



**Diocese of New Westminster
Anglican Church of Canada**

Diocesan Response to The Windsor Report

**Adopted by the 103rd session of the Synod of the Diocese
meeting on May 13 and 14, 2005**

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Executive Summary

In response to the Windsor Report, we affirm

- * that communion with God and one another in Christ is both a divine gift and expectation
- * that communion is not an abstraction, but a lived reality that finds its concrete expression in communities of faith
- * that the primary task of the church is to engage in God's mission to the world
- * that we currently face very serious challenges to the unity of the Anglican Communion and we regret and repent of any part that we have played in the failures that have led to them
- * that the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral is a sufficient statement of the necessary elements of the catholic tradition
- * that the Holy Scriptures are the supremely authoritative witness to the triune God who accommodates divine revelation to the limitations of human beings
- * that there can be legitimate differences among sincere Christians of good faith over the blessing of same-sex unions and we are determined to protect the freedom of conscience of those who dissent from diocesan policy on this matter
- * that the episcopate is a vital and fruitful dimension of our life as a Communion
- * that the "Shared Episcopal Ministry" scheme of the Canadian House of Bishops is an appropriate model of supplementary episcopal oversight for dissenting congregations
- * that unauthorized interventions by other primates and bishops in the affairs of our diocese are inappropriate and unnecessary
- * that there is a need for a Communion-wide exploration of the nature and functions of authority within the Anglican Communion
- * that ongoing study of the biblical and theological rationales for and against blessing same-sex unions is required
- * that any demonizing of homosexual persons is a gross affront to Christian charity and to the proper principles of pastoral care

We cannot affirm

- * that our diocese has made no serious attempt to explain or consult with appropriate bodies within the Anglican Communion regarding our actions in authorizing the blessing of same-sex unions
- * that the role and influence of the Archbishop of Canterbury should be strengthened as advocated by the Windsor Report
- * that the Lambeth Conference and the Primates' Meeting should exercise anything more than monitory, consultative and advisory functions for member churches of the Communion

We recommend

- * that a moratorium be enacted on the authorization of any additional parishes as communities in which same-sex unions may be blessed in our diocese pending the actions of General Synod 2007

Introductory Terms of Reference

1) The release of the Windsor Report by the Archbishop of Canterbury's Lambeth Commission on Communion in October 2004 not only represents a major contribution to international discussions of "ways in which communion and understanding could be enhanced" where serious differences over issues of human sexuality have threatened the life of the Anglican Communion. It was intended, in the words of Commission Chair, Archbishop Robin Eames of Armagh, to be "part of a pilgrimage towards healing and reconciliation," to which responses were welcomed and encouraged from member churches around the world.¹ Thus in his Pastoral Letter of November 30, the Canadian Primate, Archbishop Andrew Hutchison, issued an open invitation to both individuals and dioceses "to share their thoughts on the Windsor Report" with him.² Likewise, in their Communiqué of February 24, 2005, the Primates of the Communion, whilst offering their own reflections on the Windsor Report, extended further time for the Anglican Church of Canada to consider its recommendations and asked for specific responses to questions addressed to our national church.³

2) In his Pastoral Message of October 21, 2004, Bishop Michael Ingham welcomed the publication of the Windsor Report and expressed the view that "we need to listen carefully to what it says...and study it with open hearts and minds." Our bishop also committed our Diocesan Synod to a thorough review of the report's recommendations with a view to deciding our "official response" to them.⁴ It is in pursuit of Bishop Michael's commitment, as well as the invitations of the Lambeth Commission and the world's Primates, that we offer this document. It was originally drafted by the Revd. Dr. Richard Leggett and the Revd. John Oakes, who undertook the task in search of diocesan unity and consensus despite their differing theological perspectives.⁵ It has subsequently been revised in consultation with delegates to our Synod and with other members of the Diocese of New Westminster for presentation to Synod as a whole. Our hope and prayer is that it will contribute to what Archbishop Eames has called "the enhanced levels of understanding which are essential for the future of the Anglican Communion."⁶

¹ The Lambeth Commission on Communion, *The Windsor Report 2004* (London: Anglican Communion Office, 2004), at www.anglicancommunion.org/windsor2004/downloads/index.cfm, 5-6.

