thinking in both the Anglican Communion and the Catholic Church, we offer a preliminary section on shared ecclesiological foundations. We look first at the 4th century, where there are certain parallels to the current context which suggest some helpful insights for the present situation. Next, we look to recent statements from both our communions on the maintenance of communion, which have shaped and, in some

instances, been influenced by the work of ARCIC. Finally, in the principal section of this document, we turn to the ARCIC Agreed Statements, identifying five areas relevant to the task facing the Lambeth Commission. We hope that our reflections will help the Commission to take full account of that 'certain yet imperfect communion we already share', and to cherish and guard it 'as we seek to grow into the fuller communion Christ wills' (*Common Declaration*, 1989).

II. Ecclesiological Pointers Past and Present

i. The Church's Life in the 4th Century

5. The fourth century was a particularly turbulent period in the Church's history, during which the Christian community was both grappling with the doctrinal crisis of Arianism and adapting to a new relationship with the State. Henry Chadwick notes that it 'was the misfortune of the fourth-century church that it became engrossed in a theological controversy at the same time as it was working out its institutional organization.'[2] The same could be said for the Anglican Communion today, which is in the throes of a major controversy regarding sexuality and ordination at the same time as it is seeking to develop structures to sustain an interdependent life among an ever-increasing number of provinces. It is helpful to look to the Church's life in the 4th century at a time of doctrinal crisis and to note in particular the role of councils, the responsibilities of bishops and metropolitans, and the relationship between local and universal within the *koinonia* of the Church.

6. The 4th century shows the Church's instinct to address problems by means of councils of bishops, and in this way, to hold together the Church in its local and universal expressions. The Council of Nicaea, for instance, lays down fundamental principles for episcopal life and relations, stipulating that a bishop should be ordained by all the bishops of his province, if possible, but never by less than three, and that whatever is done in a province is subject to the consent and confirmation of the metropolitan of that province (canon 4). Nicaea also acknowledged particular regional prerogatives of the bishops of Rome and Alexandria, whereby they had authority to confirm episcopal elections beyond the strict bounds of their own provinces (canon 6) . The Council of Sardica (342/3), while not accepted as a universal council, reflects the same sense of interdependence between the local and the universal. With regard to the integrity of the local church it decreed that, 'if in any province, any bishop have a cause against his brother and fellow-bishop, neither shall call in bishops from another province'.[3] This measure in turn highlighted the leadership role of the metropolitan in the bishops' own province. On the other hand, Sardica reflects the importance of interdependence of local churches with the Church universal by decreeing that if an accused or deposed bishop felt himself to be misjudged, there could be an appeal to the Bishop of Rome by those who heard the case, by the neighbouring bishops or by the bishop himself. If the Bishop of Rome decided that the case should be retried, he could appoint judges or send a delegate to sit with the neighbouring bishops to settle the matter (canon 3).

7. It is plain that the Church's conciliar life, which was developing at this time, did not spontaneously function in total harmony. In 4th century practice, many councils were actually summoned by the emperor (e.g. Nicaea, 325; Constantinople, 381) or emperors (Sardica, 342/343). Moreover, a feature of the period between Nicaea and

[2] Henry Chadwick, *The Early Church* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, revised ed. 1993), p.133.
[3] J. Stevenson (ed.), *Creeds, Councils and Controversies* (London: SPCK, 1989), p.15.

Constantinople 'was certainly the large number of controversial assemblies of bishops which were summoned by one party or the other or by the emperors themselves';[4] the resolution of these controversies necessitated further clarification of the relationship between the local and the universal Church. Through this formative period, we can see that metropolitans undoubtedly exercised a vital role in the assurance of good order, and that important patriarchal and primatial responsibilities were beginning to be clarified for the effective living out of the Church's life of communion. **Unity** and **interdependence** were emerging as essential hallmarks of authentic *koinonia*. Patterned on the primordial communion of the three persons of the Holy Trinity, these hallmarks were to characterize the life of the Church at all levels.

8. Commenting on the councils of the early Church, the Orthodox scholar, Alexander Schmemann, insists that: 'the basic truth to which all canons dealing with bishops, their consecration and their jurisdiction point and refer, is the reality of *unity*, as the very essence of the Church', and that 'the unity and interdependence of the bishops' is 'the form of the Church's unity'.[5] In this way, the bishop mediates his church to the wider communion of churches, and the wider communion to his own church. In the name of the Good Shepherd, he has prerogatives of leadership among his people that cannot be abdicated. The bishop is not just a chairman, but exercises his distinctive ministry of leadership in, with and among his people. Authentic *koinonia* has a focal point - the bishop among his people - just as the life of the Trinity is centred upon the Father. Moreover, authentic *koinonia* requires unity and interdependence between this focal figure and the community gathered around him. As suggested above, the early Church displayed this configuration not just within each local church but also at the regional or provincial level. The 34th of the *Apostolic Canons* (c.375-380) stipulated that the bishops of every region should acknowledge the one who is first among them as their head and do nothing of consequence without his consent, as also he should do nothing without their consent, 'for so there will be unanimity and God will be glorified through Christ in the Holy Spirit'.[6]

9. Recalling the crises, councils and canons of the 4th century helps us to reflect on our current situation: in particular, on the role of the local bishop, and his relationship to the metropolitan and the universal Church, in safeguarding the unity of the Church. The practice of the 4th century, which shows that, in challenging situations, consultation and conciliarity alone are not always sufficient to sustain and protect ecclesial communion, may also suggest models for the Anglican Communion as it seeks to find a way forward. In particular, it may suggest the need for some kind of right of appeal from within any Anglican province to the Archbishop of Canterbury. More broadly, it may suggest the need to strengthen both the focal role of the Primates within provinces and that of the Archbishop of Canterbury among the Primates. These would be important developments during this interim period as we continue to work towards full visible unity between the Anglican Communion and the Catholic Church. There is everything to be said for both our Communions developing a polity which is both consistent with the early Church and also consistent with the sort of Church we believe God is calling us to become together in the future.

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[4] J.N.D.Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds* (London: Longman, 1972), p.263.
[5] Alexander Schmemann, 'Problems of Orthodoxy in America', *St Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly* 8(1964), pp.75, 80.
[6] F.X. Funk, *Didascalia et Constitutiones Apostolorum* (Paderborn, 1905), vol.1, pp.572-5.

ii. Recent Reflections on *koinonia* in our two Communions

10. In order to contextualise the ARCIC material which follows, we turn now to review some of the ecclesiological themes in recent writings of both our Communions, illustrating a converging understanding about the Church as *koinonia,* the maintenance of communion and decision-making in communion.

11. Each of our Communions affirms *koinonia* as the fundamental reality of the Church and also as the primary concept for our understanding of the life and mission of the Church, both through history and today.[7] Since Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, the life in which the Church participates, as the Body of Christ, is the life of the Trinity, which is one of perfect *koinonia*. *Koinonia* is both God's gift to us and our calling. Dependent on the Holy Spirit, we are to manifest God's life in and for the world.[8]

12. Each of our Communions understands that *koinonia* is sustained and nurtured by "structures of grace", the constituent elements or bonds of communion. Each agrees that all the various elements of visible communion are gifts of the Risen Christ, bestowed through the power of the Holy Spirit, on the Church. They are not separable items but integrally related to one another. Working together they serve and protect the inner mystery of the Church's communion. By such gifts of communion, the Church is held together in the apostolic Tradition, enabled to offer united worship and praise to the Triune God, and strengthened and organized to be the sacrament of God's presence in the world.[9]

13. Each Communion considers that it lives by these bonds of communion. Anglicans are held together in a life of visible communion by baptism, 'the confession of a common faith, the celebration of the eucharist, a life of common prayer, the service of an ordered ministry, conciliar structures, shared service and mission …These elements belong to the universal Church and are not unique to Anglicans. They are, nevertheless, lived out in a recognisably and characteristically Anglican way.'[10] These bonds are what Roman Catholics also indicate when they say that the unity of the Church is 'constituted by the bonds of the profession of faith, the sacraments and hierarchical communion.'[11] Essential to these bonds for Roman Catholics is the ministry of the Bishop of Rome and the bishops in communion with him.[12] Anglicans recognise that the constitutive elements of the Church exist in the Roman Catholic Church, while the Roman Catholic Church has acknowledged that 'some and even very many of the significant elements and endowments which together go to build up and give life to the Church itself, can exist outside the visible boundaries of the Catholic Church';[13] or, in the words of *Ut Unum Sint,* that 'many elements of great value … are also found in other Christian Communities.'[14]

14. Each of our Communions cherishes the ministry of *episcopacy* in apostolic succession as having a decisive role within the succession of communities living in fidelity to the

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[7] *The Final Report of the Extraordinary Synod of Bishops*, 1985 states: "The ecclesiology of communion is the central and fundamental idea of the Council's document" (II. C. n.1); *The Virginia Report*, Chapter 2.
[8] *The Virginia Report* , Chapter 2; *Unitatis redintegratio*, n.2; *The Final Report of the Extraordinary Synod of Bishops*, 1985, II. C. n.1.
[9] First Report of the Eames Commision paras 26-27; *Lumen gentium*, n.8; *Unitatis redintegratio*, n.3.
[10] *The Virginia Report*, Chapter 3.
[11] *Ut Unum Sint*, n.9.
[12] *The Ecumenical Directory* (1993), n.10 and *Ut Unum Sint*, n.79.
[13] *Unitatis redintegratio*, n.3; cf. *Lumen gentium*, n.8.
[14] *Ut Unum Sint*, n.13.

apostolic Tradition. The episcopal ministry, exercised in a personal, collegial and communal way, nurtures the communion of the Church and safeguards the unity between local churches. Collegiality and some form of primacy are exercised in both our Communions at the different levels of the Church's life. At the world level, collegiality for Anglicans is expressed in the meeting of the Lambeth Conference. The Archbishop of Canterbury is the personal focus of unity and communion, having 'in a particular way the care of all the churches which is shared by all the bishops'. His task is 'not to command, but to gather', and within the Anglican Communion, his authority is understood as moral and not juridical. His is 'a primacy of honour'.[15] Only an Archbishop of Canterbury may call bishops to a Lambeth Conference. He presides at the Conference, chairs the regular meetings of Primates and is President of the Anglican Consultative Council. For Anglicans, the communal dimension of the exercise of *episcope*, expressed in synods in which laity participate, is a vital part of the maintenance of communion. Roman Catholics stress that the fullness of *koinonia* entails the ministry of universal primacy of the Bishop of Rome, the successor of St Peter, to whom Christ entrusted all his sheep 'to be confirmed in faith and shepherded in perfect unity'. The service of unity of the Bishop of Rome is exercised by him within the college of bishops.[16]

15. Each of our Communions emphasises the interdependence of the local and the universal. Although binding decisions for Anglicans can only be made at the level of a province, there has been a growing 'sense' that matters that touch the faith, order or moral life of the Communion should be settled within the interdependent life of the Anglican Communion – and, in a divided Christendom, should be considered in a way that is open to the rest of the Church. Archbishop Robert Runcie challenged what he called 'the shibboleth of autonomy'. His speech to the 1988 Lambeth Conference was an encouragement to continue moving along a path from independence to interdependence: 'We have reached the stage of growth of the Communion when we must begin to make radical choices, or growth will imperceptibly turn to decay. I believe the choice between independence and interdependence…is quite simply the choice between unity or gradual fragmentation'.[17] *The Virginia Report* suggests that: 'within the Anglican Communion matters which touch the communion of all the churches need to be discerned and tested within the life of the interdependence of the Provinces …'[18]

16. Anglicans have developed international structures and processes for the purpose of helping them to maintain the communion of all the churches. The Lambeth Conference has served the Anglican Communion since 1867. Resolution 49 of the Conference of 1930 declared that the Churches of the Anglican Communion 'are bound together not by a central legislative and executive authority, but by mutual loyalty sustained through

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[15] *The Truth Shall Make you Free*: Report of the 1988 Lambeth Conference (London: CHP, 1988) Dogmatic and Pastoral Concerns, p.110. He is 'a pastor in the service of unity, offers a ministry of service, care and support to the Communion' (*The Virginia Report*, in *The Official Report of the Lambeth Conference*, 1998, p.56).

[16] *Unitatis redintegratio*, n.2.

[17] Robert Runcie, Opening Address to the Lambeth Conference, *The Truth Shall Make You Free*, The Lambeth Conference 1988, pp. 16 and 17.

[18] *The Virginia Report*, Chapter 5, para. 24; cf also Resolution 34 of the ACC 2002 having in mind the emphasis on mutual responsibility and interdependence called upon: '1) dioceses and individual bishops not to undertake unilateral actions or adopt policies which would strain our communion with one another without reference to their provincial authorities; 2) provincial authorities to have in mind the impact of their decisions within the wider Communion; and 3) all members of the Communion, even in our disagreements to have in mind the 'need for courtesy, tolerance, mutual respect and prayer for one another' (1998, II.2 e).

the common counsel of the bishops in conference.' Two newer organs, the Anglican Consultative Council and the Primates' Meeting also have a part to play, along with the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Lambeth Conference, in the Anglican Communion's discernment of what is faithful to the Apostolic tradition on matters which touch the unity of the Church. Decision-making entails consultation, dialogue, discernment and reception and involves those with a special ministry of oversight and the whole people of God.

17. Roman Catholics hold to 'the very ancient discipline whereby the bishops installed throughout the whole world lived in communion with one another and with the Roman Pontiff in a bond of unity, charity and peace', and also maintain the practice of holding councils wherein profound issues are to be settled together.[19] The college or body of bishops has 'no authority unless united with the Roman Pontiff, Peter's successor, as its head'.[20] *Lumen gentium* speaks of the role of the entire body of the faithful in the discernment of matters of faith, which is 'aroused and sustained by the Spirit of truth'.[21]

18. Each of our Communions is exploring more effective ways to maintain *koinonia* in times of change. Roman Catholics, since Vatican II, have been gradually developing structures for sustaining *koinonia* more effectively: national and regional Episcopal Conferences, General Assemblies of the Synod of Bishops and, at local level, the involvement of lay people and clergy in parochial and diocesan pastoral councils. Anglicans have considered how to develop their international instruments of communion: the role of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lambeth Conference, the Anglican Consultative Council and the Primates' Meeting - and what part each has to play in the maintenance of the communion of local churches.

19. Each of our Communions stress the qualities of life that belong to Communion. The *Virginia Report* speaks of life in communion as one of mutuality, common concern for one another, forbearing one another in love.[22] Pope John Paul II has called for the fostering of a 'spirituality of communion', without which external structures 'will serve very little purpose', becoming 'mechanisms without a soul'. Such a spirituality centres on the 'contemplation of the mystery of the Trinity dwelling in us, …whose light we must also be able to see shining on the face of the brothers and sisters around us.' A spirituality of communion means thinking of our brothers and sisters in faith as 'those who are a part of me', and enables us to 'share their joys and sufferings, to sense their desires and attend to their needs', to 'make room' for each other, 'bearing "each other's burdens" (Gal 6:2)'.[23]

20. The convergence that we note in our understanding of the nature of the Church, of the constitutive elements of communion and of the ways in which communion is to be maintained prompt us to ask how far the recent events in North America challenge what we both believe. With this question in mind, we now turn our attention directly to the work of ARCIC, which has given sustained expression to our shared belief.

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[19] *Lumen gentium*, n.22. *Lumen gentium* elaborates on the ministry of the Bishop of Rome, who 'presides over the whole assembly of charity and protects their legitimate variety, while at the same time taking care that these differences do not hinder unity, but rather contribute to it…' (n.13). 'There never is an ecumenical council which is not confirmed or at least recognized as such by Peter's successor. And it is the prerogative of the Roman Pontiff to convoke such councils, to preside over them and to confirm them…' (n.22).

[20] *Ibid*.

[21] *Ibid*, n.12.

[22] *Virginia Report*, chapter 3, para.4.

[23] *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, n.43.

III. ARCIC and the Lambeth Commission

21. The theological conversations of ARCIC I and II have explored areas which have a bearing on the current situation in the Anglican Communion. ARCIC's Agreed Statements hold differing degrees of authority. The official responses of both Communions to the work of ARCIC I recognised 'substantial agreement' or 'significant convergence' in the areas treated in its Agreed Statements. The Agreed Statements of ARCIC II have not received official responses on the level of our two Communions. However, the Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops gathered at Mississauga in May 2000 were able to point to all the documents and note 'the very impressive degree of agreement in faith that already exists'.[24] Such recognition would seem to imply that actions or decisions taken by either Communion, which touch the communion of the Church, necessarily have implications for the other. Moreover, how each Communion acts either gives credibility to what has been agreed in our theological dialogue or calls that agreement into question. How we act also confirms, or denies, something about the sort of life we look to live together in the future and indicates the seriousness, or lack of seriousness, of our intention to move together in conformity with what has been agreed.

22. We believe that the theological Agreed Statements have insights to offer in interpreting the current situation and may even help to suggest a possible way forward. We would group these insights under five headings, as follows:
    A. the nature of the Church as communion;
    B. the constitutive elements of communion, the episcopal office, unity and diversity in ecclesial communion, and the relation between local churches and the universal Church;
    C. discernment in the communion of the Church, authority and the use of Scripture and Tradition;
    D. the qualities and obligations of life in communion;
    E. morals and discerning in communion.

A. The nature of the Church as communion

23. The understanding of the Church as communion is fundamental to all of the work of ARCIC – 'union with God in Christ Jesus through the Spirit is the heart of Christian *koinonia*' (*Final Report*, Introduction, 5). 'God wants his people to be in communion with him and with each other' (*Church as Communion*, 7). This communion thus embraces 'both the visible gathering of God's people and its divine life-giving source' (*Church as Communion*, 3). These two aspects of the nature and life of the Church must never be divorced. The *Final Report* goes on to talk of the eucharist as the effectual sign of *koinonia*, *episcope* as serving *koinonia*, and primacy as its link and focus (Introduction, 6).

24. *Church as Communion* is ARCIC's fullest treatment of the theme of *koinonia*, and notes in its conclusion that 'our two Communions agree in their understanding of the Church as communion' (56). The report expands upon the nature of communion and sees how that notion is unfolded in Scripture. The Church, as the body of those baptised into the life and love of God, is the communion of believers called to be an effective sign, in and for the world, of all God intends for the whole of humanity. It is also an instrument of salvation and in its life, here and now, we are given a foretaste of the life God intends for all. It is inadequate to speak only of an invisible communion.

[24] *Communion in Mission*, n.4.

Communion requires visible expression (43).

The New Hampshire consecration has had an effect on the unity of the Anglican Communion. Recent documents have spoken of 'impaired communion' and even of 'broken communion'. In the light of the centrality that ARCIC gives to communion for the realisation of the Church, we ask whether the damage that the recent consecration is doing to communion can be acceptable to those who profess belief in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

B. Constitutive elements of ecclesial communion, the episcopal office, unity and diversity in communion, and the relationship between local churches and the universal Church

25. ARCIC is clear that there are inter-related constitutive elements and facets which 'belong to the visible communion of the universal Church. Although their possession cannot guarantee the constant fidelity of Christians, neither can the Church dispense with them.' (*Church as Communion*, n.46); indeed the Church has received these elements and has an obligation to pass them on (*Gift of Authority*, 14). *Church as Communion* notes:

> For all the local churches to be *together in* communion, the one visible communion which God wills, it is required that all the essential constitutive elements of ecclesial communion are present and mutually recognised in each of them. Thus the visible communion between these churches is complete and their ministers are in communion with each other. (43)

The text proceeds to describe what constitutes ecclesial communion:

> It is rooted in the confession of the one apostolic faith, revealed in the Scriptures and set forth in the Creeds. It is founded upon one baptism. The one celebration of the eucharist is its pre-eminent expression and focus. It necessarily finds expression in shared commitment to the mission entrusted by Christ to his Church…. Also constitutive of life in communion is acceptance of the same basic moral values, the sharing of the same vision of humanity created in the image of God and recreated in Christ and the common confession of the one hope in the final consummation of the Kingdom of God. (45)

The text goes on to state that the ministry of oversight, the fullness of which is entrusted to the episcopate, is needed to maintain and express the Church's unity and to hold together believers in the communion of the local church in the communion of all the churches. 'This ministry of oversight has both collegial and primatial dimensions…. It is exercised so that unity and communion are expressed, preserved and fostered at every level – locally, regionally and universally.' It is precisely within the context of the communion of all the churches that 'the Episcopal ministry of a universal primate finds its role as visible focus of unity' (45).

ARCIC understands that there is an essential relationship between all of the constitutive elements of the Church. They interrelate and belong to a single life of communion. To deny or damage one is to weaken the total life of communion of the Church. The New Hampshire consecration raises questions about how constitutive elements of communion - the unity of the episcopate, the authority of Scripture and its interplay with Tradition, and the holding of 'the same basic moral values' - have been honoured, singly and together.

26. ARCIC has much to say about the role of the bishop, both within the local church and in the service of the communion of all the churches. At ordination, every bishop receives 'both responsibility for his local church and the obligation to maintain it in living awareness and practical service of other churches. The Church of God is found in each of them and in their *koinonia*' (*Authority I*, 10). Within the local church, the bishop carries a pastoral authority, by virtue of which he is primarily 'responsible for preserving and promoting the integrity of the *koinonia* in order to further the Church's response to the Lordship of Christ and its commitment to mission' (*Authority I*, 5). The bishop is to teach 'the faith through the proclamation and explanation of the Word of God', to provide for the celebration of the sacraments, and to maintain the Church in holiness and truth (*Gift of Authority*, 36). 'The exercise of this teaching authority requires that what (is taught) be faithful to Holy Scripture and consistent with apostolic Tradition' (*Gift*, 44). ARCIC also communicates the understanding of both Anglican and Roman Catholic Communions that bishops carry out their ministry in succession of the Apostles, which is 'intended to assure each community that its faith is indeed the apostolic faith, received and transmitted from apostolic times' (*Church as Communion*, 33).

27. ARCIC sees the mission of the local church as being held within the mission of the universal Church. *Authority I* notes that '*koinonia* is realised not only in the local Christian communities, but also in the communion of these communities with one another' (8). The text goes on to state:

> A local church cannot be truly faithful to Christ if it does not desire to foster universal communion, the embodiment of that unity for which Christ prayed…. Every local church must therefore ever seek a deeper understanding and clearer expression of this common faith, both of which are threatened when churches are isolated by division.' (*Authority I*, 13)

Each bishop, in communion with all other bishops, is responsible to preserve and express the larger koinonia of the church, and 'participates in the care of all the churches' (*Gift*, 39). The bishop is therefore 'both a voice for the local church and one through whom the local church learns from other churches' (*Gift*, 38). By means of communion among the bishops, 'the whole Church is made aware of the perceptions and concerns of the local churches: at the same time the local churches are enabled to maintain their place and particular character within the communion of all the churches' (*Church as Communion*, 33). *Authority I* (5) had already affirmed the 'mutual responsibility and interdependence' of all who minister in the Church, and *Gift of Authority* underlines more deeply the same notion in speaking of the role played by the

college of bishops in maintaining the unity of the Church – a topic which will be further addressed in the forthcoming section (29ff) on discernment:

> 'The mutual interdependence of all the churches is integral to the reality of the Church as God wills it to be. No local church that participates in the living Tradition can regard itself as self-sufficient.... The ministry of the bishop is crucial, for his ministry serves communion within and among local churches. Their communion with each other is expressed through the incorporation of each bishop into a college of bishops. Bishops are, both personally and collegially, at the service of the communion …' (*Gift*, 37).

28. While communion with other local churches safeguards the Church's unity and catholicity, this is not to result in a narrow uniformity. The challenge and responsibility of bishops in this regard is 'so to exercise their ministry that they promote the unity of the whole Church in faith and life in a way that enriches rather than diminishes the legitimate diversity of local churches' (*Gift of Authority*, 33). A diversity of traditions, faithful to the Word revealed in Jesus Christ, is indeed 'the practical manifestation of catholicity and confirms rather than contradicts the vigour of Tradition' (*Gift*, 27). *Church as Communion* speaks of a legitimate diversity in liturgies and forms of spirituality, in ways of exercising authority and canonical structure, in theological approaches, and in diverse theological expressions of the same doctrine (36, 43). The text notes: 'These varieties complement one another, showing that, as the result of communion with God in Christ, diversity does not lead to division; on the contrary, it serves to bring glory to God for the munificence of his gifts' (36). The text proceeds to speak about the framework within which that diversity is held together, including a reference to a common ministry of oversight:

> Amid all the diversity that the catholicity intended by God implies, the Church's unity and coherence are maintained by the common confession of the one apostolic faith, a shared sacramental life, a common ministry of oversight and joint ways of reaching decisions and giving authoritative teaching. (39)

- **From the perspective of ARCIC's understanding of the episcopate, we conclude that the collegiality of bishops is seriously affected if the majority of bishops in the Anglican Communion will neither receive nor recognise the ministry of the Bishop of New Hampshire.**
- **How can a bishop whose ordination made him a cause of controversy (leading others to break communion with him and with those who consecrated him) represent the local community in the councils of the Church? How can he mediate the unity of the universal Church to his diocese when he is at odds with large segments of the universal church, the latter arguing that he has departed from the moral teaching of the apostolic faith?**
- **Does not this situation damage both the communion of the local church of New Hampshire and the communion of the diocese of New Hampshire with all churches in the Anglican Communion?**

C. Discernment in the communion of the Church, authority and the use of Scripture and Tradition

29. *Church as Communion* notes that tensions are inevitable in the life of the Church. Some are creative tensions, others are not:

> Some may cause a loss of continuity with apostolic Tradition, disruption within the community, estrangement from other parts of the Church. Within the history of Christianity, some diversities have become differences that have led to such conflict that ecclesial communion has been severed. Whenever differences become embodied in separated ecclesial communities, so that Christians are no longer able to receive and pass on the truth within the one community of faith, communion is impoverished and the living memory of the Church is affected. (30)

Amid internal tension and conflict, it is the Church's task to 'distinguish between tolerable and intolerable diversity in the expression of the apostolic faith'. *Church as Communion* adds that 'in the area of life and practice the Church has to discover what is constructive and what is disruptive of its own communion' (40).

30. These evocative citations serve to highlight the decisive importance of discernment, most especially when the unity of the communion is at stake. This sub-commission's reflections on ARCIC's understanding of Christian discernment are offered mindful of the discernment process with which the Anglican Communion and its churches are currently engaged.[25] Our reflections also have in mind the New Hampshire consecration, which was itself the result of processes of discernment on the diocesan and provincial levels. The Diocese of New Hampshire issued a statement noting that they 'faithfully and prayerfully considered and followed a Spirit-led process' in their election of a new bishop.[26] As we have already seen, these processes of discernment all have broad ecclesiological implications, and with these in mind we turn to what ARCIC has to say about the nature of discernment in communion.

31. In the Elucidation of *Authority I*, ARCIC notes that in all it says, it takes for granted two fundamental principles: 'that Christian faith depends on divine revelation and that the Holy Spirit guides the Church in the understanding and transmission of revealed truth' (1). All Christian discernment has as its foundational reference point God's revelation in Christ, who 'sums up in himself the whole of God's self-disclosure' (*Authority I*, Elucidation, 2). Christian discernment is therefore always a seeking of the guidance of the Holy Spirit, a discerning of the mind of Christ, an attentiveness to how God speaks into a particular situation. This discernment is not principally a matter of subjective insight; it is done in communion, recognising the objectivity and givenness of the Word that addresses us.

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[25] The 'Guide for Ecumenical Partners', issued by the Anglican Communion Office following the Primates' Meeting of Oct. 15-16, 2003, anticipated the consequences of the New Hampshire consecration and spoke of the (forthcoming) discernment process in the following terms: 'Questions remain about the nature, extent and duration of this impaired or broken communion. Will a breach in Communion between two parts of the Anglican Communion mean a Communion-wide split with each province having to choose between one side or the other? How will these divisions affect the relationship of each province with the See of Canterbury as the centre of unity of the Communion?' (Anglican Communion News Service, October 17, 2003).

[26] Statement from the Diocese of New Hampshire, October 17, 2003 (Anglican Communion News Service 3639). Regarding the discernment process at the General Synod of the Episcopal Church USA, see the statement of ECUSA Primate and Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold, August 8, 2003 (General Convention website).

32. Scripture and Tradition play foundational roles in Christian discernment. The fullness of revelation manifest in Jesus Christ is mediated to the Church of subsequent generations by the apostolic community's reception of that revelation, as recorded in the New Testament. The Commission states clearly and strongly the place and authority of the Scriptures: 'Scriptures are the uniquely inspired witness to divine revelation' (*Authority I Elucidation* n.2). Within Tradition the Scriptures occupy a 'normative place' and are 'uniquely authoritative'; the Church is 'constantly to measure its teaching, preaching and action' against the Scriptures (*Gift*, 19). In ARCIC's understanding, Scripture and Tradition are indelibly bound together. Scripture arises from the living proclamation of the Church and the formation of the Canon takes place within it (*Gift*, 22). However, every generation needs 'prophetically to translate' the Gospel (*Authority I*, 15). 'Tradition is a dynamic process, communicating to each generation what was delivered once for all to the apostolic community. Tradition is far more than the transmission of true propositions concerning salvation' (*Gift*, 14). The handing on involves stating the Gospel message in new ways. Yet all such restatement 'must be consonant with the apostolic witness recorded in the Scriptures' (*Authority I*, 15). Finally, the Gospel 'is fully understood only within the Church. God's revelation has been entrusted to a community.' Hence, individualistic interpretation of the Scriptures is 'incompatible with the nature of the authority of the revealed Word of God. Word of God and Church of God cannot be put asunder' (*Gift*, 23).

33. ARCIC understands bishops as having a vital role in the process of discernment, bearing 'a special responsibility for promoting truth and discerning error' (*Authority I*, 18) and for preserving and promoting communion; but this is never exercised apart from the whole body of the faithful. The 'interaction of bishop and people' in this exercise of discernment and teaching 'is a safeguard of Christian life and fidelity' (*Authority I*, 18). *Church as Communion* reflects on this interaction, noting:

> In responding to the insights of the community, and of the individual Christian, whose conscience is also moulded by the same Spirit, those exercising oversight seek to discern what is the mind of Christ. Discernment involves both heeding and sifting in order to assist the people of God in understanding, articulating and applying their faith. (32)

The Gift of Authority develops this further by emphasising the role of the whole people of God as bearers of the living tradition: discernment is the duty of all, together in communion. Each Christian who is seeking to follow Christ and who is incorporated into the life of the Church has a sense of faith, and 'when this capacity is exercised in concert by the body of the faithful we may speak of the exercise of the *sensus fidelium*' (*Gift*, 29; cf. *Authority I Elucidation*, 3-4). The Church is like a symphony in which all have a part to play; all are walking together on the way. 'Consulting the faithful is an aspect of episcopal oversight' (*Gift*, 38).

34. ARCIC texts also reflect on the decisive role of the college of bishops and synodal and collegial structures in the Church's discernment.

> 'When bishops take counsel together they seek both to discern and to articulate the *sensus fidelium* as it is present in the local church and in the wider communion of churches. Their role is magisterial: that is, in this communion of the churches, they are to determine what is to be taught as faithful to the apostolic Tradition.'(*Gift*, 38)

The teaching office, which 'is not above the Word of God but serves it' (*Gift* cites *Dei Verbum*, n.10), is exercised in communion. As *Gift of Authority* puts it: 'the authenticity of the teaching of individual bishops is evident when this teaching is in solidarity with that of the whole episcopal college. The exercise of this teaching authority requires that what it teaches be faithful to Holy Scripture and consistent with apostolic Tradition' (*Gift*, 44). Both personally and collegially, bishops are to be concerned with synodality 'in all its expressions':

> These expressions have included a wide variety of organs, instruments and institutions, notably synods or councils, local, provincial, worldwide, ecumenical. The maintenance of communion requires that at every level there is a capacity to take decisions appropriate to that level. When those decisions raise serious questions for the wider communion of churches, synodality must find a wider expression. (*Gift*, 37; cf *Church as Communion*, 45; *Authority I*, 16)

When a discernment process issues forth in authoritative teaching, an important role is also played by the reception of this teaching by the faithful as an authentic expression of the apostolic faith. Particularly in challenging situations, or when contradictory interpretations of Scripture or Tradition are proposed, Christian discernment in the Church requires the participation of the whole body of believers, not only of those charged with the ministry of memory and teaching (*Gift*, 43). The people of God must be able to recognise that what is presented as authoritative teaching expresses the apostolic faith and operates within the truth of Christ, the Head of the Church. In the formulation of *Authority I Elucidation* (3), reception 'does not create truth nor legitimize the decision', but 'is the final indication that such a decision has fulfilled the necessary conditions for it to be a true expression of the faith' (cf *Authority I*, 6, 16; *Church as Communion*, 32).

35. Finally, ARCIC also touches briefly on the role of the bishop of a principal see in the Church's discernment, reflects at length on a universal primacy which would serve the *koinonia* of the Church, and invites cooperation between our churches in discernment.

- *Authority I* notes that it is the duty of a bishop of a principal see to assist the bishops of his region to promote right teaching, unity and the Church's mission. 'When he perceives a serious deficiency in the life or mission of one of the churches he is bound, if necessary, to call the local bishop's attention to it and to offer assistance' (*Authority I*, 11).
- Regarding a universal primacy, what *Authority I* notes is that 'if God's will for the unity in love and truth of the whole Christian community is to be fulfilled, this general pattern of the complementary primatial and conciliar aspects of *episkope* serving the *koinonia* of the churches needs to be realised at the universal level (23; cf. *Gift*, 46). While our two Communions haven't yet reached full consensus on a universal primacy, ARCIC has explored this subject intermittently for thirty years, and its reflections are an integral part of its reflection on discernment. *The Gift of Authority* envisioned a primacy which would help to 'uphold the legitimate diversity of traditions, strengthening and safeguarding them in fidelity to the Gospel' (*Gift*, 60; cf. 47).
- Regarding consultation between our two Communions, *Gift of Authority* noted: 'For the sake of *koinonia* and a united Christian witness to the world, Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops should find ways of cooperating and developing relationships of mutual accountability in their exercise of oversight' (58). We see the invitation for this sub-commission to offer these reflections as a valuable example of the latter.

ARCIC's thorough treatment of discernment within the Church offers various insights to the Anglican Communion in its current discernment process, and raises numerous questions, among which we would highlight the following:

ARCIC is clear about the normative role of Scripture within the Tradition of the Church and the need to have recourse to Scripture and Tradition in discerning the will of Christ. The teaching of the Anglican Communion on the issue of homosexuality is set forth in Resolution 1.10 of the 1998 Lambeth Conference. Roman Catholic teaching is stated in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (nn.2357-59). Both see their conclusions as grounded in Scripture and Tradition. While in recent times differing interpretations of Scripture have emerged with regard to the issue of homosexuality, the traditional teaching continues to be upheld by our two Communions. In this context, should there not be restraint within Anglican Provinces while together in the communion of the Church we seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit regarding issues facing us?

ARCIC holds that the maintenance of communion requires that decisions which raise questions for the wider communion of churches be addressed in appropriately wide synodal structures and processes.

- **Should the decision to ordain a priest in a committed same sex relationship for the office and work of a bishop be taken in a local or regional church when the matter is considered to touch the moral life of the whole Church?**
- **The fact that the New Hampshire Consecration took place in opposition to Resolution 1.10 passed by the bishops at the Lambeth Conference, to Resolution 34 of ACC 12, to the statement of the Primates' Meeting in October 2003, and to a public statement of the Archbishop of Canterbury, would seem to call into question the processes of discernment in communion, and in particular the place of the episcopate and the ministry of primacy in their respective responsibilities for the maintenance of unity in the Anglican Communion. When individual dioceses and provinces act autonomously against the recommendations of the Communion's instruments of unity, at what cost is this done?**
- **How can these instruments of unity more effectively serve and safeguard the *koinonia* of the Anglican Communion?**
- **How can the effective governance of the Church on diocesan and provincial levels be complemented by collegial and primatial structures in such a way that the unity of the Anglican Communion is creatively maintained in the Apostolic faith and not under recurring threat of dissolution?**

Alongside these questions, those posed to the Anglican Communion at the end of *The Gift of Authority* about authority and decision-making in the life of the Church seem particularly pertinent:

Is the Communion open to the acceptance of instruments of oversight which would allow decisions to be reached that, in certain circumstances, would bind the whole Church? When new questions arise which, in fidelity to Scripture and Tradition, require a united response, will these structures assist Anglicans to participate in the *sensus fidelium* with all Christians? To what extent does unilateral action by provinces or dioceses in matters concerning the whole Church, even after consultation has taken place, weaken *koinonia*?(*Gift,* 56) [27]

D. The qualities and obligations of communion

36. *Church as Communion* also stresses that our *koinonia* is a participation in the life and love of the Trinity, and must therefore be modelled on and grounded in the love which is at the heart of the divine life (15). 'It is a life of shared concern for one another in mutual forbearance, submission, gentleness and love; in the placing of interests of others above the interests of self; in making room for each other in the body of Christ…'(45). It includes a sharing in one another's joys and sorrows, a common responsibility for maintaining unity and peace, and a mutual giving and receiving of gifts because of the fellowship that exists in Christ.

- **When fundamental changes arise which may impair the communion of the Church, then concern for others, mutual forbearance, deferring to others, putting the interest of others above one's own are marks of the way of communion. We ask whether these attitudes were shown towards all sections of the Anglican Communion and towards the holders of all shades of opinion in the Communion in the recent decisions of New Hampshire and New Westminster.**
- **We ask how these attitudes can be fostered during this period of discernment in the Anglican Communion. Whose responsibility is it in the Anglican Communion to nurture the qualities and obligations of communion as it seeks to discern a common mind, in fidelity to the Apostolic faith, when facing new and potentially divisive questions and how is this to be done?**

[27] *Gift* (53) also takes note of the 1998 Lambeth Conference Resolution which requested the Primates' Meeting to initiate a study in each province 'on whether effective communion, at all levels, does not require appropriate instruments, with due safeguards, not only for legislation, but also for oversight … as well as on the issue of a universal ministry in the service of Christian unity' [Resolution III, 8 (h)].

E. Morals and discerning in communion

37. In its 1994 Agreed Statement *Life in Christ: Morals, Communion and the Church*, ARCIC addressed the Church's moral teaching. In this context, the Commission briefly touched upon the question of homosexual relationships, affirming a significant degree of common teaching,[28] while also drawing attention to remaining differences in Anglican and Roman Catholic approaches.[29] We are mindful that our sub-commission has not been asked to reflect directly on questions pertaining to human sexuality, but rather, to address the ecclesiological implications arising from the recent developments in the Anglican Communion in light of the work of ARCIC. In what follows, we draw attention to three themes in ARCIC's work on morals which complement the topics presented in our previous sections on *koinonia* and discernment. They are:
    a) the relationship that ARCIC sees between communion and the process of moral judgement;
    b) the foundational moral positions that are held in common by Anglicans and Roman Catholics and an understanding of the factors that have led to divergences between us on certain matters;
    c) the mutually felt need for common study, consultation and common witness on moral questions.

    The relevance of these three themes to the debate about homosexuality is evident.

38. First, the subtitle of *Life in Christ*, namely '*Morals, Communion and the Church*', reflects the close relationship upheld by ARCIC between morals and the communion of the Church. The text begins by noting that Church doctrines and morals are closely inter-connected (2), and that 'authentic Christian unity is as much a matter of life as of faith' (Co-Chair's Preface). The Preface reiterates the statement made in *Church as Communion* (45) that 'acceptance of the same basic moral values' and 'the sharing of the same vision of humanity created in the image of God and re-created in Christ' are constitutive elements of ecclesial communion. The text (3) notes that our *koinonia* determines 'both the structure of the moral order and the method of the Church's discernment and response':

> Life in Christ is a life of communion.... (C)ommunion means that members of the Church share a responsibility for discerning the action of the Spirit in the contemporary world, for shaping a truly human response, and for resolving the ensuing moral perplexities with integrity and fidelity to the Gospel. (96-97)

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[28] Regarding homosexual relationships, *Life in Christ* (87) notes: 'Both our communions affirm the importance and significance of human friendship and affection among men and women, whether married or single. Both affirm that all persons, including those of homosexual orientation, are made in the divine image and share the full dignity of human creatureliness. Both affirm that a faithful and lifelong marriage between a man and a woman provides the normative context for a fully sexual relationship. Both appeal to Scripture and the natural order as the sources of their teaching on this issue. Both reject, therefore, the claim sometimes made, that homosexual relationships and married relationships are morally equivalent, and equally capable of expressing the right ordering and use of the sexual drive. Such ordering and use, we believe, are an essential aspect of life in Christ.

[29] '… our different approach to the formulation of law are relevant (cf. Para 52). Roman Catholic teaching holds that homosexual activity is 'intrinsically disordered', and concludes that it is always objectively wrong. This affects the kind of pastoral advice that is given to homosexual persons. Anglicans could agree that such activity is disordered; but there may well be differences among them in the consequent moral and pastoral advice they would think it right to offer to those seeking their counsel and direction' (*Life in Christ*, 87).

39. Secondly, *Life in Christ* reflects upon the common foundations that Anglicans and Roman Catholics share on moral questions, but also identifies divergences on particular issues, and explores underlying reasons for those divergences. Regarding common foundations, the text notes that both Anglicans and Roman Catholics 'appeal to a shared tradition' and 'recognize the same Scriptures as normative of that tradition', respecting the role of reason in moral discernment (102). We derive from that common heritage a shared vision of human nature and destiny fulfilled in Christ, upholding the same fundamental moral values and identifying common general principles for discerning the mind of Christ on moral questions (1, 12, 23-32, 96). Our centuries of separation led to a breakdown in communication and to developments in our moral teachings and practices 'in isolation from each other' (88; cf. 89); the resulting differences, however, are not on the level of fundamental moral values, but on their application or implementation in practical judgments (37, 83, 84, 86, 88, 96). Reflecting on these differences, *Life in Christ* notes divergent views on the way in which authority on moral matters 'is most fruitfully exercised and the common good best promoted' (49):

> Anglicans affirm that authority needs to be dispersed rather than centralized, that the common good is better served by allowing to individual Christians the greatest possible liberty of informed moral judgment, and that therefore official moral teaching should as far as possible be commendatory rather than prescriptive and binding. Roman Catholics, on the other hand, have, for the sake of the common good, emphasized the need for a central authority to preserve unity and to give clear and binding teaching. (49; cf. 52)

Could it not be that, in our drawing together, we can learn from one another and take advantage of the complementary value of both these factors of moral discernment?

40. Thirdly, *Life in Christ* proposes that steps should be taken even at the present stage of our journey towards unity in view of dealing together with moral issues. It argues for the importance of such a shared approach from the need to give common witness to the world. 'The urgency of the times and the perplexity of the human condition demand that (our two Communions) now do all they can to come together to provide a common witness and guidance for the well-being of humankind and the good of the whole creation' (88). The final section of the text, entitled 'Towards moral integrity and full communion', draws helpful connections between the desire of Anglicans and Roman Catholics for full communion and the desire to resolve our differences on certain moral teachings, noting concisely that the integrity of our moral response requires a movement towards full communion (99ff; 3). After highlighting the benefits of further exchange between our two traditions on moral questions, the Agreed Statement concludes by proposing that 'steps should be taken to establish further instruments of co-operation between our two Communions at all levels of church life (especially national and regional), to engage with the serious moral issues confronting humanity today' (103). Such co-operation would be 'a practical way of expressing the communion we already enjoy, of moving towards full communion, and of understanding more clearly what it entails; without such collaboration we run the risk of increasing divergence' (104).

41. ARCIC's proposal for a communion-seeking approach to moral matters by Anglicans and Roman Catholics has, unfortunately, had limited fulfilment The degree of communion that exists between us has, indeed, been put at risk by both our churches when they have made statements, or acted, on matters that affect communion without taking the other into due consideration. The bishops gathered at Mississauga in May

2000 took up this issue again. They expressed the hope that their Action Plan would in future promote collegiality through various means, including 'examining ways of ensuring formal consultation prior to one Church making decisions on matters of faith and morals which would affect the other Church, keeping in view the agreed statements of ARCIC.'

The decision of an Anglican diocese and province to consecrate as bishop a priest who is in a same-sex relationship seems to us to call into question the criteria for moral discernment that we have found in the ARCIC agreed statement on moral matters. Specifically we ask:

- **Has the decision given sufficient weight to the commonly-held belief, shared by ARCIC, that teaching on homosexuality touches those 'basic moral values' about which agreement is needed in order to establish and preserve communion; and that consequently significant decisions about it should be taken only with the agreement of those who are in communion with each other?**
- **When moral discernment on an issue that matters for communion is undertaken by one part of the Anglican Communion independently of the rest of the Communion, and actions are taken on the basis of that discernment, are not the same kind of fractures of communion that have occurred, and still exist, between Anglicans and Roman Catholics liable to occur within the Anglican Communion?**
- **When such decisions are made by one part of the Anglican Communion with little attentiveness to the ecumenical relationships of their Communion with other churches and Christian bodies, is there not an undermining of the movement towards restoration of full communion to which the churches are committed, and does not there occur by default a serious diminishment of what our relations and our dialogue have already achieved?**
- **Could not the Anglican Communion, as it struggles with this issue, offer a model of how moral discernment might be done, in communion, in a way that takes full advantage of the grace that communion brings to such endeavour?**

E. Conclusion

42. There is an immense amount to be grateful for in the recent developments within Anglican-Roman Catholic relations. Our international commissions have produced valuable work and have given us reasons for hope. Relations between Archbishops of Canterbury and the Holy See have grown and deepened. There are an impressive

number of instruments for theological dialogue, maintaining communication, and fostering relations between Anglicans and Roman Catholics - reminders of how deeply our relationship has evolved over the past decades. What we have achieved and the hope this has given rise to accentuate the pain and awkwardness of the current situation for us.

43. One concern which has motivated us is the desire to preserve that which has been gained through our theological dialogue. That is why in writing this report we have particularly wished to show the ways in which we have together articulated our understanding of communion and the dynamics and structures which nurture and sustain it. Communion is simultaneously both a gift and a calling; it makes demands. All through its history, by God's grace, the Church has been striving to bear witness to this gift and respond to the calling, and to accept its demands. The living of communion in history requires an effective way of dealing with new and difficult issues, so as to be able to continue to live and grow together. This applies both within the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion, respectively, and it applies also between us as we make every effort to grow closer in our life and witness, in search of the unity which we believe is the will of Christ.

44. We have tried to show how the decision of the Episcopal Church USA to proceed with the recent consecration despite sustained strong opposition from large segments of the Anglican Communion calls into question significant portions of our agreed statements on authority and ecclesiology: the nature of ecclesial communion; the mutual interdependence of churches; the role of episcopal and collegial authority in maintaining the unity of the communion; the process of discernment in the communion of the Church, and the decisive role of Scripture and Tradition therein. This decision also challenges our mutual claim that we uphold a shared vision of human nature and the same fundamental moral values.

45. We believe that interdependence is of the essence of communion. It causes us concern that the New Hampshire consecration went ahead contrary to the resolutions and requests of the Anglican instruments of unity. Archbishop Runcie's warning of the need to confront the 'shibboleth of autonomy' and choose between independence and interdependence has taken on a new urgency in the light of recent events. The new obstacles which have arisen need to be addressed in the strength of our increasingly shared understanding of the apostolic tradition, and with a great resolve born of the profound conviction that communion matters crucially; it is what the world most needs and what the Church empowered by the Holy Spirit (2 Cor 13:13) is charged to show forth and minister.

