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## **A Statement from the American Anglican Council on the Executive Council Letter to the Anglican Consultative Council**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **A Statement from the American Anglican Council on the Executive Council Letter to the Anglican Consultative Council**

The Executive Council of the Episcopal Church USA (ECUSA) met yesterday and has announced they will refrain from "official participation" in the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) meeting scheduled for June 2005 in Nottingham, England. In their letter to the ACC Chair, however, the Executive Council writes they will still send their delegation.

We find it very disturbing that the Episcopal Church leadership met in seclusion, continuing a pattern of secrecy. In addition, we note that they seem incapable of acquiescing fully to the requests and clear expectations of the Primates as expressed in their 2005 Communiqué. As with the House of Bishops' March 2005 Covenant Statement, the Executive Council has professed compliance to the Primates while dictating their own terms:

"In the spirit of the Covenant Statement recently adopted by our House of Bishops, we voluntarily withdraw our members from official participation in the ACC as it meets in Nottingham. As an expression of our desire "to bear one another's burdens" (Galatians 6:2), we are asking our members to be present at the meeting to listen to reports on the life and ministry we share across the Communion and to be available for conversation and consultation." [Episcopal News Service—Executive Council Letter to Anglican Consultative Council]

The Executive Council's letter to the Anglican Consultative Council is manipulative and deceptive. The Primates were clear and direct in their call to the Episcopal Church and Anglican Church of Canada:

"...we request that the Episcopal Church (USA) and the Anglican Church of Canada voluntarily withdraw their members from the Anglican Consultative Council for the period leading up to the next Lambeth Conference. During that same period we request that both churches respond through their relevant constitutional bodies to the questions specifically addressed to them in the Windsor Report as they consider their place within the Anglican Communion." (cf. paragraph 8)

While the language of the Communiqué is gracious and diplomatic, the intent is crystal clear—the American and Canadian Churches have been told to stand down from the Anglican Consultative Council. In addition, they have been presented with a clear choice to permanently walk together or walk apart. The parameters for "walking together" are also definitive: the Episcopal Church must repent of its heretical actions and embrace once more in word and in practice the faith and order of Anglicanism. We cannot accept that the Executive Council does not understand what the Primates have requested, and therefore we must assume that this is a deliberate plan to circumvent and ignore the full intent of the Communiqué.

The Executive Council is setting up an opportunity to lobby and influence the ACC meeting. Given the fact that ECUSA is insisting on such a presence, it seems a matter of justice and fair play that those who are excluded from ECUSA

and isolated because they stand against revisionism should also be present and "available for conversation and consultation". We call upon the Anglican Consultative Council to deny the Executive Council's request; however, if the ECUSA delegation attends, we believe it is critical to include voices that offer a very different perspective, one that is consistent with Scripture and the accepted faith and order of the Anglican Communion.

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ATTACHMENT:

From Executive Council: A letter to Bishop John Paterson  
Wednesday, April 13, 2005

>[From the Episcopal New Service of the United States of America](#)

A letter to the Rt Revd John C Paterson, Chair of the Anglican Consultative Council, from the Most Revd Frank T Griswold and the Very Revd George L W Werner on behalf of the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church.

The Executive Council met in special session at the University of St Mary of the Lake in Mundelein, Illinois, to consider the request of the Primates to "voluntarily withdraw" our members for a time from participation in the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC). This is a weighty matter for the Episcopal Church since the ACC is the primary instrument of communion in which the fullness of the Body of Christ is represented. Representative consultation is an essential component of our life as a church. We struggled to discern how best to respond to the request.

We are acutely aware that we meet in a time of great distress and need in the wider world. War, famine and disease stalk the earth. We express our passionate commitment to the mission of the church and especially to the United Nations Millennium Development Goals endorsed by our General Convention.

We are unanimous in our desire to do all that we can to preserve and further the bonds of affection in the "new humanity" created by Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:15). This in our view constitutes the very essence of our life together as Anglican Christians. We firmly believe that the only way to address the things that divide us is for "Christians of good will ... to engage honestly and frankly with each other" (Windsor Report, paragraph 146). We are therefore heartened by the decision of the Chair of the ACC, responding to the Primates' communiqué to include in the program for the upcoming meeting in Nottingham an opportunity for a consultation at which major contributions will come from the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Church of Canada.

We are mindful that Christ has made us members of one body, and that no part can say to any other "I have no need of you." At the same time we wish to express our openness to the concerns and beliefs of others. In the spirit of the Covenant Statement recently adopted by our House of Bishops, we voluntarily withdraw our members from official participation in the ACC as it meets in Nottingham. As an expression of our desire "to bear one another's burdens" (Galatians 6:2), we are asking our members to be present at the meeting to listen to reports on the life and ministry we share across the Communion and to be available for conversation and consultation.

Please be assured of our prayers and continuing support for the mission we share in the Risen Christ.

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