

Canterbury Tales, January 2016

From January 11 to 15 the leaders of the 38 Anglican Communion Provinces, from across the world, met in England in the crypt of Canterbury Cathedral. Of great interest to us at Holy Communion is that our leader, The Most Reverend Foley Beach, Archbishop and Primate of the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA)^[1], as the 39th official present, was, for the first time invited to participate with full voice and vote.

The first and primary agenda item was to address the Episcopal Church's changes to the doctrine of marriage. It was unanimously agreed that these changes, by the Episcopal Church, represent a fundamental departure from the faith and teaching held by a majority Anglican provinces on the doctrine of marriage. This doctrine has always held that marriage is a lifelong commitment between one man and one woman.

Given the seriousness of this matter, a majority of these leaders decided that for a period of three years The Episcopal Church should no longer represent the Anglican Communion on any ecumenical and interfaith bodies, should not be appointed or elected to an internal standing committee and that while participating in its internal bodies, they will not take part in decision making on any issues pertaining to doctrine or polity. Further, the Archbishop of Canterbury was asked to appoint a Task Group with the intention of restoration of relationships and the rebuilding of mutual trust among the provinces.

The Primates, arising out of its discipleship to Jesus Christ, condemned homophobic prejudice and violence and resolved to work together to offer pastoral care and loving service irrespective of sexual orientation, and that God's love for every human being is the same, regardless of their sexuality, and that the church should never by its actions give any other impression.

As Archbishop Beach said in his public statement following these meetings, "It took many steps for the Anglican Communion to come to this current crisis. This is a good step back in the right direction, but it will take many more if the Communion is to be restored."

[1]The Anglican Church in North America unites 112,000 Anglicans in nearly 1,000 congregations across the United States, Canada, and Mexico into a single Church. On April 16, 2009, it was recognized as a province of the global Anglican Communion, by the Primates of the Global Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans, and in December 2015, by the Global South Anglicans. We are in the mainstream of Christianity, both globally and historically – the biblically-faithful way of following Jesus and being part of the "One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. "As Anglicans, this orthodoxy is defined by and centered on our church's classic formularies – the Book of Common Prayer, including the Ordinal, and the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion – which all point back to the authority of the Holy Bible and articulate foundational principles of the Anglican tradition throughout the world. We wholeheartedly embrace The Jerusalem Declaration, established in 2008, the founding declaration of the Global Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans.

Links:

Final Communique of the 2016 primates gathering in Canterbury, 15 Jan 2016:

<http://www.primates2016.org/articles/2016/01/14/statement-primates-2016/>

The Jerusalem Declaration: <http://gafcon.org/resources/jerusalem-statement/>

The Anglican Church in North America: <http://anglicanchurch.net/>

The Reformed Episcopal Church: <http://www.rechurch.org/>

The Church of the Holy Communion Dallas:

https://www.google.com/?gws_rd=ssl#q=church+of+the+holy+communion+dallas