46. If Anglican Dioceses or provinces were to embrace the notion of a "local option" for important decisions about the teaching of the Church in matters of faith and morals, and if bonds of communion were weakened in the direction of a federation of autonomous provinces rather than a relationship of mutual responsibility and interdependence, then our consensus on the ecclesiology of communion would be seriously undermined, and perhaps irreparably damaged. A federal arrangement cannot adequately express the profound link between the visible gathering of God's people and its life giving source, and is a pale shadow of a proper ecclesiology of communion.

47. We have also sought to show that ARCIC's statements on *koinonia* and discernment in communion are consistent with and find a clear echo in recent Anglican (and Roman Catholic) ecclesiological statements, and are consonant with developments within the

Anglican Communion concerning the four instruments of unity. They are also grounded in 'the ancient common traditions' as we saw these developing in the 4th century.

48. In reflecting on the effect of decisions in the Diocese of New Westminster and the Episcopal Church USA on the communion that Anglicans and Roman Catholics already share, we have taken seriously the following concerns raised frankly by representatives of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity in recent discussions with leaders of the Anglican Communion:

> *Unitatis redintegratio* n.13 singles out the Anglican Communion as *occupying a special place* among Churches and Ecclesial Communities with roots in the 16th c. Reformation. On that presumption we have proceeded to maintain relations at the highest level possible. Even at difficult moments in the past we have not sought to downgrade our relations, and do not seek to do so now.
>
> But in the same breath, we must add: the current decisions you face are of monumental ecclesiological importance.... Clearly the ecclesiological decisions you make will be a decisive factor in determining the shape of our future relations. As we see it, the kind of answer you will give to the current situation will tell us what kind of communion you are.
>
> It is profoundly worrisome that the term communion needs increasingly to be qualified by the adjectives *impaired* and *broken*, and that ecclesiological anomalies threaten to pile up as means of responding to tensions within Anglican provinces.... Decisive in this regard, if the term 'communion' is still to be meaningfully applied, is the interpretation given to the autonomy of the Anglican provinces, and the parameters of that autonomy.
>
> If you choose to strengthen the authority structures and instruments of unity within the Anglican Communion and find an effective means of addressing the tendency towards divergence on matters of faith and doctrine, we would clearly see this as enhancing the possibility of meaningful and fruitful dialogue in the search for Christian unity, and of an increasing commitment to shared witness and mission.
>
> It is our overwhelming desire that the Anglican Communion stays together, rooted in the historic faith which our dialogue and relations over four decades have led us to believe that we share to a large degree.

49. The members of this sub-commission are conscious of how many Christians and others are watching the Anglican Communion, to see how it responds to its difficulties. We hope that these reflections, rooted in the work of our theological dialogue commission, will assist your discernment process as you seek the mind of Christ. We find it a hopeful sign that this small group was invited to comment on recent events in the light of the work of ARCIC. We hope that the work of IARCCUM will soon be resumed and that the Commission will be able to carry out its mandate of fostering the reception of the work of ARCIC and finding means of giving tangible expression in our ecclesial lives to the level of faith we share. We accompany the work of the Lambeth Commission with our heartfelt prayers.

50. *Church as Communion* notes that 'the closer we draw together the more acutely we feel those differences which remain', words which resonate strongly for us and for many who, over the past decades, have worked and prayed for closer relations between us. The text closes with a word of encouragement and an invitation to persevere in our pursuit of that unity to which God is calling us:

> The forbearance and generosity with which we seek to resolve these remaining differences will testify to the character of the fuller communion for which we strive. Together with all Christians, Anglicans and Roman Catholics are called by God to continue to pursue the goal of complete communion of faith and sacramental life. This call we must obey until all come into the fullness of that Divine Presence, to whom Father, Son and Holy Spirit be ascribed all honour, thanksgiving and praise to the ages of ages. Amen. (58)

The Members of the Ecclesiological Sub-Commission of IARCCUM were:

Anglicans

The Rt Revd David Beetge – Anglican Co Chair of IARCCUM
The Rt Revd John Baycroft
Dr Mary Tanner
The Revd Canon Gregory Cameron, Anglican Co-Secretary, IARCCUM, *ex officio*

Roman Catholics

The Revd Peter Cross
The Revd Dr Paul McPartlan
The Revd Liam Walsh, OP
The Revd Canon Donald Bolen, Roman Catholic Co-Secretary, IARCCUM, *ex officio*

The current crisis in the Anglican Communion – what are the ecclesiological issues involved?

In his classic account of Anglican ecclesiology, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, Michael Ramsey makes the point that the way that the Christian Church is ordered is theologically significant because it is an outward expression of the Gospel. In his words:

> The outward order of the Church therefore is no indifferent matter; it is on the contrary, of supreme importance since it is found to be related to the Church's inner meaning and to the Gospel of God itself. For the good news that God has visited and redeemed His people includes the redeemed man's knowledge of death and resurrection through his place in the one visible society and through the death to self in which every member and group has died. And in telling of this one visible society the Church's outward order tells indeed of the Gospel. For every part of the Church's true order will bear witness to the one universal family of God and will point to the historic events of the Word-made-flesh. Thus Baptism is into the death and resurrection of Christ, and into the one Body (Rom 6:3, 1 Cor 12:13); the Eucharist is likewise a sharing in Christ's death and merging of the individual into the one Body (1 Cor 11:26, 1 Cor 10:17); and the Apostles are both a link with the historical Jesus and also the officers of the one ecclesia whereon every local community depends. Hence the whole structure of the Church tells of the Gospel; not only by its graces and virtues, but also by its mere organic shape it proclaims the truth. A baptism, a Eucharistic service, an Apostle, in themselves tell us of our death and resurrection and of the Body which is one.[1]

From the end of the first century onwards the dual function of the Apostles to which Ramsey refers in this quotation came to be exercised by the bishops.

It was the responsibility of the bishops to maintain the link with the historical Jesus by ensuring that the Apostolic testimony to Him was passed down whole and uncorrupted from one generation of the Church to the next. This was a point emphasised by St. Irenaeus and by Tertullian in the context of the Church's struggle with Gnosticism. They appealed to the unbroken succession of bishops originating with the Apostles themselves as the guarantee that Catholic orthodoxy rather than Gnosticism represented the authentic form of the Christian faith.[2]

It was also the responsibility of the bishops to maintain the unity of the Church. This not only meant acting as the focus of unity in their own churches (a point made repeatedly in the letters of St. Ignatius in the early second century) [3] but also acting, in Ramsey's words, as the 'officers of the one ecclesia' by acting as the link between the churches thus manifesting and maintaining the unity of the Catholic Church as a

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[1] M Ramsey *The Gospel and the Catholic Church* 2ed London: SPCK 1990 p.50
[2] See Irenaeus *Against Heresies* III:1-4, Tertullian *On Prescription against Heretics* XXXII
[3] See for example Ignatius of Antioch *Epistle to the Ephesians* 4-6 and *Epistle to the Magnesians* 4-7

whole. The role of the bishop in this regard is explained as follows in the report *Bishops in Communion* produced by the House of Bishops of the Church of England:

> In keeping contact and communication with the leaders of other worshipping communities on his people's behalf, the bishop has been the person, in every age, who has held together the local community with other Christian communities. Through the ordination of deacons and presbyters into catholic order and especially through the consecration of bishops. Christian communities remain constantly in touch with one another throughout the Church. So the bishop holds in unity the local church with every other local church with which it is in communion.[4]

In order to function in this way a bishop has to be accepted as a bishop of the Catholic Church by other bishops. In the Patristic period this recognition took the form of other bishops either attending the consecration of a new bishop in person or signifying their consent that the consecration should proceed and the ratification of the appointment by the bishop who was the Metropolitan of the ecclesiastical province concerned. For example, Canon IV of the Council of Nicaea in 325 declares:

> It is by all means proper that a bishop should be appointed by all the bishops in the province; but should this be difficult, either on account of urgent necessity or because of distance, three at least should meet together, and the suffrages of the absent [bishops] also being given and communicated in writing, then the ordination should take place. But in every province the ratification of what is done should be left to the Metropolitan.[5]

At the Reformation the reformed Church of England insisted that its orders of ministry remained those which had existed in the Catholic Church from the time of the Apostles. In the famous words of the Preface to the Ordinal, the Church of England believed that:

> It is evident to all men diligently reading Scripture and ancient Authors, that from the Apostles' time there have been these Orders of Ministers in Christ's Church; Bishops, Priests and Deacons.

and its intention was that; '…these Orders may be continued and reverently used and esteemed.'

In the case of bishops what this meant was that the Church of England intended that its bishops should be bishops of the Catholic Church ('a Bishop in the Church of God' as the Ordinal in the *Book of Common Prayer* puts it) and in order to signify that this was the case it was scrupulous in its adherence to the pattern for the consecration of bishops laid down in the Nicene Canon. Thus Matthew Parker was consecrated as Elizabeth I's first Archbishop of Canterbury on December 17 1559 by four bishops and all subsequent consecrations involved at least three bishops and the consent of the Archbishop of Canterbury or York as the Metropolitan of the province concerned.

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[4] *Bishops in Communion* London: CHP 2000 p.12

[5] *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* 2nd series Volume XIV Edinburgh & Grand Rapids: T&T Clark/Eerdmans 1997 p.11

The decision of the 16th century Church of England to adhere to the Nicene pattern set a precedent that has continued to be followed by the churches of the Anglican Communion. For example Canon C2 of the Canons of the Church of England, 'Of the Consecration of Bishops,' states:

> No person shall be consecrated to the office of bishop by fewer than three bishops present together and joining in the act of consecration, of whom one shall be the archbishop of the province or a bishop appointed to act on his behalf.

Similar Canons exist in the other provinces of the Communion and the significant point about their existence is that they are not simply arbitrary forms of ecclesiological conservatism. Precisely as at the English Reformation, they are an expression of the belief that Anglican bishops are not just bishops of the local Anglican churches to which they belong, but bishops of the whole Church of God. In the present divided state of the Christian Church it is impossible for Anglican bishops to receive universal ecumenical recognition (Anglican orders are not officially recognised by the Roman Catholic Church, for example), but the way that Anglican bishops are consecrated is meant to ensure that they will receive recognition from the other churches of the Communion and from the churches which they are in communion, such as the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht, the Philippine Independent Church, the Mar Thoma Syrian church of Malabar and the Lutheran churches of the Porvoo agreement.

When someone is consecrated as a bishop two things have to occur in order for a valid consecration to occur. There has to be a proper outward form. That is to say, there has to be a laying on of hands with prayer by the consecrating bishops. There also has to be a proper intention. That is to say, there has to be the intention to consecrate a bishop of the Catholic Church.

This means that the person who is being consecrated must be someone who will be able to uphold the Apostolic teaching, act as a focus for unity within the local church and link the local church to the wider Church of which it is a part. If it is known in advance that someone would be unable to fulfil these criteria then it would be impossible for those consecrating to act with the intention that they should do so. As a consequence the consecration would be invalid due to what is known as a 'defect of intention' and the person consecrated could not be regarded as a bishop.

For instance, it would be impossible validly to ordain someone who was known to be an atheist because those consecrating could not be acting with the intention that the person being consecrated would uphold the Apostolic faith and teach others to do so.

In the case of the consecration of Canon Gene Robinson as coadjutor bishop of New Hampshire on 2 November 2003 it can be argued that there was a defect of intention and that as a result the consecration was invalid and Robinson cannot be regarded as a bishop.

To understand why this is the case it is necessary to note the statement issued by the Primates of the Anglican Communion, including the Presiding Bishop of ECUSA,

Archbishop Frank Griswold on 16 October 2003. This stated that if the consecration of Canon Robinson were to proceed:

> …the ministry of this one bishop will not be recognised by most of the Anglican world, and many provinces are likely to consider themselves to be out of communion with the Episcopal Church (USA). This will tear the fabric of our Communion at itse deepest level, and may lead to further division on this and further issues as provinces have to decide in consequence whether they can remain in communion with provinces that choose not to break communion with the Episcopal Church (USA).[6]

This statement can be read as a declarative statement ('what will happen') or as a predictive statement ('what is likely to happen'). In either case it is clear that those who consecrated Canon Robinson, including Archbishop Griswold, must have been aware that they were consecrating someone who would either certainly, or very probably, be unable to carry out the ministry of a bishop by linking the diocese of New Hampshire and the Episcopal Church (USA) to the wider Anglican Communion. On the contrary it was either certain, or very probable, that his consecration would lead to the breaking of the links that already existed.

It follows that although the form of Canon Robinson's consecration was canonical since he was appointed according to the constitution of the Episcopal Church (USA) and consecrated by three bishops with the consent of the Metropolitan, there must have been a defect of intention since those consecrating could not have been acting with the reasonable expectation that they were consecrating someone who could act as a bishop of the Catholic Church. It follows that the consecration should be regarded as invalid and that the see of New Hampshire should be regarded as vacant.

Recognition that Canon Robinson was never properly consecrated suggests a possible way forward out of the crisis currently facing the Anglican Communion because of the actions of the Episcopal Church (USA).

First of all it means that Canon Robinson could not be invited to the Lambeth Conference in 2008 since he is not a bishop and this would avoid the problems that an invitation to him would raise.

Secondly. with the agreement of the other Primates of the Anglican Communion, the Episcopal Church (USA) could be invited by the Archbishop of Canterbury to fill the see of New Hampshire with an acceptable bishop and to censure those bishops who were involved in his consecration on the grounds that they took part in a consecration that they must have known was invalid.

Failure to take this action within an agreed time frame could then be regarded as a sign that the Episcopal Church (USA) no longer regarded itself as part of the Anglican Communion. The reasons would be that the Episcopal Church had taken action that it knew would lead to a breaking of communion with other churches of the Communion and had refused to rectify the situation when given the opportunity to do so, and that it

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[6] *A Statement by the Primates of the Anglican Communion meeting in Lambeth Palace* ACNS 3633 16 October 2003 p.2

had refused to take notice of decisions agreed collectively by the bishops of the Communion both at the Lambeth Conference 1998 and at subsequent Primates' meetings.

As Resolution 49 of the Lambeth Conference of 1930 declares, the Anglican Communion is a fellowship of churches that:

> …are bound together not by a central legislative and executive authority, but by mutual loyalty sustained through the common counsel of the bishops in conference.[7]

If a church decides to reject the common counsel of the bishops in conference it follows that it has decided to act in a way that is incompatible with the mutual loyalty referred to in the resolution. To put the same thing in more theological terms, that church has refused to act as a church by living according to the pattern of death and resurrection referred to by Ramsey, in which each Christian individually, and each local church collectively, dies to their own desires and preferences and enters into a new life that is shaped by the requirements of membership of the body of Christ as a whole.

In this new way of life independence is replaced by interdependence[8] and it is within this context that the question of provincial autonomy needs to be considered. It is true that the Anglican tradition has stressed the importance of the concept of provincial autonomy in response to what has been seen as the over centralised approach of the Roman Catholic Church. However, the acceptance of provincial autonomy has never been unqualified. For example, Resolution 48 of the Lambeth Conference of 1930 stated that:

> The Conference affirms that the true constitution of the Catholic Church involves the principle of the autonomy of particular Churches based upon a common faith and order.[9]

What we see in this quotation is that the affirmation of provincial autonomy is balanced by the fact that this autonomy is seen as being the autonomy of churches that share a common faith and order. This common faith and order limits the autonomy that these churches possess. Thus in terms of Anglican theology a province is not free to reject the authority of the Bible or to dispense with the dominical sacraments, the Catholic creeds or the historic episcopate. To do so would be to repudiate its identity as part of the Anglican Communion.

In similar fashion it can be argued that the autonomy of an Anglican province does not extend to taking a course of action, such as the consecration of an openly gay bishop, that has been rejected by the Anglican Communion as whole. This is because such an action would, as we have said, amount to an implicit refusal to live as part of the Communion and, as such, would be an example of the kind of abuse of freedom at

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[7] R Coleman (eds) *Resolutions of the Lambeth Conferences 1867-1988* Toronto: Anglican Book Centre 1992 p. 84
[8] I Cor 12: 12-26
[9] Ibid p.83

the expense of the unity of the Church criticised by St. Paul in a number of his letters.[10]

If it was considered that the Episcopal Church (USA) had repudiated its Anglican identity, the way would then be open for the Communion, through the Primates' meeting, to ask the Archbishop Canterbury to re-establish the Anglican Church in the United States by appointing bishops to form the nucleus of new church that was part of the Communion.

There are three responses that are commonly made to the kind of criticisms of the actions of the Episcopal Church (USA) outlined above.

The first response is to say that the threat to unity has been caused not by the actions of the Episcopal Church but by those other provinces of the Communion who have been unwilling to accept what the Episcopal Church has done. The problem with this argument is that ignores the principle set out by St. Paul that a Christian is not free to take a course of action that he or she thinks is permissible if this course of action will be a stumbling block for another Christian.[11] As Professor Anthony Thiselton comments, according to St. Paul:

> Rather than seeking to demonstrate some individualist assertion of freedom or even victory, love seeks the welfare of the other. Hence if 'the strong' express love, they will show active concern that 'the weak' are not precipitated into situations of bad conscience, remorse, unease or stumbling….Rather the one who *loves* the other will consider the effect of his or her own attitudes or actions upon 'weaker' brothers and sisters. [12]

What this mean is that the burden of responsibility lies with the 'strong' and not with the 'weak'. In the present instance it follows that, even if the Episcopal Church (USA) believed that the consecration of a practising homosexual was a theologically legitimate step to take, the demands of Christian love mean that they should have refrained from taking it out of respect for the consciences of those Anglicans who could not accept such an action.

The second response is to say that it is a missiological necessity for the Episcopal Church (USA) to support the ministry of practising homosexuals because only by acting in an 'inclusive' fashion can it continue to engage in effective outreach to gay and lesbian people. There are two problems with this response.

(a) This argument from missiological necessity was presented to both the Lambeth Conference in 1998 and the Primates' Meeting in October 2003. On both occasions the vast majority of the bishops present did not find this argument convincing, and, this being the case, it was incumbent on the Episcopal Church to accept the collective decision of the bishops about the matter and not to proceed with the consecration of Canon Robinson.

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[10] Rom 15:1-6, 1 Cor 1:10-17, 8:1-14:38, Eph 4:1-6, Phil 2:1-11
[11] Rom 14:1-15:6, 1 Cor 8:1-13
[12] A C Thiselton *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* Grand Rapids& Carlisle: Eerdmans/ Paternoster 2000 pp. 622-3

(b) Any missiological gains in the United States have to be balanced by the missiological problems caused by the actions of the Episcopal Church in Africa and South East Asia where the suggestion that Anglican Christians accept homosexuality has caused very serious problems in relations with Islam. The mutual responsibility of the members of the body of Christ means that it is not legitimate to seek to obtain missiological advantage for ourselves if this will damage the mission of Christians elsewhere in the world.

The third response is to say that at the Reformation the English Reformers acted unilaterally in pursuit of what they thought was right even though this damaged the unity of the Church. If it was right for them to do this it must also be right for Anglicans today to follow their example.

The problem with this argument is that it overlooks three key points made, for example, by Bishop John Jewel in his classic *Apology for the Church of England*. The first point that Jewel makes is that Rome had broken the unity of the Church by its doctrinal and ecclesiological innovations and what the Church of England had done was to restore unity with the ancient and undivided Church of the early centuries by doing away with these innovations. The second point that Jewel makes is that the Church of England had to act because the central issue underlying the Reformation was the issue of human salvation and it was not possible to hesitate on this issue. The final point that he makes is that there was no realistic prospect of a free council of the Church at which the Protestant viewpoint would obtain a fair hearing and so unilateral action was unavoidable.

In the present case none of these points apply. No one can reasonably argue that the traditional position on human sexuality is an innovation that marks a deviation from the teaching of the undivided Church. Nor can anyone can claim that the consecration of Canon Robinson was a matter of salvation. No one's soul would have been imperilled if he had not been consecrated. Finally, no one can claim that the supporters of the ordination of gay and lesbian clergy have not had the opportunity to have their case heard in the councils of the Anglican Communion. Their arguments have been given a fair hearing, but they have been rejected. It follows that it cannot be said that there is a good analogy between the actions of the Episcopal Church (USA) and those of the English Reformers.

Given that these responses are unconvincing for the reasons just given, the case against the actions of the Episcopal Church (USA) outlined earlier in this paper remains solid. Furthermore, this case also applies *mutatis mutandis* to the proposal before the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada that it should authorise Canadian dioceses to introduce the blessing of same sex relationships should they wish to do so.

Having warned of the consequences of the consecration of Gene Robinson, the Primates' meeting in October 2003 noted that: 'Similar considerations apply to the situation pertaining in the Diocese of New Westminster.'[13] What this means is that the Primates considered that the decision by the Canadian diocese of New Westminster to

[13] *A Statement by the Primates of the Anglican Communion meeting in Lambeth Palace* p.2

authorise the blessing of lesbian and gay relationships represented a similar threat to the unity of the Anglican Communion

This being the case, any decision by the Canadian General Synod to authorise same sex blessings more widely would be a decision to ignore the warning of the Primates as to the damage that such a decision would cause. Such a decision might be constitutionally valid but it could never be theologically valid because, as in the case of the decision to consecrate Canon Robinson, it would mean privileging the exercise of autonomy over the maintenance of communion. It would mean refusing to die to self in order to live as part of the wider Church.

Should the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada decide to take such an un-Catholic action it should be requested to reconsider it within a specified period of time. If it refused to do so, this should be regarded as sign that the Canadian Church had decided to place itself outside the Anglican Communion.

As we have suggested in the case of the Episcopal Church (USA), the Archbishop of Canterbury could then be asked to take the necessary steps to ensure that Anglican Church life in Canada continued by appointing bishops who could form the basis of a church that remained part of the Anglican Communion.

Prepared by

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GS-04 -- Statement to faithful Canadian Anglicans

Statement to faithful Canadian Anglicans from a consultation of Archbishops, bishops, theologians and leaders meeting in Nassau.

Warm greetings from the Bahamas where a group has been meeting in theological consultation about the current crisis in the Anglican Communion. Word has come to us of very serious actions of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada. We note the decision to defer paragraph (2) of resolution A-134 to the Primates Theological Committee for a determination as to whether or not the implementation of liturgies for the blessing of same-sex unions represents a doctrinal change.

We are sad, however, that the General Synod of the ACC has passed an amendment to resolution A-134 which has the effect of negating the deferral of paragraph 2 to the Primates Theological Committee. In our view, the amendment is much more serious than even the orginal form of the motion which did not describe the nature of same-sex unions.

The amendment goes much further than the original motion in employing expressions which Scripture uses to describe marriage (Eph 5:25-33). In accordance with Scripture, your own Prayer Book uses this language in its marriage service. It is completely unacceptable to Bible believing orthodox Christians that same-sex unions are described as "holy." Such language is reserved for marriage alone.

The attempt to give "committed adult same sex relationships" the same theological stature as marriage exacerbates the crisis in the communion and will reap devastating consequences.

We stand in solidarity with you as you seek to maintain catholic faith and practice and to reject such innovations. Please be sure we are praying for you in this critical time in the life of the church.

Archbishop Drexel Gomez
on behalf of the Theological Consultation in Nassau, June 3. 2004

The Lambeth Commission on Communion - Documents

Address to the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada

by the Secretary to the Lambeth Commission on Communion,
the Revd Canon Gregory Cameron

Introduction:

Part of the mandate of the Faith, Worship and Ministry Committee was to monitor developments and discussion as they were taking place in the Anglican Communion, so we thought it was important to have a member of the Anglican Communion whose connections with the Anglican Consultative Council and the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Lambeth Commission would provide us a perspective on the discussion that would help us as we deliberate. So I would like at this time to invite Canon Gregory Cameron to come to the podium.

Gregory Cameron:

- I suppose that I should begin by saluting your courage as a General Synod in being willing to debate what is probably the single most controversial topic that could be chosen for debate in the life of the Anglican Communion today. It is arguably crazy that this issue is taking up so much of the Communion's life and energy at present and, as your Acting Primate said last night, it is a debate which has been short on generosity and long on vituperation. To debate it, however, is your absolute right and, many would say, your duty, but it does mean that I am filled with something of a quiet terror as I stand here before you knowing the strength of diverse opinions on the issue.

- I have been asked to speak to you as the Secretary of the Lambeth Commission on Communion and, as you have heard, this was the body set up by the Archbishop of Canterbury at the request of the Primates of the Anglican Communion after their meeting in London last October to look at ways of keeping the Communion together in the wake of all the events of the last eighteen months. And so it is that I have come not only to speak to you now, but perhaps more importantly to listen to you, to discern what is going on in the life of the Anglican Church of Canada and to hear the different viewpoints that are generated and expressed. And I am extremely grateful for the hospitality afforded to me and for the honesty with which those conversations have already begun.

- No debate or decisions can be taken in a vacuum, and that I suppose is why I have been asked to provide this Anglican Communion context - but I am very uneasy about doing that in a situation where almost anything one says will be interpreted as aiming at one particular goal or another. I am uneasy about it as well because, quite honestly, I am struggling with different loyalties in the current situation:

- First of all, I want to be loyal as a disciple of Christ, because that is what I try to be;

• I want to be loyal to the Chair and members of the Lambeth Commission, whom I represent on this occasion, and for their process of work, and that does not complete itself for another four months or so;

• I want to be loyal to my friends who are gay, and whose Christian faith and discipleship often put my own to shame;

• I want to be loyal to my fellow Christians of the Global South, who see recent developments as a terrible betrayal of the Gospel;

• and last, but not at all least, I want to be loyal to you as the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, and to respect your proper autonomy.

• And I rehearse those loyalties, not merely as a piece of self-indulgence, but because I suspect that many Anglicans across the globe feel the same tug of similar and different loyalties, and this is one of the main reasons why the debate has become so fierce. On all sides, this debate touches deeply the integrity and convictions of our faith.

• Of course, the idea of a Public Rite of Blessing for Same Sex Unions is not new, and it is not distinctive to the Anglican Church of Canada. Indeed, only yesterday a colleague was pointing out to me that bishops in the Episcopal Church of the USA have been developing such rites since at least 1973. You do not need me to tell you how the case for same sex civil marriages, let alone mere same sex partnerships, is very much part of the political debate here in North America, in the United Kingdom and in Australia; nor will you need reminding about the decisions of the General Convention of ECUSA last Summer which recognise the development of rites of blessing as within the legitimate life of the Church;

• Less well-known are the same debates currently going on within the Lutheran Church of Sweden, in the Presbyterian, Methodist and Lutheran churches in the States; the acceptance by some of the Lutheran churches of Europe of pastors openly living in same-sex relationships; and the decisions by Old Catholic dioceses in Europe to authorise such rites;

• for many, such developments are a welcome sign that the Church is at last turning its back on centuries of prejudice and oppression.

• However, nothing can be plain sailing - and no sooner did your Diocese of New Westminster persuade its bishop to accept its desire for a Public Rite of Blessing of Same Sex Unions than that decision was under attack.

• The Anglican Consultative Council meeting in Hong Kong passed a motion advising against the adoption of controversial decisions in the life of the Anglican Communion - by a diocese without consulting the province, and by a province without consulting the Communion; and in so doing, some of its members at least were seeking to invoke an ancient principle of Church government - that what touches all should be decided by all.

• Opponents of the decision in New Westminster were quick to point out that not only had ACC-12 urged caution but that the decisions flew directly in the face of the teaching on human sexuality adopted by the overwhelming majority of Anglican bishops at the Lambeth Conference of 1998.

• The Primates of the Anglican Communion, as a body, reiterated their own views at their meeting in 2003 - and they wrote to all the Communion to say that they could not as the college of the senior bishops of the Anglican Communion together support the authorisation of such rites, echoing their earlier statements of 2000 and 2001.

• The Archbishop of Canterbury himself said at that meeting that there was no theological consensus on such matters.

• In other words, at least three, arguably the four, of the Instruments of Unity in the Anglican Communion took positions opposed to the developments in New Westminster;

• Others went further, and were quick to condemn - in June 2003, the Primate of Nigeria and leader of 17 million Anglicans, announced that he was severing Communion with the Diocese of New Westminster, because he believed that it was being unfaithful to Scripture.

• Now your Acting Primate has rightly pointed out that as a matter of Church law none of these voices have anything more than a moral authority in the Anglican Communion. And primates have not been slow to assert the autonomy of the independent provinces, such as for example the Primate of the Church of the Province of Southern Africa, who has said almost, "it's none of our business what happens in other provinces". But you need also to be aware that many of our sister and brother Anglicans of the Global South - much of Asia, most of Africa and in Latin America - are asking the question whether the Anglican churches of the West are prepared to pay any attention at all to the Instruments of Unity, and they intend to judge the value we place on the Communion by the heed we pay to the views expressed. Nor should we decry their motives, this is no game playing - on all sides people are acting out of profound convictions that this is what God calls the Church towards.

• Your Acting Primate could have cited principles adopted at successive Lambeth Conferences to support his anger at the irregular actions of primates from overseas in intervening in the internal affairs of the Church of Canada. "That is not the Anglican way", he said to us last night - but the fear of the Lambeth Commission is that it may end up becoming the Anglican way, as we move from respect towards rivalry. And that is why the Commission is working so hard to find ways to allow the Anglican Communion to walk together again.

• Whatever happened in New Westminster, within days of Nigeria's condemnation, the whole matter was eclipsed by the election of a Bishop Co-adjutor for the Diocese of New Hampshire in the States.

• These two events taken together have caused joy for many of those who have witnessed - or experienced - the intolerance and persecution of gay people at first hand; but it is also true that it caused enormous pain in other places - in Pakistan, Uganda, Nigeria and Egypt, Christians - and not just Anglicans, but Baptists and Copts and others - were publicly pilloried and physically attacked, homes being set on fire and people physically assaulted.

• The Russian Orthodox have severed links with ECUSA; the Oriental Orthodox Churches have suspended talks with the Anglican Communion, and their church leaders have denounced what they see as an attack on the institution of marriage and the teaching of the Bible about family life.

• The Roman Catholic Church has paused for thought about what they make of the Anglican Communion's claim to be a worldwide family of churches, and stated that developments constitute a new and serious obstacle to the path to unity. Reaction has come from right across the *oikoumene* of the Church. As Cardinal Kasper said to the Archbishop of Canterbury on his visit to Rome, "In this day and age, no-one is an observer; we are all participants".

• Within our own Communion, the leaders of twenty-two of the thirty-eight provinces of the Anglican Communion, representing about forty-four million Anglicans, have pronounced that they reject the moves in New Hampshire and in New Westminster as incompatible with the Gospel and with the Christian fellowship of which they are part. They have said that these developments tear the fabric of the Communion at its deepest level, and a state of broken Communion now exists between ECUSA and some twelve to eighteen provinces of the Communion.

• I really would that this was not so, but I cannot pretend that this is not the reality across the Anglican and ecumenical world at the moment. All of this has become a distraction from the wider mission and ministry of the Church, and innumerable bishops speak of how they are frustrated by the seeming inability of the Church to move beyond this topic.

• The Lambeth Commission, for its part, is painfully, carefully listening to all who will talk to it to discover whether there is a way to hold this great family of ours together - and it has been given a mere twelve months by the primates in which all provinces have been urged not to take precipitate action in order to allow space for the Communion to find a way to heal itself.

• This week, the eyes of all those other provinces will turn to you, to watch how you decide. It is your decision, and you must bring your collective wisdom to bear upon it, but I'm afraid to say that the context of this decision is so fraught at the moment that the fear must be that no matter what the careful wording of your resolutions this week, the Anglican Church of Canada will be seen to be debating, as I think your Acting Primate recognised last night, the place of gay and lesbian lifestyles in your Church. Fairly or unfairly, the Anglican and ecumenical worlds are likely to react to your decisions on whether they perceive you to support or to reject the possibility of public rites of blessings of same sex unions as elements of your lived-out faith in Canada.

- If you say "no" to the motions before you, then you will be in danger of letting down the thousands of gay people in your midst, who are part of your Canadian family, as well as all those others who are looking towards the Anglican Church of Canada to set a new standard in dealing with this issue;

- But if you say "yes", the work of the Lambeth Commission becomes horribly complicated, because we will be told that the Anglican Church of Canada refuses to hear the voice, or to heed the concerns of your fellow Anglicans in the growing provinces of the Global South, who are your international family. The reaction to such a decision, without very careful explanation and liaison by the Church of Canada, is likely to be on a par with that currently being experienced by your neighbours to the South.

- No that may be a price worth paying if you conclude that that is where Christ leads. You must do what you believe God is calling you to do - as your Acting Primate said - to do what will expand the realm of God; but I think I would be unfaithful to the task I have been set if I did not say that the implications of your decision for the unity of the Anglican Communion, perhaps even its very survival in its current form, are just about as serious as it could get.

Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold to the Primates

May 5, 2004

For the Primates of the Anglican Communion

My dear brothers,

Grace to you and peace in our risen Savior Jesus Christ.

I find myself, in these days of Easter in which we contemplate the mystery of the resurrection and its consequences in our lives, living with a sharp awareness of the reality of our being bound together in the Lord because of our baptism into the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. And, that being thus bound we are called to share one another's sufferings as well as joys. Over these months I have been deeply grieved that recent events in the life of the Episcopal Church in the United States have caused suffering for many of you. I am very clear that what occurred is in accord with our Constitution and is widely regarded as a faithful action. However, as your brother I am profoundly sorry for the wound this has caused within our body.

As I have said many times to the bishops of the Episcopal Church and to others, what we do in one part of the Communion can have significant consequences elsewhere. I remember vividly when we were together last October at Lambeth hearing from some of you about finding yourselves ridiculed and made a laughing stock because of your association with the Episcopal Church. I completely understand why some of you have spoken so harshly about what has occurred here. At the same time, many of us who love you deeply in the Lord are profoundly saddened that our fellowship is so severely strained, and in some cases appears to be broken.

I pray that in spite of our differences, serious as they are, we can discover together in this difficult time the truth of what we said in our statement of last October that "what we hold in common is much greater than that which divides us in proclaiming Good News to the world." The prayer of my heart is that we can discover anew our unity in service to God's mission through these difficulties. Our world, which is so burdened by poverty, disease and civil strife, is much in need of our common witness and action.

I regret that this communication is through a letter rather than a conversation. I hope we as primates will encourage ongoing conversations at all levels between people of our various provinces. I do believe that as we explore what we share across our differences we rediscover our common ground in service to God's continuing work of reconciliation. In conversation our differences do not disappear. Instead we find ourselves grounded upon the rock of Christ whose deathless love is able to transform our mistrust and woundedness into mutual care and affection.

It is my deepest sense that we have much to learn from one another, particularly as we seek to proclaim the gospel in our often very different contexts. The visits I have been privileged to make to several of your provinces have certainly made that very plain, and I have come away with an enlarged and deeper sense of how God is acting in this world to save us all from the power of sin and death.

On another matter, I want to share with you the response of the bishops of the Episcopal Church to the concern expressed in our Lambeth statement of last October that there be "adequate provision for episcopal oversight of dissenting minorities within their own area of pastoral care in consultation with the Archbishop of Canterbury on behalf of the Primates." The bishops of the Episcopal Church are called to be chief pastors for all people in their dioceses. They have continued to shape a plan for pastoral care which they first put forward in 2002. They have addressed how bishops with different perspectives, overseeing dioceses in which there are varying points of view, can bear one another's burdens and uphold one another's ministries for the sake of the gospel and its proclamation. When we met in March of this year we further refined our plan, which was then agreed to by an overwhelming majority. It is set forth in the enclosed document: Caring for all the churches.

I am in conversation with a number of bishops, whose theological perspectives meet the pastoral needs of "dissenting minorities," about making themselves available to provide episcopal oversight at the invitation of the diocesan bishop. As well, I know of several instances where diocesan bishops have arranged or are about to arrange for Delegated Episcopal Pastoral Oversight.

Key to what we are trying to do at this time is the shared understanding of our bishops that an episcopal ministry of care and oversight is not a personal possession of any one bishop but is shared by all bishops for the well being of the church as a whole.

Please pray for us as we pray for you in these days that challenge us all in the various contexts in which the Lord has placed us.

This comes, as ever, with my love and prayers,

The Most Rev. Frank T. Griswold

Presiding Bishop and Primate

The Episcopal Church, USA

Southern Cone Primate Gregory Venables replies to Griswold

May 7, 2004

The Most Revd Frank T. Griswold
Presiding Bishop, ECUSA

Dear Bishop Frank,

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

I write in response to your letter of May 5th. Since it has found its way all over the internet, I am constrained to respond more broadly than just in a personal note.

With great respect it must be said that considering what you now write in the light of what you have already done brings to mind the old cliche of Nero fiddling while Rome burns. It's like the doctor telling the grieving family that the operation was a success even though the patient has died.

You speak with clarity about your grief over the pain your actions have caused and yet you proceed with your relentless agenda. Do you not see that there is an enormous contradiction here?

The key path to alleviating that pain is repentance. It is simple to turn around and join the spiritual and doctrinal direction of the Anglican Communion and the overwhelming majority of the Christians of history and the world today. When one considers that you were advised by the Lambeth Bishops Conference, the ACC, the Primates, and the Archbishop of Canterbury that to proceed would bring a harvest of pain, it is hard to see why you find the consequences you now experience surprising.

You indicate that the action of the General Convention was constitutional. Of course I am not an expert in the Constitution and Canons of ECUSA, but I do remember the commitment of your General Convention to initiate an "inter-Anglican and ecumenical dialogue on human sexuality issues which should not be resolved by the Episcopal Church on its own (B-020)." (A ten minute search of internet archives shows that!) Many colleagues have also reminded me that you were clear that the official position of ECUSA was parallel to that of Lambeth I. 10 at a number of Primates meetings. When was that changed, or was it just ignored? Of course there is pain when you moved ahead in violation of your own Convention decisions. In addition, I saw the broadcast of objections to Gene Robinson's consecration which were simply and totally ignored.

How can these be constitutional actions?

You cling to the statement that "what we hold in common is much greater than that which divides us..." That statement was made before you chose to be the

chief consecrator at an event you knew would "tear the fabric of our Communion at its deepest level."

At a time like this, simply celebrating what we hold in common is like a man arguing before a judge that his offence should be overlooked because he hasn't broken other laws.

You cannot offer a band aid to a person who needs open heart surgery.

The situation must be addressed at the root of the disorder. You don't heal a disease by treating its symptoms.

You tell us that "Delegated Episcopal Pastoral Oversight" is moving toward solving the problem in your province. It is not so. First of all it leaves the decisions in the hands of the offending bishops and does not give any substantive protection to parishes that maintain Anglican teaching and practice. In addition, we are aware of ECUSA clergy and parishes who have been ordered by their revisionist bishops not to ask for alternative oversight, threatened if they do, or who live in areas where bishops have publicly stated that they will not allow it. The fact that "some" bishops will arrange for Delegated Episcopal Pastoral Oversight does not mean at all that it can be put in place where it is really needed.

And when did those who hold to the apostolical, biblical faith and practice of Christianity as accepted for 2000 years suddenly become "dissidents"?

You now say that you want to be in conversation. In the light of your previous great reticence to discuss the matter in our meetings this is tragically late in the day.

ECUSA's actions have caused a great and unnecessary crisis in the Anglican Communion that has spilled over into culture, ecumenical affairs, and even interfaith relations. It is tragic and painful indeed. It is the result of your actions and it is also reversible.

You have insisted on autonomy from the Lambeth resolutions, from the Archbishop of Canterbury's plea, from the ACC, and from the Primates to pursue an agenda that is absolutely scandalous to most Christians. That view of autonomy is the opposite of everything Anglicanism has always stood for. Why would you still want to call yourself Anglican? May I urge you either to live as an Anglican conforming to Anglican norms or admit that you have left us and closed the door behind you.

May God guide us in love and truth at this crucial and sad time.
+Greg

The Most Revd Gregory J. Venables
Primate of the Southern Cone of the Americas

Submission to Eames Commission by David F. Ford
June 2004

Learning from Lambeth 1998 and Primates' Meetings 2000-2003

This submission is **based** on participation in: the **Lambeth Conference 1998** (as part of the group that produced the opening and closing Plenary Sessions of the Conference and in between them tracked the Conference by observing its main Sections and being present at the lunchtime meetings of the group steering the Conference); the **Primates' Meetings in Porto (2000), in Kanuga (2001), and in Canterbury (2002)** (as leader of the daily Bible Studies and member of the drafting group for the communiqués/pastoral letters issued by the Meetings); and the **Primates' Meeting in Gramado (2003)** (as one of the theological respondents to the Meeting and member of the drafting group for the pastoral letter issued by it).

The **rationale** is that Lambeth 1998 and the Primates' Meetings that followed it have been the main centres of representative deliberation for the Anglican Communion on the issues that are the concern of the Eames Commission, and are among the main reference points mentioned in the Commission's Mandate.

The **aim** is to recall briefly a few critical moments, statements and realities that the Commission may find helpful to bear in mind as it consults the records of those gatherings in accordance with its Mandate.

1. Lambeth 1998: A Problematic Polity?

Lambeth 1998 went very well indeed at every level except that of the plenary gatherings that discussed and voted on resolutions. Those plenaries proved vulnerable to forms of politics that as far as I know were unprecedented at Lambeth Conferences, but have since spread. Whatever one's attitude to what emerged from the plenaries, I think it is generally agreed that the process was problematic. **The underlying issue, however, was the polity of the Anglican Communion**. The Commission's Mandate and Key Questions commit it to making *ad hoc* polity recommendations to meet a serious situation. ***Is it possible to do that without having in mind an overall polity for the Anglican Communion? If that is too ambitious in the time available, then might one recommendation of the Commission be that serious work on polity be done before the next Lambeth Conference?***

2. The Shape of the Primates' Meetings: Enabling Collegiality

One observation about the four Primates' Meetings that I attended is the importance of the collegiality they encouraged by a combination of several factors: a good deal of worship and Bible study; long enough (a week) for community life to happen; a balanced agenda covering mission and global issues (debt, HIV/AIDS, etc.) as well as internal Church matters; contributions from guests invited to address the Meetings; and frank sharing by Primates of what was going on in their Provinces. I noticed that each Meeting had its tensions in advance; each time it took some days for the Primates really to engage with each other; each time the discussion of mission and world issues had beneficial effects on the discussion of controversial Church matters; and yet by the time the next Meeting came around a great deal of the understanding

and fellowship seemed to have evaporated during another year of ecclesial politics and separation from each other, so that communion had to be renewed by the same process over again. The best meetings were those most secluded and retreat-like in conception. ***My conclusion as regards the Commission's work is that the Primates' Meeting and Anglican Consultative Council meeting which receive and deliberate about the Commission's report should ideally have the characteristics of the best of the Primates' Meetings***.

3. Porto 2000: A Key Peacemaking Insight

In the communiqué of the Porto Primates' Meeting there is the following statement:

> **As in any family, the assurance of love allows boldness of speech. We are conscious that we all stand together at the foot of the Cross of Jesus Christ, so we know that to turn away from each other would be to turn away from the Cross.**

That grew out of what I judge to be the most significant moment in all five gatherings from 1998-2003.

The key moment happened in the course of a Bible study on the Letter to the Ephesians. A discussion of 'the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name' (Eph. 3:14) led into a discussion of authority in families between two African archbishops. This connected with the discussion of Ephesians Chapter 2 on being brought together by the blood of Christ, 'For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us' (Eph. 2:14). Through the discussion that followed in the Bible study and later in the group drafting the communiqué a number of basic realities emerged:

- **in our Anglican Christian family it can be 'life-giving' to have the sort of challenge, disagreement and admonition in love and truth that were going on in the Meeting;**
- **if it is virtually unthinkable for us to turn away and break off from our natural families, how much more unthinkable and scandalous should it be to turn away from those with whom the blood of Christ unites us;**
- **the measure of the suffering we are called to be willing to put up with for the sake of our unity is nothing less than that seen in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ;**
- **the suffering might well last many years; in the face of impatient calls for solutions on all sides, we may need to be prepared if necessary for decades of living patiently with deep problems, yet without ever turning away from each other. That patient living and loving 'at the foot of the Cross of Jesus Christ' might prove to be the witness that our conflict-torn world needs most of all.**

This cross-centred understanding of the extraordinary preciousness of unity and the sacrifices which it is worth enduring for the sake of our Communion's unity was only the most powerful example of what the Primates' Meetings demonstrated again and again: ***that the best way to cope with differences is to go deeper into the heart of the Gospel***. I hope that that is where the Commission will lead the Anglican Communion.

4. Kanuga 2001: A Transforming Perspective

The second most memorable event of the five gatherings occurred in Kanuga. The Rev. Gideon Byamugisha of Uganda gave what the Pastoral Letter rightly called a profoundly moving presentation on HIV/AIDS. When the Letter later said: 'We thank God for those outpourings of the Holy Spirit we have heard of and experienced this week' (how many gatherings of Anglican archbishops and presiding bishops have claimed to have experienced outpourings of the Holy Spirit?) what it had in mind was Gideon's presentation and the remarkable overflow from it in discussing implications and in sharing experiences of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The indirect effect on the sensitive discussions about divisions in the Anglican Communion was considerable. ***The pandemic helped to put our internal difficulties into a different perspective, shaped by God's compassion for those who are suffering***. How might this perspective shape the Commission's report?

5. Canterbury 2002: The Role of Law

One of the surprises of Kanuga and then Canterbury for me was the way in which the relevance of canon law to the long term health of the Anglican Communion was convincingly demonstrated, and it is good to see it featuring prominently in the Commission's Key Questions. However, especially after Canterbury, I was convinced that canon law is no substitute for ***creative thinking about polity***, of which there has been too little in Anglicanism in recent years. This reinforces the questions under Section 1 above.

6. Gramado 2003: Scripture and 'A New Dawn'

In Gramado the Bible studies were led by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams. They invited the Meeting day by day deeper into the heart of St John's Gospel through chapters from the Farewell Discourses. Those who were there will recall the remarkable effect of this immersion in scripture. I asked the Archbishop of Nigeria, Peter Akinola, what he thought at the end of the final study, and he said: 'A new dawn'. I am convinced that scripture, which is so much part of our problems, also offers the main way through them. **There are wiser ways of understanding and applying scripture than many of those which often dominate the controversies in our Communion.** I hope the Commission's report will exemplify the Gramado wisdom interpretation of scripture.

Lambeth Conference 1998 Archives

News Items English

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Address at Lambeth Plenary on making moral decisions - July 22, 1998

Prof. Rowan Williams
Bishop of Monmouth, Wales **Canterbury**

1. What is it like to make a choice? The temptation we easily give way to is to think that it's always the same kind of thing; or that there's one kind of decision making that's serious and authentic, and all other kinds ought to be like this. In our modern climate, the tendency is to imagine that choices are made by something called the individual will, faced with a series of clear alternatives, as if we were standing in front of the supermarket shelf. There may still be disagreement about what the 'right,' choice would be, but we'd know what making the choice was all about. Perhaps for some people the right choice would be the one that best expressed my own individual and independent preference: I'd be saying no to all attempts from outside to influence me or determine what I should do, so that my choice would really be mine. Or perhaps I'd be wondering which alternative was the one that best corresponded to a code of rules: somewhere there would be one thing I could do that would be in accord with the system, and the challenge would be to spot which one it was - though it might sometimes feel a bit like guessing which egg-cup had the coin under it in a game. But in any case the basic model would be much the same: the will looks hard at the range of options and settles for one.

   But of course we don't spend all our lives in supermarkets. Some of us come from environments in which this kind of consumer choice is at best a remote dream, where it can sound like a cruel mockery to talk of such choices. And for the rest of us, the ones who do have the power to exercise such choices - is this model a sensible account of what it's like to make decisions in general?

