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News from Our Anglican World Vol. 10, No. 2 – 3 September
2016

"Everywhere in the New Testament God's truth is something to be "done", not something only to be "believed". It carries with it demands, duties, obligations. The evangelical faith radically transforms those who believe and embrace it." ~ John R. W. Stott

"Truth is no longer championed. Doctrine has been abandoned and feelings have been put on a pedestal. Personal preference now reigns supreme in many church circles, and those who stand strong on biblical doctrine are dissed as being narrow-minded, judgmental and unloving."

~ Fr. Bill Muehlenberg

"The invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury to the Primates meeting in January 2016 to Archbishop Foley Beach of the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) is another recognition of the facts on the ground. ACNA is an Anglican Church that holds the Anglican teachings which are recognized by a large number of Provinces from the Global South. On this basis, the Archbishop did not want to exclude anybody." ~ Archbishop Mouneer Anis, Presiding Bishop of Jerusalem and the Middle East, Bishop of Egypt

"The Creeds (The Nicene Creed and the Apostles Creed) are to be accepted as good and faithful summaries of the core of the Faith, and as faithful to the Scriptures. They are to be used in the life and work of the Church. Many churches are woefully inadequate in teaching the faithful the central doctrines of the Faith today" ~ Bishop John H. Rodgers, Jr., Th.D.

"The Lord's Supper deeply symbolic and centrally significant in the worship of the Lord. It is a great gift of Christ and is to be treasured and entered into with penitent faith, thanksgiving and anticipation" ~ Ibid.

The Quietus Ends

For those of you who were thinking these occasional newsletters had come to an end, any delay in issuing new entries has been caused only by the lack of news worth reporting, which may be interpreted as "good news".

This issue is entirely devoted to a letter from the Chairman of the GAFCON Primates Council, which eloquently states the current situation within the Anglican Communion and it highlights the importance of the Anglican Church in North America, of which CHC and the REC are actively involved. Please take the time to read Archbishop Okoh's words:

Pastoral Letter from GAFCON Chairman Archbishop Nicholas Okoh

30 Aug 2016

My dear people of God,

I have just returned from a very encouraging visit to the United States where I met with my brother Archbishop Foley Beach and I rejoice to see how the Anglican Church in North America is growing strong and standing firm.

As the steep decline of The Episcopal Church (TEC) of the United States and the Anglican Church of Canada continues, despite the hope of its leaders that reshaping it in the image of secular culture would attract, we give thanks for the Anglican Church of North America and remember the promise of our Lord Jesus Christ 'I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it' (Matthew 16:18).

GAFCON recognises that the Church is not ours. It belongs to Jesus and it is Jesus who builds the Church through his word. We are to be his instruments and not presume to be the architects. Schism happens, as it has in North America, when church leaders take the design into their own

hands. Others were prepared to make a costly stand and a faithful Anglican Church in North America exists today because some Anglican Primates understood that once the boundaries of orthodoxy were crossed, they could not stand back and fail to help.

Without that bold action and the commitment to the Anglican Church in North America as a new province at GAFCON's Jerusalem Conference in 2008, a whole continent would have been lost to orthodox witness within the Anglican Communion.

But now what happened in North America is being repeated elsewhere. If not effectively challenged, false teaching is contagious, especially when it is well funded. At the recent meeting in Kigali of the Council of Anglican Provinces of Africa (CAPA), the London based Anglican Communion Secretary General, Josiah Idowu-Fearon commended the relief and development work of the Anglican Alliance, but new research by the **Institute for Religion and Democracy** shows close links between this organisation and TEC. Even now the Anglican Church of Southern Africa is contemplating the overturning of Scripture by legitimising the blessing of same sex unions in breach of Lambeth Resolution I.10 of 1998, despite reaffirming it at the recent meeting of the Council of Anglican Churches of Africa in Rwanda.

However, the greatest cause for concern continues to be the British Isles. The Scottish Episcopal Church has already opened the door wide to conducting same sex 'marriages' while in England, Salisbury Cathedral has become the latest of a growing number of cathedrals which publicly support and even bless 'Gay Pride' marches. Chichester Diocese has issued a statement commending those of its churches 'with open doors to celebrate all that the Pride Festival stands for' while the website of the Church of England's Diocese of Europe celebrates the 'truly joyful occasion' of the same sex 'marriage' of a member of one of its congregations conducted by the Lutheran Bishop of Copenhagen.

I am therefore encouraged that seventy two members of the Church of England's General Synod have written an open letter to the English bishops ahead of meetings planned later this year calling on them not to compromise by adopting practices that are contrary to Lambeth Resolution I.10 (The Resolution the defines marriage to be only between a man and a woman) and warning that to do so 'could set the Church of England adrift from her apostolic inheritance.' Bishops in particular are called to be faithful successors to the Apostles in their teaching and the

Apostle Paul sets out what is required of a faithful episcopate when he instructs Titus that an overseer 'must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it' (Titus 1:9).

However, the English House of Bishops has failed so far to demonstrate that it has the will to resist compromise and I therefore call on GAFCON in the UK and the Anglican Mission in England to demonstrate that they have the necessary courage and faith in a context which to a large extent they alone can grapple with.

The challenge we face now is that the Church of England's problems are being exported to the rest of the Communion. If successive Archbishops of Canterbury had used their powers to teach and to gather in order to rebuke and inhibit those who audaciously contradict the Communion's apostolic inheritance, the contagion of false teaching could have been contained. Instead, as the April meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council demonstrated, endless dialogue, promoted as 'walking together', has made matters worse. To maintain institutional unity, issues of doctrinal integrity are not faced. Instead, respectability has been given to a false gospel while reducing orthodox belief to an option and casting doubt on the trustworthiness of the Bible.

We face unprecedented global challenges, but the successful establishment of the Anglican Church in North America, now formally recognised by the majority of the world's Anglicans, is a sign of hope. God in his mercy has raised up GAFCON for such a time as this to call the Anglican Communion back to its biblical roots. Let us therefore stand shoulder to shoulder as a global family and be men and women of courage, committed to the glory of Jesus in the Church which he has purchased by his own shed blood.

The Most Revd Nicholas D. Okoh

Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria and Chairman, the GAFCON Primates Council

Rudy Schenken, Parish Administrator

Pro Cathedral Church of the Holy Communion

Dallas, Texas