² Archbishop Andrew Hutchison, "A Pastoral Letter from the Primate," 30 November 2004 at <http://www.anglican.ca/primate/communications/pastoral-letter-2004-12-01.htm>.

³ "The Anglican Communion Primates' Meeting Communiqué," 24 February 2005 at <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/acns/articles/39/00/acns3948.cfm>, paragraphs 13, 14.

⁴ Bishop Michael Ingham, "A Pastoral Message," 20 October 2004 at <http://www.vancouver.anglican.ca/Portal/Default.aspx?tabid=1&mode=Story&StoryId=49>.

⁵ The Revd. Dr. Richard Leggett is Professor of Liturgical Studies at Vancouver School of Theology and a self-confessed "liberal catholic." The Revd. John Oakes is Rector of Holy Trinity, Vancouver, and would describe himself as a "charismatic conservative" in theological terms. Both of the original authors wish to point out that the views expressed in this document have been intended to represent those of members of the Synod of the Diocese of New Westminster, and are not necessarily their own or those of any other institution with which they are affiliated.

⁶ The Windsor Report 2004, 7.

Section A – The Purposes and Benefits of Communion

3) It is important for us to state from the outset that we value our membership and participation in the Anglican Communion very highly. We share the theological commitment of the Lambeth Commission to a thoroughly biblical and trinitarian vision of Christian communion as “the specific practical embodiment and fruit of the gospel itself, the good news of God’s action in Jesus Christ to deal once and for all with evil and to inaugurate the new creation.”⁷ We agree that “communion with God and one another in Christ is...both a gift and a divine expectation” and we treasure the gift as much as we strive to honour the expectation.⁸ We also embrace the Commission’s understanding of the Anglican Communion in particular as “a communion of churches...nourished by the presence and work of the Holy Spirit, building up the body in love” through such means as common prayer, the reading of Scripture and a network of relationships “rooted in its history through the See of Canterbury.”⁹ So we join with members of the Lambeth Commission in acknowledging “the great achievements of our unity and communion” and we offer praise and gratitude to God for them.¹⁰

4) At the same time, we, like the authors of the Windsor Report, recognize the gravity of current challenges to our unity as a Communion and we lament and repent of any part that we have played in the failures that have led to them. Our bishop has already expressed, in his initial response to the report, our common “regret” for “the consequences of our actions with sadness.”¹¹ We re-affirm that statement, and we repent of all the ways in which we have fallen short of God’s ideals in our dealings with other members of the Communion and thus have breached the “bonds of affection” that bind us together. Our diocese continues to contain and support a diversity of opinion on this issue, including many who dissent from diocesan policy.¹² The majority of us believe, with Bishop Michael, that in authorizing the blessing of same-sex unions, our Synod has acted rightly and justly to “make the church more welcoming and open to all Christians, whatever their sexual orientation.”¹³ But we are sincerely sorry for any injury that we may have caused our brothers and sisters in the Communion, both nationally and internationally, as we have pursued this course of action.

⁷ Ibid., paragraph 3.

⁸ Ibid., paragraph 5.

⁹ Ibid., paragraph 7.

¹⁰ Ibid., paragraph 9.

¹¹ Bishop Michael Ingham, “Media Statement,” 18 October 2004 at: <http://www.vancouver.anglican.ca/Portal/Default.aspx?tabid=1&mode=Story&StoryId=48>.

¹² See, for example, the views of the coalition of parishes describing themselves as the “Anglican Communion in New Westminster,” as posted on the organization’s website at: <http://www.acinw.org/main.html>. See further John Oakes, “Guidelines for ‘Safe Sex’ - A Sermon on 1 Corinthians 6:12-20,” (Vancouver, BC: Unpublished sermon, January 2003), available at: <http://www.churchinfolweb.com/newvision>.

¹³ Ingham, “Media Statement.”

5) However, our regret for some of the consequences of our actions does not necessarily entail that we endorse all the Lambeth Commission's findings about what it describes as the "surface" and "deeper symptoms" of the "illness" from which it sees the Anglican Communion now suffering.¹⁴ We agree with much of the Windsor Report's analysis of the challenges currently facing our Communion, which clearly centre on disagreements over the place of lesbian and gay women and men in ordained (and especially episcopal) ministry, as well as over the moral legitimacy of blessing same-sex unions.¹⁵ We also regret any "tit-for-tat stand-off" that has resulted between those of differing opinions.¹⁶ But most of us do not think that the Commission's interpretations of our actions are consistently accurate.