   Whom shall I marry? Shall I marry at all? Which charity shall I support this Christmas? Shall I resign from this political party, which is now committed to things I don't believe in - but is still better than the other parties in some ways? Should I become a vegetarian? Should I break the law and join an anti-government protest? Should I refuse to pay my taxes when I know they're partly used to buy weapons of mass destruction? How should I finish this poem or this novel? How should I finish my life if I know I'm dying? Think about these and choices like them. Each of them - even 'Which charity shall I support?' - is a decision that is coloured by the sort of person I am; the choice is not made by a will operating in the abstract, but by someone who is used to thinking and imagining in a certain way: someone who is the sort of person who finds an issue like this an issue of concern (another person might not be worried in the same way by the same question). And this means that an answer only in terms of the

system', the catalogue of right answers, would help us not at all; what kind of code, we may well ask, would give us impersonally valid solutions to the dilemmas just listed? We believe that, in some contexts, we can say, 'You ought never to do that'; but there is no straightforward equivalent formula allowing us to say, 'You ought to do that'. As the Welsh philosopher Rush Rhees, argues in an unpublished paper, telling someone else what they ought to do is as problematic as telling someone else what they want. There is a significant sense in which only I can answer the question, 'What ought I to do?' just as only I can answer, 'What do I want?'

But for me to answer either question is harder than at first it sounds. Rhees is careful to say that 'What ought I to do?' is drastically different from a question about my preferences, what I just happen to want (or think I want) at some specific moment. Herbert McCabe, a prominent British Catholic theologian and moralist, wrote many years ago - not without a touch of mischief - that 'ethics is entirely concerned with doing what you want'; going on to explain that our problem is that we live in a society, and indeed as part of a fallen humanity, that deceives us constantly about what we most deeply want. The point that both Rhees and McCabe are trying to make is emphatically not that ethics is a matter of the individual's likes or dislikes, but, on the contrary, that it is a difficult discovering of something about yourself, a discovering of what has already shaped the person you are and is moulding you in this or that direction. You might put it a bit differently by saying that you are trying to discover what is most 'natural' to you, though this begs too many questions for comfort. Rheas notes, very pertinently, that if I say I must discover something about myself in order to make certain kinds of decisions with honesty, this is not purely 'subjective': I am in pursuit of a truth that is not at my mercy, even if it is a truth about myself. And when the decision is made, I shall not at once know for certain that it is 'right' - in the sense that I might know if it were a matter of performing an action in accordance with certain rules: it may be that only as years pass shall I be able to assess something I have done as the 'natural, or truthful decision.

That too tells us something significant about our decision-making: we may in retrospect come to believe that - however difficult a decision seemed at the time - it was the only thing we could have done. We were less free to choose than we thought: or, we might say, we were more free (in a different sense) to do what was deepest in us. Some of our problems certainly arise from a very shallow idea of what freedom means, as if it were first and foremost a matter of consumer choice, being faced with a range of possibilities with no pressure to choose one rather than another. But we have to reckon with the freedom that comes in not being distracted from what we determine to do. The saint is often recognised by this freedom from distraction. They may not be - subjectively - eager to do what they are going to do, but they have a mature and direct discernment of what 'must' be done if they are to be faithful to the truth they acknowledge. And their confidence comes not from knowing-a-catalogue- of-recommended or proscribed actions, but from that knowledge of who or what

they are that enables them to know what action will be an appropriate response to the truth of themselves and the world.

2. But it is time now to look harder at this matter of self-knowledge. We can easily misunderstand it of we think first and foremost of the self as a finished and self-contained reality, with its own fixed needs and dispositions. That, alas, is how the culture of the post-enlightenment world has more and more tended to see it. We romanticise the lonely self, we are fascinated by its pathos and its drama; we explore it in literature and psychological analysis, and treat its apparent requirements with reverence. None of this is wrong - though it may be risky and a courting of fantasy; but we have to think harder, in the 'Western' or North Atlantic world about the way the self is already shaped by the relations in which it stands. Long before we can have any intelligent account of our 'selfhood' in absolutely distinct terms, we already have identities we did not choose; others have entered into what we are - parents and neighbours, the inheritance of class and nation or tribe, all those around us who are speaking the language we are going to learn. To become a conscious self is not to say no to all this: that would be flatly impossible. It is to learn a way of making sense and communicating within an environment in which our options are already limited by what we have come into.

   If this is so, self-knowledge is far more than lonely introspection. We discover who we are, in significant part, by meditating on the relations in which we already stand. We occupy a unique place in the whole network of human and other relations that makes up the world of language and culture; but that isn't at all the same as saying that we possess an identity that is fundamentally quite unlike that of others and uninvolved in the life of others -with its own given agenda. Thus the self-discovery we have been thinking about in the process of making certain kinds of decision is also a discovery of the world that shapes us. I spoke earlier of finding out what has shaped the person I now am; and this is always going to be more than the history of my own previous decisions.

   And this is where we may begin to talk theologically (at last). How do Christians make moral decisions? In the same way as other people. That is to say, they don't automatically have more information about moral truth in the abstract than anyone else. What is different is the relations in which they are involved, relations that shape a particular kind of reaction to their environment and each other. If you want to say that they know more than other people, this can only be true in the sense that they are involved with more than others, with a larger reality, not that they have been given an extra set of instructions. The people of Israel in the Old Testament received the Law when God had already established relation with them, when they were already beginning to be a community bound by faithfulness to God and each other. The Law didn't come into a vacuum, but crystallises what has begun to exist through the action of God. When the Old Testament prophets announce God's judgement on the people, they don't primarily complain about the breaking of specific rules (though they can do this in some contexts) or about failure to live up to a moral ideal; they denounce those actions that signify a breaking of the covenant with God and so the

breaking of the bonds of faithfulness that preserve Israel as a people to whom God has given a unique vocation - above all, actions such as idolatry and economic oppression. They denounce Israel for replacing the supremely active and transcendent God who brought them out of Egypt by local myths that will allow them to manage and contain the divine; and for creating or tolerating a social order that allows some among God's chosen nation to be enslaved by others because of poverty, and that is unworried by massive luxury and consumption, or sees its deepest safety in treaties with bloodthirsty superpowers. If you had asked one of the prophets about moral decision making, he might have responded (once you had explained what you meant to someone who wouldn't be starting with such categories) by saying, 'What we seek as we choose our path in life is what reflects the demands of the covenant, what is an appropriate response to the complete commitment of God to us. The Law tells me what kinds of action in themselves represent betrayal of God; but in deciding what, positively, I must do, I seek to show the character of the God who has called me through my people and its history'.

The truth sought by such- a person would be a truth shared with the community of which they were part, the community that gave them their identity in a number of basic respects. When we turn to the New Testament, it is striking that the earliest attempts at Christian ethical thinking echo this so closely. We can watch St Paul in Romans 14 and 15 or I Corinthians 10 discussing what was in fact a profoundly serious dilemma for his converts: to abstain from meat sacrificed to pagan gods was regarded as one of the minimum requirements for fidelity to the true God by Jews of that age (as an aspect of the covenant with Noah, which was earlier and more comprehensive than the covenant made through Moses); and it had been reaffirmed by the most authoritative council we know of in the Church's first decades, the apostolic synod described in Acts 15. But the growing recognition that the sacrifice of Christ had put all the laws of ritual purity in question, combined with the practical complications of urban life in the Mediterranean cities, was obviously placing urban converts under strain. Paul is, it seems, fighting on two fronts at once. He warns, in Romans 14, of the risks of the 'pure', the ultra-conscientious, passing judgement on the less careful, at the same time as warning the less careful against causing pain to the scrupulous by flaunting their freedom in ways that provoke conflict or, worse, doubt. In the Corinthian text, he offers an even clearer theological rationale for his advice in arguing that any decision in this area should be guided by the priority of the other person's advantage and thus by the imperative of building the Body of Christ more securely. What will guide me is the need to show in my choices the character of the God who has called me and the character of the community I belong to; my God is a God whose concern for all is equal; my community is one in which all individual actions are measured by how securely they build up a pattern of selfless engagement with the interest of the other - which in itself (if we link it up to what else Paul has to say) is a manifestation of the completely costly directedness to the other that is shown in God's act in Christ.

So for the early Christian, as for the Jew, the self that must be discovered is a

self already involved very specifically in this kind of community, in relation to this kind of God (the God of self-emptying). The goal of our decision-making is to show what God's selfless attention might mean in prosaic matters of everyday life - but also to show God's glory (look, for example, at Romans 15.7 or I Corinthian 10.31). What am I to do? I am to act in such a way that my action becomes something given 'into, the life of the community and in such a way that what results is glory - the radiating, the visibility, of God's beauty in the world. The self that I am, the self that I have been made to be, is the self engaged by God in love and now in process of recreation through the community of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit.

It's no use trying to answer the question about who I really am independently of this. There is no secret, detached, individual ego apart from these realities in which I am gracefully entangled. So perhaps the most important challenge to some of our conventional ways of talking about morality comes from the biblical principle that sees ethics as essentially part of our reflection on the nature of the Body of Christ.

3. What might this mean in more depth? The model of action which actively promotes the good of the other in the unqualified way depicted by Paul, and which reflects the self-emptying of God in Christ, presupposes that every action of the believer is in some sense designed as a gift to the Body. Gifts are, by definition, not what has been demanded, not the payment of a debt or the discharging of a definite duty. To borrow the terms of one of our most distinguished Anglican thinkers, John Milbank, a gift can't just be a 'repetition' of what's already there. At the same time, a gift has its place within a network of activities; it is prompted by a relationship and it affects that relationship and others; it may in its turn prompt further giving. But in this context it is important that a gift be the sort of thing that can be received, the sort of thing it makes sense to receive; something recognisable within the symbolic economy of the community, that speaks the language of the community. In the Christian context, what this means is that an action offered as gift to the life of the Body must be recognisable as an action that in some way or another manifests the character of the God who has called the community.

   And this is where the pain and tension arises of Christian disagreement over moral questions. Decisions are made after some struggle and reflection, after some serious effort to discover what it means to be in Christ; they are made by people who are happy to make themselves accountable, in prayer and discussion and spiritual direction. Yet their decisions may be regarded by others as impossible to receive as a gift that speaks of Christ - by others who seek no less rigorously to become aware of who they are in Christ and who are equally concerned to be accountable for their Christian options. It would be simpler to resolve these matters if we were more abstract in our Christian learning and growing. But the truth is that we learn our faith in incarnate ways; Christ makes sense to us because of the specific Christian relationships in which we are involved - this community, this inspirational pastor or teacher, this experience of reading scripture with others. Of course (it ought not to need saying) such

particularities are always challenged and summoned to move into the universal sphere, the catholic mind of the whole body. But this is what can be a struggle. If we learn our discipleship in specific contexts and relations, as we are bound to, our Christian identity will never be an abstract matter. We are slowly coming to acknowledge the role of cultural specificities in our Christian practice. But it's more than that, more than a matter of vague cultural relativity, let alone allowing the surrounding culture to dictate our priorities. It is that local Christian communities gradually and subtly come to take for granted slightly different things, to speak of God with a marked local accent. At a fairly simple level, we might think of different attitudes to the Christian use of alcohol in many African contexts as opposed to prevailing assumptions in the North Atlantic work or differences as to who you might most immediately ask for help over matters of moral or even spiritual concern - a cleric or an elder in a community or a family council. At first sight, when you encounter a different 'accent', it can sound as though the whole of your Christian world is under attack or at least under question, precisely because no-one learns their Christianity without a local accent.

And it would be easy to resolve if we didn't care about Christian consistency if we didn't somehow share a conviction that the Church ought to speak coherently to its environment about discerning the difference between ways that lead to life and ways that lead to death. We want our faith to be more than just what we learn from those who are familiar and whom we instinctively trust, because we remember - or we should-remember - how the faith moved out from the familiar territory of the Eastern Mediterranean to become 'naturalised' in other cultures. Tribalism is never enough. Yet when we begin to put our insights together, deep and sometimes agonising conflict appears. What are we to do?

4. So much is being said about issues of sexuality that I believe it is important to look seriously at some other matters also when we reflect on moral decision making and the character of our moral discernment. So let me take a different set of questions, one in which I have long been involved. I believe that it is impossible for a Christian to tolerate, let alone bless or even defend, the manufacture and retention of weapons of mass destruction by any political authority. And having said that I believe it is impossible, I at once have to recognise that Christians do it; not thoughtless, shallow, uninstructed Christians, but precisely those who make themselves accountable to the central truths of our faith in the ways I have described. I cannot at times believe that we are reading the same Bible; I cannot understand what it is that could conceivably speak of the nature of the Body of Christ in any defence of such strategy. But these are people I meet at the Lord's Table; I know they hear the scriptures I hear, and I am aware that they offer their discernment as a gift to the Body. At its most impressive, the kind of argument developed in defence of their stance reminds me that in a violent world the question of how we take responsibility for each other, how we avoid a bland and uncostly withdrawal from the realities of our environment, is not easily or quickly settled. In this argument, I hear something I need to hear something that, left to myself, I might

not grasp. So I am left in perplexity. I cannot grasp how this reading of the Bible is possible; I want to go on arguing against it with all my powers, and I believe the Christian witness in the world is weakened by our failure to speak with one voice on the matter. Yet it seems I am forced to ask what there is in this position that I might recognise as a gift, as a showing of Christ.

It comes - for me - so near the edge of what I can make any sense of. I have to ask whether there is any point at which my inability to recognise anything of gift in another's policy, another's discernment, might make it a nonsense to pretend to stay in the same communion. It's finely balanced: I'm not a Mennonite or a Quaker. I can dimly see that the intention of my colleagues who see differently is also a kind of obedience, by their lights, to what we are all trying to look at. I see in them the signs of struggling with God's Word and with the nature of Christ's Body. Sixty years ago, Bonhoeffer and others broke the fragile communion of the German Protestant Churches over the issue of the anti-Jewish legislation of the Third Reich, convinced that this so cut at the heart of any imaginable notion of what Christ's Body might mean that it could only be empty to pretend that the same faith was still shared. How we get to such a recognition is perhaps harder than some enthusiasts imagine, and Bonhoeffer has some wise words about the dangers of deciding well in advance where the non-negotiable boundaries lie. Our task is rather to work at becoming a discerning community, ready to recognise a limit when it appears, a limit that will have a perfectly concrete and immediate character. For him, the limits are going to be set 'from outside': 'the boundaries are drawn arbitrarily by the world, which shuts itself off from the church by not hearing and believing' (The Way to Freedom, p.79). But of course the discernment of such boundaries has quite properly involved the Church in drawing boundaries 'from within', in the form of baptism and credal confession. To paraphrase Bonhoeffer: if we didn't have these markers of Christian identity, there would be no ground on which the Church as a community, a body with a common language, could discuss and discern a possible boundary being set by the world's refusal of the gospel.

The question is when and where the 'world' so invades the Church that the fundamental nature of the Church is destroyed; and to this question there is - by definition, Bonhoeffer would say - no general and abstract answer. Up to a certain point we struggle to keep the conversation alive, as long as we can recognise that our partners in this conversation are speaking the same language, wrestling with the same given data of faith. If I might put it in a formula that may sound too much like jargon, I suggest that what we are looking for in each other is the grammar f obedience: we watch to see if our partners take the same kind of time, sense that they are under the same sort of judgement or scrutiny, approach the issue with the same attempt to be dispossessed by the truth they are engaging with. This will not guarantee agreement; but it might explain why we should always first be hesitant and attentive to each other. Why might anyone think this might count as a gift of Christ to the Church? Well, to answer that I have a great deal of listening to do, even if my incomprehension remains.

5. And there is a further turn to this. When I reluctantly continue to share the Church's communion with someone whose moral judgement I deeply disagree with, I do so in the knowledge that for both of us part of the cost is that we have to sacrifice a straightforward confidence in our 'purity'. Being in the Body means that we are touched by one another's commitments and thus by one another's failures. If another Christian comes to a different conclusion and decides in different ways from myself, and if I can still recognise their discipline and practice as sufficiently like mine to sustain a conversation, this leaves my own decisions to some extent under question I cannot have absolute subjective certainty that this is the only imaginable reading of the tradition; I need to keep my reflections under critical review. This, I must emphasise again, is not a form of relativism; it is a recognition of the element of putting oneself at risk that is involved in any serious decision making or any serious exercise of discernment (as any pastor or confessor will know). But this is only part of the implication of recognising the differences and risks of decision-making in the Body of Christ. If I conclude that my Christian brother or sister is deeply and damagingly mistaken in their decision, I accept for myself the brokenness in the Body that this entails. These are my wounds; just as the one who disagrees with me is wounded by what they consider my failure or even betrayal. So long as we still have a language in common and the 'grammar of obedience' in common, we have, I believe, to turn away from the temptation to seek the purity and assurance of a community speaking with only one voice and to embrace the reality of living in a communion that is fallible and divided. The communion's need for health and mercy is inseparable from my own need for health and mercy. To remain in communion is to remain in solidarity with those who I believe are wounded as well as wounding the Church, in the trust that in the Body of Christ the confronting of wounds is part of opening ourselves to healing.

   This is hard to express. It may be clearer if we think for a moment of the past of our Church. In the Body of Christ, I am in communion with past Christians whom I regard as profoundly and damagingly in error - with those who justified slavery, torture or the execution of heretics on the basis of the same Bible as the one I read, who prayed probably more intensely than I ever shall. How do I relate to them? How much easier if I did not have to acknowledge that this is my community, the life I share; that these are consequences that may be drawn from the faith I hold along with them. I don't seek simply to condemn them but to stand alongside them in my own prayer, not knowing how, in the strange economy of the Body, their life and mine may work together for our common salvation. I don't think for a moment that they might be right on matters such as those I have mentioned. But I acknowledge that they 'knew' what their own concrete Christian communities taught them to know, just as I 'know' what I have learned in the same concrete and particular way. And when I stand in God's presence or at the Lord's Table, they are part of the company I belong to.

   Living in the Body of Christ is, in fact, profoundly hard work. The modern liberal is embarrassed by belonging to a community whose history is infected by prejudice and cruelty (and so often tries to sanitise this history or silence it or

distance themselves from it). The modern traditionalist is embarrassed by belonging to a community whose present is so muddled, secularised and fragmented (and longs for a renewed and purified Church where there are apparently clear rules for the making of moral decisions). If we cared less about the truth and objectivity of our moral commitments, this would matter infinitely less. But if I say that our moral decisions involve a risk, I don't mean by that to suggest that they have nothing to do with truth; they are risky precisely because we are trying to hear the truth - and to show the truth, the truth of God's character as uniquely revealed in Jesus Christ. And there are times when the risky decision called for is to recognise that we are no longer speaking the same language at all, no longer seeking to mean the same things, to symbolise or communicate the same vision of Who God is. But that moment itself only emerges from the constantly self-critical struggle to find out who I am and who we are in and as the Body of Christ.

6. Can we then begin thinking about our ethical conflicts in terms of our understanding of the Body of Christ? The first implication, as I have suggested, is to do with how we actually decide what we are to do, what standard we appeal to. An ethic of the Body of Christ asks that we first examine how any proposed action or any proposed style or policy of action measures up to two concerns: how does it manifest the selfless holiness of God in Christ? And how can it serve as a gift that builds up the community called to show that holiness in its corporate life? What I have to discover as I try to form my mind and will is the nature of my pre-existing relation with God and with those others whom God has touched, with whom I share a life of listening for God and praising God. Self-discovery, yes; but the discovery of a self already shaped by these relations and these consequent responsibilities. And then, if I am serious about making a gift of what I do to the Body as a whole, I have to struggle to make sense of my decision in terms of the common language of the Faith, to demonstrate why this might be a way of speaking the language of the historic schema of Christian belief. This involves the processes of self-criticism and self-questioning in the presence of Scripture and tradition, as well as engagement with the wider community of believers. Equally, if I want to argue that something hitherto not problematic in Christian practice or discourse can no longer be regarded in this light, I have a comparable theological job in demonstrating why it cannot be a possible move on the basis of the shared commitments of the Church. I may understand at least in part why earlier generations considered slavery as compatible with the gospel or why they regarded any order of government other than monarchy to be incompatible with the gospel. I may thus see something of what Christ meant to them, and receive something of Christ from them, even as I conclude that they were dangerously deluded in their belief about what was involved in serving Christ.

   I cannot escape the obligation of looking and listening for Christ in the acts of another Christian who is manifestly engaged, self-critically engaged, with the data of common belief and worship. But, as I have hinted, there are points when recognition fails. If someone no longer expressly brings their acts and projects before the criterion we look to together; if some one's conception of the Body

of Christ is ultimately deficient, a conception only of a human society (that is, if they have no discernible commitment to the Risen Christ and the Spirit as active in the Church); if their actions systematically undermine the unconditionality of the gospel's offer (this was why justification by faith became the point of division for the Reformation churches, and why the anti-Jewish laws of the Third Reich became the point of division for the Confessing Church in 1935) - then the question arises of whether there is any reality left in maintaining communion. This is a serious matter, on which generalisations are useless. All we can do is be wary of self-dramatising, and of a broad-brush rhetoric about the abandonment of 'standards'. As the Confessing Church knew well, such a case requires detailed argument - and the sense also of a decision being forced, a limit being encountered, rather than a principle being enunciated in advance to legitimate divisions.

Unity at all costs is indeed not a Christian goal; our unity is 'Christ-shaped, or it is empty. Yet our first call, so long as we can think of ourselves as still speaking the same language, is to stay in engagement with those who decide differently. This, I have suggested, means living with the awareness that the Church, and I as part of it, share not only in grace but in failure; and thus staying alongside those on the 'other side, in the hope that we may still be exchanging gifts - the gift of Christ - in some ways, for one another's healing.

One of our problems, especially in our media-conscious age, is that we talk past each other and in each other's absence; and even when we speak face to face, it is often in a 'lock' of mutual suspicion and deep anxiety. But the Body of Christ requires more of us. It requires, I've suggested, staying alongside: which implies that the most profound service we can do for each other is to point to Christ; to turn from our confrontation in silence to the Christ we all try to look at; to say to one another, from time to time, hopefully and gently, 'Do you see that? This is how I see him; can you see too?' For many of us, the experience of ecumenical encounter is like this when it is doing its work. I wonder whether we are capable of a similar methodology when we divide over moral questions. It does not preclude our saying - in the ecumenical context - 'I can't see that; that sounds like error to me'; and in the ethical context, 'I can't see that; that sounds like sin to me'. It's what I want to say to those who defend certain kinds of defence policies, as I've noted. But what if I still have to reckon with my opponent's manifest commitment to the methods of attention to Christ in Word and worship? I risk an unresolvedness, which is not easy and may not be edifying, and trust that there may be light we can both acknowledge at some point.

And I am brought back to the fundamental question of where and who I am: a person moulded by a specific Christian community and its history and culture, for whom Christ has become real here with these people; but a person also committed, by my baptism, to belonging with Christian strangers (past, present and future - do we think often enough of our communion with Christians of the future? we are their tradition...). I am not sure what or how I can learn from them. They may frighten me by the difference of their priorities and their discernment. But because of where we all stand at the Lord's Table, in the Body,

I have to listen to them and to struggle to make recognisable sense to them. If I have any grasp at all of what the life of the Body is about, I shall see to it that I spend time with them, doing nothing but sharing the contemplation of Christ. At the very least, it will refresh the only thing that can be a real and effective motive for the making of Christian moral decision: the vision of a living Lord whose glory I must strive to make visible.

The Lambeth Commission on Communion - Documents

Presiding Bishop Frank T. Griswold message on the Meeting of the Lambeth Commission

ENS 061804-3

Friday, June 18, 2004

[Episcopal News Service] On the afternoon of June 15 I met with members of the Lambeth Commission under the chairmanship of the Most Rev. Robin Eames, Primate of All Ireland. Participating with me in this conversation were: the Very Rev. George Werner, President of the House of Deputies; the Rt. Rev. Arthur Williams, former Vice-President of the House of Bishops; the Rt. Rev. Charles Jenkins, the President of my Council of Advice; David Beers Esq., my chancellor, and Barbara Braver, a member of my staff.

During our remarks and in our conversation and response to questions from the Commission, we sought to give a full and accurate picture of the present state of our church, and to dispel a number of misapprehensions. As Presiding Bishop of the whole church it was important for me to make sure that I, along with my colleagues, sought honestly to represent the breadth of views and the depth of feeling that exists in different parts of our household. At the same time, we sought to make clear that the overwhelming reality of the Episcopal Church is the diverse center in which differing views are held in tension because of our common desire to live together in the communion of the Holy Spirit, and to manifest Christ's reconciling love to our divided and broken world.

Because the Commission's work is to assist the Anglican Communion in dealing with serious differences, I very much hope that our several voices were able to convey some of the ways in which we in this church are seeking to live honestly and respectfully with divergent views within our own province.

The work of the Commission is indeed difficult and therefore its members need the support of our prayers.

The Most Rev. Frank T. Griswold
Presiding Bishop and Primate
June 18, 2004

Rediscovering Christian Orthodoxy in Episcopal Anglicanism

The Rev. George F. Woodliff, III

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The undersigned clerics wish to note their support of this document, and encourage the Commission to consider it in its deliberations:

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Tulsa, Oklahoma
Diocese of Oklahoma

Kenneth L. Jone
Los Banos, California
Diocese of San Joaquin

Andrea Sturgeon
Severna Park, Maryland
Diocese of Maryland

John & Donna Briggs
Poulsbo, Washington
Diocese of Olympia

Nancy Johnsen
Fremont, California
Diocese of El Camino Real

Allen Wood, Jr.
Greenwood, Mississippi
Diocese of Mississippi

Lauren Woodliff
Yazoo City, Mississippi
Diocese of Mississippi

Gigi Duffy
Gautier, Mississippi
Diocese of Mississippi

R. James Young
Jackson, Mississippi
Diocese of Mississippi (AMiA/Rwanda)

Keith Mansel
Oxford, Mississippi
Diocese of Mississippi

Richard Wolfe

Canton, Mississippi
Diocese of Mississippi

Bill Cooper
Onchiota, New York
Diocese of Albany

Joan Irey
Purcellville, Virginia
Diocese of Virginia

Sam Godfrey
Como, Mississippi
Diocese of Mississippi

Bob Harper
Yazoo City, Mississippi
Diocese of Mississippi

Priscilla Harper
Yazoo City, Mississippi
Diocese of Mississippi

Ralph Stillions
Madison, Mississippi
Diocese of Mississippi

Lynne Stillions
Madison, Mississippi
Diocese of Mississippi

Ken Allen
Madison, Mississippi
Diocese of Mississippi

Ruth Ann McClain
Memphis, Tennessee
Diocese of Thika, Kenya

Debra Wilson
Kanata, Ontario, Canada
Diocese of Ottawa

Dave Wilson
Kanata, Ontario, Canada
Diocese of Ottawa

Michael Watson
Houston, Texas
Diocese of Texas

Marion Lucas
Herndon, Virginia

Diocese of Virginia

Steve Swencki
Greensburg, Pennsylvania
Diocese of Pittsburgh

Lyman Alddrich
Collierville, Tennessee
Diocese of West Tennessee

Jon Wilson
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Diocese of Oklahoma

Daniel R. Sturgeon
Severna Park, Maryland
Diocese of Maryland

Ann McCarthy
Naperville, Illinois
Diocese of Chicago

Annette H. Smiley
Huntsville, Alabama
Diocese of Alabama

Jerry C. Smiley
Huntsville, Alabama
Diocese of Alabama

Darlene Passons
Yazoo City, Mississippi
Diocese of Mississippi

Susan Jones Engelhardt
Arlington Heights, Illinois
Diocese of Chicago

Mary T. Bishop
Greenwood, Mississippi
Diocese of Mississippi

Clarke D. Bishop
Greenwood, Mississippi
Diocese of Mississippi

Hal Ellison
Madison, Mississippi
Diocese of Mississippi

Barbara Beinvenu
Brandon, Mississippi
Diocese of Mississippi

David Carrell
Edmond, Oklahoma
Diocese of Oklahoma

Patricia A. Gibbons
Albany, New York
Diocese of Albany

John W. Bond
Gautier, Mississippi
Diocese of Mississippi

George W. Keitt, Jr.
Fairfax, Virginia
Diocese of Virginia

Rediscovering Christian Orthodoxy
in
Episcopal Anglicanism

I. Introduction

We are a church divided–within the Anglican Communion, within the Episcopal Church, and within the Diocese of Mississippi. This last division became painfully obvious during the 177th Annual Council in Hattiesburg, particularly during debates over the budget and different resolutions. The depth of the division was captured by the vote by orders on Resolution 6 which I had submitted and which, as amended, stated that "the Diocese of Mississippi by majority vote formally states that it disagrees with and deeply regrets the action of the 74th General Convention of the Episcopal Church of the United States of America (ECUSA) in consenting to the consecration of Canon Gene Robinson to the office of bishop...." The clergy in the diocese voted against the resolution by a lopsided margin of 34 in favor and 77 against, but the laity voted strongly in favor by a vote of 106 to 62. If the vote had not been by orders, the resolution would have passed by one vote. The division was also captured in the language of a resolution which did pass, Resolution 27-1, which acknowledged that "our church is deeply divided over seemingly straightforward issues around human sexuality which are actually complex combinations of issues...."

The way forward is not to ignore or to gloss over this deep division, but rather, in the words of my CPE supervisor, "to go into the pain" of this division, to acknowledge with candor its reality, to explore the reasons for the divisions–the premises which underlie our respective positions, and to provide a place to stand in good conscience for all as we seek to discern God's will for us in these difficult times. In short, it is to go "through" rather than "around" the division.

This is not to suggest that the work of the Church be put on hold while we do this painful work. That work must of necessity continue. However, the nature of this division raises fundamental questions about that work. What, for example, is the gospel of Jesus Christ? What is the mission of the Church? If there is any light at the end of this very long, very dark tunnel, it is the hope that we shall all become stronger and more effective disciples and witnesses on the other side.

To its credit this diocese saw this division coming several years ago and began to take steps to address it. For several years I had the privilege of working with a committee which designed two theological convocations for the priests in the diocese. The committee had its origin out of a sense of frustration experienced by some of the more theologically conservative clergy during a presbyters conference over the discussion of the subject of homosexuality. This committee was then appointed by Bishop Marble and was very intentionally balanced in terms of theological positions with three conservatives, three liberals, and one moderate. Bishop Marble and Bishop Gray also met with the committee.

Because this committee was so evenly represented, there was an intentional effort made to be as evenhanded as possible in the design of the convocations. We also worked diligently to create a safe environment where opposing views could be expressed and explored.

The work of that committee has become a model for me of how this diocese should proceed in discussing the aftermath of the last General Convention. It is extremely important that conservatives, liberals, and moderates have input from the beginning and at every stage of the conversation.

While working on the committee, I gained a deeper respect for the other members–Chip Davis, Ann Heinemann, and Chris Colby, and especially those representing the liberal side of this controversy–Mike Dobrosky, David Christian, and my sister, Ruth Woodliff-Stanley. I believe that the positions they hold

on this issue arise from deeply held convictions. Particularly with respect to Mike, David, and Ruth, I admire the Christlike love which they have shown to homosexual persons over the years. My disagreement with them stems from my own deeply held convictions, but I do not honor them any less. In fact, I seek to emulate their Christlike love and compassion in my own life. The question is how are we best to do that, and this requires an honest exploration of our differences.

II. The Current Crisis

Four years ago when this diocese was engaged in the election of a bishop coadjutor, I commented to a group of clergy that I viewed the Episcopal Church as a ship that was steaming straight toward an iceberg and that one of the characteristics I was looking for in a new bishop was some apprehension of that danger and the wisdom and judgment to attempt to avoid it. I believe that we chose such a bishop, but unfortunately he was unable to prevent the collision which occurred at the General Convention in August of 2003.

I was by no means the only one who could see the impending danger. There were repeated warnings which went unheeded. At the last Lambeth Conference in 1998, the bishops of the Communion addressed the issue of human sexuality in general and homosexuality in particular. Resolution1.10 entitled Human Sexuality reaffirmed the historic orthodox Christian sexual ethic: "This Conference... in view of the teaching of Scripture, upholds faithfulness in marriage between a man and a woman in lifelong union, and believes that abstinence is right for those who are not called to marriage...." With respect to homosexuality, the Conference made the very important distinction between *orientation* and *practice*: "This Conference... while rejecting homosexual practice as incompatible with Scripture, calls on all people to minister pastorally and sensitively to all irrespective of sexual orientation...." With respect to the actions subsequently taken by the General Convention of ECUSA, the Conference stated its position with absolute clarity: "This Conference... cannot advise the legitimizing or blessing of same sex unions nor ordaining those involved in same gender unions...."[Emphasis added] [Resolution 1.10, XIII Lambeth Conference (Summer 1998)] Resolution 1.10 was adopted by the Anglican bishops by a vote of 526 to 70 with 45 abstaining, or *82% of the bishops of the Anglican Communion*. There can be no doubt that this resolution declares the mind of the Communion pertaining to human sexuality and homosexuality.

In May of 2003, *only three months before the meeting of the General Convention*, the Primates, the leaders of the 38 provinces of the Anglican Communion, met in Brazil and issued a statement "that the 38 provinces and united churches in the Anglican Communion are irrevocably called into a special relationship of fellowship with one another." The Primates then made the following unequivocal statement pertaining to same sex blessings:

> "The question of public rites for the blessing of same sex unions is still a cause of potentially divisive controversy. The Archbishop of Canterbury spoke for us all when he said that it is through liturgy that we express what we believe, and that there is no theological consensus about same sex unions. Therefore, we as a body cannot support the authorization of such rites." [Emphasis added] [Statement by the Primates, May, 2003]

The Archbishop of Canterbury was also very clear about the very serious dangers inherent in a province taking unilateral action in this area. He stated in a letter to the Primates one year before General

Convention:

> "The Lambeth resolution of 1998 declares clearly what is the mind of the overwhelming majority in the Communion, and what the Communion will and will not approve or authorize. I accept that any individual diocese or even province that officially overturns or repudiates this resolution poses a substantial problem for the sacramental unity of the Communion." [Emphasis added] [Archbishop of Canterbury, Letter to Primates, July 23, 2002]

One month before General Convention the Archbishop of Canterbury in a letter to the Primates posed the question of what it meant to be a Communion:

> "What does it mean to be a Communion rather than a federation?...It means that we have ways of being accountable to each other, so that decisions in any one local church are not taken without consultation and awareness of the consequences a decision may have for other churches." [Emphasis added] [Archbishop of Canterbury, Letter to Primates, July 23, 2003]

The fourth locus of authority within the Communion, The Anglican Consultative Council, in a meeting held in Hong Kong in 2002 also cautioned "provincial authorities to have in mind the impact of their decisions within the wider Communion...." [The Anglican Consultative Council, Resolution 34 of the 12th Meeting of the AAC, September 15-26, 2002, Hong Kong]

Thus, all four instruments of unity within the Anglican Communion–the Lambeth Conference, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Primates, and the Anglican Consultative Council–all issued pleas and warnings, in so many words, to individual dioceses and provinces: **WARNING! DO NOT BLESS SAME SEX UNIONS! DO NOT DO THIS! YOU WILL DAMAGE THE COMMUNION IF YOU DO!**

In the movie Titanic, even though there were known reports of icebergs in their vicinity, the owner of the ship influenced the captain, against his better judgment, to go full steam ahead into the night in order to reach New York in record time to impress the media. The ship was, after all, unsinkable. As with the Titanic, the warnings to ECUSA were clear but unheeded. By the actions of General Convention in consenting to the consecration of Gene Robinson, a man who had divorced his wife and was living in an open homosexual relationship with another man, and in recognizing and affirming the local use of same sex blessings, ECUSA struck the iceberg. As with the Titanic, it was not immediately obvious what the extent of the damage had been, but with the passage of time, anyone can now see the crisis that has been caused by the actions of General Convention.

Does anyone still doubt that we are in the midst of a genuine crisis? Are there still those who honestly believe that "this is no big deal"? Consider the following. Immediately after the convention, the Archbishop of Canterbury called an unprecedented emergency meeting of the Primates of the Anglican Communion to meet at Lambeth in October, 2003. Thirty-seven of the thirty-eight Primates attended that meeting and issued a unanimous statement which specifically addressed the "controversial decisions by the Diocese of New Westminster to authorize a Public Rite of Blessing for those in committed same sex relationships, and by the 74th General Convention of the Episcopal Church (USA) to confirm the election of a priest in a committed same sex relationship to the office and work of a Bishop" and made the following statements:

"These actions threaten the unity of our own Communion as well as our relationships with other parts of Christ's Church, our mission and witness, and our relations with other faiths, in a world already confused in areas of sexuality, morality and theology, and polarized Christian opinion.

As Primates of our Communion seeking to exercise the 'enhanced responsibility' entrusted to us by successive Lambeth Conferences, we re-affirm our common understanding of the centrality and authority of Scripture in determining the basis of our faith....

We also re-affirm the resolutions made by the bishops of the Anglican Communion gathered at the Lambeth Conference in 1998 on issues of human sexuality as having moral force and commanding the respect of the Communion as its present position on these issues....

*** *** ***

To this extent, therefore, we must make clear that recent actions in New Westminster and in the Episcopal Church (USA) do not express the mind of our Communion as a whole, and these decisions jeopardize our sacramental fellowship with each other....

*** *** ***

If his [Gene Robinson's] consecration proceeds, we recognize that we have reached a crucial and critical point in the life of the Anglican Communion and we have had to conclude that the future of the Communion itself will be put in jeopardy. In this case, the ministry of this one bishop will not be recognized by most of the Anglican world, and many provinces are likely to consider themselves to be out of Communion with the Episcopal Church (USA). This will tear the fabric of our Communion at its deepest level, and may lead to further divisions on this and further issues as provinces have to decide in consequence whether they can remain in communion with provinces that choose not to break communion with the Episcopal Church (USA)." [Emphasis added] [A Statement by the Primates of the Anglican Communion meeting in Lambeth Palace, October 16, 2003]

Can anyone seriously doubt the extreme gravity of the crisis precipitated by the actions of General Convention after reading this statement? In a BBC interview on October 18, 2003, the Archbishop of Canterbury stated that "undoubtedly there is a huge crisis looming" over the impending consecration, and when asked specifically whether he believed that Canon Robinson should become a bishop, he replied, "No, I don't because I believe that on a major issue of this kind the Church has to make a decision together and one of the things that has emerged most painfully and with such difficulty in the last couple of days in our conversations is the large number–the very, very large number–of Anglican provinces who feel that, quite simply, a decision has been made which commits them or involves them in some way and yet in which they have had no part at all." [Emphasis added] [BBC Radio Interview with the Archbishop of Canterbury, October 18, 2003]

In this diocese Bishop Gray stated very clearly his views about the imminent consecration of Gene Robinson:

> "I believe that the consent given by our General Convention was an action of considerable arrogance in our relationship within that same one, holy, catholic and apostolic church. Our Anglican brothers and sisters spoke to us of the difficulties, even life threatening circumstances that would be imposed upon them were the church in this country to approve Canon Robinson's election. Our Archbishop of Canterbury counseled us against such unilateral action. Many minimized the impact that this action would have on our brothers and sisters throughout this world and have been oblivious to the considerable pain and confusion inflicted on our own people. In the actions of General Convention and in the proposed consecration of Canon Robinson the bishop as symbol of unity and as an icon of the catholicity and universality of the faith seems severely compromised.
>
> I believe General Convention erred in August. I believe it today." [Emphasis added] [A Statement to the Diocese of Mississippi by the Rt. Rev. Duncan M Gray III, October 23, 2003]

In spite of these repeated pleas and warnings, the consecration of Gene Robinson proceeded on November 2, 2003. The Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, Frank Griswold, who had signed the Primates Statement of October 16 that this consecration would "tear the fabric of our Communion at its deepest level," presided over the consecration and thus with his own hands began the tearing.

The terrible yet very predictable results of that tearing were felt immediately. The next day, November 3, 2003, the Primates of the Global South who represent *over fifty million Anglicans or approximately two-thirds of the entire Anglican Communion* issued a strongly worded statement which contained the following points:

> "We are appalled that the authorities within the Episcopal Church USA (ECUSA) have ignored the heartfelt plea of the Communion not to proceed with the scheduled consecration of Canon Gene Robinson. They have ignored the clear and strong warning of its detrimental consequences for the unity of the Communion which was contained in the Statement from the Primates' Meeting of October 15th and 16th which was unanimously assented to by the thirty-seven Primates present including the presiding bishop of ECUSA.
>
> The consecration of a bishop, who divorced his wife and separated from his children now living as a non-celibate homosexual, clearly demonstrates that authorities within ECUSA consider that their cultural-based agenda is of far greater importance than obedience to the Word of God, the integrity of the one mission of God in which we all share, the spiritual welfare and unity of the worldwide Anglican Communion, our ecumenical fellowship and inter-faith relationships. The overwhelming majority of the Primates of the Global South cannot and will not recognize the office or ministry of Canon Gene Robinson as a bishop.
>
> We deplore the act of those bishops who have taken part in the consecration which has now divided the Church in violation of their obligation to guard the faith and unity of the church. A state of impaired communion now exists both within a significant part of ECUSA and between ECUSA and most of the provinces within the Communion. By its actions, ECUSA is held solely responsible for this division. In addition to violating

> the clear and consistent teaching of the Bible, the consecration directly challenges the common teaching, common practice and common witness within the one Anglican Communion.
>
> As ECUSA has willfully disregarded the strong warnings given at Lambeth that such an action would 'tear the fabric of the communion at its deepest level', we can now have no basis whatsoever for any further confidence that ECUSA will pay any regard to the findings of the recently announced Commission set up by the Archbishop of Canterbury." [Emphasis added] [Statement of the Primates of the Global South in the Anglican Communion, November 3, 2003]

After the release of this statement, numerous provinces declared themselves to be in "impaired" or "broken communion" with all or part of ECUSA. Archbishop Bernard Malango of Central Africa wrote Bishop Griswold on November 12 and said: "In charity and heartbreak, I call you to repent. Until that time, you have broken our fellowship. To sit with you and meet with you would be a lie. We are not one. We do not share the same faith or Gospel. You should resign and let someone else lead; someone who shares the faith of the Communion–the faith of the church catholic." [Emphasis added] ["Anglican provinces declare 'impaired' or 'broken' relationship with ECUSA," Anglican Communion News Service, December 9, 2003]

When an archbishop in the Anglican Communion tells us that "we do not share the same faith or Gospel," we should not glibly dismiss it. We are facing an issue that touches the very core of the Gospel. It is not trivial, and it will not go away. Our brother and sister Anglicans in other parts of the world see this controversy clearly as a Communion-dividing issue, and the depth of their conviction is obvious as we can see in this letter of reply from Archbishop Livingstone Mpalanyi Nkoyoyo on behalf of the Anglican Church of Uganda to Presiding Bishop Griswold:

> "Considering those things, we were shocked to receive a letter from you informing us of your decision to send a delegation to the enthronement of our new Archbishop in January, and your intention for the delegation to bring aid and assistance for the people who live in desperate conditions in the camps in Gulu that you have ignored for years. Recent comments by your staff suggesting that your proposed visit demonstrates that normal relations with the Church of Uganda continue have made your message clear: If we fall silent about what you have done–promoting unbiblical sexual immorality–and we overturn or ignore the decision to declare a severing of relationship with ECUSA, poor displaced persons will receive aid. Here is our response: The gospel of Jesus Christ is not for sale, even among the poorest of us who have no money. Eternal life, obedience to Jesus Christ, and conforming to his Word are more important. The Word of God is clear that you have chosen a course of separation that leads to spiritual destruction. Because we love you, we cannot let that go unanswered. If your hearts remain hardened to what the Bible clearly teaches, and your ears remain deaf to the cries of other Christians, genuine love demands that we do not pretend that everything is normal. As a result any delegation you send cannot be welcomed, received, or seated. Neither can we share fellowship nor even receive desperately needed resources. If, however, you repent and return to the Lord, it would be an occasion of great joy." [Emphasis added] [Letter of Archbishop Livingstone Mpalanyi Nkoyoyo to Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold as quoted in First Things (March 2004), pp. 68-69]

The tearing has not been confined to within the Anglican Communion. According to an article in The Washington Times, "top-level talks between the Roman Catholic Church and Anglicans collapsed yesterday [December 2, 2003] due to the U.S. Episcopal Church's consecration of the world's first openly homosexual bishop last month." This development led to Bishop Griswold's decision to resign as the co-chairman of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC), the organization which has been working for 33 years on exploring the theological issues which divide the two churches. In addition to the actions of the Roman Catholic Church, several Orthodox churches, including the Russian, Armenian, Syrian, Coptic and Ethiopian churches have suspended ties. In referring to Gene Robinson and "those who consecrated him," the Russian Orthodox Church issued the following statement on November 17:

> "We shall not be able to cooperate with these people not only in the theological dialogue, but also in the humanitarian and religious and public spheres. We have no right to allow even a particle of agreement with their position, which we consider to be profoundly anti-Christian and blasphemous." [Emphasis added] ["Vatican cancels Anglican talks over gay bishop," The Washington Times, December 3, 2003]

The tear has affected many other ecclesiastical bodies within the Universal Church. On November 3, 2003, the executive officers of the National Clergy Council, representing more than 5000 church leaders from Catholic, Evangelical, Orthodox and Protestant traditions, released the following statement:

> "The executive officers of the National Clergy Council today express deep sadness over the actions of some bishops within the Episcopal Church to break with universal Christian moral teaching and in so doing close their doors to Christians who remain faithful to church and biblical tradition.
>
> We find that it is now impossible for traditional Christians to feel welcome in fellowship on any level with the radical bishops, priests and members of the Episcopal Church who condoned and participated in this supremely immoral act.
>
> We humbly and prayerfully call on those responsible for Mr. Robinson's elevation to acknowledge their wrongful actions, immediately undo them, repent of their sins, and reunite with the historic Christian church." [Emphasis added] [National Clergy Council, Statement on the elevation of Gene Robinson to bishop coadjutor of the New Hampshire Diocese of the Episcopal Church USA, November 3, 2003]

Can anyone still doubt the catastrophic consequences of the actions of General Convention? Can anyone seriously believe that the Episcopal Church is not, in the words of the Archbishop of Canterbury, in "a huge crisis"? Does anyone really think that this is a trivial matter which will all soon blow over?

In 1996, two years before the Lambeth Conference of 1998 and seven years before the actions of General Convention of 2003, Wolfhart Pannenberg, one of the most respected and renowned theologians in the world, spoke prophetically of the consequences of a church that crossed the boundary line and did what the Episcopal Church has now done:

> "Here lies the boundary of a Christian Church that knows itself to be bound by the authority of Scripture. Those who urge the church to change the norm of its teaching

> on this matter must know that they are promoting schism. If a church were to let itself be pushed to the point where it ceased to treat homosexual activity as a departure from the biblical norm, and recognized homosexual unions as a personal partnership of love equivalent to marriage, such a church would stand no longer on biblical ground but against the unequivocal witness of Scripture. A church that took this step would cease to be the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church." [Emphasis added] [Wolfhart Pannenberg, Christianity Today, November 11, 1996, as quoted in True Union in the Body?, A Paper Commissioned by the Most Reverend Drexel Wellington Gomez, p. 45]

The Episcopal Church has now tragically taken that step.

III. The Fault Line

For many years I have sensed what I term "the fault line" which runs through the old mainline Protestant churches in America, including the Episcopal Church. It is quite difficult to perceive, because believers on either side of the fault line in each denomination worship together in the same services, attend the same church meetings, and use the same Scriptural, theological, and ecclesiastical terminology. These similarities, however, mask profound differences in theologies and world views which have been brought to the surface, to continue the metaphor, by the current ecclesiastical earthquake. Someone who has observed these profound differences is Dr. Robert S. Munday, Dean of Nashotah House:

> "I have just returned from the Episcopal Church's General Convention where I served as a member of the House of Deputies. The appropriate committees of the General Convention held two hearings where deputies and bishops heard several hours of testimonies in the days prior to the votes on the consent to the election of the Bishop-elect of New Hampshire and the resolution concerning the blessing of same sex unions. What struck me as I was listening to the hours of testimonies is that I was not listening to members of one church in dialogue with each other, I was listening to members of two different religions in dialogue with each other–two different views of Holy Scripture, two different theologies–two different understandings of God and His ways in the world." [Emphasis added] [Letter of The Very Rev. Robert S. Munday, Dean of Nashotah House, to the Archbishop of Canterbury, August 19, 2003]

If Dean Munday is right (and I believe that he is), what we are facing in the Episcopal Church is far more serious than a debate over human sexuality. We are facing *the gravest threat to our church in her history.* Moreover, we are facing the gravest threat to the Anglican Church and the Anglican Communion in their history. I believe that we have to go back to the Reformation to find a fault line of this magnitude in the church. It is perhaps one of the ironies of history that at the moment when the Universal Church stands on the threshold of reconciling the divisions of the Reformation, another division, equally momentous, should be manifesting itself. In that light, Bishop Griswold's resignation as co-chairman of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) is hugely symbolic of the more immediate and pressing modern fault line of the 21st Century in contrast to the fault line of the Reformation of the 16th Century which ARCIC seeks to address. I would define the current division as the result of a collision between, on the one hand, Christian orthodoxy and, on the other hand, modernity and post-modernity. It has taken centuries to arrive at this moment, but we are here. I also believe that the same means of diagnosis and prescription of treatment which were used by the

Reformers in critiquing the Catholic Church and thereby precipitating the Reformation and which are now being used by Catholics and Protestants in an effort to reconcile those differences and divisions should now be used by us in the present crisis–*ressourcement*; *i.e.,* returning to the roots of the faith.

There are certain similarities and differences between these two divisions–the Reformation and the modernist divisions. In both instances what was really at stake was the authority and primacy of Scripture. During the Reformation, the issue was the primacy of Scripture over Tradition, in particular the tradition of the Roman Catholic Church pertaining to indulgences and the forgiveness of sin. In our time the issue is the primacy of Scripture over Experience, particularly the experiences of certain homosexual persons. In both instances the very core of the Gospel as it pertains to sin and forgiveness was and is at stake. In the Reformation the "forgiveness" side of the equation was compromised by the practice of indulgences which perverted forgiveness by making it a *de facto* monetary transaction. In our time the "sin" side of the equation has been compromised by making what constitutes sin the result of political power and majority vote in an ecclesiastical body. Both represent human usurpations of divine prerogatives. Only God can define sin, and only God can forgive sin. Therefore, both are, at bottom, idolatrous.

How divided we are is evident from the very different way we view the present crisis. For purposes of shorthand, I shall use the terminology in current usage–revisionists and orthodox. The revisionists do not even see the current situation as a crisis but as the normal development in the history of our church as guided by the Holy Spirit. Immediately after the Primates Meeting in October, Bishop Griswold issued a statement to the Church in which he stated: "I believe that what has occurred in the Episcopal Church is the work of the Spirit." [A Word to the Church from Bishop Griswold after the Primates Meeting, October 17, 2003] This belief was repeated a week later in his letter to the Primates: "As hard as it might be for sisters and brothers in Christ in other contexts to understand and accept, please know that broadly across the Episcopal Church the New Hampshire election is thought to be the work of the Spirit." [Bishop Griswold's Letter to Anglican Primates, October 23, 2003]

The revisionists also view the actions of General Convention as manifestations of compassion and justice. This perspective was recently articulated by Bishop C. Christopher Epting, Deputy to the Presiding Bishop for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations:

> "The shortest answer to 'How could you possibly have done this?' is 'Compassion and justice.' Compassion because, like Jesus, we are to suffer with and stand in solidarity with all those who suffer and are outcasts in this world. Justice because, like Jesus, we are to treat other people as God treats them–equally, fairly and with a constant awareness of the dignity of every human being, since we are created in the image and likeness of God." ["Compassion and justice," Episcopal Life, (January 2004), p. 29]

Furthermore, the revisionists see the recent action of General Convention as based upon a legitimate interpretation of Scripture and analogous to the evolution of the Church's understanding of other matters, such as slavery, civil rights for African Americans, the ordination of women, and the like. The actions of General Convention are merely the next step in the Church's journey toward greater inclusiveness and serve as a positive example of the distinctiveness of Anglican comprehensiveness and the *via media*.

The orthodox view of the current crisis is diametrically opposed to the revisionist view. They do not perceive the actions of General Convention as constituting the next logical step in the Church's

evolution to a more inclusive, compassionate, and just church that is being guided by the Holy Spirit but rather as a radical break from the Historic Faith and Order of the Anglican Communion and the Universal Church. The swift response from the other branches of the Universal Church–Catholic, Orthodox, Evangelical, Charismatic, and others–has confirmed the prediction of Wolfhart Pannenberg. The orthodox see the actions of General Convention as the willful flouting of the authority of Scripture, the Tradition of the Church, the Episcopal Church's own Constitution and previous resolutions as well as, by an overwhelming majority, the mind of the Anglican Communion. The orthodox do not see the current direction of the Episcopal Church as being guided by the Holy Spirit, since the Spirit does not lead in a direction contrary to the Word of God.

The orthodox also do not view the current crisis as another example of the distinctiveness of Anglican comprehensiveness. First, it is difficult to view the current action of the Episcopal Church as "the Anglican way" when the overwhelming majority of the Anglican Communion has decisively repudiated it. Second, the current crisis touches not so much on the nature of Anglicanism as the nature of orthodox Christian beliefs. By the actions of the last General Convention, the Episcopal Church has gone, in the words of Pannenberg, outside of the "boundary of a Christian Church." Thus, for orthodox Episcopalians, the actions of the Episcopal Church have placed them in an untenable position: They can no longer be obedient to their Lord and to their Church. To remain in the Church and say and do nothing would constitute complicity with disobedience.

Dr. Ephraim Radner, theologian, author, and Episcopal priest, has clearly articulated the reasons why he believes this division is so serious and different from such issues as women's ordination and Prayer Book revision:

> "First, the extreme novelty of recent revisionary teachings on sexual behavior is unique in our church's development, and more than anything else offers up a seemingly culturally-driven rejection of Scriptural authority that has no precedents. This strikes at the core of our Biblical faith. Secondly, the kinds of reasonings that seem to lie behind the revisionary trend in our denomination–reasonings based on controlling definitions of 'justice' and 'love' and 'inclusion' and so on–are so distant from the particularistic and defined words and actions of Jesus and the Christian tradition's acknowledgment of His person, that the revealed Christ appears to have become the servant of a greater principle that stands beyond Him. This contemporary and perhaps only implicit form of the ancient Arian heresy strikes at the core of our catholic confession of Christ. Thirdly, so many other Christians around the world perceive this threat clearly, and yet a significant and powerful part of our denomination seems oblivious to and even unconcerned at their pleas and warnings. This evidences a chilling lack of charity that strikes at the core of Christian communion." [The Rev. Dr. Ephraim Radner, An Open Letter to the Conservative Clergy of the Diocese of Colorado, March 23, 2003]

The fault line, although often difficult to detect, is real and deep and wide and now, at least in the Episcopal Church, unmistakably visible for the entire world to see.

IV. How the Episcopal Church Came to the Current Crisis

In the movie, The Lion in Winter, Henry II of England and his estranged and imprisoned wife, Eleanor of Aquitaine, plot and scheme and verbally lacerate each other with appalling cruelty. At one point

Eleanor muses, "How from where we started did we ever get to this Christmas?" Henry responded immediately, "Step by step." The Episcopal Church has likewise arrived at this place in its history step by step.

Dr. Philip Turner, former Dean of the Berkely Divinity School at Yale and current Vice President of the Anglican Communion Institute, spoke at the first theological convocation for the priests of this diocese. He has done an excellent job of tracing those steps in an article entitled "The Episcopalian Preference." [First Things, (November 2003), p.28-32] In the mid-1960s the Episcopal Church began aligning itself with "new learning and new experience" that was "attuned to the latest trends within the liberal culture." [Turner, p.28] A pivotal moment occurred when the House of Bishops, although voting to censure him, refused to inhibit Bishop Pike in the exercise of his episcopal office after he had announced that "the Church's classical way of stating what is represented by the doctrine of the Trinity is...not essential to the Christian faith." [Turner, p. 29] The minority report which expressed indignation over even the consideration of something as reactionary as heresy articulated the position which has since become the majority position within the Church: "We believe it is more important to be a sympathetic and self-conscious part of God's action in the secular world than it is to defend the positions of the past, which is a past that is altered by each new discovery of truth."[Turner, p. 29]

In a very real sense, a boundary line was crossed at that time, and what has recently occurred in Minneapolis is simply the logical working out of that first step. When "God's action in the secular world" is divorced from His Self-revelation in Scripture, then who is to say whether that action is truly of God or not? When the doctrine of the Trinity is merely a "position of the past" which "is altered by each new discovery of truth," then the Episcopal Church is no longer guarding "the good treasure entrusted to" it [2 Timothy 1:14], but rather has willfully chosen a very different path.

Step by step the Episcopal Church continued on this new path in the 1970s and 1980s. In 1977 Bishop Paul Moore of the Diocese of New York ordained a practicing lesbian. The next General Convention in 1979 adopted a resolution which stated that "it is not appropriate for this Church to ordain a practicing homosexual or any person who is engaged in heterosexual relations outside of marriage." In defiance of the clear language of this resolution, twenty dissenting bishops issued a letter stating that they considered the resolution to be only "recommendary and not prescriptive" and announced that they would not abide by the resolution in their dioceses. [Turner, p. 30]

Once again, in time, the minority position has become the majority position. The 1979 resolution obviously had no force and effect whatsoever in the actions taken in 2003, but then that resolution had already been openly defied by ordinations of practicing homosexuals in 1989, 1990, and 1991 in the dioceses of Newark and Washington, D.C. These ordinations were proclaimed as "prophetic" and "justice issues." Turner observed that "it is perhaps not surprising that charges of heresy later brought against Bishop Walter Righter of Newark were turned down on the grounds that the Bishop's action was not contrary to the 'core doctrine' of the Episcopal Church." [Turner, p. 30] Of course, after the "Pike affair," one wonders just what *is* the "core doctrine" of the Episcopal Church.

Step by step the General Conventions of the Episcopal Church passed resolutions which eventually led to the actions taken in 2003: 1976–resolution (A068) calling for study and dialogue on sexuality (including homosexuality) and resolution (B101) calling for study of homosexual ordination; 1985–resolution (D082) calling to "dispel myths and prejudices" against homosexuals; 1988–resolution (D102) calling for the continuation of consultation and dialogue on questions of homosexuality; 1994–resolution (D049) calling for the preparation of a report considering rites for same sex commitments;

1997–blessings of same-sex marriages defeated by one vote; 2000–resolution (D039) on human sexuality that affirms a legitimate place in the church for non-marital sexual relations; 2003–consent to election of Gene Robinson and resolution (C051) which recognized that "local faith communities are operating within the bounds of our common life as they explore and experience liturgies celebrating and blessing same-sex unions." [American Anglican Council, "Time line on Homosexuality Debate in the Episcopal Church 1976-2003, October 8, 2003]

Two of the resolutions called for "dialogue" on the subject of homosexuality. Dr. Stanton L. Jones, provost and professor of psychology of Wheaton College, and Dr. Mark A. Yarhouse, assistant professor of psychology at Regent University in Virginia Beach, Virginia, wrote a book in 2000 entitled The Use of Scientific Research in the Church's Moral Debate, in which they exhaustively analyzed the scientific data which was being used to justify the radical change in the Church's historic position on human sexuality, including homosexuality. They also examined the quite biased materials used by various mainline denominations, including the Episcopal Church, in this so-called "dialogue." [Stanton L. Jones and Mark A. Yarhouse, The Use of Scientific Research in the Church's Moral Debate (InterVarsity Press 2000), pp. 24, 49-50, 96] An example was an official leader's manual promulgated by the Standing Commission on Human Affairs of the Episcopal Church:

> "The same line of reasoning appears in church documents promoting the view that homosexual behavior is moral. For example, the leader's manual for a recent Episcopal 'sexuality dialogue' process presents four views on the morality of homosexuality. The first position, the one that is supposed to represent the traditional position, is a partial caricature: 'All homosexual acts are sin, first, because they violate the strictures of Scripture and, second, because they are a willful perversion of the natural order.' It is certainly true that most conservatives ground their opposition to changing Christian morality in the clear teaching of Scripture. The important phrase here, though, is 'willful perversion.' The implication seems to be that traditionalists must believe that all homosexuals have willfully chosen to be perverted. If traditionalists can be caricatured as saying that homosexuality is immoral because it is a 'willful perversion,' then any evidence that suggests that homosexuality is neither 'willful' nor a 'perversion' will undermine the traditionalist's credibility. If science can show that a homosexual orientation is not chosen but is a 'given' in a person's life, then the traditionalist loses credibility for arguing that homosexuality is always a willful perversion." [Jones and Yarhouse, pp. 49-50]

Another example of such biased materials used in the "dialogue" was the booklet entitled "Christian Discipleship and Sexuality" by Bishop Frederick H. Borsch, who was a speaker for the revisionist side at the second theological convocation for priests in this diocese. The booklet contains its own Study Guide by M. R. Ritley. The section of the booklet on "Gay and Lesbian Sexuality" makes the assertions that "most studies agree that between four and ten percent of people are so oriented" which is "a very large number of people" and furthermore that "a solid percentage has the dominant gay or lesbian orientation which, on present evidence, is rarely changeable." [Borsch, pp. 31-32] Jones and Yarhouse devote an entire chapter of their book to the prevalence of homosexuality and how the figure of 10% which is from the Kinsey studies of the 1940s and 1950s has been thoroughly discredited. More recent studies reveal a rate of between 2% and 3%. [Jones and Yarhouse, pp. 34-39; see also, Judith Reisman, Ph.D., "Kinsey and the Homosexual Revolution," The Journal of Human Sexuality (1996) ed. George A. Rekers, Ph.D., pp. 25-26] Moreover, as will be discussed later, the flat assertion that homosexuality is "rarely changeable" has been repeatedly refuted. [Jones and Yarhouse, pp. 117-151]. The Study Guide

was based solely on the readings from this booklet. These were some of the discussion questions to be asked: "Would it make a difference if science proved that being gay was a natural and unchangeable trait, like being left-handed? Would it or should it change how you or the church deal with gay persons? What does or should 'inclusion' of gay persons mean? Welcoming them at services? Inviting them to serve as lectors, vestry members, etc.? Including gay couples at a parish 'family' weekend? Are there limits to this inclusion? What are they, and why?" [Borsch, pp. 61-62]

If you control the study material of the "dialogue," then you control the direction that the "dialogue" will take and the conclusions that will be drawn. The truth of the matter is that the Episcopal Church has never had a truly open, fair, impartial, unbiased debate or dialogue on this issue. It has instead controlled and managed the so-called "dialogue" from the very beginning with utterly predictable results.

Step by step the Episcopal Church has followed and mirrored the culture and has proclaimed that it is God at work, and now we live in a culture where the imperial Self reigns supreme. David B. Hart, an Eastern Orthodox theologian, has given this trenchant description of that culture in which we now live:

> "We live in an age whose chief moral value has been determined, by overwhelming consensus, to be the absolute liberty of personal volition, the power of each of us to choose what he or she believes, wants, needs, or must possess; our culturally most persuasive models of human freedom are unambiguously voluntarist and, in a rather debased and degraded way, Promethean; the will, we believe, is sovereign because unpremised, free because spontaneous, and this is the highest good. And a society that believes this must, at least implicitly, embrace and subtly advocate a very particular moral metaphysics: the unreality of any 'value' higher than choice, or of any transcendent Good ordering desire towards a higher end. Desire is free to propose, seize, accept or reject, want or not want–but not to obey. Society must thus be secured against the intrusion of the Good, or of God, so that its citizens may determine their own lives by the choices they make from a universe of morally indifferent but variably desirable ends....And so, at the end of modernity, each of us who is true to the times stands facing not God, or the gods, or the Good beyond beings, but an abyss, over which presides the empty, inviolable authority of the individual will, whose impulses and decisions are their own moral index." [David B. Hart, "Christ and Nothing," First Things (October, 2003), p. 47]
>
> A striking example of this ethos in the Episcopal Church is Bishop Spong's "Service for the Recognition of the End of a Marriage," which he has created out of whole cloth and has justified as a liturgical means of recognizing the reality of divorce and allowing the parties and their friends to feel good about it. In his monumental work on Christian ethics, The Moral Vision of the New Testament, Dr. Richard Hays, professor of New Testament at Duke Divinity School, comments on the outright bizarre nature of this rite:
>
> "In our cultural setting, where such thinking has become commonplace, it requires a disciplined effort of the historical imagination to realize how strange and un-Christian such an argument would have sounded to virtually all Christian thinkers before, say, 1950. Only in a culture that exalts the therapeutic ideal of individual fulfillment over the binding character of covenant promises–and over the authority of Jesus' word–would

such a line of thought be conceivable. [Emphasis added] [Richard B. Hays, The Moral Vision of the New Testament (HarperCollins 1996), pp. 370-371]

Hays describes the service and then asks this question which may also be asked of bishops performing same-sex blessings: "By what authority does the bishop say, 'We affirm you in the new covenant you have made'?" He then answers his own question: "The answer is clear: it is by the authority of *experience*, overriding everything in Scripture and tradition." [Hays, p. 371]

Experience is supreme. Personal preference is supreme. Note the similarity between David Hart's description of our culture and Philip Turner's description of the Episcopal Church:

> "Here is *the* theological projection of a society built upon preference–one in which the inclusion of preference within the common life is the be-all and end-all of the social system. ECUSA's God has become the image of this society. Gone is the notion of divine judgment (save upon those who may wish to exclude someone), gone is the notion of radical conversion, gone is the notion of a way of life that requires dying to self and rising to newness of life in conformity with God's will. In place of the complex God revealed in Christ Jesus, a God of both judgment and mercy, a God whose law is meant to govern human life, we now have a God who is love and inclusion without remainder. The projected god of the liberal tradition is, in the end, no more than an affirmer of preferences." [Emphasis added] [Turner, p.31]

The Episcopal Church, in service to this new god, has become merely the affirmer or blesser of preferences.

V. The Homosexual Movement

The theological deterioration of the Episcopal Church has not occurred in a vacuum. It has reflected the general coarsening of the culture, but, with respect to the blessing of same-sex unions, it must be seen against the backdrop of an extensive movement or campaign characterized by determination, perseverance, political acumen, revolutionary tactics, and tremendous financial resources. We now have eye-witness accounts from persons who saw first hand what happened. One of these is Dr. Charles W. Socarides, clinical professor of psychiatry at Albert Einstein College of Medicine and Montefiore Medical Center in New York. He is past president of the National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality (NARTH) and author of Homosexuality: A Freedom Too Far. He recounts the strategies and tactics that were employed to change American public opinion with respect to homosexuality in his article provocatively entitled, "How America Went Gay":

> "How did this change come about? Well, the revolution did not just happen. It has been orchestrated by a small band of very bright men and women–most of them gays and lesbians–in a cultural campaign that has been going on since a few intellectuals laid down the ideological underpinnings....
>
> It was all part of a plan, as one gay publication put it, 'to make the whole world gay.' I am not making this up. You can read an account of the campaign in Dennis Altman's The Homosexualization of America.
>
> *** *** ***
>
> Gays said they could 'reinvent human nature, reinvent themselves.' To do this these

> reinventors had to clear away one major obstacle. No, they didn't go after the nation's clergy. They targeted the members of a worldly priesthood, the psychiatric community, and neutralized them with a radical redefinition of homosexuality itself. In 1972 and 1973 they co-opted the leadership of the American Psychiatric Association and, through a series of political maneuvers, lies and outright flim-flams, they 'cured' homosexuality overnight–by fiat. They got the A.P.A. to say that same-sex sex was 'not a disorder.' It was merely 'a condition'–as neutral as lefthandedness.
>
> This amounted to a full approval of homosexuality. Those of us who did not go along with the political redefinition were soon silenced at our own professional meetings. Our lectures were canceled inside academe and our research papers turned down in the learned journals. Worse things followed in the culture at large. Television and movie producers began to do stories promoting homosexuality as a legitimate lifestyle. A gay review board told Hollywood how it should deal or not deal with homosexuality. Mainstream publishers turned down books that objected to the gay revolution. Gays and lesbians influenced sex education in our nation's schools, and gay and lesbian libbers seized wide control of faculty committees in our nations' colleges." [Charles W. Socarides, "How America Went Gay," The Journal of Human Sexuality (1996), pp. 29-30]

A more detailed description of the takeover of the American Psychiatric Association can be found in the incisive book by Dr. Jeffrey Satinover entitled Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth, which the Congressional Record of May 1996 described as "the best book on homosexuality in our lifetime...." Dr. Satinover practiced psychoanalysis and psychiatry for more than twenty years and is a former Fellow in Psychiatry and Child Psychiatry at Yale University and past William James Lecturer in Psychology and Religion at Harvard University. He holds degrees from M.I.T., Harvard, and the University of Texas. Dr. Satinover flatly states that "the APA vote to normalize homosexuality was driven by politics, not science." [Jeffrey Satinover, M.D., Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth (Baker Books 1996), p. 32] The intimidation began at the 1970 meeting when an eminent psychiatrist was interrupted and threatened while presenting a paper on homosexuality. The threats and intimidation were far more organized at the 1971 meeting with "a detailed strategy for disruption...." [Satinover, p. 33] At one meeting a protesting psychiatrist grabbed a microphone and turned it over to an outside activist who warned: "Psychiatry is the enemy incarnate....You may take this as a declaration of war against you...." [Satinover, p. 33] No one objected to these tactics, and the activists then demanded to appear before the APA's Committee on Nomenclature. The chairman then "allowed that perhaps homosexual behavior was not a sign of psychiatric disorder, and that the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) should probably therefore reflect this new understanding." [Satinover, p. 34]

These tactics of intimidation were entirely successful as Dr. Satinover recounts what then happened in the 1973 meeting:

> "When the committee met formally to consider the issue in 1973 the outcome had already been arranged behind closed doors. No new data was introduced, and objectors were given only fifteen minutes to present a rebuttal that summarized seventy years of psychiatric and psychoanalytic opinion. When the committee voted as planned, a few voices formally appealed to the membership at large which can overrule committee decisions even on 'scientific' matters. [Emphasis added]

> The activists responded swiftly and effectively. They drafted a letter and sent it to the over thirty thousand members of the APA, urging them to 'vote to retain the nomenclature change.' How could the activists afford such a mailing? *They purchased the APA membership mailing list* after the National Gay Task Force (NGTF) sent out a fund-raising appeal to *their* membership." [Emphasis in the original] [Satinover, p. 34]

The mailing campaign was successful although only a third of the membership responded. However, a survey conducted four years later showed that 69% of psychiatrists disagreed with the change in the DSM and still considered homosexuality a disorder. [Satinover, p.35; Jones and Yarhouse, p. 97] Thus, the official change in the American Psychiatric Association was effectuated not through scientific studies, new discoveries, and reasoned discourse, but through a well-organized and well-financed campaign of disruption, intimidation and mass mailing. The campaign worked. A significant shift in public opinion began to occur, but most people are probably unaware of the *means* used to effect that change:

> "For in response to the explicit efforts of the activists, a mass change in opinion in accepting homosexuality as normal *has* occurred. But it remains unsupported by the very sources the activists manipulate for their own ends. Such 'disinformation' seems to arise partly from a deliberate campaign, especially given the willingness of some to use 'any means necessary' to convert public opinion. 'Any means necessary' is no exaggeration. Eric Pollard formerly belonged to the prominent homosexual organization ACT-UP and founded its Washington, D.C. chapter. In an interview with The Washington Blade, a major homosexual newspaper, he stated that he and other group members learned to apply 'subversive tactics, drawn largely from the voluminous Mein Kampf, which some of us studied as a working model.'" [Satinover, p. 38]

After the takeover of the American Psychiatric Association and later of the American Psychological Association, the campaign moved on to other influential institutions in the country. This broader campaign has been exposed in the recent book, The Homosexual Agenda, in which the authors, Alan Sears and Craig Osten, president and vice-president, respectively, of the Alliance Defense Fund, have posed these important questions: "What has caused such a radical shift in public attitudes toward homosexual behavior? And how did this shift happen in less than a generation?" The answers, once again, point not to chance or natural cultural evolution, but to careful design and planning:

> "The reason is a well-thought-out strategy that was devised by homosexual activists Marshall Kirk and Hunter Madsen and publicized in two publications: a 1987 article entitled 'The Overhauling of Straight America' and a 1989 book titled After the Ball. When one reads both of these works, one sees how radical homosexual activists have implemented the strategy laid out in these publications almost to the letter.
>
> The homosexual activists laid out a six-point strategy to radically change America's perception of homosexual behavior. Their six points were:
>
> 1. Talk about gays and gayness loudly and often as possible.
> 2. Portray gays as victims, not aggressive challengers.
> 3. Give homosexual protectors a 'just' cause.
> 4. Make gays look good.
> 5. Make the victimizers look bad.
> 6. Solicit funds: the buck stops here (i.e., get corporate America and

> major foundations to financially support the homosexual cause). [Alan Sears and Craig Osten, The Homosexual Agenda (Broadman & Holman 2003), p.18]

Kirk and Madsen understood that a very important aspect of the campaign was to downplay any references to actual homosexual behavior while emphasizing the whole notion of rights: "In the early stages of the campaign to reach straight America, the masses should not be shocked and repelled by premature exposure to homosexual behavior itself. Instead, the imagery of sex should be downplayed and gay rights should be reduced to an abstract social question as much as possible....First, let the camel get his nose inside the tent–and only later his unsightly derriere!" [Sears and Osten, p. 20] This campaign has been systematically, thoroughly and successfully implemented in the media, public schools, universities, corporations, and governmental bodies. Just one example is the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) which boasts over thirty prime time television characters who are openly homosexual and the Alliance's "control" over Hollywood with "full script approval over the portrayal of homosexual behavior." [Sears and Osten, p. 39]

Although the homosexual campaign is being waged on many different fronts in America's institutions, the ultimate goal is the same: the redefinition of marriage and the family. One example of this objective can be found in the organizing manual of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force which is used to change the corporate policies of American companies:

> "If possible, an employer should offer benefits to same-and-opposite sex couples, both romantic and nonromantic, as well as the partner's children. By crafting an inclusive policy such as this, *the employer allows the employee to define his or her own family* and responds to the family's needs. Moreover, an inclusive policy is more flexible and *can adapt to employee family structures as they continue to change*." [Emphasis by Sears and Osten] [Sally Kohn, "The Domestic Partnership Organizing Manual for Employee Benefits," Policy Institute of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, p. 6 as quoted in Sears and Osten, p. 151]

The particularities in this and other institutional campaigns further the overarching agenda. An activist named William Eskridge hopes that gay marriage "will dethrone the traditional family based on blood relationships in favor of families we choose." [William N. Eskridge, "The Case for Same-Sex Marriage" (1996) as quoted in Sears and Osten, p. 96] Another activist, Michaelangelo Signorile, has encouraged fellow activists "to fight for same-sex marriage and its benefits, and then, once granted, redefine the institution of marriage completely...to debunk a myth and radically alter an archaic institution....The most subversive action lesbians and gay men can undertake...is to transform the notion of 'family' entirely." [Emphasis added] [Michaelangelo Signorile, "Bridal Wave," OUT (December-January 1994) as quoted in Sears and Osten, p. 96] Of particular significance to the current controversy is the underlying notion that marriage, sex, and families are not objective realities given by God but rather mental constructs which can be reshaped and reinvented according to individual whims. Thus, an employee can "define his or her own family," and "family structures" will "continue to change."

The campaign has also been waged in the churches, and thus in addition to the Gay Rights Movement, there is also the Gay Christian Movement. "The battle in the churches is an extension of [the] cultural war but, given the role of religion in public life, it is also an effort to capture the church's moral authority in that larger conflict." [Richard John Neuhaus, The Best of The Public Square (The Institute on Religion and Public Life 1997), p. 68] The history of this movement in the churches has been

recounted by Joe Dallas, a former practicing homosexual who later left the homosexual lifestyle behind and served as president of Exodus International, an organization dedicated to helping other homosexuals leave homosexuality. His story and a history of the movement are told in his book, A Strong Delusion. In 1968 the first openly homosexual denomination, The Metropolitan Community Church, was founded by a former Pentecostal minister named Troy Perry, and in the 1970s numerous homosexual advocacy organizations were formed in a number of the major denominations–Lutherans Concerned, Affirmation (United Methodist), Integrity (Episcopal), Dignity (Catholic), and Kinship (Seventh Day Adventist). [Joe Dallas, A Strong Delusion (Harvest House 1996), pp. 65, 76] For a while Dallas himself found love and acceptance in the Metropolitan Community Church where he met "gay and lesbian Christians" who were "obviously devoted to God" and were "comfortable with themselves...." [Dallas, p. 15] By the 1980s "there was an identifiable body of work, from a variety of sources promoting the pro-gay theology." [Dallas, p. 83] There were books, journals, articles, and caucuses in traditional churches. Liberal churches were targeted first for a very good reason:

> "Churches of a more liberal bent were also influenced toward a pro-gay position. Troy Perry, when explaining how easily liberal churches accepted his beliefs, made an interesting admission: I knew I would have few if any problems with the so-called liberal churches. Liberal churches do not usually deeply involve themselves with Scripture.'" [Emphasis added] [Dallas, p.84]

The more conservative churches that hold a high view of Scripture will be handled differently according to the master plan as set forth in After the Ball: "[In regard to those] who feel compelled to adhere rigidly to an authoritarian belief structure (i.e., an orthodox religion), that condemns homosexuality...our primary objective regarding die-hard homohaters of this sort is to cow and silence them." [Emphasis added] [Marshall Kirk and Hunter Madsen, After the Ball (Doubleday 1990), p. 176 as quoted in Sears and Osten, pp. 186-87]

It is regrettable but true that the Episcopal Church, as one of the liberal churches identified by Troy Perry, as a result of its Scriptural and theological vulnerability to the strategies and tactics of this relentless campaign, has become the first major Protestant Church to make Troy Perry's prediction come true.

VI. Homosexuality: The "New Learning"–Arguments and Evidence

Because of the decision of the Episcopal Church to sever its ties with Christian orthodoxy ("the positions of the past") in order to "preach an enlightened religion attuned to the latest trends within liberal culture" [Turner, pp. 28-29], and because of the coordinated and relentless campaign of the homosexual movement to change American culture and churches in America, including the Episcopal Church [Satinover, passim; Dallas, passim], many Episcopalians now understandably and quite sincerely believe the revisionist position to be true. It is, therefore, necessary to examine the merits of this position.

The essence of the revisionist argument is this:

> "If research can persuasively show that the homosexual state is caused by factors beyond the individual's control, especially if the causative factors are biological/genetic

> in nature, then it would be wrong for the Christian church to condemn homosexual action or lifestyle." [Jones and Yarhouse, p. 180]

A variant of this position was set forth in an official document of the Episcopal Church:

> "Expert opinion is largely agreed...that a sexual orientation is not, in the vast majority of cases, voluntary in the sense of self-conscious choice....If it is granted that a homosexual orientation is involuntary...it is unjust to present celibacy as a calling." ["Standing Commission on Human Affairs," Blue Book of the Episcopal Church General Convention (New York: The Episcopal Church General Convention, 1991), pp. 199, 202 as quoted in Jones and Yarhouse, p. 24]

This is the heart of the "new learning:" "We now know what Christians did not know before–that certain people are born homosexual probably as a result of their genes; that this orientation is involuntary and fixed; and that to continue to deny legitimate sexual expression to homosexual persons would be unjust." This "new learning" is supported by the experience of many homosexual persons who have testified that from a very early age they felt different with no attraction to persons of the opposite sex but with strong attractions to person of the same sex and that these attractions later led to homosexual experiences and that eventually they came to the conclusion that their condition was unchangeable and that this was essentially who they are. [Satinover, pp.222-226] Their homosexuality became an essential part of their identity. [Hays, p. 379] This position, in fact, is called "essentialism...[which] is the view that sexual orientations are deep categories of human nature...." Moreover, "much of the current ecclesial argument for revising the Church's teaching presupposes an *essentialist* understanding," and this is the "apparently foundational rock on which much 'revisionist' argument builds...." [True Union, pp. 13-14; Jones and Yarhouse, pp.25-26] This essentialist position is supposedly supported by recent scientific studies which have been loudly trumpeted by the media. [Satinover, p. 39; Jones and Yarhouse, p. 48] A careful examination of the evidence and arguments of this position, however, will reveal that it is premised on both *factual* and *theological* errors.

Before examining the evidence which supposedly supports the essentialist position of the so-called "new learning," it is necessary first to consider the matter of the burden of proof. In any contest, such as a lawsuit or debate, it is usually the one who is proposing a change from the status quo that must carry the burden of proof. How much more is that true in the current controversy given the mind of the Anglican Communion on this issue by an overwhelming margin which is consistent with the position of the overwhelming majority of the Church Universal today and for the past unbroken two thousand years (Tradition), given the univocal position of the Bible, both Old and New Testaments (Scripture), and given the already obviously extremely destructive consequences of such an innovation. [Jones and Yarhouse, p. 23] Under these circumstances, it seems prudent to suggest that the proponents of such a radical change must carry a very heavy burden of proof, which I would suggest should at least be equivalent to the legal burden of clear and convincing evidence. It is accurate to state that such a burden has not even come close to being met. [Jones and Yarhouse, p. 23]

The revisionists' argument for this radical change in the traditional Christian sexual ethic is based largely on new scientific studies, particularly in the field of genetic research. The claim is that homosexuality is genetically caused based upon certain studies. This claim has been widely reported in the secular press as the discovery of the so-called "gay gene." (e.g., National Public Radio, the Wall Street Journal, and the New York Times). [Satinover, pp. 109-110] An example of this type of reporting can be found in an article in Time magazine entitled "Search for a Gay Gene":

> "[G]ays and lesbians welcome [research on genetics] because it supports what most of them have long felt: that homosexuality is an innate characteristic, like skin color, rather than a *perverse life-style choice, as conservative moralists contend.* And if that is true, then gays deserve legal protection similar to the laws that prohibit racial discrimination." [Emphasis by Jones and Yarhouse] [Larry Thompson, "Search for a Gay Gene," Time, June 12, 1995, p. 61 as quoted in Jones and Yarhouse, p. 48]

This article sets forth the basic revisionist argument–*if...then. If* science has proven that homosexuality is genetically determined, *then* we are faced with "new learning" unknown to the writers of the Bible, and it would, therefore, be unjust for the Church to withhold the blessing of committed same sex unions. Jones and Yarhouse examine the implications of this position:

> "Without even looking at the quality of the genetic research, the writer has presented the reader with an *either-or* view of the homosexuality debate: homosexuality is *either* an innate characteristic (deserving legal protection and, by implication, full acceptance) *or* a perverse lifestyle choice. Since 'conservative moralists' are caricatured as saying that homosexuality is a 'perverse life-style choice,' then any research that appears to support a genetic hypothesis for homosexuality will make any conservative position (that is, any position that fails to be pro-gay) look scientifically naive, uniformed and, most importantly, false." [Jones and Yarhouse, pp. 48-49]

A careful examination of the principal studies which were the bases for these media headlines about the discovery of the so-called "gay gene" do *not* support the argument that homosexuality is genetically caused. One of these studies was conducted by a scientist named Dean Hamer and his colleagues and reported in Science magazine in 1993. A follow-up article by Hamer was conducted in 1995 and published in Nature Genetics. These studies examined the chromosomes of homosexual brothers who had some homosexual relatives on their mothers' side and found a shared chromosomal marker or genetic sequence in the area of the chromosome known as Xq28. In the first study this marker was found in 83% of the brothers, and in the second study it was found in 67% of the brothers. In the first study Hamer concluded that "one form of male homosexuality is preferentially transmitted through the maternal side and is genetically linked to chromosomal region Xq28." [Dean Hamer, et al., "A Linkage Between DNA Markers on the X Chromosome and Male Sexual Orientation," Science 261 (1993) 321-27 as quoted in Robert A. J. Gagnon, The Bible and Homosexual Practice (Abingdon Press 2001) p. 399]

The problems with these studies are numerous. The results were not checked against a heterosexual control group. A young researcher on Hamer's team who accused Hamer of not reporting some of the findings that undermined the conclusions of the report was fired. [Gagnon, p. 400] A later study in 1999 conducted by Canadian researchers failed to replicate the findings in Hamer's study even though they had a larger sample. [Georgy Rice, Carol Anderson, Neil Risch and George Ebers, "Male Homosexuality: Absence of Linkage to Microsatellite Markers at Xq28," Science 284 (April 1999): 665-67 as quoted in Jones and Yarhouse, p. 80] These researchers found "no significant relationship of homosexual orientation to this genetic region despite examining four separate chromosomal markers." [Emphasis added] [Jones and Yarhouse, p. 80] The size of Hamer's sample was also criticized in an article in Science written by genetic researchers from Yale, Columbia, and Louisiana State University: "Small sample sizes make these data compatible with a range of possible genetic and environmental hypotheses...." [Risch et al, "Male Sexual Orientation and Genetic Evidence," Science as quoted in

Satinover, pp. 111-112] Jeffrey Satinover reported Hamer's response to this criticism:

> "Nonetheless, regarding the failure of their most important 'findings' to achieve even statistical significance, they themselves agree–in a rather awkward circumlocution–that: the question of the appropriate significance level to apply to a non-Mendelian [that is, polygenic, multiple factors influencing expression] trait such as sexual orientation is problematic. [D. H. Hamer et al, "Response to N. Risch et al.," Science 262 (1993), p. 2065.
>
> In lay terms, this translates as, 'we have no idea how significant this finding is or indeed whether it is significant at all." [Satinover, pp. 112-113]

One very significant aspect of the study does need to be noted:

> "[T]he researchers found that this chromosomal pattern was neither necessary nor sufficient to cause homosexuality. If it was necessary to the homosexual condition, then they would not have found the 7 out of 40 homosexual brother pairs who did not share this characteristic (these 7 brothers did not have the chromosomal pattern but were gay anyway). If it was sufficient to cause homosexuality, then they would not have found, in their second study, nonhomosexual brothers who shared the genetic characteristic but not the sexual orientation (these brothers did have the marker but were not gay). Having the genetic marker does not mean you are a homosexual (not sufficient), and not having the genetic marker does not mean that you are not a homosexual (not necessary)." [Jones and Yarhouse, p.81]

Finally, Hamer himself has acknowledged that "We have not found the gene–which we don't think exists–for sexual orientation." "There will never be a test that will say for certain whether a child will be gay. We know that for certain." [Emphasis added] [Gagnon, p. 400] As Jeffrey Satinover wryly observed, "Needless to say, none of the disclaimers were given equal time in the press as the original overblown claims." [Satinover, p. 113]

The other hugely influential study positing the genetic causation of homosexuality was conducted by researchers, Michael Bailey and Richard Pillard, in 1991. This study was also touted by the national media:

> "It would be hard to overestimate the broad influence of the Bailey and Pillard studies. They were widely trumpeted in the secular and religious media. To many they are definitive proof that homosexuality is genetic. When a member of the lay public states with confidence 'Homosexuality is genetically caused,' it is almost always the Bailey and Pillard studies they have vaguely in mind." [Jones and Yarhouse, p. 73]

Bailey and Pillard studied male homosexuals who had identical twins to determine the so-called "concordance rate" and determined a rate of 52% for identical twin pairs which meant that "in 52% of the identical twin pairs studied the co-twin was also homosexual" and a rate of 22% for non-identical twins. [Gagnon, p. 403] They concluded that "genetics explain a significant amount of the reason why people have a homosexual orientation." [Jones and Yarhouse, p. 73]

The first observation which needs to be made about this study is that even if the results were accurate,

they would not prove that homosexuality is genetically caused as explained by Jeffrey Satinover:

> "If 'homosexuality is genetic,' as activists and their media supporters repeatedly claim, the *concordance* rate between identical twins–that is, the incidence of the two twins either both being homosexual or both being heterosexual–will be 100 percent. There would *never* be a *discordant* pair–a pair with one homosexual twin and one heterosexual twin. When we say that 'eye color is genetically determined,' that is what we mean. That's why identical twins *always* have the same eye color.
>
> *** *** ***
>
> If accurate, this finding [by Bailey and Pillard] alone argues for the enormous importance of *nongenetic* factors influencing homosexuality, because, as noted above, in order for something to be genetically *determined*, as opposed to merely *influenced*, the genetic heritability would need to approach 100 percent." [Satinover, pp.83, 85]

The study itself, however, was flawed, because the samples were not obtained randomly but through seeking volunteers in homosexual magazines, thereby creating the strong possibility that homosexual twins with homosexual co-twins were more likely to respond. [Gagnon, p. 404; Jones and Yarhouse, pp. 73-74] Moreover, a similar study was conducted in Britain by Michael King and Elizabeth McDonald who found considerably lower concordance rates of 25 percent for identical twins and 12 percent for non-identical twins. The conclusions they drew were quite different from the conclusions drawn by Bailey and Pillard: "Discordance for sexual orientation in the monozygotic pairs [identical twins] confirmed that genetic factors are insufficient explanation for the development of sexual orientation. [Emphasis added] [Michael King and Elizabeth McDonald, "Homosexuals Who Are Twins: A Study of 46 Probands," quoted in Satinover, p.87]

The King and McDonald study also revealed "a relatively high likelihood of sexual relations occurring with same-sex co-twins at some time, *particularly in monozygotic pairs*." [Satinover,p. 88] Satinover then comments on the significance of this finding:

> "The fact that *identical* twins in particular tended to have sexual relations with each other also suggests that the experience of twinhood (a developmental peculiarity) itself can cause an increase in homosexuality as a factor in its own right, apart from the shared genes." [Satinover, p. 88]

The most compelling refutation of the Bailey and Pillard study, however, has come from a separate study conducted by Bailey himself. The problem with sample bias was eliminated by utilizing the Australian Twin Register. Bailey sent out 9,112 surveys and tabulated responses from 4,901 completed questionnaires. This time he found a concordance rate for male identical twin pairs of *only 11%*. [Jones and Yarhouse, p. 74-77; Gagnon, p. 404] The conclusion drawn from this study was dramatically different from the earlier study with Pillard: the study "did not provide statistically significant support for the importance of genetic factors" for homosexual orientation. [Emphasis added] [J. Michael Bailey, Michael P. Dunne and Nicholas G. Martin, "Genetic and Environmental Influences on Sexual Orientation and Its Correlates in an Australian Twin Sample," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 78 (March 2000) 534 as quoted in Jones and Yarhouse, p. 78] Bailey himself now admits that "concordances from prior studies were inflated due to concordance dependent ascertainment bias." [Emphasis added] [Bailey, Dunne and Martin, p. 533 as quoted in Gagnon, p. 404] Jones and Yarhouse raise the same question that Satinover raised about the media: "The original Bailey and Pillard studies made a huge splash in the popular media; only time will tell if Bailey's follow-up Australian study is ever brought to the public's awareness with the same forcefulness." [Jones and Yarhouse, p. 79]

The scientific studies ballyhooed by the media as proving that homosexuality is genetically caused upon closer scrutiny do no such thing. Two researchers at Columbia University, William Byne and Bruce Parsons, decided to examine all of the published scientific literature on the subject of the biology of homosexuality, including genetics. They reviewed 135 research studies, books, academic summaries, prior reviews–basically the entire literature–and published their conclusions in an article in Archives of General Psychiatry. In this, the most comprehensive review of the status of the research in this area, they conclude:

> "Recent studies postulate biologic factors [genetic, hormonal] as the primary basis for sexual orientation. However, there is no evidence at present to substantiate a biologic theory, just as there is no evidence to support any singular psychosocial explanation. While all behavior must have an ultimate biologic substrate, the appeal of current biologic explanations for sexual orientation may derive more from dissatisfaction with the current status of psychosocial explanations than from a substantiating body of experimental data. Critical review shows the evidence favoring a biologic theory to be lacking." [Emphasis added] [William Byne and Bruce Parsons, "Human Sexual Orientation: The Biologic Theories Reappraised," Archives of General Psychiatry 50 (1993) 228 as quoted in Satinover, p. 114]

Therefore, the evidence simply does **not** support the assertion of the homosexual movement that homosexuality is genetic. If the evidence for genetic causation of homosexuality is lacking, what are we with left with? What is the cause? There is "a growing consensus within the scientific community that homosexuality is likely the product of both inheritance and environment. Rather than determining sexual orientation, biology provides the predisposition; biological influences increase the probability that under certain environmental circumstances a person will engage in homosexual behavior." [Stanley J. Grenz, Welcoming But Not Affirming (Westminster John Knox Press 1998)] p. 24. This view is echoed by Gerald Coleman:

> "There is a general consensus today that no one theory of homosexuality can explain such a diverse phenomenon....There is no single genetic, hormonal or psychological cause of homosexual orientation. There appears to be a variety of factors which can provide a 'push' in the direction of homosexuality for some persons. The complex of factors which result in the orientation toward homosexuality probably differs from person to person. While we do not know what causes the orientation, we undoubtedly know that the forces that go into the creation of a homosexual person are more complex and mysterious than most had earlier appreciated. There is, then, substantial reason to approach the scientific topic of homosexuality with caution, respect and humility, as the overwhelming complexity of the issue merits." [Gerald D. Coleman, Homosexuality: Catholic Teaching and Pastoral Practice (Paulist Press 1995), p.54 as quoted in Grenz, p. 24]

The psychological theories focus on the arrested development of the homosexual person who has suffered in childhood from a deficient relationship with the parent of the same sex. [Grenz, p. 16-17] This deficiency leads to a longing to compensate with a relationship with a person of the same sex which becomes eroticized. [Grenz, p. 17] Michael Saia explains how this process occurs:

> "Most homosexually oriented men do not enter into relationships with other men just to

> have sex. Rather, they are trying to fulfill their needs for unconditional love and a sense of identity. But sex often plays a part in these relationships, and after a while confusion may occur. The man may begin to think sex will meet his basic needs, so he attempts to satisfy his needs in that way. Since sex is such a powerful, pleasurable experience, it can quickly reinforce any behavior associated with it. This is how the patterns of thinking (sexualization) and behavior (promiscuity) can so quickly become entrenched in the homosexual's life." [Michael Saia, Counseling the Homosexual (Bethany House 1988), p. 56 as quoted in Grenz, p. 17]

If, according to the essentialist position, homosexuality is a genetically determined fixed condition in a certain percentage of the population, we would expect to find this so-called "naturally occurring phenomenon" at the same rate in different cultures throughout history. In fact, we do not. The most comprehensive transcultural study of homosexuality throughout history is The Construction of Homosexuality, a 500 page tome, by David F. Greenberg. This book proves conclusively that homosexual practice and the conceptual categories used to understand homosexuality vary greatly from society to society. Therefore, "the contemporary Western concept of homosexuality as a fixed, biologically based sexual orientation that is 'normal' for a select group of people is in fact the product of a constellation of ideas present in our society and not the transcultural reality proponents assume it is." [Grenz, p. 29] As opposed to the "essentialist" view, this is known as the "constructionist" view. Greenberg "regards as indefensible the position of 'essentialists' who view homosexuality as an immutable, genetic condition." [Emphasis added] [Gagnon, p. 415] Greenberg also believes that homosexual behavior is learned within a specific social context and that cultural conditioning is more important than any innate factors in a particular person's life. According to Greenberg, "Where social definitions of appropriate and inappropriate behavior are clear and consistent, with positive sanctions for conformity and negative ones for nonconformity, virtually everyone will conform irrespective of genetic inheritance and, to a considerable extent, irrespective of personal psychodynamics." [Emphasis added] [David Greenberg, The Construction of Homosexuality (University of Chicago Press 1988), p. 487 as quoted in Grenz, p. 30 and Gagnon, p. 415]

Greenberg's massive study refutes the essentialist position from transcultural evidence. The essentialist position is also refuted by evidence of significant elasticity in sexual behavior within our own society. Robert Gagnon cites three separate studies–the 1992 National Health and Social Life Survey (NHSLS), the 1983 nationwide random survey of 4,340 adults in five U.S. cities conducted by the Family Research Institute, and the 1970 study by Alan Bell and Martin Weinberg–all of which show a fluidity in sexual orientation at different times in the lives of those surveyed. [Gagnon, pp. 418-20] For example, in the Family Research Institute survey, "sixty-seven percent of homosexual women and 54% of homosexual men reported current sexual attractions to the opposite sex." [Gagnon, p. 419] In the Bell and Weinberg survey, "half of all 'exclusive' homosexuals had at one time or another experienced orgasm while having heterosexual sex. Nine out of ten homosexuals (97% of women and 84% of men) and one out of every five heterosexuals (15% of women, 29% of men) shifted along the Kinsey categories of sexual orientation at least once during their lives." [Gagnon, p.420] "A second shift was reported by 60% of homosexual males, 81% of homosexual females, 10% of heterosexual males, and 2% of heterosexual females. A third of homosexual males (32%) and half of homosexual females had a third shift." [Emphasis added] [Gagnon, p. 420] Moreover, a study conducted in Great Britain in 1994 entitled Sexual Behavior in Britain, which surveyed nearly 20,000 randomly selected Britons, reported that over 90% of the men who had had any homosexual experience at any stage in their lifetime had also had a female sexual partner, indicating a huge incidence of bisexuality. "The Report concluded that exclusively homosexual behavior is rare." [Peter May, "The Significance of Bisexuality," The Church Times

(February 18, 2004)]

Therefore, the essentialist position is contradicted *both* by evidence of transcultural variations of homosexuality *and* by evidence of fluidity in sexual behavior among professed homosexuals. It is also refuted by evidence of homosexuals who have undergone a change in sexual orientation:

> "To claim that 'homosexual orientation is immutable' is to make a universal claim: there has never and will never be any instance whatsoever of a person changing a homosexual orientation. Framed in this language, even one case in all of history would falsify this universal claim; one healed homosexual makes it *not true* that homosexuals cannot change." [Jones and Yarhouse, p. 120]

The evidence is overwhelming that change is possible and has occurred many times. A survey of treatments from 1930 to 1986 reveal a composite success rate of 52% "where success is defined as 'considerable' to 'complete' change. These reports clearly contradict claims that change is flatly impossible. Indeed, it would be more accurate to say that *all the existing evidence suggests strongly that homosexuality is quite changeable.*" [Satinover, pp. 185-86]

In 1997 the National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality (NARTH) conducted a survey of 882 clients who had undergone some change in sexual orientation. The changes reported are shown below:

Kinsey Rating	**BEFORE**	**AFTER**
0 - exclusively heterosexual	0%	15%
1 - almost entirely heterosexual	0%	18%
2 - more heterosexual than homosexual	0%	20%
3 - equally heterosexual and homosexual	9%	11%
4 - more homosexual than heterosexual	22%	23%
5 - almost entirely homosexual	31%	8%
6 - exclusively homosexual	36%	5%

"Those surveyed also reported significant decreases in homosexual thoughts." [Gagnon, p. 421] "An overwhelming 99% reported believing that homosexual orientation can be changed." [Jones and Yarhouse, p.139]

Other studies have confirmed "expectations of long-term significant change in behavior and perhaps even orientation for 30 percent to 50 percent of homosexual persons who undergo therapy. Some reports suggest that the figure may be as high as 65%." [Grenz, p. 25]

The most unexpected and significant recent study on successful therapy for homosexuals was conducted by Dr. Robert Spitzer, a prominent psychiatrist and gay activist who played a pivotal role in the removal of homosexuality from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual in 1973. His findings were published in the Archives of Sexual Behavior in October of 2003 and summarized in a NARTH article. The findings challenged "the widely-held assumption that a homosexual orientation is 'who one is'–an intrinsic part of a person's identity that can never be changed....Testing the hypothesis that a predominantly homosexual orientation will, in some individuals, respond to therapy were some 200 respondents of both genders (143 males, 57 females) who reported changes from homosexual to heterosexual

orientation lasting 5 years or more." The significance of this study cannot be missed:

> "...the majority of participants did report change from a predominantly or exclusively homosexual orientation before therapy to a predominantly or exclusively heterosexual orientation in the past year as a result of reparative therapy. These results would seem to contradict the position statements of the major mental health organizations in the United States, which claim there is no scientific basis for believing psychotherapy effective in addressing same-sex attraction." [Roy Waller and Linda A. Nicolosi, "Spitzer Study Just Published: Evidence Found for Effectiveness of Reorientation Therapy," NARTH.com., p. 1]

Thus, we see that the revisionists' claim that "new learning" from science justifies the radical revision of the traditional Christian sexual ethic of the past 2000 years is based upon a *factual* error. Science has not proven that homosexuality is a genetically caused and unalterably fixed condition naturally occurring in a certain percentage of the population. The evidence is actually to the contrary. The revisionists have come nowhere close to meeting their burden of proof.

But, even if they had met their burden of proof based upon the scientific evidence, their case for a revision of the Christian sexual ethic must fail because of a far more serious *theological* error. This error is brilliantly explained by Richard Hays, an expert on New Testament ethics and Pauline theology:

> "The biblical analysis of the human predicament, most sharply expressed in Pauline theology, offers a subtle account of human bondage to sin. As great-grandchildren of the Enlightenment, we like to think of ourselves as free moral agents, choosing rationally among possible actions, but Scripture unmasks that cheerful illusion and teaches us that we are deeply infected by the tendency to self-deception. As Jeremiah lamented, 'The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately corrupt; who can understand it?' (Jer. 17:9, RSV) Romans 1 depicts humanity in a state of self-affirming confusion: 'They became futile in their thinking, and their senseless minds were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools....They know God's decree, that those who practice such things deserve to die–yet they not only do them but applaud others who practice them' (Rom. 1:21-22, 32). Once in the fallen state, we are not free not to sin: we are 'slaves of sin' (Rom. 6:17), which distorts our perceptions, overpowers our will, and renders us incapable of obedience (Rom. 7). Redemption (a word that means 'being emancipated from slavery') is God's act of liberation, setting us free from the power of sin and placing us within the sphere of God's transforming power for righteousness (Rom. 6:20-22, 8:1-11,cf.12:1-2).
>
> Thus, the Bible's sober anthropology rejects the apparently commonsense assumption that only freely chosen acts are morally culpable. Quite the reverse: the very nature of sin is that it is *not* freely chosen. That is what it means to live 'in the flesh' in a fallen creation. We are in bondage to sin but still accountable to God's righteous judgment of our actions. In light of this theological anthropology, it cannot be maintained that a homosexual orientation is morally neutral because it is involuntary." [Hays, p.390]

When viewed in this light, heterosexuals and homosexuals are all under the bondage of sin, only in different ways. In the end, scientific research does not change this theological fact:

> "In any case, such research is fundamentally irrelevant to the Christian ethical case. The

> only way to exempt homosexuals from the demands of God's Law is to show that they are incapable of responsible choice regarding their actions because of the influence of causative factors–that they are subhuman robots acting without choice because of their condition. Few gay activists would accept such a description of their condition.
>
> Even if the homosexual condition of desiring intimacy and sexual union with a person of the same gender is caused in its entirety by causal factors outside the personal control of the person, that does not constitute moral affirmation of acting on these desires. If it did, the pedophile who desires sex with children, the alcoholic who desires the pursuit of drunkenness, and the person with Antisocial Personality Disorder who desires the thrill of victimization and pain infliction would all have an equal case for moral approval of their exploits. At the broadest level all humans are heirs to a predisposition that we have not chosen and that propels us toward self-destruction and evil–our sinful nature. The plight of the homosexual who has desires and passions that he or she did not choose is in fact the common plight of humanity. We all face the same challenge: how are we to live when what we want is out of accord with what God tells us we should want in this life? [Emphasis added] [Jones and Yarhouse, p. 181]

No scientific study can negate the call of God to lead lives of holiness. We are all sinners but with different predispositions which make us vulnerable to different temptations, and yet we are still responsible for our actions irrespective of our predispositions. Both heterosexuals and homosexuals as well as bisexuals and "pansexuals" are all equally prone to powerfully destructive desires and to self-deception. It is the Word of God that reveals to us how God views these desires and how we may be liberated from them. Ultimately this issue, as with all issues in our lives, is about fidelity to that Word.

VII. The Word of God

The current crisis in the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion finally comes down to the authority of the Holy Scriptures, the Word of God. "Why do we call the Holy Scriptures the Word of God? We call them the Word of God because God inspired their human authors and because God still speaks to us through the Bible." [Emphasis added] [An Outline of the Faith, The Book of Common Prayer, p.853] The question facing us at this hour is this: What is God speaking to us through the Bible about human sexuality and homosexuality?

We know the mind of the Anglican Communion on this matter, since 82% of the bishops at the last Lambeth Conference in 1998 endorsed Resolution 1.10 in which the Conference "in view of the teaching of Scripture, upholds faithfulness in marriage between a man and a woman in lifelong union, and believes that abstinence is right for those who are not called to marriage" and rejects "homosexual practice as incompatible with Scripture...."[Resolution 1.10, XIII Lambeth Conference (Summer 1998)]

In adopting this resolution, the Anglican Communion did no more than restate the orthodox Christian sexual ethic for the past 2000 years. [Hays, p. 402] The House of Bishops Theology Committee also recognized this as the traditional teaching:

> "These questions are controversial in part because they challenge the Church's traditional understanding of human sexuality which can be summarized as follows: Holy Scripture nowhere condones homosexual practice; in fact, a few passages of Hebrew

> Scripture and of letters of Paul explicitly condemn homosexual acts; marriage is defined as the joining together of a man and a woman; marriage is the only appropriate setting for genital sexual intimacy; the norm for singleness, as for marriage, is chastity; but in the case of singleness that norm means abstinence." [House of Bishops Theology Committee Report, The Gift of Sexuality: A Theological Perspective, p. 4]

Both of these statements of the traditional, orthodox Christian position on human sexuality and on homosexual practice appeal to the authority of Holy Scripture. If the actions of General Convention are allowed to stand, they will constitute a radical deviation from this orthodox Christian teaching in two dramatic ways: 1) blessing an act which Scripture does not condone but rather condemns; and 2) blessing genital sexual intimacy outside the bounds of marriage defined by Scripture as the joining together of a man and a woman.

Two questions must now be addressed. Do these statements of the Christian teaching on human sexuality and homosexuality truly state the will of God as expressed in Scripture? Do they continue to do so in our day? The answer of the Anglican Communion and the Universal Church to both questions is yes. The answer of the Episcopal Church, at least to the second question, is no. If "God still speaks to us through the Bible," then this is a very grave disagreement. Unless we drastically alter our understanding of God, He does not speak one word to the Episcopal Church and the exact opposite word to the Anglican Communion, and if the Anglican Communion is right in its answer to both questions, then the Episcopal Church is in a state of disobedience against God.

This section relies on the works of numerous scholars but is particularly indebted to two monumental works–The Moral Vision of the New Testament by Dr. Richard B. Hays, professor of New Testament at Duke University Divinity School, and The Bible and Homosexual Practice by Dr. Robert A. J. Gagnon, assistant professor of New Testament at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. It is important to note the quite remarkable accolades and endorsements both of these books have received from some of the most respected scholars in the academy. The list is a veritable who's who in biblical scholarship: for Dr. Hays' book: James D. G. Dunn, Lightfoot Professor of Divinity, University of Durham; George Lindbeck, Pitkin Professor Emeritus of Historical Theology, Yale University Divinity School; Luke Timothy Johnson, Robert W. Woodruff Professor of New Testament and Christian Origins, Emory University; Graham Stanton, professor of New Testament Studies, King's College, University of London; Victor Paul Furnish, University Distinguished Professor of New Testament, Southern Methodist University; and William Klassen, visiting research professor, Ecole Biblique, Jerusalem, and visiting scholar, Toronto School of Theology; for Dr. Gagnon's book: John Barton, Oriel and Laing Professor of the Interpretation of Holy Scripture, University of Oxford; Brevard S. Childs, Sterling Professor of Divinity (Hebrew Bible), Emeritus, Yale Divinity School; C. E. B. Cranfield, Professor of Theology (New Testament), Emeritus, University of Durham; C. K. Barrett, Professor of Divinity (New Testament), Emeritus, University of Durham; Bruce M. Metzger, George L. Collard Professor of New Testament, Emeritus, Princeton Theological Seminary; and James D. G. Dunn, Lightfoot Professor of Divinity, University of Durham. And these were not all; there were other scholars who endorsed both books. A representative review of Dr. Hays' book was this one by N. T. Wright, New Testament scholar and Bishop of Durham: "This book isn't just a breath of fresh air. It's a hurricane blowing away the fog of half-understood pseudo-morality and fashionable compromise, and revealing instead the early Christian vision of true humanness and genuine holiness. If this isn't a book for our time, I don't know what is." A representative review of Dr. Gagnon's book was this one made by James Barr, Distinguished Professor of Hebrew Bible, Emeritus, Vanderbilt University: "This is a brilliant, original, and highly important work, displaying meticulous biblical scholarship, and indispensable even for those

who disagree with the author." It is extremely important to realize that the positions taken by Dr. Hays and Dr. Gagnon on this issue are not "fringe" positions but are indisputably within the mainstream of respected biblical scholarship.

The Holy Scriptures reveal God's plan and will for the world and for humanity. That revelation encompasses our relationship to God and to one another. The Bible also reveals God's plan for human sexuality which is a divine gift given in the specific context of marriage. This is the starting place for all Christian teaching on sexuality, and all prohibitions against forbidden sexual acts, including homosexual acts, should be seen within the context of the divine endorsement of marriage as the only ordained setting for sexual intercourse. Homosexual acts are contrary to God's will, because they do not occur within the institution of marriage and they are expressly forbidden by the Word of God. Therefore, contrary to revisionists' arguments, the Church's prohibition against homosexual acts is not based solely upon a handful of passages in the Bible but on the entire canon as it reveals God's will for sexuality within the context of marriage.

God's plan for marriage and sexuality is revealed *ab initio* in the first two chapters of Genesis. This is an extremely important point. Marriage is not a human construct but a significant part of God's created order. It is a divinely ordained institution and unqualifiedly good in its prelapsarian state. An essential element of creation is the creation of male and female as complementary beings. Woman was made from man and thus is one with whom "he longs to *re*unite in sexual intercourse and marriage, a *re*union that not only provides companionship but restores *adam* to his original wholeness." [Gagnon, 61] It is this reunion that has God's unreserved blessing: "Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh." [Genesis 2:24]

Sexual intercourse, the man and the woman coming together as one flesh, is clearly within the context of marriage. The Bible reveals God's good purposes for sexual intercourse in marriage. The first purpose mentioned is *procreation* in accordance with the command to "be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it...." [Genesis 1:28; Jones and Yarhouse, p. 163] Thus, sexual intercourse within the context of marriage is inextricably linked to God's plan of humanity governing creation. Moreover, "a procreative purpose for marriage avoids a detachment of sexuality from stable family structures...." [Gagnon, pp. 57-58] The second purpose revealed is *union*, powerfully conveyed by the expression "one flesh." The sexual act unites the husband and wife. This union is supposed to happen only in marriage; however, as St. Paul warned, it also occurs even when a man has so-called casual sex with a prostitute. [1 Corinthians 6:16; Jones and Yarhouse, p. 163] The third purpose revealed in Scripture is *physical pleasure and gratification.* St. Paul speaks of husbands and wives meeting each other's sexual needs [1 Corinthians 7:1-9], and The Song of Solomon celebrates romantic love. [Jones and Yarhouse, p. 163] The fourth purpose is to *instruct* us about our relationship with God and with Christ in the coming together with someone who is "the Other" in order to be truly ourselves. [Jones and Yarhouse, p. 163]

The act of sexual intercourse derives its meaning and moral significance from these divine purposes for it in marriage. The act itself conveys symbolic meaning of the exclusive commitment of husband and wife to each other, of the mutuality of the relationship, and of the openness to the creation of new life. [Grenz, p. 108] The objective reality of the act is to unite the husband and wife, two complementary beings, into one flesh. That is what it symbolizes, and that is what it does. It matters, therefore, whether the actual sexual act being committed is in conformance with God's divine purpose for the act. Lewis Smedes explains the importance of the reality of the act:

> "It does not matter what the two people [who are having sex] have in mind....The *reality*

> of the act, unfelt and unnoticed by them, is this: It unites them–body and *soul*–to each other. It unites them in that strange, impossible to pinpoint sense of 'one flesh.' There is no such thing as casual sex, no matter how casual people are about it. The Christian assaults reality in his night out at the brothel. He uses a woman and puts her back in a closet where she can be forgotten; but the reality is that he has put away a person with whom he has done something that was meant to inseparably join them. This is what is at stake for Paul in the question of sexual intercourse between unmarried people.
>
> And now we can see clearly why Paul thought sexual intercourse by unmarried people was wrong. It is wrong because it violates the inner reality of the act; it is wrong because unmarried people thereby engage in a life-uniting act without a life-uniting intent. Whenever two people copulate without a commitment to life-union, they commit fornication." [Lewis Smedes, Sex for Christians (Eerdmans 1994), pp. 109-10 as quoted in Jones and Yarhouse, p. 172]

Sexual fidelity in marriage expresses the covenant of lifelong, committed union of husband and wife, but it also is a metaphor for the committed relationship between God and His people. [Hosea 1-3; True Union, p. 11] This metaphor is also applied to the relationship between Christ and the Church. [Ephesians 5:25-33; Jones and Yarhouse, p.164] The metaphorical significance of marriage runs throughout the canon even to the coming again of Christ in Revelation: "Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." [Revelation 19:9; Jones and Yarhouse, p. 164] Therefore, sexual fidelity in marriage is a means given by God by which a husband and wife can symbolize and bear witness to the fidelity of Christ to His Church. Given this mysterious spiritual reality, the sexual act itself can never be considered morally insignificant. "Marriage is not an incidental human construction but a creational reality." [Jones and Yarhouse, p. 164]

Therefore, the context of the right expression of sexual intercourse throughout the Bible is marriage. References to any other kind of sexual practice must always be viewed against that backdrop. The Bible also presupposes heterosexual sex throughout the canon:

> "On a prescriptive level, every regulation that affirms the sexual bond affirms it between a man and a woman–without exception. In addition, every proverb or wisdom saying refers to heterosexual–not homosexual--relationships as fitting for the lives of the faithful. There is an abundance of Old Testament laws and proverbs regulating and establishing proper boundaries for sexual intercourse between male and female (e.g., regarding virginity, mate selection, engagement, marital fidelity). By way of contrast, there are no laws distinguishing proper homosexual conduct from improper homosexual conduct, because in every law code homosexual conduct is presumed to be forbidden *in toto*....Likewise, every discussion in the New Testament about marriage or sexual unions always and only seek to regulate heterosexual unions because there is no conception of a proper homosexual union. There was no need to talk about fidelity and loving concern in same-sex unions because it was universally understood that homosexual unions were abominable. The relationship between Yahweh and Israel and between Christ and the church is imaged as a marriage between a husband and a wife. It would have been absolutely unthinkable for any prophet or New Testament author to conceive of this relationship in homosexual terms. The universal silence in the Bible regarding an acceptable same-sex union, when combined with the explicit prohibitions, speaks volumes for a consensus disapproval of homosexual conduct. To say that there

> are only a few texts in the Bible that do not condone homosexual conduct is a monumental understatement of the facts. The reverse is a more accurate statement: there is not a single shred of evidence anywhere in the Bible that would even remotely suggest that same-sex unions are more acceptable than extramarital or premarital intercourse, incest, or bestiality." [Emphasis added] [Gagnon, 438-39]

Biblical prohibitions against various other sexual acts should be seen against the background of the consistent approval and blessing of sexual intercourse within the context of marriage. The prohibition against homosexual practice should also be seen in this broader context:

> "The sexual behaviors and patterns judged immoral in Scripture are, in rough order of their appearance: adultery (Ex 20:14 and many other passages), incest (Lev 18:6-18; 20:11-22), homosexual intercourse (Lev 18:22; 20:13; Rom 1:26-27; 1 Cor 6:9), bestiality (Lev 20:15-16), rape (Deut 22:23-29), lust (Mt 5:28) and fornication (Acts 15:29; 1 Cor 6:9)." [Jones and Yarhouse, p. 168]

Homosexual intercourse is sinful and contrary to the will of God in the first place, because it is not sexual intercourse within the context of marriage between a man and a woman. Homosexual intercourse is sinful and contrary to the will of God in the second place, because it is specifically and unambiguously prohibited in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. The principal text in the Old Testament is Leviticus 18:22: "With a male you shall not lie as though lying with a woman; it is an abomination." It is the *act* of male homosexual intercourse, "lying with a male as with a woman," that is unconditionally forbidden. There is no reference to motives. [Hays, p. 381]

This prohibition is located in that part of the Holiness Code in Leviticus that also prohibits "incest [18:6-18], adultery [18:20], child sacrifice [18:21], and bestiality [18:23]. These prohibitions continue to have universal validity in contemporary society." [Gagnon, p. 113]

The word "abomination"–*toeba*--which is specifically applied to this prohibited act suggests "a particularly revolting and conspicuous violation of boundaries established by God." [Gagnon, p. 113] The term is closely associated with the threat of idolatry, particularly pertaining to a reverse of the created order which constitutes an affront to the integrity of God. [Grenz, p. 45] The fact that the term appears in the Holiness Code of Leviticus does not automatically render it irrelevant to Christians today:

> "The word is generally applied to forms of behavior whose abhorrent quality is readily transparent to contemporary believers. Worshiping other gods, child sacrifice, incest, bestiality, adultery, theft, oppressing the poor, false testimony in court against another person, and deceit are not oddities of a superstitious, pre-Enlightenment people whose sole function was to keep the people of God separate from the surrounding culture. It is contextually clear that what is generally meant by *toeba* is something '*Yahweh* hates' (Deut 12:31; Prov 6:16)" [Gagnon, p. 120]

Although many of the laws in the Holiness Code of Leviticus, particularly of a civil and ceremonial nature, have no binding effect on the Christian Church today, the laws which are considered moral are timeless and universal and still authoritative. [Jones and Yarhouse, p. 169] These would include many of the prohibitions contained in chapters 18 through 20 related to the Ten Commandments, such as the commandments against adultery, incest, stealing and lying as well as homosexual intercourse. [Gagnon, p. 121] In particular, all of the laws in Leviticus 18:6-23 prohibit sexual practices which are contrary to

God's created order. [Gagnon, p.136] The continuing binding authority of moral laws in distinction to civil and ceremonial laws is recognized by Article VII of the Articles of Religion. [The Book of Common Prayer, p. 869]

The prohibition against homosexual intercourse was carried forward into the New Testament in three separate passages. Two of these, First Corinthians 6:9-11 and First Timothy 1:8-10, contain a list of vices or behaviors that are inconsistent with the Christian life:

> "Do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived! Fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, male prostitutes (*malakoi*), sodomites (*arsenokoitai*), thieves, the greedy, drunkards, revilers, robbers–none of these will inherit the kingdom of God. And this is what some of you used to be. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God." [1 Corinthians 6:9-11]

> "Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it legitimately. This means understanding that the law is laid down not for the innocent but for the lawless and disobedient, for the godless and sinful, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their father or mother, for murderers, fornicators, sodomites (*arsenokoitai*), slave traders, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching ..." [1 Timothy 1:8-10]

The continuity of the prohibition against homosexual intercourse between the Old Testament and the New Testament is evidenced especially by the use of the Greek word, *arsenokoitai*, in both of these passages, because it is a word coined from the Greek version of the prohibition in Leviticus:

> "The word *malakoi* is not a technical term meaning 'homosexuals' (no such term existed either in Greek or in Hebrew), but it appears often in Hellenistic Greek as pejorative slang to describe the 'passive' partners–often young boys–in homosexual activity. The other word, *arsenokoitai*, is not found in any extant Greek text earlier than 1 Corinthians. Some scholars have suggested that its meaning is uncertain, but Robin Scroggs has shown that the word is a translation of the Hebrew *mishkav zakur* ('lying with a male'), derived directly from Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 and used in rabbinic texts to refer to homosexual intercourse. The Septuagint (Greek Old Testament) of Leviticus 20:13 reads, 'Whoever lies with a man as with a woman [*meta arsenos koiten gynaikos*], they have done an abomination' (my translation). This is almost certainly the idiom from which the noun *arsenokoitai* was coined. Thus, Paul's use of the term presupposes and reaffirms the holiness code's condemnation of homosexual acts." [Emphasis added] [Hays, p. 382]

The third and most important passage in the New Testament indicating that homosexual intercourse continues to be contrary to God's will is Romans 1:24-27 which is part of a larger argument by Paul that all people, both Jews and Gentiles, are under judgment for sin and in need of salvation from Jesus Christ. The relevant passage is in the first part of the argument designed to demonstrate the utter depravity of the Gentiles:

> "Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the degrading of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever!

> Amen. For this reason God gave them up to degrading passions. Their women exchanged natural intercourse for unnatural, and in the same way also the men, giving up natural intercourse with women, were consumed with passion for one another. Men committed shameless acts with men and received in their own persons the due penalty for their error." [Romans 1:24-26]

Paul was very intentional in his taking as an example of Gentile depravity homosexual practices involving both men and women. At the very heart of this particular sin is the rejection of the created order:

> "It is certainly true that Paul's portrayal of homosexual behavior is of a secondary and illustrative character in relation to the main line of argument; however, the illustration is one that both Paul and his readers would have regarded as particularly vivid. Rebellion against the Creator who may be 'understood and seen in the things that he has made' is made palpable in the flouting of sexual distinctions that are fundamental to God's creative design. The references to God as Creator would certainly evoke for Paul, as well as for his readers, immediate recollections of the creation story in Genesis 1-3, which proclaims that 'God created humankind in his own image..male and female he created them,' charging them to 'be fruitful and multiply' (Gen. 1:27-28). Similarly...Genesis 2:18-24 describes woman and man as created for one another and concludes with a summary moral: 'Therefore a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh.' Thus the complementarity of male and female is given a theological grounding in God's creative activity. By way of sharp contrast, in Romans 1 Paul portrays homosexual behavior as a 'sacrament' (so to speak) of the antireligion of human beings who refuse to honor God as Creator. When human beings engage in homosexual activity, they enact an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual reality: the rejection of the Creator's design. Thus, Paul's choice of homosexuality as an illustration of human depravity is not merely random: it serves his rhetorical purposes by providing a vivid image of humanity's primal rejection of the sovereignty of God the Creator." [Emphasis added] [Hays, p. 386]

It is very revealing to see this passage in Romans through the eyes of Christian Anglicans who are not part of the modern West. One of the great advantages of being part of a global communion is to share in another very different perspective:

> "This global perspective casts a fresh light on one of the key texts in this debate–Romans 1. Paul's words are primarily an analysis *not* of individuals and personal psychology, but rather of cultural and societal disintegration. To those living in poorer parts of the globe, this makes perfect sense. Is it a coincidence that the gay movement has arisen in a Western culture that is post-Christian, highly sexualized and, to them, politically and economically imperialist? There is here an uncomfortable correlation between what Paul saw in the ancient Roman Empire and what they sense in the modern West–oppression and exploitation on the frontiers, but moral innovation at the centre. From such a perspective, some 'Western' responses to those experiencing same-sex attraction seem, however sincere, to be driven by a consumerist mentality providing 'whatever sells best'. Those of us living within Western culture need to hear such uncomfortable questions raised from outside." [True Union, p. 9]

All three of these passages in the New Testament make it very clear that homosexual intercourse is still considered sinful and contrary to the will of God. Although Jesus made no mention of this particular sin, "it is notable that, unlike his observances (or lack thereof) and teaching on the ceremonial law, our Lord *never modified any portion of the moral law dealing with sexuality other than to raise the expectations on us.*" [Jones and Yarhouse, p. 22] In Mark 7:21-23 Jesus tells his disciples that a person is defiled by the evil things that come out of his heart such as theft, murder and adultery. The first sin in that list is the Greek word *porneiai*. "No first-century Jew could have spoken of *porneiai* (plural) without having in mind the list of forbidden sexual offenses in Leviticus 18 and 20 (incest, adultery, same-sex intercourse, bestiality). The statement underscores that sexual behavior does matter." [Gagnon, pp. 191-92] Moreover, when Jesus was asked a question about divorce in Mark 10:1-12, he appealed to God's design in creation of two complementary creatures, male and female, and of their coming together as husband and wife as one flesh. "The whole point of Jesus' stance in Mark 10:1-12 is not to broaden the Torah's openness to alternative forms of sexuality but rather to narrow or constrain the Torah's sexual ethic to disallow any sexual union other than a monogamous, lifelong marriage to a person of the opposite sex." [Gagnon, p. 194] Jesus did not dilute the Jewish sexual ethic; he intensified it as evidenced by his saying that "everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart." [Matthew 5:28] "It is not enough to refrain from fornication and adultery. One must also refrain from actively imagining one's sexual involvement with another woman." [Gagnon, p. 205] Jesus did not expressly condemn homosexual intercourse or incest or bestiality, but considering all of the evidence, his silence can hardly be interpreted as approval of any or all of these sexual sins.

The foregoing examination of the relevant Scriptural passages supports the conclusion that the traditional orthodox teaching on human sexuality and homosexuality is strongly supported by the Word of God. In fact, there are no dissenting voices within the canon:

> "Though only a few biblical texts speak of homoerotic activity, all that do mention it express unqualified disapproval. Thus, on this issue, there is no synthetic problem for New Testament ethics. In this respect, the issue of homosexuality differs significantly from matters such as slavery or the subordination of women, concerning which the Bible contains internal tensions and counterposed witnesses. The biblical witness against homosexual practices is univocal." [Emphasis added] [Hays, p. 389]

The question posed at the beginning of this section of whether the teachings set forth in Resolution 1.10 on human sexuality and homosexuality "truly state the will of God as expressed in Scripture" can be answered in the affirmative. The second question posed was: Do they continue to do so in our day? By its actions the Episcopal Church has answered no to this question. It is apparent from the following letter that this is also the stated belief of the Presiding Bishop. In this letter Robert Gagnon, whose exhaustive 500-page book on the texts and hermeneutics relating to homosexual practice in the Bible, a book widely acclaimed by the *creme de la creme* of Biblical scholars, answers this question decisively:

> "Dear Presiding Bishop Griswold,
>
> The following remarks were attributed to you in an Associated Press interview published yesterday ('Episcopal Leader Defends Gay Bishop,' by Rachel Zoll, AP religion writer;):
>
> > He said that in biblical times there was no understanding that homosexuality was a natural orientation and not a choice. 'Discreet acts of homosexuality' were condemned in the Bible because they were acts

> of lust instead of the 'love, forgiveness, grace' of committed same-sex relationships, he said. 'Homosexuality, as we understand it as an orientation, is not mentioned in the Bible,' he said.

With all due respect, if these remarks are correctly cited, you are in error on all counts.

First, there were many theories in the Greco-Roman world that posited something akin to modern sexual orientation theory. Philosophers, doctors, and moralists often attributed one or more forms of homosexual behavior, at least in part, to congenital factors. And some of the same persons could still refer to such forms as 'contrary to nature'–that is, given by nature but not in conformity with embodied existence or nature's well-working processes. Lifelong, exclusive participants in homosexual behavior were also widely known in the ancient world. Indeed, Paul's reference to the malakoi ('soft men,' men who play the sexual role of females) in 1 Corinthians 6:9 is one such instance.

Second, you assume that the absence of 'choice' regarding sexual impulses absolves one of moral responsibility for the behavior arising from such impulses. Numerous sinful desires, sexual and otherwise, are not 'chosen' in the sense of being manufactured wilfully. That doesn't make them any less sinful–though it can and should inform our pastoral response. Who would choose to be a pedophile if it were a simple matter of choice? Some people find it extraordinarily difficult to be limited to a single sex partner; do they choose their sexual impulses? Some people grow up without an instinctive aversion to sex with close blood relations and then fall in love with one such relative; do they simply manufacture such feelings? Paul describes sin itself in Romans 7 as an innate impulse, passed on by an ancestor figure, running through the members of the human body, and never entirely within human control. The very nature of sin is that it generates biologically related impulses. Why do you think a biological connection disqualifies an impulse from being sinful? Such thinking is patently un-biblical.

Third, biblical writers were certainly not limiting their condemnation of same-sex intercourse to particularly exploitative forms. Non-exploitative forms were known in Paul's day and had Paul wanted to limit his condemnation to exploitative forms he certainly could have done so. The wording in Romans 1:24-27 is quite clear as regards what Paul found objectionable about same-sex intercourse: its same-sexness, persons seeking integration with a non-complementary sexual same, persons erotically attracted to what they intrinsically are as sexual beings. This is sexual narcissism and/or sexual self-deception: a desire either for what one is or for what one wishes to be but in fact already is. The intertextual echoes to Genesis 1:27 ('God made them male and female') and Genesis 2:24 ('For this reason a man shall...be joined to his woman/wife and the two shall become one flesh') in Romans 1:24-27 and 1 Corinthians 6:9, respectively, confirm that Paul had in view the male-female prerequisite ordained by God at creation. (Incidentally, so did Jesus when he appealed to the same two texts from Genesis as normative and prescriptive texts for human sexual relations [Mark 10:6-8]). The beautiful image put forward in Genesis 2:18-24 is that of an original binary human split down the side into two sexually differentiated beings. If sexual relations are to be had, 'one-flesh' sexual wholeness requires a re-merger of the two constituent parts produced by the splitting. By 'nature' in Romans 1:24-27 Paul meant the complementary structure

of males and females still transparent in material creation–a category of thinking that transcends issues of love and commitment. The description in Romans 1:27 of males mutually gratifying themselves with other males does not suggest exploitation. Nor does the mention of female-female intercourse point us in the direction of a particularly exploitative form of same-sex intercourse. The language in Romans 1:24-27 of being 'given over' to preexisting desires and forsaking any heterosexual relations certainly suggests innate and exclusive passions for members of the same sex. Scripture is clearly condemning every form of same-sex intercourse. Biblical authors would no more have accepted a committed and loving homosexual union than they would have accepted a committed and loving adult incestuous union. Both types of unions are structurally incompatible: sex with sexual or familial sames.

Much more could be said about each of the points above but what I have written should suffice for now.

Even some pro-homosex biblical scholars such as Bernadette Brooten and William Schoedel recognize that 'sexual orientation' and commitment would have made little difference to Paul's indictment of same-sex intercourse. My book, the Bible and Homosexual Practice (Abingdon) which has been out for a full two years, also makes this clear (see especially pp. 347-60, 380-95). See also now my more condensed discussion in Homosexuality and the Bible (Fortress), just released, and a forthcoming article in an edited volume entitled Christian Sexuality (Kirk House), which deals extensively with orientation theory in antiquity.

There really is no excuse any more for making the kinds of false statements about Scripture that you made in the AP interview. It is especially inexcusable for a presiding bishop–an office that has guarding the faith as a chief concern–to be making such inaccurate representations of the biblical witness. I urge you to read more widely, and more carefully, as regards recent work on the subject of the Bible and homosexual behavior.

Sincerely,
Robert A. J. Gagnon, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of New Testament
Pittsburgh Theological Seminary"
[An Open Letter to the Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold, September 30, 2003]

Some revisionists have also suggested that the authority of Scripture is not in issue but only its interpretation and that the Episcopal Church's treatment of the Biblical texts pertaining to homosexuality is analogous to the Church's treatment of slavery and women. In a review of Robert Gagnon's book, Walter Wink, Professor of Biblical Interpretation at Auburn Theological Seminary, accused Gagnon of avoiding these analogies. In his reply to that review, Gagnon stated:

"The key question is: What are the best analogies? The analogies of slavery, women and divorce have great defects. In particular:

* There is tension within the canon itself on these issues. There is no tension regarding homosexual behavior.
* The Bible's stance on slavery and women's roles looks liberating in

relation to the broader cultural contexts out of which the Bible engaged. The exact opposite is the case for the Bible's stance on homosexual practice.

* Neither scripture nor the contemporary church celebrates divorce as part of the glorious diversity of the body of Christ. Divorce and same-sex intercourse share in common the fact that both are forgivable sins for those who repent. The church works to end the cycle of divorce and remarriage, just as it ought to work toward ending the cycle of serial, unrepentant same-sex intercourse.

The best analogies are those that most closely correlate with the distinctive elements of the Bible's opposition to same-sex intercourse: sexual behavior proscribed strongly and absolutely by both Testaments and pervasively within each Testament (at least implicitly), with the proscription making sense. Here one would include the Bible's opposition to incest, bestiality, adultery, and prostitution." [Robert A. J. Gagnon, "Gays and the Bible A Response to Walter Wink," Christian Century (August 14-27, 2002)]

In responding to a paper from the Diocese of New York entitled Let the Reader Understand: Principles of Scriptural Interpretation (January 2002) which made similar comparisons between the Bible's position on slavery and women and its position on homosexuality, Dean Peter Moore of Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry made the following points:

"Interestingly, there is no effort in "Let the reader understand..." to unpack the actual texts of Scripture that do refer to homosexuality. Nor is there any consideration of the whole tenor of Scripture in relation to sexuality, and the place of homosexuality within that larger framework. The paper simply relativizes any and all specific Scriptural texts by declaring that if they can be shown to our modern consciences not to be in concert with the Great Commandment to love God and to love one's neighbor, they are no longer relevant. The paper thus invites the church to move beyond the most normal and likely meanings to be found in the text of Scripture, and to expect God to say something new and different to us because we have come of age.

"Let the reader understand..." is a variation of the position we have heard consistently in the homosexuality debate: there is development in the Bible, new situations require new duties, God appears to change his mind, what was once forbidden is now permitted, and so forth. There appears to be no embarrassment at the fact that, if these claims are true, we really have no clear access to the Divine will on these matters. Hence, if Scripture is revelatory at all, God must be seen as contradicting Himself.

But let's take the point of development within Scripture. We all know that the civil and ceremonial laws of the Old Testament were set aside by Jesus Christ. We all know that Jesus modified certain commandments, or at least applied them differently than the Pharisees of his day. We all know that many Christians thought for centuries that slavery was OK, but discovered in the 19th century that it was immoral. We also know that the Church forbade women in leadership for centuries, based on certain texts of Scripture, but in many places now permits women to be ordained. We all know that divorce was once held to the letter of the law, but now those Scriptures that speak of abandonment are interpreted more broadly than they were in the past.

Would any of this really surprise the bishops at Lambeth? Does any of this surprise those of us who, with those bishops, believe homosexual acts are still wrong today?

The idea that there is development, growth, change in the Bible, and that God does a new thing when it pleases Him, has been a fundamental principle of Scriptural interpretation from the earliest times. No one thought, however, that that meant that God contradicted Himself. Clearly the Bible is a living document; and therefore we see development, movement and growth in the whole process of revelation.

But the really important thing is that when you come to the matter of homosexuality there is no development or change in the Bible.

Contrast the Bible's teaching on homosexuality with its teaching on slavery. Slavery was tolerated in both Testaments; but never seen as a positive good. The Jews regulated slavery along humane lines. But the Bible's overall message undermined slavery almost from the start. In the Old Testament, the motif for salvation was freedom from slavery. In the New Testament it was freedom from bondage to sin. Paul urged slaves who could secure their freedom to seek it (1 Corinthians 7:21). He sent Onesimus back to Philemon not just as his slave but as his 'brother.' And he taught that in Christ there was neither slave nor free, but all are one (Galatians 3:28).

Contrast the Bible's teaching on homosexuality and on the role of women. Women made great advances in the Bible from more primitive times. By restricting sex to marriage, as happened in the sexual revolution God instituted among the Jews, women's status was dramatically lifted. In the New Testament women become objects of special attention by Jesus. In the earliest churches they are in responsible positions of leadership. Perhaps there was even a woman among the apostles (Romans 16:7)? Women are the first witness to the resurrection. Also, as Galatians 3:28 says, in Christ there is neither male nor female.

Contrast the Bible's teaching on homosexuality and on the food laws, such as eating meat with blood in it. While it is true that the Jerusalem church sought to impose this on gentiles (out of charity towards weak Jewish consciences, we presume), this regulation does not seem to have been enforced. Furthermore, eating bloody meat could not compare in its potential for spiritual contamination with eating meat that had been offered to idols. But Paul sees no problem in eating meat offered to idols. Why the change? In Peter's vision in Acts, we read that God declares all foods clean (Acts 10:15; Mark 7:19).

So there is a trajectory in Scripture in each of these areas. Even with divorce, while God 'hates divorce' according to Malachi 2:16, there is the Mosaic permission, 'for the hardness of your hearts' (Matthew 19:8), the Matthean exception, 'except for adultery' (Matthew 5:32), and the Pauline consent, 'If the unbelieving partner desires to separate, let it be so' (1 Corinthians 7:15). These indicate that the modern church may not have gone against the will of God in adapting basic principles to new situations. The same might be said to be true in regard to lending money at interest. Old strictures yield to new situations.

> However, there is no such trajectory in the Bible with regard to homosexuality. Homosexuality is considered a particular abomination in the Holiness Code of Leviticus and Deuteronomy (Leviticus 18 & 20). The Sodom and Gibeah stories may have been primarily about rape (Genesis 19, Judges 19), but the horror in the text implies that the homosexual nature of the intended behavior was repugnant. When you turn to the New Testament, homosexual acts are also condemned. You see this in Romans 1, 1 Corinthians 6, 1 Timothy 1, and Jude. Furthermore, while the Old Testament doesn't mention lesbianism, the New Testament explicitly expands its prohibition to include lesbianism." [Emphasis added] [Peter C. Moore, Homosexuality and the Great Commandment (November 1, 2002), pp. 4-6]

In addition to his argument about the analogies to slavery and women, Walter Wink has also made the argument that in reality there is no Christian sexual ethic. While acknowledging that Christians still reject rape, incest, adultery, and bestiality, he mentions sixteen "sexual mores" in the Bible, such as concubinage, polygamy, and prostitution, that no longer are authoritative for Christians today. Robert Gagnon has cogently refuted this argument:

> "Quite apart from the fact that Wink misreads some of the biblical data and/or the contemporary stance of the church on many of the sixteen sexual mores (e.g., the Bible nowhere approves of prostitution, nowhere requires celibacy), what Wink fails to do is to weigh truly comparable sexual issues from a biblical perspective. What makes the biblical mandate concerning homosexuality so hard for Christians to ignore or downplay are seven considerations.
>
> First, it is *proscribed* behavior, which as a minimalist approach to ethics is less demanding that a positive prescription and therefore more doable (or, better, 'non-doable') and fundamental–a sin of commission rather than omission. For example, a command not to harm another is a minimalist expectation in relation to the Golden Rule and thus its violation constitutes a more severe infraction.
> Second, it is proscribed *behavior*, not proscribed thoughts, theories, or worldviews. As such, the ethic is again more 'bottom-line,' more doable, and more basic for human social interaction.
>
> Third, it is behavior proscribed *by both Testaments*. The change of salvation-historical dispensations sometimes results in shifting assessments of what is expected of God's people, especially as regards ritual requirements or civil law for a state theocracy; hence, the preeminence of the New Testament. Yet the Old Testament, because of its sheer size and unique experiences of God, can also balance out or fill in gaps in the New Testament. When the two Testaments are in complete agreement that a given action is morally wrong, the biblical witness is hard to circumvent.
>
> Fourth, it is behavior proscribed *pervasively within each Testament*. There are no dissenting voices anywhere in either Testament. All the inferential evidence that we have for authors who do not speak explicitly to the issue confirms the supposition of pervasive opposition. The best that Wink and others can do is attempt to appeal to the 'big picture' of the Bible, by which they mean some general statements about love and tolerance–none of which any of the biblical writers, or Jesus, found to be in conflict

with opposition to homosexual conduct. The 'big picture' consists not of this misunderstood application of love but rather of the heterosexual model for sexual intercourse provided in Gen 1-2, consistently affirmed throughout the history of Israel and the church.

Fifth, it is *severely* proscribed behavior. The revulsion expressed for homosexual intercourse, across both Testaments, is as strong as it could possibly be, given the different parameters for each Testament: grounds for the death penalty in the Old Testament and grounds for exclusion from the kingdom of God in the New Testament. In Rom 1:26-27, it epitomizes the height of gentile depravity and folly in the ethical sphere.

Sixth, the proscribed behavior is proscribed *absolutely*; that is, the proscription encompasses every and any form of homosexual behavior. The proscription is not limited, for example, only to select types of exploitative homosexuality.

Seventh, it is proscribed behavior *that makes sense*. The complementarity of male and female is a clear indication in the natural order of God's will for sexuality–much clearer than the urges homosexuals experience. Contrary to Wink's view, such urges or 'orientation' can never be *natural* in the sense Paul uses the term since they (a) manifestly contradict God's creation design of male and female; (b) arise at best from only a partial and indirect genetic influence; and (c) have no more validity than orientations toward bestiality, incest, multiple partners, sadomasochism, or any of the sinful orientations cited in the vice list of Rom 1:29-31.

When these seven tests are applied to the lists of sexual mores collated by Wink, the first four mores he mentions–those which believers still adhere to–provide much closer analogues than the allegedly sixteen others that differ from contemporary Christian standards." [Gagnon, pp.448-51]

Related to the argument that there is really no Christian sexual ethic is the position that all moral obligations for the Christian are subsumed under the concept of love. Richard Hays has explained the inadequacy of this word in isolation from the crucifixion of Jesus. "What the New Testament means by 'love' is embodied concretely in the cross." [Hays, p. 202] Apart from the cross of Jesus Christ, the concept of love has become vague, infinitely elastic, and ultimately meaningless:

"Love covers a multitude of sins in more ways than one. The term has become debased in popular discourse; it has lost its power of discrimination, having become a cover for all manner of vapid self-indulgence. As Stanley Hauerwas has observed, 'The ethics of love is often but a cover of what is fundamentally an assertion of ethical relativism.' One often hears voices in the church urging that the radical demands of Christian discipleship should not be pressed upon church members because the 'loving' thing to do is to include everyone without imposing harsh demands–for example, disciplines of economic sharing or sexual fidelity. Indeed, love is sometimes invoked even to sanction sexual relations outside of marriage or the use of violence. Surely in such cases the term has been emptied of its meaning. The biblical story teaches us that God's love cannot be reduced to 'inclusiveness': authentic love calls us to repentance, discipline, sacrifice, and transformation (see, e.g., Luke 14:25-35; Heb. 12:5-13). We can recover the power

> of love only by insisting that love's meaning is to be discovered in the New Testament's story of Jesus–therefore, in the cross." [Hays, p. 202]

Consideration and reflection of all of the relevant biblical texts must always take place within the broader context of the Christian doctrines of creation, fall, redemption, and glorification. Richard Hays analyzes some of the underlying assumptions of those arguing in favor of a radical revision of the Church's teaching on homosexuality:

> "Many of the advocates of unqualified acceptance of homosexuality seem to be operating with a simplistic anthropology that assumes whatever is must be good: they have a theology of creation but no theology of sin and redemption. Furthermore, they have a realized eschatology that equates personal fulfillment with sexual fulfillment and expects sexual 'salvation' now. The Pauline portrayal of human beings as fallen creatures in bondage to sin and yet free in Christ for the obedience of faith would suggest a rather different assessment of our sexuality, looking to the future resurrection as the locus of bodily fulfillment. Thus, eschatology looms as the crucial question that divides the traditional position from those who would revise it." [Hays, p. 402]

This eschatological perspective sheds much light on the theological fault line that lies at the bottom of this deep division between the orthodox and revisionist positions. We are indebted again to Philip Turner whose article, "Sex and the Single Life," First Things, May 1993, pp. 15-21, is discussed by Stanton Jones and Mark Yarhouse:

> "The astute arguments of Philip Turner give us valuable insights about the implications of glorification for our daily living out of our sexuality. Turner begins with a chilling depiction of the assumptions that are replacing a Christian view of persons, sexuality and morality. Drawing on the work of the philosopher Charles Taylor, Turner argues that we are increasingly assuming, at the deepest level, that who we are as selves is defined (1) inwardly, by our human subjectivity, rather than by anything outward or objective; (2) by how we live in everyday life, rather than by visions of virtue and possibilities; and (3) by the possibilities we possess for successfully wringing personal satisfaction of various sorts from life (i.e., of 'self-actualizing,' of pursuing and attaining happiness and fulfillment). Morality then becomes secondary to this view of selves, and the most basic moral principles then become the obligation to act to enhance growth and gratification, to protect each person's rights to such pursuit of happiness and growth, and to eliminate suffering since suffering is always an obstacle and frustration of one's rightful growth. Turner then points out how our view of sexuality is transformed. He notes the widespread acceptance of the view that our sexuality 'in some way defines the inner depths of the self' and that our sexuality is thus fundamental to the very 'powers and abilities [of the self which] the self is to discover, develop, and exercise in the course of daily life.' It then follows that 'denial of one's 'sexuality' is akin to denial of 'oneself' and so also one's basic 'identity.'
>
> Turner contrasts two essential elements of Christian understanding against this prevailing view...: (1) that a self, in the Christian view, is not defined solely or primarily by subjectivity but rather by meanings given by God by revelation and worked out in a community beyond the autonomous self, and (2) the belief that our sexuality, particularly the act of sexual intercourse, has meanings and implications that exist

> independently of what we might think we mean by such acts and that are intrinsic to those acts. This argument...strikes at the heart of popular essentialism.
>
> Now, finally getting to glorification, Turner argues that we will deal properly with sexuality only when we see it in the context of all of life, which must, in the biblical understanding, include our ultimate and eternal context. 'The ethics of sex ought to be placed within the full context of the Christian life and the churches' pastoral ministry....To place sexual relations in this full and more adequate context, Christians ought to understand them as part of the undertaking that encompasses all aspects of their lives. That undertaking is holiness of life and its end is not repression but joy unconfined.' As opposed to subjective undertakings defined by the autonomous self's desire for self-actualization, Christians believe that God places before us an objective pursuit defined by him–holiness. Holiness in this life is a calling, in part, of preparation for and partial realization now of what will eventually be ours forever in glorification. To pick up one earlier thread: to the secular mind, suffering is a frustration of a person's rightful pursuit of satisfaction; but to the Christian, suffering (such as the real suffering of sexual disappointment and frustration, and their deeper root, loneliness) is integral to our questing after a goal that only begins when this life ends–holiness, purity, Christlikeness and giving glory to God. In short, we live our sexuality properly only when we live it in light of eternity." [Emphasis added] [Jones and Yarhouse, pp.165-67]

The Word of God reveals to us the plan of God for our lives, including our sexual lives. It also reveals to us the objective reality of God's world to which we should conform, including the objective reality of the sexual act, as well as the end to which we are called: "to be holy and blameless before him in love." [Ephesians 1:4] It is this Word and the Church's theological reflection on that Word that illumines the path that we are to take and that should inform us in all of our actions, including our ministry to persons with homosexual desires.

VIII. The Church's Ministry to Homosexual Persons

It must be candidly admitted that, by and large, the Universal Church has failed homosexual persons. Liberal churches are offering affirmation without transformation, and conservative churches are offering condemnation. "Naturally the gay Christian movement looks so appealing to the woman or man struggling with homosexuality. It offers the acceptance and understanding that they may never have found in the church." [Dallas, p. 24] The Church first needs to become aware of the inherent dangers of living the homosexual lifestyle and then develop new ministries that will meet homosexual persons at their point of need.

Richard Hays, Professor of New Testament at Duke University Divinity School, at the beginning of the chapter on homosexuality in his book, The Moral Vision of the New Testament, recounts the story of Gary, his best friend from his undergraduate days at Yale. Gary was a Christian and a homosexual who was dying of AIDS. In the summer of 1989 Gary traveled to Hays' home for one last visit before he died. The two of them had long conversations about Christianity and the Bible and homosexuality. Gary "was angry at the self-affirming gay Christian groups, because he regarded his own condition as more complex and tragic than their apologetic stance could acknowledge." [Hays, p. 379] "However much he wanted to believe that the Bible did not condemn homosexuality, he would not violate his own stubborn intellectual integrity by pretending to find their arguments persuasive." [Hays, 380] Gary was

concerned about the growing pressure being exerted on the churches to legitimate homosexual relations, and he shared Hays' misgivings about the exegetical and theological arguments which were being offered by the revisionists. "As a homosexual Christian, Gary believed that their writings did justice neither to the biblical texts nor to his own sobering experience of the gay community that he had moved in and out of for twenty years." [Hays, p. 380] Gary wanted to write an article about his struggles as a homosexual Christian and his belief that homosexuality was incompatible with Scripture but was unable to accomplish it because of his weakened condition. He died in May of 1990.

Now go back about ten years to 1981. A young physician working at a hospital in New York City examined a young man with a terribly wasting disease which had affected his immune system. The young man's arms were covered with purple welts which the physician recognized as Kaposi's sarcoma, a very rare form of cancer. The young man died within the week, and other young men with similar symptoms began showing up. The disease was referred to at the time as GRID, "gay-related immune disorder," which reflected the reality that it occurred disproportionately among male homosexuals. The young physician was Jeffrey Satinover, who saw GRID as another example of the medical consequences of the sexual liberation of the previous decades, consequences which included syphilis, gonorrhea, and herpes. Satinover had thought at the time that this new terrible disease would put the brakes on the dangerous homosexual lifestyle. In the introduction to his book, Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth, he recounts what actually happened:

> "In fact, the reaction in the gay community was indeed swift, but startlingly unexpected. Not only did the gay community mobilize to attack GRID, they worked to ensure that GRID would not be perceived–by either the medical profession or the public–as in any way related directly to their sexual way of life. Homosexuals indeed needed protection from illness, but that became only a third priority. The second priority was to keep gays from straight disapproval and hatred, and the first priority was to *protect homosexuality itself as a perfectly acceptable, normal, and safe way of life.* Massive interventions were designed and funded to a greater extent than with any other illness, but none were allowed to target the number-one risk factor itself, homosexuality. Even treatment to help those homosexuals who fervently wished to change came under fierce attack, regardless of the dramatic–indeed, potentially life-saving–benefit afforded by even modest success.
>
> So the first move in the early eighties was to eliminate the earlier name of the condition. Because under the right circumstances the virus was transmissible to anyone, pressure was swiftly generated to rename 'gay-related immune disorder' to AIDS: 'Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.' Though the connection to homosexuality is universally understood to be valid and medical literature still speaks of homosexuality as the major risk factor for AIDS, the fact that gay male anal intercourse and promiscuity created the American reservoir for HIV (the pathogen that causes AIDS)–and continues to preserve it–quickly became an unspeakable truth." [Satinover, 15-16]

Satinover observed this campaign first hand while he was gaining experience in the treatment of AIDS. He was invited to be a speaker at a medical conference on AIDS in Connecticut, and because of his speech there, he was invited to speak at a New England conference on AIDS which was sponsored by the Episcopal Church. What he witnessed at that conference disturbed him deeply:

> "The program included numerous healing services and all the speakers spoke of 'spirituality.' But apart from me, none mentioned the word 'sin' (of any sort, not just

> sexual), for in the name of not being 'judgmental' it had been made taboo. Problematic and dangerous aspects of the gay life were never discussed, nor was the tragedy of the women addressed from the point of view of ethics in sexual relationships. The clergy who ran the conference belonged to ACT-UP–the 'AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power,' a militant activist group. Following communion they distributed 'solidarity' pins to the conference attendees–condoms encrusted with glue and glitter.
>
> The denial at this conference was so dense that self-examination was entirely precluded. How could healing possibly take place without an honest facing up to the realities of the situation? I returned from the experience saddened by the depth of suffering I had seen but angered as well. Churches and synagogues were influential in the politics and pastoral care of those caught in homosexuality and AIDS, but their influence could be destructive as well as constructive." [Satinover, p.25]

Satinover raises the question about the moral responsibility of the activists: "We can only wonder how many twenty-year-olds (who were only five when AIDS first appeared in America) might have been spared had activists made it their number-one priority to protect individual lives rather than the gay lifestyle." [Satinover, p. 22] What about Richard Hays' friend Gary? What about all the other Garys, and what about the moral responsibility of the Church? These personal encounters with the tragedy of young lives being snuffed out by AIDS became the genesis for Satinover's book. In the first part of his book, he discusses the brute medical facts of homosexuality:

> "What would you think if a relative, friend, or colleague had a condition that is routinely, even if not always, associated with the following problems:
>
> * A significantly decreased likelihood of establishing or preserving a successful marriage
> * A five- to ten-year decrease in life expectancy
> * Chronic, potentially fatal, liver disease–hepatitis
> * Inevitably fatal esophageal cancer
> * Pneumonia
> * Internal bleeding
> * Serious mental disabilities, many of which are irreversible
> * A much higher than usual incidence of suicide
> *A very low likelihood that its adverse effects can be eliminated unless the condition itself is eliminated
> * An only 30 percent likelihood of being eliminated through lengthy, often costly, and very time-consuming treatment in an otherwise unselected population of sufferers (although a very high success rate among highly motivated, carefully selected sufferers) [Satinover, p. 49-50]

Satinover then adds:

> "We can add four qualifications to this unnamed condition. First, even though its origins are influenced by genetics, the condition is, strictly speaking, rooted in behavior. Second, individuals who have this condition continue the behavior in spite of the destructive consequences of doing so. Third, although some people with this condition perceive it as a problem and wish they could rid themselves of it, many others deny they have any problem at all and violently resist all attempts to 'help' them. And fourth,

these people who resist help tend to socialize with one another, sometimes exclusively, and form a kind of 'subculture.'

The condition which Satinover was describing is alcoholism. It is a form of addictive behavior which most people believe is worth treating, because of its terribly adverse consequences on a person's life. Then Satinover poses a similar situation in which a friend or colleague had a condition associated with the following problems:

> "* A significantly decreased likelihood of establishing or preserving a successful marriage
> * A *twenty-five to thirty*-year decrease in life expectancy
> * Chronic, potentially fatal, liver disease–infectious hepatitis, which increases the risk of liver cancer
> * Inevitably fatal immune disease including associated cancers
> * Frequently fatal rectal cancer
> * Multiple bowel and other infectious diseases
> * A much higher than usual incidence of suicide
> *A very low likelihood that its adverse effects can be eliminated unless the condition itself is
> * An at least 50 percent likelihood of being eliminated through lengthy, often costly, and very time-consuming treatment in an otherwise unselected group of sufferers (although a very high success rate, in some instances nearing 100%, for groups of highly motivated, carefully selected individuals)
>
> As with alcoholism: First, even though its origins may be influenced by genetics, the condition is, strictly speaking, a pattern of behavior; second, individuals who have this condition continue in the behavior in spite of the destructive consequences of doing so; third, although some people with this condition perceive it as a problem and wish they could rid themselves of it, many others deny they have any problem at all and violently resist all attempts to 'help' them; and fourth, some of the people with this condition–especially those who deny it is a problem–tend to socialize almost exclusively with one another and form a 'subculture.'
>
> The condition is homosexuality. Yet despite the parallels between the two conditions, what is striking today are the sharply different responses to them." [Satinover, p. 51]

Why does the Church do everything possible to help the person with alcoholism to leave that condition because of its terribly adverse consequences but does nothing to encourage the person with homosexuality to leave that condition even when the medical consequences are far worse? Does not the Church have an obligation to learn of these adverse consequences, especially if it is encouraging people to engage in the behavior that leads to the consequences? What should be the Church's ministry to homosexual persons?

The Church's ministry to homosexual persons at the outset should be to welcome them into the Church as it should do with all persons. That is the emphasis in Stanley Grenz's book, Welcoming But Not Affirming in which he quotes Richard Hays:

> "We live, then, in a community that embraces sinners as Jesus did, without waiving

> God's righteousness. We live confessing that God's grace claims us out of confusion and alienation and sets about making us whole. We live knowing that wholeness remains a hope rather than an attainment in this life. The homosexual Christian in our midst may teach us something about our true condition as people living between the cross and the final redemption of our bodies." [Richard B. Hays, "Awaiting the Redemption of Our Bodies: Drawing on Scripture and Tradition in the Church Debate on Homosexuality, Latimer 110 (June 1992) 29-30 as quoted in Grenz, p. 133]

The Church can minister so much more effectively if its teaching on sexuality is clear. The Church should strive to strike the right balance between theological clarity and pastoral sensitivity:

> "As Jesus' own ministry demonstrates, this offer of welcoming grace is a difficult tightrope to walk. It is often misunderstood and may scandalize some. Paradoxically, if the public and official stance of the Church is clear and uncompromising, this would enable a greater flexibility at the local level. Clear public principles can be married to pastoral sensitivity. So, as helpfully noted in a recent report from the UK, there is a call here to:
>
> > welcome and accept sexually active homosexual people, but to do so in the expectation that they will come in due course to see the need to change their lifestyle in accordance with biblical revelation and orthodox Church teaching.
>
> The Body of Christ is the place in which all of us sinners *learn together* from God what constitutes faithful discipleship of Jesus Christ and are empowered by His Spirit to keep in step with the Spirit and be conformed to the image of God's Son. All who confess Christ as Lord need the encouragement and guidance of his people to discern and walk that path in penitence and faith, keeping God's commandments and living in love. This is not easily done on one's own: fellowship and friendship is a vital God-given resource that we remove from people at great cost. So, if the Church is called to be the place of generous welcome, this is precisely in order that she may offer people an ongoing and life-changing encounter with Jesus Christ, who is alive today and still welcomes people into his fellowship–what might be called his distinctive community of 'transforming inclusivity'." [True Union, p. 34]

Thus, on a general level, the ministry of the Church to homosexual persons is the same as to all persons: welcoming, preaching the gospel of salvation, inviting into a living relationship with Jesus which involves repentance and confession and baptism and discipleship and the call to a holy life. The ministry on a more particular level should involve encouragement toward leaving the homosexual lifestyle based upon the Church's teaching as well as on information of the destructive consequences of the behavior. This information should include physical consequences of particular diseases, such as AIDS, "Gay Bowel Syndrome," trauma, enteric diseases, and classical sexually transmitted diseases. [Satinover, p. 68] The information should also include mental consequences, such as significantly higher rates than in the heterosexual population of depression, substance abuse, anxiety disorder, conduct disorder, nicotine dependence, suicidal ideation, and suicidal attempts. [Jones and Yarhouse, 105-106; Gagnon, p. 476-78; Satinover, p. 194] Finally, the information should include inherent relational problems including numbers of partners and problems with sexual fidelity. For example, the Multicenter AIDS Cohort Study found that a significant majority of homosexual men reported having

50 or more lifetime sexual partners. The best researched study on stable homosexual pairs found that out of 156 couples, one hundred had been together for more than five years but none of those had maintained sexual fidelity. According to the report, "The expectation for outside sexual activity was the rule for male couples and the exception for heterosexuals." [Satinover, p. 55; Jones and Yarhouse, p. 110]

One of the most important ministries which the Church can offer to homosexual persons is the ministry of listening to them and going into the pain of their lives. This ministry is specifically called for in the Lambeth 1998 Resolution 1.10: "We commit ourselves to listen to the experience of homosexual persons and we wish to assure them that they are loved by God and that all baptized, believing and faithful persons, regardless of sexual orientation, are full members of the Body of Christ." This listening is to be part of a process leading toward transformation: "Many of these are members of the Church and are seeking the pastoral care, moral direction of the Church, and God's transforming power for the living of their lives and the ordering of relationships." [Resolution 1.10, Resolutions to the XIII Lambeth Conference (Summer 1998)]

The Church must, above all, be to the homosexual person a place where the transforming love and power of Jesus Christ can be experienced in his or her life. Robert Gagnon devotes the final word in his book to this crucial role of the Church in the ministry to homosexual persons:

> "The core proclamation of the gospel declares that God made amends for human sin while humans were still ungodly and hostile sinners, that God experienced the pain and agony of offering Christ up to death in order to rescue the maximum number of people from sin and transform them into Christ's image. To denounce same-sex intercourse and then stop short of actively and sacrificially reaching out in love and concern to homosexuals is to have as truncated a gospel as those who mistake God's love for 'accepting people as they are' and who avoid talk of the gospel's transformative power. It is to forget the costly and self-sacrificial work of God in our lives, past and ongoing." [Gagnon, p. 492]

In light of this goal of transformation, the Church's ministry to homosexual persons should involve helping find the best treatment for them. Jeffrey Satinover has devoted separate chapters in his book to secular and Christian treatments. In chapter 12 he discusses psychoanalysis and psychotherapy. His study of these secular treatments has revealed that "the treatment of homosexuality has evolved out of eighty years of clinical experience, demonstrating approximately the same degree of success as, for example, the psychotherapy of depression." [Satinover, p. 180]

The type of transformation that any particular homosexual person experiences is to be left into the hands of God, but Christian healing ministries should be made available to all:

> "The 'healing' ministry of the church, though recently brought to the fore through the charismatic movement and Christian interaction with modern psychology, is rooted in the gospel and has always been a treasured part of the Church's sacramental and spiritual life. Radical transformation of life, including sexual desires, must, therefore, never be ruled out. The gracious God we worship is not just an academic idea but a living God, covenantally involved with the life of His people with the purpose of bringing us into 'conformity with his Son' Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:29). In this present age we must affirm the active presence of God's Spirit, yet at the same time we 'groan

> inwardly' and await the 'redemption of our bodies' (Rom. 8:23). Because of this eschatological tension, it may be wisest pastoral practice to focus 'transformation of life' on controlling homosexual desire and living a life of sexual abstinence–but only so long as due allowance is also given for God's active grace to bring other transformations in whatever ways He sees fit." [True Union, p. 35]

Several Christian healing ministries are described in chapter 13 of Jeffrey Satinover's book. Homosexuals Anonymous (HA) is based upon the methods of Alcoholics Anonymous. "The strength of HA lies in its emphasis on building up self-discipline and mutual accountability." [Satinover, p. 200] Exodus International is an umbrella organization for over two hundred different ministries to homosexuals. "Most have integrated the insights of depth-psychology (psychology of the unconscious) into their approach, some with great sophistication and discernment. Alien as such a formulation may appear to secularists and others outside the charismatic tradition, this belief in the potential transformation of even extremely intractable problems is repeatedly borne out by experience." [Satinover, p. 201-202] Desert Stream/Living Waters is a ministry led by Andrew Comiskey, a former practicing homosexual himself. "His long-term experience reveals that approximately 25 percent of the homosexuals in the program marry within eight years and have marriages that last at least as long or longer than the current national average." [Satinover, p. 204] Redeemed Life Ministries founded by Mario Bergner, another former practicing homosexual, "combines depth-psychology in a primarily group setting with healing prayer. Participants make an eight-month minimum commitment to a small group, which is focused on sexual redemption in Christ. For individuals who continue on and remain committed to the process for the long haul, Bergner reports success rates of over 80 percent." Pastoral Care Ministries founded by Leanne Payne emphasizes the importance of the healing of memories:

> "When the memories are healed, these wounds and our sinful responses to them are remembered, acknowledged, understood for what they are, and *presented to God for forgiveness and healing*. Thus the retrieval of our wounds and sins by using a depth-psychological approach is a way to deepen the process of confession. But these activities are not themselves curative; they are preparatory. Healing of the memories therefore departs from secular psychological theory in two critical ways: healing is, first, made far more likely because of openness to God; and, second, healing itself is effected by God." [Satinover, p. 206]

Satinover believes that "of all the approaches to the healing of homosexuality, the approach of Pastoral Care Ministries, and other similar ministries..., incorporates the best of the secular psychological approaches into its vital, spiritual, orthodox Christian healing." [Satinover, p. 209] Interestingly, one of the most important events in Satinover's life leading up to the writing of his book was his attendance of a conference sponsored by Pastoral Care Ministries. He described his hesitancy as a Jewish psychiatrist educated at MIT, Harvard, and Yale attending a conference in Wichita, Kansas. Nevertheless, he went and was astounded by what he experienced and how profoundly it differed from the Episcopal-sponsored conference in New England. A new world had been opened up to him:

> "What I found was that about two hundred of the three hundred people in attendance were homosexuals, male and female, struggling to emerge out of their homosexuality. And among the conference leadership a large number were *former homosexuals*, some now married and with children, all devoted to helping others out of the gay lifestyle. They were remarkable, tender human beings, enviable in their humanity and humility and in their longing for and connectedness to God. From out of the cosmopolitan desert that

offers itself as the best that life has to offer, I had stepped directly into an oasis with a rushing torrent–not just a well–of living water.

Nothing in my experience prepared me for this third conference. The professional and personal circles within which I normally moved are oblivious to such phenomena. If they note their existence at all, it is as a hazy blob at the periphery of mainstream, 'enlightened' vision or as the butt of media jokes. With rare exception, *I had never once heard from others within my own profession any mention at all of such people as these healed homosexuals*. Clearly, communities of faith could be not only constructive and caring but healing." [Satinover, p. 26]

One of the most respected figures in Christian healing ministry is Dr. Francis MacNutt, a Harvard graduate who holds a Master's Degree from Catholic University of America and a doctorate from the Aquinas Institute of Theology. He is the author of the best-selling book, Healing, and the founder of Christian Healing Ministries in Jacksonville, Florida. He is an internationally recognized leader in the field, and in his book, Homosexuality Can It Be Healed? (2001), he describes the methods he has used in healing homosexuals:

"The most important thing to realize is that God can truly transform the wounds of our past when we pray for inner healing. This is an extraordinary secret that some Christians have discovered, but that most have never even heard about. Sadder yet, the leaders of most churches–the bishops, the district superintendents, etc.–have for the most part not heard about the power of inner healing prayer to transform the deepest wounds, the pains that shape our lives without our even knowing it.

In the simplest form of prayer for inner healing we do two things:

1) We talk with the person who desires to be free of the wounds of the past which still influence the present. We ask him simply to share whatever he can remember about his childhood, about his relation with his father and mother. What does he know about the circumstances of his birth. Did his parents want him or was he unplanned, a 'mistake'? When did he first experience his homosexual orientation? What were his experiences then and later? How and when did the sexual activity begin (if it did)?

We can make the answer to each of these questions (and many others that the Spirit may prompt) into the subject of an entire prayer session.

2) We spend the last part of each session in prayer, asking our compassionate Lord and brother, Jesus, to be present to that time in the past and to transform it.

In the experience of the prayer ministers I have worked with (such as my wife Judith, who is also a psychotherapist), the homosexuality almost always changes. But it does take time. And it takes patience because the real change comes at a very deep level as layer after layer of the personality becomes transformed." [Francis MacNutt, Homosexuality Can It Be Healed? (Christian Healing Ministries, Inc. 2001), p. 64-65]

Later in the book, Marlin Moore, a former practicing homosexual who now runs a center for recovery from homosexuality, spoke to the importance of healing prayer in churches:

> "The church is going to have to learn how to deal with these issues. They need to learn that homosexuality is a learned behavior; it has been ingrained in us from an early age and we just need inner healing–which God can do–and to make a decision to walk out of the lifestyle. In one church they have found that it takes three years to walk out of the homosexual lifestyle, provided they are given love and healing prayer. We have to learn to pray, with the laying on of hands." [MacNutt, p. 71]

There are many moving stories of men and women with homosexual desires who have through prayer and counseling been able to transition to a heterosexual lifestyle. Richard Cohen, a former practicing homosexual, is the founder of International Healing Foundation, Inc., which offers counseling services to practicing homosexuals among other persons. In his book, Coming Out Straight, he includes several personal stories of persons who have left the homosexual lifestyle. One of these is by a man named Christian:

> "It was July 1995 and I had come to the end of a very long, long road. I was gay; a homosexual. It was time to give up the charade I had been playing for 44 years. It was a deep dark secret I had hidden from everyone. This feeling of gayness had been a part of every aspect of my life and I could no longer tolerate the incredible pain. I supposedly had it all. I had a great job and social life. I had the suburban lifestyle. I had a beautiful devoted, loving wife of over 20 years and the greatest daughter and son a father could ever hope for. Ultimately, however, I always felt trapped as a homosexual pretending to be a straight man in a straight world where I just didn't belong. It was time to come out as a gay man." [Richard Cohen, Coming Out Straight Understanding and Healing Homosexuality (International Healing Foundation 1999), p. 64]

Christian told his story of his attraction to boys and men from an early age and of his first sexual encounters with other men. He told of going to different counselors who were unable to help him. Finally, his wife learned about Richard Cohen, and she insisted that he go to see him or get a divorce. He described his therapy with Richard which involved reliving painful childhood memories of not being loved and hugged by his parents and reparenting sessions where he was held in a safe way by other men and women. Listen to Christian describe in his own words the change that has taken place in his life:

> "In July 1995, I started a therapy course that changed my life. I had individual therapy, sometimes twice a week, for a little less than 2 years. I was in a support group for the same amount of time. At the end of this time, it became apparent that I was living a wonderful, productive life with my wife, children and friends. I had and have the tools necessary to continue to grow as the man I have become. My darkness and anxiety are completely gone. I really enjoy sex with my wife. I do not have homo-emotional feelings for men. I am not, nor ever was gay. I had addictive homo-emotional feelings for men. I feel fantastic because I had a choice made available to me. I believe strongly that I had to make a choice for me. A choice I believe. I chose to transition and it is possible.
>
> I no longer identify with the man I was before July 1995. That was a lifetime ago. I feel reborn. At the beginning of my therapy I felt so alone. A friend in my support group

> said, 'If you think you're alone, then you are wrong. You are not alone anymore.' I have God, my wife, my two children and the great prospects of what life holds for me each day! [Emphasis in the original] [Cohen, p. 66]

The ministry of the Church should be to lead the homosexual person into the healing presence of Jesus, but the way that transformation looks for a particular person must be left in the hands of God. Richard Hays examines the question about whether homosexual Christians should expect to change their orientation and then leaves the last word to his friend Gary:

> "This tough question must also be answered in the critical framework of New Testament eschatology. On the one hand, the transforming power of the Spirit really is present in our midst; the testimonies of those who claim to have been healed and transformed into a heterosexual orientation should be taken seriously. They confess, in the words of the Charles Wesley hymn, that God 'breaks the power of cancelled sin; He sets the prisoner free.' If we do not continue to live with that hope, we may be hoping for too little from God. On the other hand, the 'not yet' looms large; the testimonies of those like Gary who pray and struggle in Christian community and seek healing unsuccessfully for years must be taken with no less seriousness. Perhaps for many the best outcome that is attainable in this time between the times will be a life of disciplined abstinence, free from obsessive lust. (Exactly the same standard would apply for unmarried persons of heterosexual orientation.) That seems to be the spiritual condition Gary reached near the end of his life:
>
> > Since All Saints Day I have felt myself being transformed. I no longer consider myself homosexual. Many would say, big deal, you're forty-two–and are dying of AIDS. Big sacrifice. No, I didn't do this of my will, of an effort to improve myself, to make myself acceptable to God. No, he did this for me. I feel a great weight has been lifted off me." [Hays, pp. 402-403]

The Church must stop its complicity in encouraging people to engage in behavior that is not only immoral but also inherently destructive, both physically and mentally. The Church instead should minister to homosexual persons by offering to them Christ's forgiveness and Christ's transforming power through the indwelling Holy Spirit in their lives in order to lead lives of holiness and faithful obedience to our Lord. Why should they be denied what the Church offers to all others?

IX. The Current Crisis in its Anglican Context

Many of the arguments surrounding the controversy over homosexuality would be equally applicable in any ecclesiastical body; however, the controversy has reached a critical stage in one particular church, the Episcopal Church, which is part of the world-wide Anglican Communion, an ecclesiastical body with its own history and polity and way of interpreting Scripture. Therefore, we need to consider the current crisis within its distinctive Anglican context.

The Episcopal Church is one of thirty-eight provinces in the Anglican Communion. According to the preamble to its Constitution, the Episcopal Church "is a constituent member of the Anglican Communion, a Fellowship within the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, of those duly

constituted Dioceses, Provinces, and regional Churches in communion with the See of Canterbury, upholding and propagating the historic Faith and Order as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer." [Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church, p. 1] The current crisis has arisen, because the Episcopal Church acting through the General Convention of 2003 has taken two actions which are in direct conflict with the mind of the Communion as expressed in a resolution adopted at the Lambeth Conference in 1998.

The two actions taken by General Convention which have precipitated the crisis are these:

> "1. Consent by both Houses (finalized on August 5, 2003) to the election as Bishop of New Hampshire, a self-professed homosexual man, living openly in a sexual partnership with another man for 13 years, having divorced his wife and left the family home.
>
> 2. Passage of Resolution (C051) that included in its 5th Resolve the following: 'we recognize that local faith communities are operating within the bounds of our common life as they explore and experience liturgies celebrating and blessing same-sex unions.' Other portions of the resolution recognized sexual partnerships outside of marriage and called on the church to exercise appropriate pastoral care in their regard." [Claiming our Anglican Identity: The Case Against the Episcopal Church, USA, A Paper Commissioned for the Primates of the Anglican Communion by The Most Rev. Drexel Gomez, The Most Rev. Peter Akinola, and The Most Rev. Gregory Venables (2003), p. 2]

These actions of General Convention place the Episcopal Church in direct conflict with the Anglican Communion, because of their violation of the pertinent portions of Resolution 1.10 passed at the Lambeth Conference of 1998 by a margin of 526 to 70 with 45 abstaining, or 82% of the bishops voting: "This Conference...in view of the teaching of Scripture, upholds faithfulness in marriage between a man and a woman in lifelong union, and believes that abstinence is right for those who are not called to marriage;"...rejects "homosexual practice as incompatible with Scripture..." and "cannot advise the legitimizing or blessing of same sex unions nor ordaining those involved in same gender unions...." [Resolution 1.10, XIII Lambeth Conference (Summer 1998)]

The violation of this resolution could not be more flagrant in that the Episcopal Church *both* endorsed the "blessing of same sex unions" *and* ordained a person "involved in [a] same gender union." Moreover, in taking these radical steps, the Church violated the theological underpinning of these prohibitions based upon "the teaching of Scripture" pertaining to sexual fidelity in marriage and abstinence outside of marriage.

Because of the structure of the Anglican Communion, the authority of this resolution is more *moral* than legislative:

> "At present it is the Lambeth Conference that has the moral (if not strictly legislative) authority within the Communion. It is this authority that must be recognized in national decisions and which must be the final arbiter of whether what is being proposed by a national church is in keeping with or contrary to God's Word. In relation to the question of blessing of same-sex unions this is focused on Resolution 1.10 at Lambeth 1998 which clearly rejects such innovations. It is not as though the wider Communion has not yet been consulted or has been unable to reach a considered opinion on the

issue. No, it has expressed its mind–and not by a marginal majority. A decision and choice has already been made." [Emphasis added] [True Union, pp. 42-43]

In other words, within the Anglican Communion, *this is a settled matter*. The bishops who hold the teaching authority within the Church have spoken unambiguously. We have already determined that this resolution is supported by Scripture, and we now consider whether it is consistent with Anglican tradition and methods.

The fundamental test applied to actions of church councils has been conformity to Scripture, tradition and reason as articulated by Richard Hooker, the great apologist of the Elizabethan Settlement and expositor of Anglicanism. It is crucial to understand the sense in which Hooker originally used these terms in his monumental work, Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity:

> "In contemporary Anglican theology, Richard Hooker is known most famously for his 'three-legged stool' of scripture, reason, and tradition. However, the classic passage in Hooker is misinterpreted if it is understood to mean that Hooker viewed scripture, reason, and tradition as three equal 'legs' of authority. Rather, the passage has to be understood in the context of Hooker's more central concern–how the Church decides which areas of scripture are permanently binding and which can be modified. The crucial principle of the so-called three-legged stool is actually Hooker's own affirmation of the principle of the sufficiency of scripture already endorsed by Jewel. The original context of the passage is the distinction Hooker makes between doctrine and morals (which are unchangeable) and matters of church order and polity (which are changeable). Hooker stated: 'The Church hath authority to establish that for an order at one time, which at another time it may abolish, and in both it may do well. But that which in doctrine the Church doth now deliver rightly as a truth, no man will say that it may hereafter recall, and as rightly avouch the contrary. Laws touching matter of order are changeable, by the power of the Church; articles concerning doctrine not so.' This appears immediately before the frequently cited passage and is the key to its interpretation: 'Be it in matter of the one kind or of the other [i.e., doctrine or order], what scripture doth plainly deliver, to that the first place both of credit and obedience is due; the next whereunto is whatsoever any man can necessarily conclude by force of reason; after these the voice of the Church succeedeth.' (Laws 5.8.2) The order of authority is clear. In matters of doctrine and morals, the Church has no authority to make any changes from the plain teaching of scripture. In matters of church order and ceremony, the Church is authorized to change its structures, but, even here, the proper order is that the plain teaching of scripture is primary. It is only when scripture does not speak clearly, that reason and tradition must weight in. Reason, for Hooker, follows in the tradition of Anselm's 'faith seeking understanding' (fides quaerens intellectum) or Augustine's earlier 'I believe that I might understand' (credo ut intelligam). It is not the autonomous reason of post-Cartesian modern and post-modern thought. Hooker appeals to the plain sense of scripture in matters necessary for salvation: 'Some things are so familiar and plain, that truth from falsehood, and good from evil, is most easily discerned in them, even by men of no deep capacity. And of that nature, for the most part, are things absolutely unto all men's salvation necessary.' (Preface 3.2) When scripture does not speak clearly, reason, must apply itself, but reason's function is to understand and apply scripture; it is not an autonomous source of authority.
>
> *** *** ***

> Lambeth's appeal to scripture was not based on a 'simple application,' but rather echoes the classic Anglican understanding that the Church when making dogmatic decisions is bound ultimately to the plain teaching of the biblical text. The Church does have authority to make changes in matters of ceremony, ecclesial order, and canon law, but it has no authority whatsoever to alter the plain teaching of scripture on matters of doctrine or morals. Accordingly, the Church cannot alter the teaching of scripture that sexual relationships must be confined to exclusive life-long heterosexual marriage because heterosexual marriage alone expresses God's intention in creating humanity as male and female....It is clear that, for Hooker, life-long exclusive heterosexual marriage is rooted in natural law–God's intentions for human nature in creation–and cannot be abrogated or altered without violating its essential structure."[Emphasis added] [Northeast SEAD (Society of Ecumenical Anglican Doctrine), Response to Let the Reader Understand, Appendix IV: The Anglican Reformers on the Sufficiency of Scripture (December 9, 2003)]

Thus, in matters of doctrine and morals (which would certainly encompass sexual practices, including homosexuality), Hooker believed that Scripture was *the* source of authority. Philip Turner presents a similar exposition of Hooker's understanding of the right use of Scripture, tradition, and reason:

> "Through the ages Scripture has been a necessary source to which those in authority and those under authority must refer to justify either its exercise or an objection to that exercise. Until recently, Scripture has not been considered either first among equals or simply one point of reference among others (say tradition or, more recently, experience). It has been the primary and sufficient source for testing the stewardship of those who have been given authority and office within the churches, be that authority used to safeguard the unity of the church or to protect its teaching and sanctity. It has also been the primary and sufficient source for those in authority to show that their exercise of office has in fact been in God's name.
>
> In recent years other legitimating points of reference for the exercise of authority in the church have been added and used in ways Richard Hooker would neither recognize nor approve. For Hooker, doctrine was to be established on the basis of Scripture. Reason was thought to yield moral truths open to all people of good will. These truths were in no way thought to be opposed to the witness of Scripture. Rather, they were simply 'republished' by its authors. For its part, tradition was a minor matter, referring as it did to those aspects of the life of the church which had a venerable history and were not to be changed unless shown to be contrary to the witness of Scripture or contrary to the light of universal human reason. Experience, our current favorite source of moral and religious knowledge, was not a category Hooker would have separated from reason. This separation is, in fact, a product of the romantic movement. Experience, as something independent of these other sources of moral and religious knowledge, is a category Hooker would have had trouble even recognizing.
>
> Thus, the reference to Hooker's three-legged stool that is currently so popular with Anglicans is both anachronistic and misleading. When they refer to its various legs as having a certain independence one from another, when they assign them more or less equal weight or when they appeal to one or another of them over against Scripture, they show that they have engaged in a form of argument he would have rejected out of

hand." [Emphasis added] [Philip Turner, "Episcopal Authority in a Divided Church On the Crisis of Anglican Identity," Pro Ecclesia (Winter 1999), pp. 44-45]

If we apply this Anglican test as articulated by Richard Hooker to the Lambeth 1998 Resolution 1.10, we see that it is definitely in conformity with Scripture in its plain sense and as reasonably interpreted. As we have already seen, Scripture speaks unambiguously and with one voice on this matter. There is no dissent within the entire canon. Furthermore, what is at stake is not the *interpretation* of Scripture but rather the *authority* of Scripture:

> "The problem before us is not the interpretation of scripture but the authority of scripture, that is, when the teaching of scripture should be set aside. LRU [Let the Reader Understand: Principles of Scriptural Interpretation] appears to us to argue that because of the cultural context in which the scripture arises and the cultural context in which the scripture must be applied, the plain teaching of the scripture in the area of sexual practice does not apply with regard to homosexuality. Rather than a difference of interpretation, this appears to us as straightforward rejection of the authority of scripture based upon the conviction that in light of current American cultural understandings of sexuality the clear teaching of scripture favored by the whole history of the tradition and the overwhelming consensus of the contemporary world-wide Church is wrong." [Northeast SEAD, p. 2]

Since homosexual practice is a matter of morals, appeal to tradition, according to Hooker, is unnecessary. This is also true of the provisions advising against the blessing of same-sex unions and ordaining those who are involved in same gender unions even though these matters touch on areas of church order and rites, because the underlying matter with respect to both is a matter of morals. [True Union, pp. 40-43] Nevertheless, it is instructive to know that the voice of tradition in this matter is equally unequivocal:

> "Far more emphatically than Scripture itself, the moral teaching *tradition* of the Christian church has for more than nineteen hundred years declared homosexual behavior to be contrary to the will of God. As Boswell's study amply documents, the mainstream of Christian ethical teaching has been relentlessly hostile to homosexual practice. Only within the past twenty years has any serious question been raised about the church's universal prohibition of such conduct. It is extremely difficult to find in the tradition any firm point of leverage against the New Testament on this issue." [Hays, p. 397]

This consistency in the tradition was constant even though the expressions of homosexual practices differed:

> "This suggests that Christian ethicists from the second century to the twentieth forge an unbroken chain. Their teaching, which condemned a variety of behaviors, occurring as they did in differing social contexts, nevertheless connects all such actions together. The Christian trajectory draws together the varieties of pederasty prevalent in pagan Roman society; the conduct of medieval clergy, monks, and nuns, who expressed their deep affection through sexual acts; certain acts of sexual licentiousness prevalent among heterodox groups in the Middle Ages; and the homoerotic activities present in post-Reformation Western society. In each era, Christian moralists rejected the same-sex practices of their day. And they consistently found the basis for such condemnation in

> the several scriptural texts in which the biblical authors appear to pronounce divine judgment on the homosexual behavior with which they were confronted." [Grenz, p. 80]

The tradition of the Church, therefore, strongly bolsters the position of Scripture on homosexual practice. Furthermore, the application of reason, as understood by Hooker, would also support this position. Even if reason in its post-Enlightenment sense is employed, the weight of the evidence, as we have seen, further supports the voice of Scripture. If all truth is ultimately from God and God is One, then this concord should not be surprising. The authority of Scripture in matters of faith and practice was reaffirmed at the last Lambeth Conference:

> "This Conference
>
> (a) affirms that our Creator God, transcendent as well as immanent, communicates with us authoritatively through the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments; and
> (b) in agreement with the Lambeth Quadrilateral, and in solidarity with the Lambeth Conference of 1888, affirms that these Holy Scriptures contain 'all things necessary to salvation' and are for us the 'rule and ultimate standard' of faith and practice." [Emphasis added] [Resolution III.5, XIII Lambeth Conference (Summer 1998)]

Therefore, the Lambeth 1998 Resolution 1.10, particularly as it speaks to homosexual practice, is clearly and undoubtedly consistent with Anglican tradition and methods.

The same, however, cannot be said for the actions of General Convention. The opposite, in fact, is true.

The actions of General Convention of 2003 pertaining to the consecration of Gene Robinson and the blessing of same-sex unions defied every instrument of unity of the Anglican Communion as set forth in Section II of this paper. It has acted in flagrant defiance of Resolution 1.10 of the 1998 Lambeth Conference. It has also violated previous Lambeth resolutions pertaining to mutuality and collegiality:

> "Member churches of the Anglican Communion have committed themselves to the 'guiding principle of collegiality' as the means by which they shall relate to each other (Lambeth 1968, Resolution 55), a form of 'mutual loyalty sustained through common counsel' (Lambeth 1930, Resolution 49). This moral responsibility of member churches to remain accountable to each other includes the concrete call to restraint from any 'action regarding issues which are of concern to the whole Anglican Communion' apart from 'consultation' with Lambeth and the Primates' Committee (Lambeth 1978, Resolution 11). ECUSA's 74th General Convention neither consulted nor listened to these groups, both of which were on record as opposing actions that might legitimate same-sex partnerships or the ordination of practicing homosexuals." [Claiming Our Anglican Identity, p. 10]

Not only were the actions of General Convention in open defiance of the Anglican Communion, they also violated the Constitution, Book of Common Prayer, and resolutions of the Episcopal Church. The case for the violation against the Constitution is based upon the following:

> "ECUSA's Constitution contains in its Preamble the church's self-definition as 'a constituent member of the Anglican Communion, a Fellowship within the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church [...] in communion with the See of Canterbury, upholding and propagating the historic Faith and Order as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer'. If General Convention's actions have violated the teachings of Scripture, including the 'apostolic' writings, if they have violated the stated bonds of the Anglican Communion, both in terms of collegial commitments and common doctrine, if they have violated the framework by which it own Book of Common Prayer is bound to Scripture and to these common commitments..., then General Convention has clearly violated the terms of its own Constitution." [Claiming Our Anglican Identity, p. 13]

Although the Episcopal Church is an autonomous province within the Anglican Communion, its authority is not unlimited but restrained by the conciliar structures of the Communion:

> "In reaching such decisions, national churches (including ECUSA) are often bound explicitly by their own constitutions to recognize that they are members of the Anglican Communion and that they have no power to make decisions contrary to the mind of the wider Communion. This legally requires them to recognize the conciliar structures of that Communion before introducing disputed innovations in doctrine, discipline or worship. Their own constitutions therefore place a brake on their freedom to develop local options." [True Union, p. 42]

In anticipation of General Convention's potentially unconstitutional actions, four Episcopal theologians articulated with specificity the reasons that the "explicit permission or promotion of same-sex blessings and behavior" would constitute a violation of the Episcopal Church's Constitution:

> "Such permission or promotion would appear to be a clear violation of the Anglican Communion's understanding of the 'historic faith' as interpreted by the church in the past and by the Communion itself. While the Episcopal Church's Constitution and Book of Common Prayer do not refer explicitly to this matter, the conciliar economy that stands as the fundamental constitutional principle of the church demands that any such decision regarding same-sex unions accept the constraints by which the Episcopal Church's corporate identity is defined. The nature of these constraints on this particular issue are well known, having been frequently defined, and therefore any decision contrary to them would be an intentional contradiction of their force.
>
> The conciliar constraint of scripture is primary. In this case, the interpretation of scripture on questions of sexual morality, while not unanimous in some parts of the Communion, is consistently upheld in a way that would forbid the permission or promotion of same-sex unions. To ignore the constraining authority of this consensus requires rejecting the conciliar economy. For the Episcopal Church in particular, ignoring this constraint would be unconstitutional because it would:
>
> a. violate the principle of uniformity of doctrine, discipline and worship within the Communion, represented by the teaching and practice of the vast majority of Anglican dioceses throughout the world;
>
> b. violate the principle of conciliar approbation, that is, that the decisions of General

Convention cohere with the decisions of other councils of the church;

c. violate the principle of universal acceptance, since not only within the Episcopal Church but around the Anglican Communion such decisions would be rejected by large numbers of the faithful;

d. violate the principle of historical continuity, since it would constitute an innovation of scriptural interpretation, ethical understanding, and church discipline, contrary to two millennia of Christian witness and teaching.

It cannot be stated too strongly that General Convention has no authority, within the framework of its own constitution and its basis in the conciliar economy, to make decisions either promoting or permitting same-sex unions. As such, any decision in this direction would clearly violate the constitutionality of the convention itself." [Emphasis added] [R. R. Reno, Christopher Seitz, Philip Turner and Paul Zahl, "The Authority of General Convention," The Living Church (January 2, 2003)]

The General Convention has also violated provisions within the Book of Common Prayer, including Article 20 of the Articles of Religion:

"XX. Of the Authority of the Church

The Church hath power to decree Rites or Ceremonies, and authority in Controversies of Faith: and yet it is not lawful for the Church to ordain any thing that is contrary to God's Word written, neither may it so expound one place of Scripture, that it be repugnant to another. Wherefore, although the Church be a witness and a keeper of Holy Writ, yet, as it ought not to decree any thing against the same, so besides the same ought it not to enforce any thing to be believed for necessity of Salvation." [Emphasis added] ["Articles of Religion," Book of Common Prayer, p. 871]

The violation of this article is clear:

"Above all, however, she must continue in faithful listening to the voice of Scripture and, because the Body of Christ is ruled by the Word of God, the Church cannot bless that which God in Scripture has declared wrong. From this perspective, no part of the Anglican Communion could bless same-sex unions without thereby acting *against Scripture* and rejecting its authority by ordaining something 'contrary to God's Word written' (Article 20)." [Emphasis added] [True Union, p. 29]

One of the most repeated justifications for the actions of General Convention was that they were guided by the Holy Spirit. Bishop Griswold asserted to the Anglican Primates "that broadly across the Episcopal Church the New Hampshire election is thought to be the work of the Spirit." [The Presiding Bishop's Letter to the Anglican Primates, October 23, 2003] Consequently, another part of the Book of Common Prayer which has also been violated by these actions is the following teaching on the Holy Spirit in the Catechism:

"Q. How do we recognize the truths taught by the Holy Spirit?
A. We recognize truths to be taught by the Holy Spirit when they are in accord with the Scriptures." [Emphasis added] [An Outline of the Faith, Book of Common Prayer,

p. 853]

We have seen that the actions of General Convention are unquestionably ***not*** "in accord with the Scriptures." If there were any doubt on this issue, we have this startling admission by Bishop Griswold himself:

> "Broadly speaking, the Episcopal Church is in conflict with Scripture. The only way to justify it is to say, well, Jesus talks about the Spirit guiding the church and guiding believers and bringing to their awareness things they cannot deal with yet. So one would have to say that the mind of Christ operative in the church over time...has led the church to, in effect, contradict the words of the Gospels." [Philadelphia Inquirer Magazine (December 28, 1997) as quoted in Claiming Our Anglican Identity, p. 20]

Thus, the Episcopal Church is espousing a pneumatology which is not only completely alien to orthodox Christianity but also contradicts the teaching of its own Prayer Book.

The actions of the General Convention of 2003 violate the Episcopal Church's *own resolutions* passed in previous General Conventions:

> "ECUSA's House of Bishops in 1977 resolved that 'the Church is right to confine its nuptial blessing exclusively to heterosexual marriage. Homosexual unions witness to incompleteness." The 66th General Convention in 1979 went on to affirm "the traditional teaching of the Church on marriage, marital fidelity, and sexual chastity [as] the standard of Christian sexual morality', and that 'it is therefore not appropriate for this Church to ordain a practicing homosexual, or any person who is engaged in heterosexual relations outside of marriage'. ECUSA has never repealed these interpretations.
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> *** *** ***
>
> On the specific issue of teaching and discipline regarding sexuality, its own 70th General Convention, in 1991, made a commitment (Resolution B020) that 'these potentially divisive issues should **not** be resolved by the Episcopal Church on its own'. Instead, the Convention voted that the 'office of the Presiding Bishop' initiate a 'broad' process of 'pan-Anglican' and 'ecumenical' consultation so as to avoid unilateral action. This commitment was never followed through, for the Presiding Bishop never took the steps asked of him." [Emphasis added] [Claiming Our Anglican Identity, pp. 9, 11]

Having defiantly flouted the numerous resolutions, pronouncements, and warnings of the Anglican Communion, having violated its own Constitution, Book of Common Prayer, and previous resolutions, the 74th General Convention of 2003 even ignored the warnings of The House of Bishops' own Theology Committee which had been established by the 73rd General Convention. The Theology Committee appointed by the House of Bishops to study and report on homosexuality issued its report in early 2003 *before the General Convention*. The report was "the product of an eighteen-month study" by the committee which consisted of "six bishops and seven academic theologians of the Episcopal Church who represent diverse theological viewpoints." The title of their paper is The Gift of Sexuality: A Theological Perspective. In spite of the diversity of theological viewpoints represented, the committee as a whole clearly and unambiguously warned against proceeding at this time with the blessing of same-sex unions:

"[6.4] Those who argue against the Church's blessing believe it is a contradiction in terms to bless relationships that involve behavior proscribed by God. More broadly, they object that changes in the Church's moral teaching on this question will impair the larger witness and mission of the Church.

[6.5] Liturgy provides cohesion for the Anglican Communion, and it is through our liturgies that we define what we most deeply believe as Christians. Because at this time we are nowhere near consensus in the Church regarding the blessing of homosexual relationships, we cannot recommend authorizing the development of new rites for such blessings.

[6.6] For these reasons, we urge the greatest caution as the Church continues to seek the mind of Christ in these matters....

*** *** ***

[8.1] For these reasons, we believe it is imperative that the Episcopal Church refrain from any attempt to 'settle' the matter legislatively." [Emphasis added] [House of Bishops Theology Committee Report, The Gift of Sexuality: A Theological Perspective, pp. 6-7]

A fair question to ask is this: What was the point of forming this committee if after eighteen months of hard work, their recommendations were just going to be totally ignored anyway?

Based upon all of the evidence, the conclusion is inescapable: the actions of the 74th General Convention of the Episcopal Church in consenting to the election of Gene Robinson as bishop and in approving the local option of same-sex blessings were completely and utterly contumacious.

As we have seen, the consequences of these actions have been catastrophic in so many ways. In addition to rending the fabric of the Communion, lives have been placed at risk. Bishop Gray alluded to this in his October letter: "Our Anglican brothers and sisters spoke to us of the difficulties, even life threatening circumstances that would be imposed upon them were the church in this country to approve Canon Robinson's election." [A Statement to the Diocese of Mississippi by The Rt. Rev. Duncan M. Gray, III (October 23, 2003)] This is particularly true in countries such as Nigeria that have a very large Muslim population. For many years Muslims in Nigeria and throughout Africa have pointed to the moral decadence of the Christian West. Christians in these countries face the very real threat of persecution and jihad which will be exacerbated by the recent actions of the Episcopal Church. Peter Akinola, the Primate of Nigeria, believes that these actions jeopardize the very survival of Christianity in his country. [Philip Jenkins, "Defender of the Faith," The Atlantic Monthly (November 2003), pp. 46-49]

If the actions of General Convention were indeed lawless, contumacious, and contemptuous of the wider Communion, a legitimate question to ask is: why? What is wrong with the Episcopal Church? Four years before the General Convention of 2003, Philip Turner explored this question in a very insightful article which focused on a crisis of authority. [Philip Turner, "Episcopal Authority in a Divided Church On the Crisis of Anglican Identity," Pro Ecclesia (Winter 1999)] In his careful examination of the Episcopal Church, he finds a church that "is being politicized all the way down and the result of this process is erosion of the church's communion." [Turner, p. 28] He finds a church which mirrors the surrounding society in that what is sought is not authority but rather power to further

the agenda of various special interest groups. [Turner, p. 31] He finds a church where the principal task of the leaders is to protect the rights of, and to manage conflict between, persons of different beliefs and where the "job description of the new authority is best summed up in the words *pluralism* and *inclusivity*." He finds a church where "'inclusivity,' interpreted as the amalgamation of people with vastly differing beliefs and ways of life, becomes not only the method but also the end of the exercise of authority." [Turner, p. 31] He finds a church where, as a result of this new authority, "doctrine is gone and in its place there has appeared a Babel of theological opinion, none of which is privileged unless those who support a particular theological fashion are in power." [Turner, p. 33] At the bottom of the current crisis is the very meaning of the Christian faith: "Buried beneath the moral issues that now divide the church and the crisis of authority those divisions have surfaced, lies a more profound question–the content of the Christian gospel itself." [Turner, pp. 32-33]

The current crisis of authority has followed the demotion of Scripture as the primary locus of authority and the concurrent elevation of other sources of authority, principally experience. Until recent decades, Scripture "has been the primary and sufficient source for testing the stewardship of those who have been given authority and office within the churches, be that authority used to safeguard the unity of the church or to protect its teaching and sanctity." [Emphasis added] [Turner, p. 45] The reason that the Episcopal Church is at its present impasse is that Scripture has been displaced as "the primary and sufficient source"of authority while other sources of authority have been elevated to equal status and that there is no agreed methodology of assigning relative weight to the competing sources of authority:

> "It is true that Scripture, tradition, reason and experience are incessantly referred to as people seek to justify either authority's exercise or their objections to it, but the references are without effect. They are without effect because there are no agreements about their relative weight or their interpretation. If there is conflict between experience or modern learning, on the one hand, and the received interpretation of Scripture or the traditional teaching of the church, on the other, which takes precedence and on what basis? These are questions to which no common answer has been found and, as a result, conflicts never seem to be settled. Indeed, it is now difficult even to have a reasonable discussion. The various parties in the contemporary church either square off like contending armies or pass like ships in the night.
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> Once more, it appears that the crisis of authority now present in all the churches is tied to a more fundamental rupture in the *koinonia* of the church–a rupture whose presenting symptoms are an inability to agree about the basic sources and content of that communion. How shall the Scriptures be interpreted and what weight should be assigned past interpretations? How shall modern learning and our own experience be weighed and interpreted? These are issues about which the churches do not agree." [Turner, p. 46]

The "overarching authority" for acceptance of homosexual behavior is personal experience. [Grenz, p. 88] That is, in fact, the standard by which all other authorities, including Holy Scripture, are judged:

> "We lesbian and gay believers have the right and the duty to carefully scrutinize all religious belief systems and distinguish between those belief systems that support our need to achieve healthy self-acceptance and those that are destructive of our psychic health and maturity." [John J. McNeill, Taking a Chance on God: Liberating Theology for Gays, Lesbians, and Their Lovers, Families, and Friends (Beacon Press 1988), p. 21

as quoted in Grenz, p. 88]

This elevation of personal experience as the principal source of authority leads to personal autonomy as being the highest good:

> "The gay/lesbian criterion leads many activists to place high value on personal autonomy. Comstock, for example, describes salvation as the promotion of autonomy: 'Salvation is 'to choose *your* self,' not to 'be afraid of yourself,' to 'live your individuality to the full–but for the good of others.' [Gary David Comstock, Gay Theology without Apology (Pilgrim Press 1993), p. 131] This, in turn, allows Comstock to look within himself, and not to the external norms of scripture and tradition, in his quest for acceptance: 'I skirt established Christian Scripture and tradition to gain autonomy, to locate myself within my own life, to escape an external authority and find an internal authority, to respond to my own need for the company of others.' In Comstock's estimation, so doing does not entail an act of 'rebellion,' but a bold step of 'independence.'" [Comstock, p. 108 as quoted in Grenz, p. 88]

With these ideas we have entered into a very different thought world which is quite foreign to orthodox Christianity. Instead of being under the authority of the Word of God, one is guided by one's own personal experience. Instead of seeking to be transformed into the likeness of Christ, one strives for complete personal autonomy. In orthodox Christianity, experience does have value but "as a hermeneutical lens for reading the New Testament rather than as an independent counterbalancing authority." [Hays, p. 399] This is the point where the analogy of the acceptance of the Gentiles by the early church in Acts breaks down:

> "Only because the new experience of Gentile converts proved *hermeneutically illuminating* of Scripture was the church, over time, able to accept the decision to embrace Gentiles within the fellowship of God's people. This is precisely the step that has not–or at least not yet–been taken by the advocates of homosexuality in the church. Is it possible for them to reread the New Testament and show how this development can be understood as a fulfillment of God's design for human sexuality as previously revealed in Scripture? In view of the content of the biblical texts summarized above, it is difficult to imagine how such an argument could be made." [Hays, p. 399]

Reliance upon personal experience as a separate source of authority within the Church is contrary to the understanding of both Richard Hooker and John Jewel, Bishop of Salisbury and early expositor and defender of Anglicanism:

> "Perhaps anticipating the post-modern church's appeal to 'experience,' Hooker speaks disparagingly of those who claim a special spiritual illumination that enables them to find meaning in scripture that is not in the plain text. To the contrary, there are only two ways in which the Holy Spirit leads people into truth, either through direct revelation, or by reason: 'If the Spirit by such revelation have discovered unto them the secrets...out of scripture, they must profess themselves to be all...Prophets.' If we do not claim the special revelation belonging to inspired prophecy (and Hooker presumes that we do not), then we have the moral obligation to justify our interpretation of scripture by sound reasoning in a manner that is open and evident (Preface, 3.11). Jewel stated that to put aside the plain teaching of scripture and to appeal directly to 'God

himself, speaking in the Church and in Councils' is to follow one's own opinions. It is a way of 'uncertainty' and 'hazard,' the path of 'fanaticism.'" [Northeast SEAD, Appendix IV]

The effects of these radical developments within the Episcopal Church–the derogation of Scripture, the elevation of experience, and the exaltation of personal autonomy–are not confined to the boundaries of this province but impact other provinces within the Anglican Communion, especially those in the global South. This interconnectedness among the provinces as well as a growing awareness that what one province does affects the others is now just as an important part of our Anglican context as the words of Richard Hooker. What Episcopalians need to understand is the crucial significance of Scripture in establishing the boundaries of the Anglican Church in these countries in the global South as they seek to define themselves over against their surrounding pagan societies:

> "In forming this Anglican identity, the non-Western world needed to address boundaries of the Church in relation to the culture in which it lived. It had to develop a world view that nurtured and matured its new identity. The appeal to the authority and teaching of the Bible became paramount. At the heart of non-Western Anglican identity is the authority and teaching of scripture. The scripture defined the *boundaries* of the Churches, situated as they were in pagan cultures. Scripture identified the *boundary markers*." [Emphasis added] [Canon Vinay Samuel, "Voice of the global South," Church Times (November 11, 2003), p. 1]

By its action at General Convention, the Episcopal Church has effectively moved the boundary markers of Scripture, something that no province, acting on its own, has any right to do. In acting unilaterally they have by analogy violated an ancient proverb: "Do not remove the ancient landmark that your ancestors set up." [Proverbs 22:28] The clear boundaries of Scripture in the Anglican churches of the global South have enabled the Church to be a powerful agent of transformation within their respective societies. The moving of these boundaries threatens the "Christian identity" of these churches. [Samuel, p. 3] Moreover, the concept of personal autonomy which supposedly justifies the removal of these ancient Scriptural landmarks directly conflicts with the Anglican South's view of freedom in Christ, which is also the orthodox Christian teaching. The contrast between these two opposing views of freedom could not be more striking:

> "The Christian who finds such freedom submits, as Paul did, to become a bond slave of Christ. Paul teaches that true freedom is experienced and expressed in a relationship of submission to Christ, not in an autonomous experience of self. This biblical understanding of freedom shapes Christian moral teaching in the Anglican South.
>
> The Western Church lives in a culture in which the highest moral value is set on the absolute freedom of the individual. The power to choose what one desires, as long as it does not harm others, and to be able to will the good we define ourselves, is at the heart of the moral vision of Western cultures.
>
> The Anglican South, however, finds that the language of rights used in promoting acceptance of homosexual practice in faithful same-sex relationships masks the underlying understanding of freedom as autonomy, self-expression and self-definition. Such an understanding of freedom has its roots in the enlightenment, and is not supported by biblical teaching.

> The struggle is not between freedom and authoritarian conformity, but between different views of freedom–one biblical and the other modern Western. Binding oneself to what one chooses is not the biblical view of freedom and accountability. Biblical freedom is also not about binding oneself to general rational criteria of justice. It is about being bound to the imperatives of scripture and its moral framework." [Emphasis added] [Samuel, p. 2]

Thus, the crisis of authority within the Episcopal Church has spilled over into the entire Communion. We have seen that the crossing of boundaries–Scriptural and natural–can cause repercussions far beyond what we may have imagined:

> "To 'grasp beyond ordained boundaries' may initially speak of freedom but in the end destroys that freedom. No, we need boundaries, both as individual persons and also in our corporate life....
>
> For many the issue of officially blessing same-sex unions is precisely a boundary issue. Confusion here massively affects our identities both as sexual beings and as a public body. For, as Paul so insightfully grasped right at the outset, what we do with our bodies is not immaterial but truly affects the Body of Christ. The union of physical bodies can affect the union of the ecclesial Body. Something which seems so small and immaterial can evidently have an explosive effect. Policy about sexual behavior is not just a private matter." [Emphasis added] [True Union, p. 46]

The crisis of authority which has led to the transgressing of boundaries has its roots in the inception of Anglicanism in the initial conflict of the authority of the king over the pope and later within the Church the opposing factions of Catholicism and Protestantism which resulted in the distinctively Anglican *via media*. In the following centuries, ecclesiastical parties developed–Evangelicals, Anglo-Catholics, and the Broad Church–which still constitute factions within the Church today. Out of the conflict of these contending factions grew another distinctively Anglican concept known as comprehensiveness:

> "Of course, it is quite understandable how the notion of comprehensiveness developed out of the Elizabethan settlement, at a time when the limits of such comprehensiveness could be set by agreement on the articles of the creed. The exacerbation of the conflict between evangelical and anglo-catholic in the nineteenth century gave rise, again understandably, to the theory of complementarity of both viewpoints to a greater truth. It was a theory with an irresistible attraction for bishops endeavoring to achieve a modus vivendi between warring groups in their dioceses." [Stephen Sykes, The Integrity of Anglicanism (Mowbray 1978), p. 34 as quoted in Class Notes, Dr. Mark Chapman, "Church and Society, Lecture One–Is There Such a Thing as Anglican Theology?" (Ripon College Cuddesdon, Michaelmas Term 1993), p. 5]

Anglican comprehensiveness is believed by some to be able to encompass the opposing parties in the current controversy over homosexuality. [*E.g.*, Letter of Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold to the clergy of the Episcopal Church (August 20, 2003); Letter of Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold to Anglican Primates (October 23, 2003)] However, a quarter of a century before the present crisis the inherent weakness and inadequacies of this notion had already been discerned:

> "Coined at a time when internal party strife was at its most acute, [comprehensiveness] apparently offered a non-partisan refuge for that large body of central Anglicans who properly speaking belonged to no party....Theologically speaking, however, the effect of the proposal has been disastrous. It must be stated bluntly that it has served as an open invitation to intellectual laziness and self-deception. Maurice's opposition to system-building has proved a marvelous excuse to those who believe they can afford to be condescending about the outstanding theological contribution of theologians from other communions and smugly tolerant of second-rate theological competence of their own; and the failure to be frank about the issues between the parties in the Church of England has led to an ultimately illusory self-projection as a Church without any specific doctrinal or confessional standpoint." [Emphasis added] [Sykes, p. 19 as quoted in Chapman, p. 5]

Comprehensiveness or tolerance has proven especially vulnerable to the dangers inherent in the current climate of pluralism:

> "Ecumenical tolerance represents an impressive moral and religious gain, a step towards love and understanding. But it has its own deep risks, and one of them is the spectre of relativity, this loss of any place to stand, this very elimination of the very heart of the religious as the ultimate concern." [Emphasis added] [Langdon Gilkey, "Plurality and Its Theological Implications," in John Hick and Paul F. Knitter, The Myth of Christian Uniqueness (London 1987), p. 44 as quoted in Class Notes, Dr. Mark Chapman, "Church and Society, Lecture Fifteen: The Church, Pluralism and Truth" (Ripon College Cuddesdon, Hilary Term 1994), p. 4.]

The unilateral, *de facto* demolition of unequivocal Scriptural landmarks recognized for two thousand years by the Universal Church has now brought the Episcopal Church to that very terrifying place–"this loss of any place to stand, this very elimination of the very heart of the religious as the ultimate concern." The one man who now stands at the very epicenter of this global ecclesiastical earthquake foresaw this terrible day with extraordinary prescience:

> "The contemporary theological situation is that in which 'there may have been no strictly theological criteria immediately available to discriminate among varieties of "Christianity"'....It is not surprising, then, that in one way or another the question is continually raised of the limits of pluralism–or, rather less starkly, of how pluralism avoids becoming 'repressive tolerance', an intellectually idle and morally frivolous prohibition against raising uncomfortable questions about Christian truth. Pluralism as a strategy...can look like a betrayal of what most Christians would still see as a central affair in their commitment–the conviction that there is a common hope and a common vocation for human beings, such that the welfare or salvation of one section of humanity cannot be imagined as wholly different from or irrelevant to that of the rest of the race." [Emphasis added] [Rowan Williams, "The Unity of Christian Truth," New Blackfriars (1989), p. 85 as quoted in Chapman, Lecture One, pp. 5-6]

The Episcopal Church has transgressed far beyond the outer limits of Anglican comprehensiveness. To assert it now at this hour of the rending of the Body of Christ known as the Anglican Communion is to rely on a feckless shibboleth that masks an "intellectually idle and morally frivolous" position. Reliance on the *via media* at this critical hour likewise provides no solace. The *via media* was originally an

intellectually defensible and faithful position between Catholicism and Protestantism, both of which were and are legitimate expressions of orthodox Christianity. The *via media* today, however, would be a position between orthodox Anglicanism and something which has moved outside the bounds of orthodox Christianity. Given the dynamism and limitless expression of personal experience and autonomy, the *via media* in this new context will be forever moving farther and farther away from its Scriptural foundation and the orthodox faith. Unorthodoxy is too high a price to pay to occupy the middle way.

What, then, is the way forward through the present crisis? Discipline–godly discipline exercised by the Anglican Communion against the Episcopal Church. Although the mechanism for such discipline has not yet been established, the Communion has been taking preliminary steps in that direction:

> "The 1998 Lambeth Conference noted 'the need to strengthen mutual accountability and interdependence among the Provinces of the Anglican Communion'. It therefore reaffirmed a 1988 Lambeth resolution which encouraged 'a more collegial role for the Primates' Meeting under the presidency of the Archbishop of Canterbury, so that the Primates' Meeting is able to exercise an enhanced responsibility in offering guidance on doctrinal, moral and pastoral matters'. This was supplemented by a request for the Primates' Meeting to include in its responsibilities 'intervention in cases of exceptional emergency' and the 'giving of guidelines on the limits of Anglican diversity in submission to the sovereign authority of Holy Scripture and in loyalty to our Anglican tradition and formularies' (Resolution III.6).
>
> *** *** ***
>
> If any province or national church rejects the moral authority of Lambeth 1998 and establishes the blessing of same-sex unions, other Anglican provinces would be acting faithfully within the Tradition if they declared such an action as 'schismatic'. This would be even more justified if innovation occurred without clearly providing the necessary theological justification (6.10-12) or appropriate discussion with the on-going instruments of unity (6.13). Other provinces would then have the right both to withhold communion and to ask whether indeed the church in that province should be entitled to label itself as 'Anglican'. <u>Is this not an act which effectively establishes a new church, with some liturgical affinities to historic and worldwide Anglicanism but essentially and theologically at odds with it</u>? Regrettably for the revisionists, the Anglican Church through its missionary endeavor has become a global Church. That wider Church now has the moral justification for questioning the orthodoxy of its 'mother provinces' and refusing to allow the treasured currency of 'Anglicanism' to be debased in this way. With the rise of Internet technology and jet travel 'global' Anglicanism is no longer a theory but a practical reality that needs coherence to survive." [Emphasis added] [<u>True Union</u>, pp. 40, 43] [<u>See also</u>, <u>Claiming Our Anglican Identity</u>, pp. 24-28]

At the request of the emergency meeting of the Primates as set forth in the Statement by the Primates of October 16, 2003, Archbishop Rowan Williams has appointed a Study Commission to be chaired by the Most Reverend Robin Eames, Primate of Ireland. "The Commission's main task would be to offer advice on finding a way through the situation which currently threatens to divide the Communion." The mandate from the Archbishop of Canterbury to the Commission includes the following:

> "Therefore, as soon as practicable, and with particular reference to the issues raised in

> Section IV of the Report of the Lambeth Conference 1998, to make recommendations to the Primates and the Anglican Consultative Council, as to the exceptional circumstances and conditions under which, and the means by which, it would be appropriate for the Archbishop of Canterbury to exercise an extraordinary ministry of episcope (pastoral oversight), support and reconciliation with regard to the internal affairs of a province other than his own for the sake of maintaining communion with the said province and between the said province and the rest of the Anglican Communion." [Archbishop of Canterbury's Appointment to Study Commission, October 28, 2003]

This Commission's report will be due by October 2004. Regardless of the recommendations of the Study Commission and the particular disciplinary actions taken or not taken by the Archbishop of Canterbury, it is clear that the Episcopal Church stands at the most important crossroads in her history. Two very different paths lie before her.

X. The Present Destructive Path

The Episcopal Church has essentially capitulated to the sexual revolution over the past three decades, but the actions of the 2003 General Convention amount to a final surrender, for now any remaining Scriptural foundation for critique has been abandoned. The Church should expect other groups seeking the blessing of their alternative sexual lifestyles probably sooner rather than later. In the same month that the General Convention was meeting, another group of Christians was meeting in Philadelphia at the WOW (Witness Our Welcome) 2003 convention, an ecumenical gathering for "sexually and gender inclusive Christians." One of the sponsoring groups was Episcopal Divinity School. At the convention Debra Kolodny led a workshop entitled "Blessed Bi Spirit: Bisexual People of Faith" in which she spoke reverently about polyamorous relationships–committed sexual relationships involving three or more persons: "I am a strong ally of those in healthy, polyamorous relationships....There can be fidelity in threesomes. It can be just as sanctified as anything else if all parties are agreed." [Mark Tooley, "'Sexually Inclusive Christians' Celebrate Victories, Push for More," The Institute on Religion and Democracy (August 22, 2003)]

And why not? Who in the Episcopal Church is now to say that such relationships are wrong? On what grounds? If personal experience trumps Scripture, then on what basis will the Episcopal Church limit its blessing to only homosexual couples? Moreover, polyamorous activist groups will be able to mount a much stronger Biblical argument to support their claims. The title of the above article is very instructive: "Sexually Inclusive Christians" Celebrate Victories, Push for More." There will be many more victories celebrated in the Episcopal Church, and the push will go on and on and on, because what is really at play here is not so much "homosexuality" as "pansexuality." [Satinover, p. 61] Once the Judeo-Christian sexual boundary has been crossed by one group, the pressure will be relentless to cross it by others. How many more WOW conferences will it take to claim the blessing for polyamorous groupings in the Episcopal Church? Three? Six? Nine? The Unitarian Church, which has already embraced same-sex blessings, is now actively considering the blessing of polyamorous relationships. The Unitarian Universalists for Polyamory Awareness (UUPA) is organized and working to "seek the same kind of affirmation and acceptance that Unitarian Universalism has granted to many others who sought liberation from the strictures of the societal ideal of one man marrying one woman until death do them part, forsaking all others." [3076 Uuism and Polyamory: Many Traditions, Many Loves (www.uua.org)]

Similarly, bisexual persons are also organizing and planning. The Bisexual Organizing Project, a bisexual advocacy group, will be holding the Eighth International Conference of Bisexuality at the University of Minnesota, August 5-8, 2004, where they are expecting "to attract about 400 academics, educators, and community members from throughout the world." [www.bisexual.org] What type of blessing will bisexuals seek from the Church? On what grounds can the Episcopal Church deny them this blessing?

And as disturbing and as improbable as it may seem, there is another organization waiting in the wings, the North American Man-Boy Love Association (NAMBLA), "which actively promotes homosexual pedophilia as an acceptable alternative form of sex. Their contentions as to the naturalness, normalcy, unchangeability, and ubiquity of pedophilia mirror precisely the arguments used to support the naturalness, normalcy, and so on of homosexuality...." [Satinover, p. 63] Already articles in professional journals are advocating changes to more "neutral" terminology "to describe freely chosen, nonharmful sex between adults and children" and arguing that "adult-child sex" is a "value neutral term" to be used in cases where there is a "willing encounter with positive reactions." [Jones and Yarhouse, p. 111] This is not fiction. This is really happening, and the groundwork is already being laid as witnessed by this excerpt from a respected professional journal written *fourteen years ago*:

> "In recent years the general trend has been to label...intergenerational intimacy [as] 'child sexual abuse....' [This] has fostered a one-sided, simplistic picture....Further research...would help us to understand the ...possible benefits of intergenerational intimacy." [Emphasis added] [G. P. Jones, "The Study of Intergenerational Intimacy in North America: Beyond Politics and Pedophilia," Journal of Homosexuality 20, nos. 1-2 (1990), pp. 275-95 as quoted in Satinover, p. 64]

Scientific evidence buttressed by personal stories will be presented. Having jettisoned Scripture and tradition, the Episcopal Church will have no place to stand to resist these claims, these rights, this justice.

The Church should anticipate the proposal of new liturgies justified by alien theologies and spiritualities similar to Bishop Spong's rite of blessing a divorce. A ritual which blesses a woman's abortion has already been suggested by one author:

> "Our culture needs new rituals as well as laws to restore to abortion its sacred dimension....I've heard women address their fetus directly...and explain why it is necessary to separate now. Others write a letter of farewell and read it to a friend, a spouse, or indeed to their whole family. Still others invent their own farewell ritual, inspired perhaps by rituals from other cultures, like offering a little doll to a divinity as a symbol of the aborted fetus.
> ...the pro-lifers see the spiritual dimension but keep it imprisoned within official orthodoxies, as if no other form of spirituality existed. What if my religious beliefs are pagan?" [Ginette Paris, The Sacrament of Abortion (Dallas: Spring Publications 1992) as quoted in Satinover, p. 243]

And what will be the effect of these radical innovations on marriage itself–on the husbands and wives and children remaining in the Church? There will be consequences here as well:

> "Any decision by the Church to confer legitimacy on same-sex unions cannot be viewed

> *solely* in terms of pragmatic, pastoral responses to our cultural and missionary context or embraced as simply the practical outworking of the inclusiveness of divine love. No, such a decision has significant *theological* and pastoral implications. This is equally true whether it is accomplished by creating some *third quasi-marital* way of holy living (in addition to marriage and singleness) or by *reconfiguring the understanding of marriage* so as to embrace couples of the same sex. The former *undermines* the institution of marriage by presenting an alternative form of sexual relationship as legitimate for humans made in the image of God; while the latter strictly *destroys* marriage as removing from its definition the bringing together of male and female. As yet, revisionists are not agreed as to which of these they are proposing. Significantly, neither path has authorization from within Scripture or the Christian Tradition. Instead arguments are based on an appeal to experience–despite the fact there is no consensus (even among revisionists) about how that experience is to be explained (whether scientifically, psychologically or culturally)." [True Union, p. 19]

We begin to glimpse the destructiveness of the path we are now on and perceive why the overwhelming majority of the Anglican Communion and the Universal Church will have no part of this rebellious heterodoxy and will shun us until we come to our senses and return to the faith once delivered. Until that time we can expect continued internal division, isolation from other Anglicans and Christians, unorthodox liturgies and spiritualities, and steady decline in members and power.

Some of these developments may take years to occur. However, the loss of members has already begun and will continue. One of the foremost experts in church growth and development in the Episcopal Church is the Rev. Kevin Martin, who served as Canon for Congregational Development in the Diocese of Texas and is the founder and executive director of Vital Church Ministries. From the 840,000 members who regularly attend church in the Episcopal Church, he predicts a loss of 100,000 in just the next year. The Episcopal Church has been in decline for the past forty years, both in actual numbers and as a percent of the national population. It is not true that ECUSA will gain members as a result of these actions: "If we would, why would the dioceses that already embrace these positions not be growing? They are demonstrably the fastest declining part of the Church." Where will all of this lead? The following comparison is definitely a reality check: "Today, more people believe that aliens have abducted them than are members of ECUSA. What is the difference between these groups? The abduction people have growing numbers of believers and adherents. We do not." [Rev. Kevin Martin, "The Future of the Episcopal Church A Hard Look at the Numbers," www.vital church ministries.org] I am personally aware of key lay leaders–former vestry members and wardens–who have had enough and have left the Episcopal Church to join the Anglican Mission in America. Others like David Warren, a popular columnist with the Ottawa Citizen, have become Roman Catholic. He observes that it is "the characteristic doctrine of utopian revolutionaries and violent heretics from many centuries–this idea that God is speaking to them directly, and that they may now ignore Scripture, history, and tradition, and do whatever feels right." He concludes wistfully with this sentiment which could speak for many who have already left and who will leave in the near future:

> "Yet I do not look back in anger, but in heartbreak, at the wreckage remaining from what was a fine four- or five-century run. Within the ruin of the Anglican Church, we will find so many beautiful things, embodying noble aspirations. We will not find, however, the Catholic succession–for Anglicanism has become one of those channels of history that runs out, as so many of the churches of the past, which lost their way, and sank into the sands." [David Warren, "On Becoming a Catholic," Ottawa Citizen

(September 9, 2003) as quoted by Richard John Neuhaus, "The Public Square," First Things (December 2003), p.74]

Will the Episcopal Church, headstrong and oblivious to the wreckage it is causing, stay on this present path of destruction while the hemorrhage of the faithful continues apace?

XI. Rediscovering Christian Orthodoxy

The Episcopal Church in the course that it has been on for the past forty years and that has been confirmed and officially endorsed by the actions of General Convention of 2003 prides itself on being an enlightened church founded on "new learning" and a church that is preeminently inclusive and tolerant. One of the great ironies of this tolerance is that everything can be tolerated except Christian orthodoxy, because Christian orthodoxy makes universal truth claims which constitute a permanent affront to this easy toleration. As with the Roman Empire in the first centuries that was tolerant of many different religions, the scandal of the Christians was that their sole allegiance was to the Lord Jesus Christ, and they, therefore, refused to offer "incense on a pagan altar" and to swear "an oath by the emperor's genius." It was this refusal which led to their martyrdom. [The Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity (Oxford University Press 1990) ed. John McManners, p. 41] When the Episcopal Church jettisoned orthodoxy in the 1960s, orthodoxy itself then became optional. As time has gone on, however, orthodoxy has become more and more an offense. After the actions of the 2003 General Convention, Kevin Martin asked those in the majority who agreed with the actions what someone like himself with orthodox beliefs should now do. He reported being "fascinated by the consistency of the responses" which he received. They fell into these three categories: 1) "get over it;" 2) "get therapy;" or 3) "get out!" [Kevin Martin, "The Dissenter's Paradox," The Vital Church Newsletter (January 8, 2004), p. 2] We may be rapidly approaching the day when the truth of this maxim becomes operative in the Episcopal Church: "Where orthodoxy is optional it will, sooner rather than later, be proscribed." [as quoted by Richard John Neuhaus, "The Public Square," First Things (April 2003), p.84]

Another exquisite irony of the moment is that just when the Episcopal Church was spurning orthodoxy, orthodox Christianity was experiencing an unexpected and exhilarating rebirth. It has emerged at the dawn of the third Christian millennium with renewed intellectual and spiritual vigor and confidence to face the challenges of a new era. This renaissance has been superbly chronicled by someone who has experienced this rebirth in his own life–Dr. Thomas Oden, Henry Anson Buttz Professor of Theology and Ethics, at Drew University–in his splendid book, The Rebirth of Orthodoxy. Dr. Oden asserts that the ideologies which constituted the presuppositions of Western modernity–"the Marxist-Freudian-Nietzchean-Bultmannian" systems have "passed over, like an angel of death." [Thomas C. Oden, The Rebirth of Orthodoxy (HarperCollins 2003), p. 8] The collapse of these ideologies has created an intellectual and spiritual vacuum into which has stepped orthodox Christianity. "What is happening amid this historical situation is a joyous return to the sacred texts of scripture and the consensual guides of the formative period of Judeo-Christian scripture interpretation." [Oden, p. 11] Dr. Oden defines orthodoxy in this way:

> "Orthodoxy itself is nothing more or less than the ancient consensual tradition of Spirit-guided discernment of scripture. The church's book–the canon of holy writ received by believers of all times around the world–remains the crucial criterion for orthodox doctrine, polity, ethics, and social teaching. There is no way to validate the orthodox tradition, according to its own self-understanding, without constant reference to

> canonical scripture. The canon of scripture is merely the list of sacred texts read in services of worship. The four gospels and Paul's letters were in the list from the earliest Christian decades. The list was largely defined long before Athanasius, whose list was widely received after the fourth century. All that is meant by *tradition*, then, is the faithful handing down from generation to generation of scripture interpretation consensually received worldwide and cross-culturally through two millennia." [Oden, pp. 31-32]

What stands behind this resurgence of Christian orthodoxy is a renewed confidence in the Word of God who stands behind and guarantees the Word of God written. "Jesus promised the faithful of each generation and of all cultures that the Holy Spirit will 'teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.' [John 14:26] The Holy Spirit has a perfect memory of the truth, even when we remember imperfectly." [Oden, p. 45] The Holy Spirit guides and protects the Universal Church through time:

> "Thus the Spirit protects the continuity of the Word in history, ensuring that the whole church does not at any given time completely err, and that it does not err in the foundation, even if in temporary and nonessential ways it may. This is a defining ecumenical doctrine: the community of faith, enabled by the Spirit, is ultimately sure and certain (*asphales*) insofar as it clings to the revealed Word." [Oden, p. 46]

Dr. Oden concludes his book by marveling on the extraordinary endurance of Christian orthodoxy through time and space:

> "This stubborn fact remains: a single cohesive deposit of faith, formed and shaped by the Spirit, and confirmed by free mutual consent to revelation, has persisted for two millennia. Translated into many tongues, this consensus has formed (and been affected by) many cultures without losing its core identity. The Spirit has enabled mutual general consent on key points of interpretation of canonically received holy writ in ways that are sufficient not only for eternal salvation but also for better life in this world. In this cohesive teaching lies special power to transform societies.
>
> This Spirit-led process has defined, remembered, and safeguarded consent to apostolic testimony over many centuries. The laity, quite capable of understanding and assessing the fairness of this process, should be given every opportunity to study how the great consensual teachers have fairly gained uncoerced consent from generation to generation over two millennia. Orthodox, Catholics, and Protestants can, despite diverse liturgical and cultural memories, find unexpected common ground ecumenically by returning to classic interpreters of scripture texts that still stand as authoritative for teaching today." [Oden, p. 186]

In addition to his encouraging book, The Rebirth of Orthodoxy, Dr. Oden has also provided the Church with another excellent resource in further assistance of the rediscovery of orthodoxy in the Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture of which Dr. Oden is the general editor. This commentary enables the modern student of the Bible to draw on the insights of the great minds of the ancient Christian writers from the first seven centuries of the Church's history. The series has been widely praised by scholars like Avery Dulles, S.J., Bruce Metzger, William Willimon, Timothy George, and others. Eugene H. Peterson, James Houston Professor of Spiritual Theology of Regent College and

author of the splendid, modern translation of The New Testament, The Message, gave this assessment:

> "Chronological snobbery–the assumption that our ancestors working without benefit of computers have nothing to teach us–is exposed as nonsense by this magnificent new series. Surfeited with knowledge but starved of wisdom, many of us are more than ready to sit at table with our ancestors and listen to their holy conversations on Scripture. I know I am." [Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture (Inter Varsity Press 1998) ed. Thomas C. Oden and Christopher A. Hall, p. iii]

The Universal Church now stands on the threshold of one of the greatest moments in church history. Through the rediscovery of the common orthodox faith, the way now lies open for the potential emergence of a new unity which has not been experienced for a thousand years. The Church in the West, no longer cowed and intimidated by the failed ideologies of the past centuries, can draw deeply from the well of orthodoxy in order to proclaim with renewed vigor and boldness the saving power of the Gospel. However, in order for the Episcopal Church to be part of this momentous opportunity and grand adventure of faith, it must stop going "limping with two different opinions." [1 Kings 18:21] The Episcopal Church must do what Christians have always had to do when they have gone astray and gotten off the true path:

> "The time has come to be done with the self-congratulatory apologetic to which Anglicans are addicted and to call for both a searching review of their common life (or lack thereof) and an attitude of repentance. The churches of the Anglican Communion, particularly those in England and North America, can renew their common life only after a long period of self-examination and repentance. Only from a stance of profound sorrow and humility can Anglicans live as faithful communion of saints who stand in the tradition of the apostles, prophets and martyrs." [Emphasis added] [Turner, "Episcopal Authority in a Divided Church," p. 47]

The words spoken by the Lord God to Solomon and the nation of Israel speak now to the Episcopal Church: "if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, pray, seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land." [2 Chronicles 7:14] Even if the Episcopal Church cannot now acknowledge that it has acted contrary to Holy Scripture, it is beyond dispute that the actions of the 2003 General Convention have caused deep division within the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion. That alone should initiate "a long period of self-examination and repentance." Without genuine repentance the Episcopal Church will continue on its present destructive path and will drift farther and farther away from the rest of the Anglican Communion, the Church Universal, and the faith once delivered.

But for those in the Episcopal Church who will turn and rejoin the Anglican Communion and the Church Universal, an immersion in Christian orthodoxy will equip the saints to be the Church Jesus intended the Church to be in at least three vital ways.

"*Ego eimi he hodos*...." Jesus said, "I am the Way." [John 14:6] The earliest Christians were identified as those who followed a Way. Paul admitted to having "persecuted this Way up to the point of death...." [Acts 22:4] When Apollos came to Ephesus, he was recognized as someone who "had been instructed in the Way of the Lord...." [Acts 18:25] Although he spoke with great boldness and eloquence, there were still things he needed to learn, and so Priscilla and Aquilla "took him aside and explained the Way of God to him more accurately." [Acts 18:26] In carrying on this instruction, Priscilla and Aquilla were

simply being obedient to the words of Jesus: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you." [Emphasis added] [Matthew 28:19] Jesus had previously taught his disciples the importance of both *hearing* his words and *acting* on them. [Matthew 7:24-25] And he spoke this stern warning to them: "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven." [Matthew 7:21] St. Paul, throughout his life and even when he was actually a prisoner of Rome, saw himself as a *doulos*–a slave or servant–of Jesus Christ. [Romans 1:1; Philippians 1:1] He understood that we are all either slaves of sin or slaves of Jesus: "Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?" [Romans 6:16] He stressed the importance of total obedience to Jesus even in our thoughts: "We destroy arguments and every proud obstacle raised up against the knowledge of God, and we take every thought captive to obey Christ." [2 Corinthians 10:5] This total allegiance and total obedience to Jesus means turning over to him those things which we cling to most dearly:

> "No one is ever united with Jesus Christ until he is willing to relinquish not sin only, but his whole way of looking at things. To be born from above of the Spirit of God means that we must let go before we lay hold, and in the first stages it is the relinquishing of all pretence. What Our Lord wants us to present to Him is not goodness, nor honesty, nor endeavor, but real solid sin; that is all He can take from us. And what does He give in exchange for our sin? Real solid righteousness. But we must relinquish all pretence of being anything, all claim of being worthy of God's consideration.
>
> Then the Spirit of God will show us what further there is to relinquish. There will have to be the relinquishing of my claim to my right to myself in every phase. Am I willing to relinquish my hold on all I possess, my hold on my affections, and on everything, and to be identified with the death of Jesus Christ?" [Oswald Chambers, My Utmost for His Highest (Barbour and Company 1935), p.49]

Orthodox Christianity is a Way of life. It involves total allegiance, total commitment, and total obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ. It means trusting in Jesus and following Jesus in every aspect of our lives, including our sexual lives. It requires absolute fidelity, but it sees this fidelity as a noble calling and a "high adventure" in following "the vibrant orthodoxy of the radical call to holiness":

> "Fidelity requires change and, yes, innovation in obedience to the truth of the faith. Fidelity is the excitement of discovering and living the living tradition of the saints, past and present. Fidelity is the surrender of self to Christ and his Church. Fidelity is the courage to be different, to lovingly engage the culture and, when necessary, to be countercultural and even *contra mundum*...Fidelity is conversion." [Richard John Neuhaus, "The Public Square," First Things (January 2003), p. 76]

"*Ego eimi...he alethia.*" Jesus said, "I am...the Truth...." [John 14:6] Fidelity to following the Way of Jesus Christ will lead us into truth: "Then Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, 'If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.'" [John 8:31] Disciples of Jesus Christ are "established in the truth" that has come to them. [2 Peter 1:12] It is possible for followers of Jesus to "wander from the truth." If that happens, other believers should bring them back from wandering. [James 5:19]

Orthodox Christianity proclaims that Jesus is the Truth for the world and is the standard, the plumb line, by which we know right from wrong, truth from falsehood. "Serious truth claims require clear denials." [Oden, p. 127] Orthodox Christianity is not afraid to draw definite boundary lines: "Some would prefer that the Christian tradition be endlessly plastic, flexible, malleable, with no boundaries at all. But such plasticity can be accomplished only by constantly twisting the sacred texts of the tradition, forcing interpretations, and resorting to bizarre speculations." [Oden, p. 132]

One of the most exciting developments in recent years in the upholding of truth in Christian orthodoxy has been the coming together of Christian scholars from diverse ecclesiastical backgrounds in seeking to bridge the divisions which stemmed from the Reformation. "In the spring of 1994, a group of Roman Catholics and evangelical Protestants issued a much-discussed statement, 'Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium' (FT, May 1994). That statement, commonly referred to as 'ECT,' noted a growing 'convergence and cooperation' between Evangelicals and Catholics in many public tasks, and affirmed agreement in basic articles of Christian faith while also underscoring the continuing existence of important differences." ["Your Word Is Truth," First Things (August/September 2002), p. 38] ECT published a second statement entitled "The Gift of Salvation" in 1998 and a third entitled "Your Word Is Truth" in 2002. These statements can provide an excellent resource to the Episcopal Church as it embarks on this journey toward rediscovering the fundamental truth of the orthodox faith. A valuable example is the following statement from "Your Word Is Truth":

> "Together we affirm that Scripture is the divinely inspired and uniquely authoritative written revelation of God; as such it is normative for the teaching and life of the Church. We also affirm that tradition, rightly understood as the proper reflection of biblical teaching is the faithful transmission of the truth of the gospel from generation to generation through the power of the Holy Spirit. As Evangelicals and Catholics fully committed to our respective heritages, we affirm together the coinherence of Scripture and tradition: tradition is not a second source of revelation alongside the Bible but must ever be corrected and informed by it, and Scripture itself is not understood in a vacuum apart from the historical existence and life of the community of faith." ["Your Word Is Truth," First Things (August/September 2002), p. 40]

Another valuable resource for the Episcopal Church can be the official documents and teachings of the Roman Catholic Church under the papacy of John Paul II. One of the most recent of these was the Declaration Dominus Iesus, published by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, August 6, 2000. The Declaration "recalls that no one can enter into communion with God except through Christ and the Spirit together (#12)" and "that Christian faith requires acknowledgment of Christ as the one Mediator (1 Tim 2:4-6)." [Avery Dulles, S.J., "*Dominus Iesus*, A Catholic Response," Pro Ecclesia (Winter 2001), pp. 5-6] Active intellectual engagement with this and other statements can assist the Episcopal Church in the quest of rediscovering the truth of the orthodox faith, as we can see from this response of Ephraim Radner:

> "I speak as an Episcopalian Anglican: would that we could be so clear and faithful by a half.
>
> *These Roman Catholics ought to make us jealous.* Jealous for the clarity of vision; jealous for the integrity of their historically maintained commitment; jealous for their continued and coherent adherence to Scripture; jealous of the courage and freedom to let 'yes' and 'no' be stated and stand for what they are in Scripture's consistently interpreted light."

[Ephraim Radner, "*Dominus Iesus*, An Episcopalian Response," Pro Ecclesia (Winter 2001), pp. 10-11]

"*Ego eimi...he zoe."* Jesus said, "I am...the Life." [John 14:6] Jesus imparts to his followers the gift of eternal life: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life." [John 3:16] Jesus gives the gift of abundant life now: "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly." [John 10:10] Followers of Jesus are promised "newness of life." [Romans 6:4] It is the very "life of Jesus" that is to live inside and to "be made visible"in the lives of believers. [2 Corinthians 4:10] Having Jesus in one's life is really a matter of life and death: "Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life." [1 John 5:12]

Orthodox Christianity testifies to the truth that Jesus is Life and has the power to transform lives and societies. "The real significance of the rebirth of orthodoxy lies in how it is transforming lives." [Oden, p. 82] Malcolm Muggeridge, Leslie Newbigin, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, and Richard John Neuhaus have all written "narratives of transformation, detailing how orthodoxy has changed their life and faith....They tell the story of the power of classic Christianity to transform modern lives." [Oden, p. 82] Dr. Oden has added his story of transformation to these others, of how, as an academic theologian, he gradually left his revisionist presuppositions and eventually embraced Christian orthodoxy. He relates how after seminary he had "learned to treat scripture selectively" to serve his own "political idealism." He candidly admits having "adapted the Bible" to his own ideology. [Oden, p. 85] He confesses:

> Like all broad-minded clergy I knew, I tried hard to reason out of modern naturalistic premises, employing biblical narratives narrowly and selectively. I could plead for social change and teach hearers to take pride in their good intentions and works; but I was not prepared to communicate the saving grace of God on the cross, which I experienced only at some vague and diffuse level and would never have thought of personally attesting publicly.
>
> For years I tried to read the New Testament entirely without the premises of incarnation and resurrection–something that is very hard to do. I habitually assumed that truth in religion would be finally reducible to economics (with Marx), or psychosexual factors (with Freud), or power dynamics (with Nietzsche). I was uncritically accommodating to the very modernity that pretended to be prophetic, yet I did not recognize modernity's captivity to secular humanistic assumptions. That accommodation lasted until I personally experienced the collapse of modern values." [Oden, pp.85-86]

In his process of transformation, Dr. Oden came to an entirely different attitude toward Holy Scripture: "Rather than interpreting the texts, I found the texts interpreting me." [Emphasis added] [Oden, p. 88] "Once blown by every wind of doctrine and preoccupied with therapeutic fads amid the spirit of hypertoleration, I came to grasp the consensual reasoning that occurs so effortlessly within classic Christianity." [Oden, p. 89] The joy and excitement of Dr. Oden in having undergone this transformation and now being solidly within orthodox Christianity cannot be missed: "I now stand within the blessed presence of the communion of saints of all generations. In that company I experience greater, not diminished, cross-cultural freedom of inquiry." [Oden, p. 90]

The power of orthodox Christianity to transform lives is also evident on a much larger scale by the phenomenal growth of Christianity in Africa. In his remarkable book, The Next Christendom, Philip

Jenkins has chronicled the explosion of Christianity in the global South, including Africa where the number of Christians increased from 10 million in 1900 to 360 million in 2000. [Philip Jenkins, The Next Christendom *The Coming of Global Christianity* (Oxford University Press 2002), p. 4] This phenomenal growth has accelerated in recent decades and continues to this day:

> "It was precisely as Western colonialism ended that Christianity began a period of explosive growth that still continues unchecked, above all in Africa. Just since 1965, the Christian population of Africa has risen from around a quarter of the continental total to about 46 percent, stunning growth for so short a period. To quote the 2001 edition of the *World Christian Encyclopedia*, 'The present net increase on that continent is 8.4 million new Christians a year (23,000 a day) of which 1.5 million are net new converts (converts minus defections or apostasies).' Sometime in the 1960s, another historic landmark occurred, when Christians first outnumbered Muslims in Africa. Adrian Hastings has written that 'Black Africa today is totally inconceivable apart from the presence of Christianity.'" [Jenkins, p. 56]

A number of these African countries have large Anglican populations. "Nigeria alone claims 20 million baptized Anglicans." [Jenkins, p. 59] In Uganda, "Anglicans make up 35 or 40 percent of the total population. There are twenty dioceses and 7,000 parishes, and by any measure of church attendance and participation, Anglicanism is considerably healthier in Uganda than in what was once the mother country." [Jenkins, p. 60] As we have seen, the Anglican churches in Africa place a very high premium on maintaining the boundary markers of Scripture. "Cultural boundaries may be crossed, but scriptural boundaries cannot be changed unless the whole Church comes to a common mind about a deeper truth concerning the existing order." [Samuel, p.3] It is obvious that the Episcopal Church can learn so much about the transforming power of the Gospel within entire societies from our fellow Anglican Christians in Africa.

Orthodox Christianity is alive and well in most of the Anglican Communion and the Universal Church. Rediscovering Christian orthodoxy in the Episcopal Church will not require reinventing the wheel but submitting to the moral and teaching authority of the Lambeth Conferences and the Primates of the Anglican Communion. Orthodox Christianity has so much to offer the Episcopal Church. It provides a disciplined and holy and loving and joyful Way of life. It proclaims the Truth about Jesus Christ, God, ourselves, and our world. It offers new Life in Jesus Christ, abundant life now and eternal life beyond death. In turn, the Episcopal Church has so much to offer to the spiritually hungry people of this country if it will only return to its orthodox roots.

The essence of Christian orthodoxy is "the ancient consensual tradition of Spirit-guided discernment of Scripture." [Oden, p. 31] With respect to human sexuality and homosexual practice, the Church, both the Historic Church and the present Universal Church, has spoken. Human sexuality is to be expressed only within marriage which is defined as heterosexual, monogamous, and lifelong. All other expressions of sexuality, including homosexual practice, are sinful and contrary to the will of God. With respect to human sexuality, this *is* the Church's interpretation and defines the boundaries of orthodox Christianity. The Universal Church, which includes the Anglican Communion, has declared this position to be the Word of God. This is not now a matter of Scriptural interpretation but of Scriptural authority which the Episcopal Church has flagrantly rejected.

The Episcopal Church's claim that its actions were guided by the Holy Spirit is untenable in light of its own outline of faith that truths are "taught by the Holy Spirit when they are in accord with Scripture."

[An Outline of Faith, Book of Common Prayer, p. 853] The Holy Spirit has patently not led the Anglican Communion or the Universal Church in this new direction. Does the Episcopal Church honestly believe that it is in the spiritual vanguard on this issue and that the rest of the Church will one day "see the light"? Almost every work cited in this paper was written in 1996 or later. The arguments against the position of the Episcopal Church are becoming stronger and stronger while the arguments for their position are becoming less and less tenable. At some point the Episcopal Church must come to the sobering realization that it has not been the Holy Spirit in charge of this unfortunate misadventure but rather the zeitgeist–the spirit of the age.

In addition to flouting the Word of God, the gravamen of the Episcopal Church's error is its rejection of the created order pertaining to human sexuality and its denial of the transforming power of the cross to restore that order in individual lives and the making of that flouting, rejection, and denial into official church policy. This is not a trivial matter that can be overlooked but one that goes to the very heart of the Gospel.

I close with a personal *cri de coeur*. I desperately need what only orthodox Christianity has to offer. I need the authority and the trustworthiness of the Word of God. I am a sinner. I am a sexual sinner. I need definite, unmistakable boundaries in my life. I need the Church to be clear on what is right and what is wrong. I need to know what is sin and what is not. I need the forgiveness of Jesus Christ when I fall short and transgress those boundaries. Most of all, I need the power of the Holy Spirit, the very life of Jesus living within me, to cleanse and to purge and to transform those parts of my life that are not of God and to give me the strength, which I do not possess of my own power, to resist the temptations that daily cross my path. I need this, and I cannot live without it. It is my fervent hope and prayer that I may have this orthodox faith within the Episcopal Church, "but if not," I shall follow the Lord Jesus Christ to the end of my days, and I shall meditate on, hold fast to, and unashamedly profess and proclaim these words: "Jesus said to him, 'I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through me." [John 14:6] Amen.

Claiming the Blessing

"I will bless you so that you will be a blessing."
— GENESIS 12.2

The General Convention of the U.S. Episcopal Church resolved in 1976 that "homosexual persons are children of God who have a full and equal claim with all other persons upon the love, acceptance and pastoral concern and care of the Church." Since that time great strides toward realizing that "full and equal" claim have been taken. There are a growing number of places in the church where lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (lgbt) persons are welcomed, affirmed in their ministries and blessed in their committed relationships. There are, however, many more places where they are still not fully included in the life of the church. A coalition of leading justice organizations in the Episcopal Church — Integrity, Beyond Inclusion and diocesan Oasis ministries — along with numerous individual leaders, are determined to see the 1976 resolution become a reality. To that end, this partnership, called "Claiming the Blessing" (www.claimingtheblessing.org), has committed itself to obtaining approval at the 2003 General Convention of a liturgical rite of blessing, celebrating the holy love in faithful relationships between couples for whom marriage is not available, enabling couples in these relationships to see in each other the image of God.

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Claiming the A Message

By The Rev. Michael W. Hopkins, President, Integrity & Member, Executive Committee of Claiming the Blessing

What is this movement about?

It is about being clear. It is about being transparent. It is about witnessing. It is about how the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit compels us. It is about our love for the Church.

This is my message to the Church at large and, in particular, certain portions of it who wonder if this movement is such a good idea. My purpose is to be crystal clear and utterly transparent.

First to the Church in general:

We are absolutely committed to this Church and we are absolutely committed to the continuance of as broad a diversity—including theological—as is possible for us to maintain together. This commitment is, in part, a commitment to continued messiness and frustration. We understand this to be true even if the General Convention passes the resolution that we are advocating, to formulate a Book of Occasional Services rite for the blessing of faithful, monogamous unions other than heterosexual marriage. We know and accept that such a rite will not be used or even allowed to be used universally.

The materials in this booklet represent the classic Anglican approach of engaging Scripture, Tradition, and Reason in deciding matters of faithful living. Reflection questions are included to assist your own consideration of the issues relating to the blessing of relationships between two people for whom marriage is not available.

We are quite deliberately advocating for a rite whose use would be optional for the sake of the unity of the Church we love. We believe in our heart of hearts that our relationships are equal to heterosexual relationships, whether or not the term “marriage” is appropriate for them, and so, in our heart of hearts, we believe the rite used to publicly celebrate them should be equal. But that is not what we are asking for.

Blessing: to the Church

We are compromising, moderating our position, for the sake of the Church. We do so in the spirit of a resolution from the 1920 Lambeth Conference (Resolution 9:VIII): "We believe that for all, the truly equitable approach to union is by way of mutual deference to one another's consciences." We offer compromise in the spirit of that same resolution, which said, "We can only say that we offer it in all sincerity as a token of our longing that all ministries of grace, theirs and ours, shall be available for the service of our Lord in a united church."

These words were said in the context of ecumenical dialogue, but they are appropriate for our current internal dialogue, which looks far more like ecumenical dialogue—dialogue across deep and serious divisions—did in the 1920's.

Liberals and conservatives, progressives and traditionalists, must learn to live together in this Church or there will be no Church in which for us to live. But learning to live together must mean "mutual deference" not moratoriums or some insistence that we all convert to being "moderates."

My second message to the church at large is that we are not going anywhere. Gay and lesbian Christians make up a significant portion of the Episcopal Church in the United States of America. We will continue to do so after General Convention 2003 no matter what happens. We will not attempt to get our way by threatening to leave. I ask those on all sides of this debate to make this commitment as well.

Now three comments especially for our conservative brothers and sisters.

First, we do not desire for you to go away. Yes, some sympathizers with our movement have said from time to time that it would be just as well if you did. Of course, some of yours have said the same about us. Let us together commit ourselves to finding every way possible to move forward with our debate without threatening either schism or purge. It is simply not necessary for us to do so.

Second, we do not desire to force same-sex blessings on you or anyone. We do desire to enable them in those places where the church is ready to receive them as a blessing but is not able to because of an understandable desire for some level of national recognition. Of course we will continue to work towards local communities desiring to bless same-sex unions. Of course you will work to keep them from doing so. We ought to be able to live with each other's efforts on that level.

Third, we do challenge you to stop scapegoating lesbian and gay Christians for every contemporary ill in the Church, particularly for our current state of disunity or the potential for the unraveling of the Anglican Communion. You know as well as we do that the issues are far deeper than human sexuality. They are issues of scriptural interpretation and authority, including the very different polities that exist in different provinces of the Communion and whether or not local autonomy is a defining characteristic of Anglicanism. Issues of human sexuality are just one tip of that very large iceberg and if sexuality went completely away tomorrow, the iceberg would still be there.

What, if any, change of mind and/or heart are these materials asking of you?

This movement is not about getting our way or else. This movement is a means to further the healthy debate within the Church, to deepen it on a theological level, to begin to articulate how we see the blessing of same-sex unions as a part of the Church's moving forward in mission rather than hindering mission. We believe that it is time for the church to claim the blessing found in the lives of its faithful lesbian and gay members and to further empower them for the mission of the Church. We are trying to find a way forward in this endeavor that holds as much of this church we love together as possible. We ask all our fellow-Episcopalians to join us even if they disagree with us. ●

Michael Hopkins is also rector of St. George's Church in Glen Dale, Maryland.

Edited version of a speech first given at the Claiming the Blessing Conference, St. Louis, Missouri, November 8, 2002



What does it mean for the church to give its blessing?

"BLESSING" is perhaps the most controversial word in the church's consideration of the treatment of same-sex households in its midst. Because of this fact, we must take great care to be precise about what we mean when we use the word. The following are the building blocks for a theology of blessing: Creation, Covenant, Grace and Sacrament.

Creation itself is the fundamental act of blessing. Creation is a blessing (gift) to humankind from God and humankind blesses (gives thanks to or praises) God in return. The Hebrew word for "blessing," *barak*, means at its core the awesome power of life itself. A fundamental claim of the Bible in regard to creation is that there is enough, in fact an abundance, of creation, and therefore of blessing, to go around.

"Blessing" is a covenantal, relational word. It describes the results of the hallowed, right, just relationship between God and humankind. Blessing is what happens when God and humankind live in covenant. It is important to remember here that the relationships between human beings and the relationship between God and human beings cannot be separated. "Blessing" and "justice" are inseparable biblical concepts.

When we ask for God's blessing, we are asking for God's presence and favor. In Christian terms this favor is what we call "grace," God's disposition toward us that is not dependent upon our merit, but is a sure and certain gift to the believer in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In our tradition, the sacraments are the primary ways the grace/blessing of God is communicated to us ("a sure and certain means," BCP, p. 857). The two "great" sacraments "given by Christ" (BCP, p. 858) are Baptism and Eucharist. In them we see the two fundamental aspects of blessing: the blessing of life from God and the blessing of God for that life.

Five other rites are traditionally known as sacraments, but they are dependent for their meaning on the two sacraments and are not "necessary for all persons." A whole host of other actions in the life of the church, and of individual Christians, are "sacramental" in nature, i.e., they mediate the grace/blessing of God and cause us to give thanks and praise/blessing to God.

In our tradition, priests and bishops have the authority to pronounce God's blessing within the community of faith. They do so not by their own power, but as instruments of the grace (blessing) of God within the church. Their authority to bless, too, finds its meaning in the two great sacraments.

What do you think of the idea that justice and blessing/grace are inseparable? Are there situations in the church where one is appropriately stressed over the other?

When the church chooses "to bless" something it is declaring that this particular person or persons or thing is a gift/blessing from God and his/her/its/their purpose is to live in (or, in the case of things, to assist in) covenanted relationship with God (and with all creation), i.e., to bless God in return.

To bless the relationship between two men or two women is to do this very thing: to declare that this relationship is a blessing from God and that its purpose is to bless God, both within the context of the community of faith. If the church believes that same-sex relationships show forth God's blessing when they are lived in fidelity, mutuality and unconditional love, then this blessing must be owned and celebrated and supported in the community of faith.

Clearing up some questions:

Just what are we blessing when we bless a same-sex relationship? We are blessing the persons in relationship to one another and the world in which they live. We are blessing the ongoing promise of fidelity and mutuality. We are neither blessing orientation or "lifestyle," nor blessing particular sexual behaviors. "Orientation" and "lifestyle" are theoretical constructs that cannot possibly be descriptive of any couple's commitment to one another. And every couple

works out their own sexual behaviors that sustain and enhance their commitment. We don't prescribe that behavior, whether the couple is heterosexual or homosexual, except to say that it must be within the context of mutuality and fidelity.

Isn't marriage and same-sex blessing the same thing? That they are similar is obvious, as is taking monastic vows, i.e., blessing a vocation to (among other things) celibacy. Each (marriage, blessing unions, monastic vows) grounds a relationship that includes sexual expression in public covenant which gives them "a reality not dependent on the contingent thoughts and feelings of the people involved" and "a certain freedom to 'take time' to mature and become as profoundly nurturing as they can" (Rowan Williams, "The Body's Grace," in *Our Selves, Our Souls and Bodies*, Charles Hefling, ed.). The question remains as to whether "marriage" is appropriately defined as the covenant relationship between a man and a woman only, as is the church's long tradition. The church must continue to wrestle with this issue. To wait until it is solved, however, in order to celebrate the blessing of a faithful same-sex relationship is pastorally irresponsible and theologically unnecessary.

Blessing and justice are inseparable biblical concepts.

Is same-sex blessing a sacrament? We can say it is sacramental. Strictly speaking, in our tradition there are only two sacraments (Baptism and Eucharist). Five other rites are commonly referred to as sacraments because of the church's long experience of them. But in a sacramental understanding of creation, everything in creation has the potential to be sacramental — to mediate the presence/blessing of God. Priests and bishops "pronounce" blessing on those things the community lifts up as showing forth this blessing. The New Testament word for "blessing" is *eulogein*, literally "to speak well of."

What does the word 'sacramental' mean to you?

Can the church withhold blessing? Certainly, in its official, liturgical sense. Priests and bishops should only "pronounce" blessing over those things or persons the community of faith lifts up as being mediators of blessing. That means that the authority to pronounce blessing over particular persons or things can change over time within a community and vary from community to community, particularly from culture to culture. Our Anglican Communion has long said that the only truly universal "blessings" are Baptism and Eucharist *(see the Lambeth Quadrilateral)*.

Prepared by the Claiming the Blessing theology committee: Michael Hopkins, Elizabeth Kaeton, Joseph Lane, Mark Kowalewski, Katie Sherrod, and Sarah Dylan Breuer.

The General Convention of the Episcopal Church Seventy-Third General Convention, Denver, Colorado, July 2000

D039: HUMAN SEXUALITY: ISSUES RELATED TO SEXUALITY AND RELATIONSHIPS

RESOLVED, the House of Bishops concurring, That the members of the 73rd General Convention intend for this Church to provide a safe and just structure in which all can utilize their gifts and creative energies for mission, and be it further.

RESOLVED, We acknowledge that while the issues of human sexuality are not yet resolved, there are currently couples in the Body of Christ and in this Church who are living in marriage and couples in the Body of Christ and in this Church who are living in other life-long committed relationships, and be it further.

RESOLVED, We expect such relationships will be characterized by fidelity, monogamy, mutual affection and respect, careful, honest communication, and the holy love which enables those in such relationships to see in each other the image of God, and be it further.

RESOLVED, We denounce promiscuity, exploitation and abusiveness in the relationships of any of our members, and be it further.

RESOLVED, This Church intends to hold all its members accountable to these values, and will provide for them the prayerful support, encouragement and pastoral care necessary to live faithfully by them, and be it further.

RESOLVED, We acknowledge that some, acting in good conscience, who disagree with the traditional teaching of the Church on human sexuality, will act in contradiction to that position, and be it further.

RESOLVED, That in continuity with previous actions of the General Convention of this Church, and in response to the call for dialogue by the Lambeth Conference, we affirm that those on various sides of controversial issues have a place in the Church, and we reaffirm the imperative to promote conversation between persons of differing experiences and perspectives, while acknowledging the Church's teaching on the sanctity of marriage.

The Gospel vs.

Biblical theology and the debate about rites of blessing: An interview with Walter Brueggemann

BY JULIE A. WORTMAN



JULIE A. WORTMAN, editor/publisher of The Witness *magazine, interviewed Old Testament scholar Walter Brueggemann to get his perspective on the controversial issue of whether churches should approve rites of blessing for lifelong, committed relationships outside of marriage.*

Walter Brueggemann is the William Marcellus McPheeters Professor of Old Testament at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Ga. He has been interested in the interpretive issues that lie behind efforts at Old Testament theology. This includes the relation of the Old Testament to the Christian canon, the Christian history of doctrine, Jewish-Christian interaction and the cultural reality of pluralism. He is the widely read author of many books and articles, including Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy *(Fortress Press, 1997) and* Deep Memory, Exuberant Hope: Contested Truth in a Post-Christian World*, Patrick D. Miller, ed. (Fortress Press, 2000).*

Julie Wortman: The Episcopal Church's 2003 General Convention will be considering a proposal that rites of blessing be developed to support "relationships of mutuality and fidelity other than marriage which mediate the Grace of God." When I asked if you'd be willing to offer your perspective on whether such rites of blessing should be approved, you said that you were just an "exegete" and that maybe we'd want to talk to someone with a "larger horizon" on the issue. What did you mean by that?

Walter Brueggemann: I just think that after you do the Bible stuff, there are people who know the whole ethical tradition of the church better than do I. The arguments can't just be made out of the biblical text as such, but they have to be made in the context of how the church has handled the Bible in many other ethical questions.

Julie Wortman: But I'm told your views are views that the "movable middle" takes seriously. Maybe a big reason is that you're a scholar who writes accessibly, which many scholars don't, but it seems likely that it is also because you're a biblical scholar whose social and political views are grounded in Scripture and ancient tradition. Is it your experience that Scripture is the chief authority for moderate Christians, and is it the chief authority for you?

Walter Brueggemann: The answer to both of those questions is, "Yes." It is the chief authority for moderates and it's the chief authority to me as long as one can qualify that to say that it is the chief authority when imaginatively construed in a certain interpretive trajectory.

I incline to think that most people, including the movable moderates, probably make up their minds on other grounds than the Bible, but then they are uneasy if it collides with the Bible or at least they have an eagerness to be shown how it is that the Bible coheres. I don't think, on most of these contested questions, that anybody — liberal or conservative — really reads right out of the Bible. I think we basically bring hunches to the Bible that arrive in all sorts of ways and then we seek confirmation. And I think that I'm articulate in helping people make those connections with the hunches they already have.

Scripture?

Julie Wortman: Do you think lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (lgbt) folks are sinners?

Walter Brueggemann: Yes, like we all are. So I think that our sexual interpersonal relationships are enormously hazardous and they are the place where we work out our fears and our anxieties and we do that in many exploitative ways. So I don't think that gays and lesbians and so on are exempt from the kind of temptations that all of us live with.

Julie Wortman: Is their struggle for full inclusion in the life of the church a justice struggle?

Walter Brueggemann: Yes. Martin Luther King, Jr., famously said that the arc of history is bent toward justice. And the parallel statement that I want to make is that the arc of the Gospel is bent toward inclusiveness. And I think that's a kind of elemental conviction through which I then read the text. I suspect a lot of people who share this approach simply sort out the parts of the text that are in the service of inclusion and kind of put aside the parts of the text that move in the other direction.

> Martin Luther's conviction that you have to make a distinction between the Gospel and the Bible is a terribly important one... It's very scary now in the church that the Gospel is equated with the Bible, so you get a kind of biblicism that is not noticeably informed by the Gospel.

Julie Wortman: And what do you do with those other parts?

Walter Brueggemann: Well, I think you have to take them seriously. I think that it is clear that much or all of the Bible is time-bound and much of the Bible is filtered through a rather heavy-duty patriarchal ideology. What all of us have to try to do is to sort out what in that has an evangelical future and what in that really is organized against the Gospel. For me, the conviction from Martin Luther that you have to make a distinction between the Gospel and the Bible is a terribly important one. Of course, what Luther meant by the Gospel is whatever Luther meant. And that's what we all do, so there's a highly subjective dimension to

Brueggemann speaks of the "arc of the Gospel" as being "bent toward inclusiveness." What examples can you identify in Scripture and in the tradition of the church that bear this out?

that. But it's very scary now in the church that the Gospel is equated with the Bible, so you get a kind of a biblicism that is not noticeably informed by the Gospel. And that means that the relationship between the Bible and the Gospel is always going to be contested and I suppose that's what all our churches are doing — they're contesting.

Julie Wortman: You've done a lot of work on the Hebrew prophets. What do you think we can learn from the prophets about justice in this particular issue of lgbt people and their quest for justice?

Walter Brueggemann: As you know the prophets are largely focused on economic questions, but I suppose that the way I would transpose that is to say that the prophets are concerned with the way in which the powerful take advantage of the vulnerable. When you transpose that into these questions, then obviously gays and lesbians are the vulnerable and the very loud heterosexual community is as exploitative as any of the people that the prophets critiqued. Plus, on sexuality questions you have this tremendous claim of virtue and morality on the heterosexual side, which of course makes heterosexual ideology much more heavy-handed.

I have the deep conviction that the adrenaline that gathers around the sexuality issues is not really about sexuality. It is about the unarticulated sense people have that the world is falling apart.

Julie Wortman: Yeah. This makes me think of an interview you did with former *Witness* editor Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann about four years ago in which you said, "The church has made a centerpiece of our worship how bad we are." It sort of connects with the virtue thing. Can you say something about that again?

Walter Brueggemann: That's a judgment I make of my Calvinist liturgics tradition. I never have that feeling in Episcopalianism — even though there's a regular confession of sin, it doesn't seem as weighty as a Calvinist confession of sin. But I incline to think that the weight of God's graciousness readily overrides our guilt and what we ought to talk about is God's grace.

The other conviction I have is that, on the whole, I don't think people are troubled by guilt in our culture. I think they are troubled by chaos. And therefore most of our talk about confession and forgiveness is beside the point. The reason that's important to me is that I have the deep conviction that the adrenaline that gathers around the sexuality issues is not really about sexuality. It is about the unarticulated sense people have that the world is falling apart.

The anxiety about chaos is acute among us. Obviously, 9/11 makes that more so, but it was there before that. The world the way we have known it is passing away from us and I believe that people have taken the sexuality issue as the place to draw a line and take a stand, but it's not a line or a stand about sexuality. It's about the emotional sense that the world is a very dangerous place. Sexuality is, I think, one way to talk about that.

Julie Wortman: That opens up for me something that I heard Peter Gomes say

recently about young people at Harvard who are hungry for a life of sacrifice and service. Does that connect with what you're talking about?

Walter Brueggemann: I would have some wonderment about whether it's that clean and simple. But people are becoming aware that the recent practices of material consumption are simply destructive for us and they do not contribute to our humanness. And the more people that know that, the more encouraging it is.

Julie Wortman: What I was thinking is that the sexuality debate seems so beside the point, given the church's call in these times.

Walter Brueggemann: Yeah. Well, in my own [Presbyterian] context, I have the sense that continuing to argue about sexuality is almost a deliberate smoke screen to keep from having to talk about anything that gets at the real issues in our own lives.

I think the issues are economic and, you know, many of the great liberals in my church don't want to talk about economics. The reason for that is many of us liberals are also into consumption in a big way. So this is something else you can talk about without threatening them.

Julie Wortman: What's the nature of blessing in the Old Testament? How is it used there?

Walter Brueggemann: It's used in a lot of ways, but I believe that the primary meaning is that it is the life force of creation that makes abundance possible. If you look at the recital of blessings, for example, in Deuteronomy 28, it's about very mundane material matters. May your livestock prosper. May your bread rise. May your corn grow. So I think it has to do with abundance, productivity, the extravagances of the material world. And a curse then, as in Deuteronomy 28, is that the life force of vitality is withdrawn from us and our future just kind of shrivels up.

Julie Wortman: Is that different from the way Jesus would use it in the New Testament? Especially thinking about the Beatitudes?

Walter Brueggemann: No, I think the Beatitudes are exactly that way when it says, you know, blessed are the peacemakers. I think this means the life force of God's creative spirit is with people who live that way. And that they are destined for abundant well-being. So when you talk about a ritual of blessing, it is the church's sacramental act of asserting that this relationship will be a place in which God's generativity is invested.

Julie Wortman: So why do you think folks balk at the idea of rites of blessing for same-sex relationships that are free of promiscuity, exploitation and abusiveness and that are marked by "fidelity, monogamy, mutual affection, respect, careful honest communication and the holy love that enables those in such relationships to see in each other the image of God," as they did at the Episcopal Church's 2000 General Convention?

Walter Brueggemann: I think it's very complex and it's about anxiety and all of that, but in the light of what I was saying, I think it's a moralistic judgment that people like this are not entitled to well-being. And therefore for the church to sacramentally guarantee well-being for these people is an unearned gift that falls outside the moral calculus.

Now in Presbyterianism the question that's sometimes put to theological articulation is "too many people are being saved!" You don't want all these people saved. That's called universalism. I think it's the same calculus that is articulated by Job's friends, that only the obedient are entitled to well-being. If these relationships are understood to be an act of disobedience, then the church ought not to be asserting well-being for them.

Julie Wortman: So there's a logic to the balking?

Walter Brueggemann: I think it is a logic. I think it's a logic that's rooted in fear and it's rooted in resentment. It is parallel to welfare reform in which the undeserving poor ought not to get food stamps.

Now, morality does matter and living obediently and responsibly is important. But that is always in tension with the other claim we make that the very fact that we exist as God's creatures gives us some entitlements.

Julie Wortman: As a person who bases what he thinks on Scripture, what would you say the biblical standards are for relationships?

Walter Brueggemann: Well, I think fidelity. It takes a lot of interpretation, but it's basically to love God and love neighbor. And the first neighbor I suppose we love is the one to whom we make these holy vows. So that has to do with relationships that are honorable and just and faithful and reliable and all that neat stuff. Then you can argue out what all that means. This is relational thinking.

But the sort of thinking that you can establish out of the Book of Leviticus, where so much of this anti-same-sex blessing stance comes from, involves a substantive material sense of contamination that has nothing to do with relationships. To this way of thinking there is a palpable poison that is turned loose in the community that must be resisted. People who think this way cannot take into account the relational dynamics that we're trying to talk about. That way of talking about physical contamination is deeply rooted in the Bible, though, which is a problem.

Julie Wortman: There are people who say the situation of lgbt people is analogous to that of the canary in a coal mine.

Walter Brueggemann: I've said that in the city homeless people are the canaries, but I think that's right about lgbt people. A general principle is that whoever is the most vulnerable is the canary. That is, it is always the test case about whether we are following Jesus. And then if you extrapolate to say that gays and lesbians are the most vulnerable in this issue, then they are indeed the canary.

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The Big House of Classic Anglicanism

Condensed from a speech at the Claiming the Blessing Conference in St. Louis, MO, in November 2002

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WE ARE HERE TO CLAIM THE BLESSING — that is, to celebrate the gospel at work in the lives of people. Particularly gay and lesbian people, but that's a way of celebrating the gospel at work in the lives of everyone. It's a way of saying that God plays no favorites, that even you, whoever you are, are really and truly welcome here.

I've noticed that people who object to what we are working toward here often speak of it as the work of a 'gay/lesbian lobby,' the functional equivalent of the 'outside agitators' of the not so distant past. They like to say that this is the world's agenda intruding on the life of the church. It's such a silly misconception, really.

The church ought to be delighted, of course, if it found people outside the church beating down its doors, clamoring for its blessing. But I don't see that happening. Some people outside the church could hardly care less; others are actively suspicious. No one is beating down the doors.

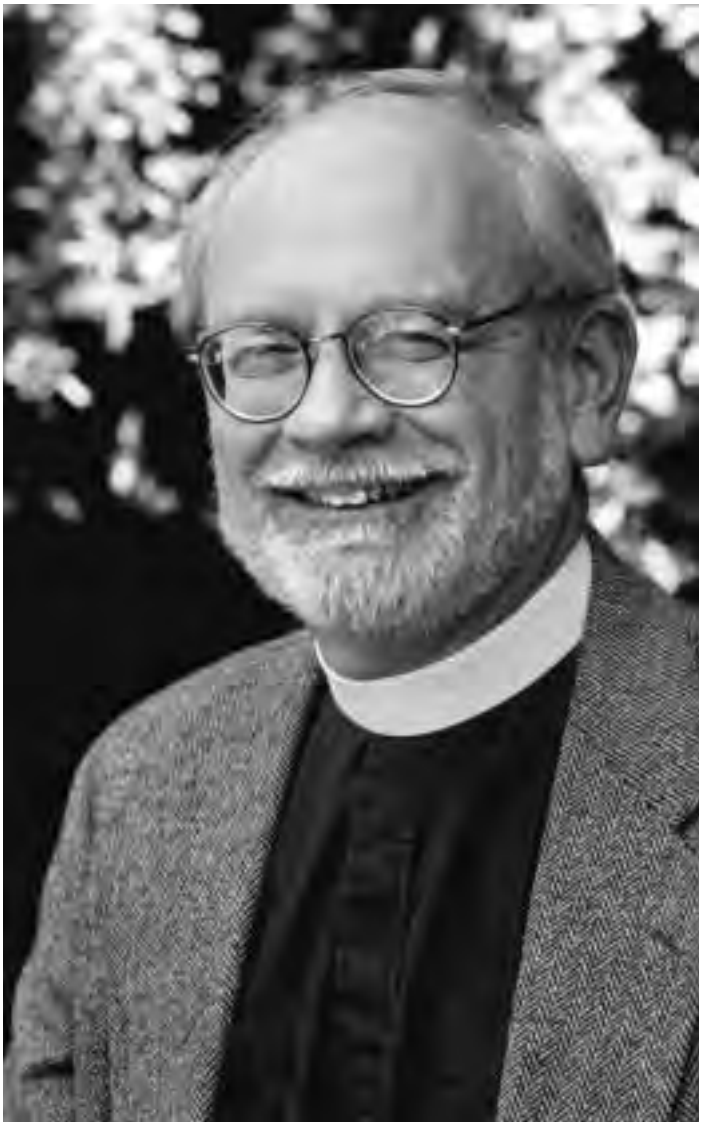
As we all know, this movement has come from within, welling up from the Spirit, from the hearts and minds and lives of faithful church folk. The issue of blessing our unions has arisen for us as a result of our growth in faith, hope, and love; and it summons us to further growth. The last few decades have seen extraordinary outpourings of grace among us. What strikes me when I visit parishes that have joined in this undertaking is that the tone of life in them is not partisan or polemical. What I encounter again and again is a sense of deep gratitude for God's ability and willingness to surprise us with new gifts of insight, with new faith and new hope, even in the difficult times in which we live. And we celebrate these gifts by sharing them with others.

We recognize afresh what Christians have recognized, in their various ways, from the beginning: that human desire, the same desire that informs our human loves, is an integral part of what draws us to God.

God's gifts are not just for us, and we haven't kept them just to ourselves. Over and over again, we see lesbians and gay men, people who would have been hiding in the shadows of our church a generation ago, now coming forward to contribute their gifts, their strength and loyalty and wisdom, freely and openly to the whole community of faith. And heterosexual people who have seen this happening have also been freed to give more generously of themselves.

What about human love makes you most comfortable? — uncomfortable?

The move to have a form of blessing for same-sex unions is, in an important sense, an appeal for justice. But it is even more a renewal of grace, an opportunity for the whole church to renew its trust in God for the future. And it is a celebration of one of God's greatest gifts — our human love for one another.



I want to return to this theme toward the end of this address. But first I want to say a little about what it means that we are Anglicans dealing with issues of sexuality here as Anglicans. Our position is rather ironic, in fact. What we're living out here together is classic Anglicanism. What do I mean by 'classic Anglicanism'? I mean the broad mainstream of Anglicanism as it was shaped in the Reformation. It was formed, in the 16th and 17th centuries, in contradistinction to two other types of Christianity, both of which thought they knew the mind of God pretty well: Roman Catholicism and the Geneva tradition, whose chief English representatives were the Puritans. We worked to distinguish ourselves from both — and especially from their assumption that they knew the mind of God so well.

This isn't just a modern way of interpreting those remote times. It was their own way of seeing the issues, too. It was particularly the Puritan challenge that caused Richard Hooker to write Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity. Hooker put the theological challenge that confronted classic Anglicanism very succinctly in a marginal note he wrote in a religious tract: 'Two things there are which greatly trouble these later times: one that the Church of Rome cannot, another that Geneva will not erre.'



Classic Anglicanism, by contrast, focused not on having a detailed and certain knowledge of the mind of God, but on maintaining life and conversation in the faithful community. We believe that no one will ever know it all, but that the Sprit will work with us in the unity (not uniformity) of the church to bring us toward truth.

Hooker was broadly sympathetic to the theology of Calvin and the Puritans. What he objected to was their utter certainty of knowing the mind of God — their unwillingness to err. Classic Anglicanism values the ongoing life and conversation of the faithful community, however awkward and irritating it may become, far above such doctrinal assurance, attractive though it may seem. We are pretty sure the assurance is mistaken. We are also pretty sure that God's help will not fail us if we continue to work and pray together.

This Anglican focus on maintaining the unity of the church has created a big house, one with room for all sorts of people

This Anglican focus on maintaining the unity of the church has created a big house, one with room for all sorts of people. What's held us together is that classic Anglican concern for the life and conversation of the faithful community. I have yet to hear any advocate of blessing gay and lesbian unions threaten to leave over the issue. The threats of schism come from elsewhere.

If there are those within the Episcopal Church who already know the mind of God too well to go on participating in this conversation, to go on maintaining the unity of the church — well, we have to say to them, 'We do not want you to go. We want to have you in the faithful community. But we are maintaining the classic Anglican tradition here. And we will not give that up to keep you here.'

What about Anglicanism is most important or appealing to you? Examples: the via media, the use of scripture/ tradition/reason in deciding matters of faith and practice, Anglican's bias toward including rather than excluding?

To move toward the blessing of lesbian and gay unions is important because all members of the church ought to be treated equally and with equal respect. But there is even more to it. It is important because it touches on the love that is at the very heart of our faith, of our relationship with God. It's a truism that Christianity is focused on love — and equally a truism that we fail to live up to that. Our attitudes toward those with whom we disagree lapse easily into quite

savage hostility. I hope that we who have experienced this kind of hostility from others will learn not to let it infect and consume us, will keep discovering ways to speak with love and respect even when we are not met with the like.

We recognize afresh what Christians have recognized, in their various ways, from the beginning: that human desire, the same desire that informs our human loves, is an integral part of what draws us to God. The Song of Songs enshrines this principle in the heart of our Scriptures. The love of the human beloved is our closest, most decisive analogy to the love of God. Both loves are difficult to express adequately. What I am saying is that without human love, we would have almost no analogy for our relationship with God. Flawed as all human love is, it is still the best thing in our makeup, the brightest treasure that God placed there. And it is by this that God calls us home.

Well-meaning people sometimes say to me, 'Why can't the gay and lesbian community just hold back on this point so that the church can get on to more important things in its mission?' To that, my answer is, 'Spiritually, there may not be anything more important.' I do not say that to slight the other very real sufferings of the world — the disaster, say, of AIDS in Africa or the unfinished struggle against racism here and throughout the world. I say it rather because our reluctant, body-avoidant Christian psyche needs to understand that this blessing of unions is not finally, for lesbians and gay men, about social convenience, or status, or even justice. It is about our access to God.

We, of course, know that our loves give us access to God. But the church at large needs to understand that, too. And as the church comes to understand it, I believe all Christians will be freed to rediscover the passion of their relatedness to God in new ways. This is not just for lesbians and gay men. It is for everyone.

What is our task now? Our task, first and foremost, is to live as people of faith, to live in celebration of God's generosity, to live as people shaped radically, from the ground up, by our experience of the gospel, to live as people converted to trust in God, to hope in God's continuing presence with us, to love the way God loves us.

And in our particular place and time, one way we have to do this is to hold up the loves of gay and lesbian people as opportunities for blessing. Through them, God's blessing can come to us and does come to us. Through them, God's blessing can and does come to the people around us. For the church to extend its blessing does not make our unions better; it simply acknowledges and gives thanks for the blessings of God already present.

The church's blessing is important not because God cannot bless without it! God is not constrained by our fears and anxieties, by our hugging of blessings to ourselves and denial of them to our neighbors. God blesses where God wills. But we, the church, need to be a part of that blessing — for our sake, not for God's. That's why we continue to move toward this goal — so that grace and blessing will continue to abound ever more and more, in this world as in the age to come.

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Reason

Eight frequently about blessing

1 How do we, as Episcopalians, make moral decisions? What is the basis of our authority to make such decisions?

Karl Barth once observed that doing theology is much like the attempt to paint a bird in flight. That image is an apt one for describing the way in which Anglicans make moral decisions. Wrestling with the Word of the living God in the midst of the ever-changing landscape of the human scene makes it impossible to write in stone an eternal formulation for a moral code. In making moral decisions, however, as Anglicans, we always begin with Scripture. We also look to what the tradition of our faith has had to say, being aware that both Scripture and tradition have been translated in the voice that was inspired by God to speak a Word of Truth to its own generation. We carefully consider the impact of archeological, scientific and anthropological discoveries as well as the insights from other theological perspectives, including those developed by people who live on the margins of society. Anglican moral decision making also takes seriously the human experience in our time and place as an arena for God's ongoing revelation in the unfolding stories of our lives of faith as children of God. This often finds us in a messy, chaotic predicament that seems antithetical to the desire of Christ for us “to be one.” The exhortation of Paul to the Church in Philippi may bring us some guidance, “...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for God is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.” (2:12b–13) In the words of a resolution from the 1920 Lambeth Conference (Resolution 9:VIII), “We believe that for all, the truly equitable approach to union is by way of mutual deference to one another's consciences.”

How has the church's consideration of blessing same-sex unions called you to "work out your own salvation"?

2 How do Episcopalians understand God's Word to be revealed through Scripture? In light of that understanding, how do we deal with those passages of Scripture that have historically been used to label homosexual relationships as sinful?

As Christians, we believe that "all Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16–17). We believe these things about Scripture, but we confess only one Word of God: Jesus Christ, come in the flesh (John 1:14). So we are careful to focus on Christ, and we note that immediately preceding 2 Timothy's oft-quoted sentence about the usefulness of scripture, 2 Timothy's readers are urged to learn not just from Paul's letters or his teaching, but from his conduct, aim in life, patience, love, and steadfastness in persecution (2 Timothy 3:10–11).

We join in a tradition going back to the writers of our Scriptures themselves when we say that while Scripture is inspired, useful, and authoritative, it is not the only venue through which we experience the Spirit, grow in faith and righteousness, and find authority. We are held in interpretive communities of those who taught us not only what words mean, but the context in which we should read any particular set of words. These interpretive communities serve as a "cloud of witnesses" as we read Scripture, but they also kick up a lot of dust; thus, we locate ultimate authority in

What aspect of being part of an 'interpretive community' in conversation with scripture calls you to (a) remain the same, or (b) be open to new possibilities and interpretations?

asked questions relationships

Christ rather than in any particular interpretation of a text, and we find ourselves called to use spiritual discernment to listen for Christ's voice amidst the cacophony of voices claiming to speak in Christ's name.

Scripture itself provides some insight into how Christians can practice discernment, and while Scripture may inform our discernment, it calls upon us to consider the example as well as the words of Jesus and his apostles, and it challenges us to imitate above all the example of Jesus' self-giving love. "From this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error," words which apply not just to what precedes them in the text, but to what follows them: that "everyone who loves is born of God and knows God," while "whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love" (1 John 4:6–8).

Sincere Christians frequently differ in their opinion of what conduct is most loving, even as they frequently differ on interpretation of biblical texts, including those which have been historically used to label homosexual relationships as sinful. What we must keep in mind at all times is that our conduct toward each other when we disagree bears powerful witness to the spirit at work among us. The extent to which we bear witness in our life together to the Spirit who has made us one Body, and especially the extent to which we find ways to honor those whom we perceive as weaker in the faith, is the extent to which we ourselves serve as the ongoing revelation of Christ, the Head of the Body and the very Word of God made flesh, to the world.

We are instructed in righteousness in this regard by the combined witness of Scripture, the example of apostles and saints (Tradition) and the Spirit's work in the saints today as we gather in community (Reason). We believe this to be a solid hermeneutical model for the church as we seek to live into our identity in Christ, both as individuals and in our relationships with one another.

3 What do we mean when we talk about faithful relationships other than marriage that show forth the purposes and glory of God?

The 2000 General Convention, in Resolution D039s, offered the foundation of a theology of holy relationship that transcends sexual orientation. It acknowledged within the Body of Christ the presence of life-long, committed relationships other than marriage and articulated the expectation that such relationships be characterized by "the holy love which enables those in such relationships to see in each other the image of God." Further, it declared that we as a church "will provide for them the prayerful support, encouragement and pastoral care necessary to live faithfully." Whether or not we think of the blessing of faithful relationships other than marriage as "a sacrament," D039 declares that such relationships have the potential to be sacramental, i.e., "show forth the purposes and glory of God" Faithful relationships which meet the standards expressed in D039 are clearly signs of God's radical grace, by which God in Christ indiscriminately chooses to love and save humankind, and therefore meet the theological and pastoral criterion for blessing.

What loving relationships (marriage, partnerships, etc.) have you encountered that have been sacramental for you?

4 What does it mean for the church to bless something or someone?

When the church chooses "to bless" something it is declaring that a particular person or persons or thing is a gift/blessing from God and his/her/its/their purpose is to participate in covenanted relationship with God and with all creation, i.e., to bless God in return. To bless such a relationship—whether between a man and a woman or between two men or two women—is to do this very thing: to declare that this relationship is a blessing from God and that its purpose is to bless God, both within the context of the community of faith (therefore in a supportive and accountable context).

When have you experienced seeing God bless something or someone from which, at least initially, you would have been inclined not to bless? What did you learn in that experience?

5 Yet it has been said that blessing same-sex unions "undermines marriage." If we authorize this rite, what message will we be sending about sexual morality and traditional family values?

To affirm same-sex blessings does not diminish the vocation of marriage between men and women. Rather, blessing same-sex unions celebrates the diversity of creation and the various ways Christians create families. Moreover, as we listen to one another, we will find that we share many values, although they may be expressed differently. Families are best defined less by the characteristics of their participants (e.g. a man, woman and children), and more by the quality of the rela-

How would the church be bettered by offering blessing and support to more relationships between two people rather than fewer? (That is, relationships other than marriage in addition to those of holy matrimony.)

tionships. Same-sex couples work against the odds to create families that may not look like what has been called the traditional nuclear family, yet these families may serve as sources of support, nurture and love as well. The message we will be sending about sexual morality is that the expectations of fidelity, monogamy, mutual affection and holy love are the same for all Christians … gay or straight, bisexual or transgender. The message we will be sending about traditional family values is that those are the values that emerge from significant, committed human relationships, including, but not limited to, marriage.

6 But isn't blessing a relationship the same as the Sacrament of Marriage? Why will this rite go into the Book of Occasional Services and not the Prayer Book?

Christian marriage is the loving, committed relationship between two people reflecting the love that Christ has for the church. The love between these partners serves as an icon or a reminder to the Christian community that the love of God comes to us in the love of another person. The term marriage has historically referred to the union of a man and a woman and we do not propose to change that definition. We do propose raising up other forms of relationship and family as signs of God's love in the world. By blessing the relationships of gay men and lesbians, and others for whom marriage is not available, the church points to the manifold ways Christians can form families, including single people and men and women who live in religious communities. Because, however, it is clear that the entire church is not of a mind on these questions, we are asking that such a rite be placed in the Book of Occasional Services and thus be clearly optional for use.

The Preface to the Book of Occasional Services states that the materials included I therein "arise out of the specific use of worshipping communities engaged in the process of creating liturgical responses to particular occasions in the life of the church." How does this rubric inform your understanding of the potential use of the optional rites being sought for blessing the relationships of those for whom marriage is not available?

7 Will this rite cause schism in the church? Will it cause a split in the Episcopal Church or threaten our relationship with the rest of the Anglican Communion?

No one in the church wants schism—even those who threaten it. There is, therefore, no reason for the authorization of a rite of blessing to split the Episcopal Church or the Anglican Communion. In terms of the Communion, member provinces of the Anglican Communion have always acted with "mutual deference," as equal partners. In terms of the Episcopal Church, dioceses and even parishes have rarely been forced to "toe the line" on matters of conscience, except in the instance of geographical diocesan unity. A rite for the blessing of a relationship between two persons for whom marriage is not available will not be forced upon anyone. That is why the request is for a rite to be included in the Book of Occasional Services, a set of authorized but optional rites. While these rites allow for the diversity of practice in our church, they do not bind others to use those rites if in conscience they do not wish to use them. No one is or will be compelled to bless same-sex unions in this church, but the church must also respect the theological judgment of those who wish to bless these relationships by providing such rites for the use of the church. It is true that many view this issue as fundamentally about the authority of Scripture, and therefore, central. At most, however, it is about the interpretation of Scripture, and if how we interpret Scripture is to split us apart, we are in for splitting on a whole host of issues. The larger question is whether or not this issue is so central to our common faith so as to split us apart. The answer is, "no."

What, at its best, does the idea of 'mutual deference' signal to you?

8 Why now? Why the sense of urgency to pass this authorizing resolution at this General Convention? Aren't there more important issues that need our attention?

The urgency is two-fold. It is first of all pastoral. The church has already recognized that committed relationships other than marriage exist in the church and that they can and should be "characterized by fidelity, monogamy, mutual affection and respect, careful, honest communication, and the holy love which enables those in such relationships to see in each other the image of God" (Resolution D039, 2000 General Convention). As people of Common Prayer, since we acknowledge these relationships exist and we state that we expect them to show forth the glory of God, then a public rite to celebrate that reality and support that vocation is simply essential to us. Second the urgency is the mission of the church. We do need desperately to move on to other important issues and other focuses demanding our energy. We cannot do that while this issue remains an unsettled source of continued wrangling. The time to move on for the sake of the mission of the church is now. The way to move on is by claiming the blessing of our Anglican heritage and, finding a middle way, a via media, authorize rites for blessings for inclusion in the Book of Occasional Services as an option for those who choose to employ them and getting on with our baptismal call to proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ to all people. ●

What is your greatest fear about (a) people leaving the church as result of General Convention authorizing a rite for the blessing of a relationship between two persons for whom marriage is not available, or (b) people coming to the church as a result of offering such blessing?