6) The Commission states that "it appears to the wider Communion that neither the Diocese of New Westminster nor the Episcopal Church (USA) has made a serious attempt to offer an explanation to, or consult meaningfully with, the Communion as a whole about the significant development of theology which alone could justify the recent moves by a diocese or a province."¹⁷ But if such is the appearance of our actions, it would seem unjustified by the facts.

7) In the first place, it is widely accepted within the Anglican Communion that it is the primary responsibility of ecclesiastical provinces, rather than dioceses, to consult with their international counterparts.¹⁸ Second, notwithstanding this principle, the Diocese of New Westminster has a detailed record of more than 15 years of theological and other consultation over issues of human sexuality, which has taken place at diocesan level, provincially with the Canadian House of Bishops and other bodies, and internationally, as through the attendance of diocesan members at a meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council in September 2002.¹⁹

8) The Lambeth Commission suggests that "the second reason we have reached the present impasse is that neither the Episcopal Church (USA) nor the Diocese of New West-

¹⁴ *The Windsor Report 2004*, paragraphs 22-42.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, paragraphs 22-30.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, paragraph 30.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, paragraph 33. Although the Lambeth Commission's critiques of the Episcopal Church (USA) are also sometimes cited in this document, it is obviously not within its purview to comment on them.

¹⁸ In 2001, for example, the Anglican Consultative Council meeting in Hong Kong made a clear distinction between the consultative responsibilities of provinces and dioceses, when it passed ACC-12 Resolution 34 on "Province-wide and Communion-wide Consultation," which 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; and 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." See *The Windsor Report 2004*, Appendix 3:8.

¹⁹ See Appendix 1 attached, "Chronology of Events Relating to Consultations by the Diocese of New Westminster with the Wider Anglican Church on Issues of Human Sexuality and the Blessing of Same-sex Unions, 1976-2003"

minster, in deciding and acting as they did in 2003, went through the procedures which might have made it possible for the church to hold together across differences of belief and practice."²⁰ But again, we would dispute this interpretation.

9) The Windsor Report's account of the story of the ordination of women to the priesthood and episcopate which it cites as a model of "mutual discernment and decision-making within the Anglican Communion" neglects to show how this process sometimes failed to meet the criteria by which the Commission judged it to be so exemplary. A closer examination of the history of women's ordination in Hong Kong demonstrates that the Commission's statements that "the Instruments of Unity, i.e. the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lambeth Conference, the Anglican Consultative Council and the Primates' Meeting, were all involved in the decision-making process" and that "provincial autonomy was framed by Anglican interdependence on matters of deep theological concern to the whole Communion" are inaccurate.²¹

10) The first woman priest in the Anglican Communion, the Revd. Florence Li Tim-Oi, was ordained in 1944 by Bishop R. O. Hall of Hong Kong, which was then part of the Chung Hua Sheng Kung Hui (the Church of China), without the approval of any extra-diocesan authority or "Instrument of Unity" at all.²² By 1946 Li Tim-Oi offered to resign the exercise of her ministry and the Lambeth Conference of 1948 stated its mind that a proposed Chinese canon for the experimental ordination of deaconesses to the priesthood would be against "Anglican tradition and order".²³

11) In the years between 1948 and 1968 the ecclesiastical circumstances of the Diocese of Hong Kong changed considerably. In 1948, for example, Hong Kong was among seven dioceses of the Chung Hua Sheng Kung Hui to be represented at the Lambeth Con-

²⁰ The Windsor Report 2004, paragraph 35.

²¹ Ibid., paragraphs 12, 21.

²² Ibid., paragraph 21. In fact, as Archbishop Carey noted in his sermon at the inauguration of the Province of Hong Kong in 1998, this happened "to the irritation of the rest of the Communion, drawing heavy criticism from [then] Archbishop [of Canterbury] William Temple and his successor Geoffrey Fisher." See Archbishop George Carey, "Sermon at the Service of Inauguration of the Province of Hong Kong," 25 October 1998 at <http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/carey/speeches/981025.htm>. Archbishop Carey further noted that "Bishop Hall saw the needs and the grace of God in Florence Li Tim-Oi."

²³ *Lambeth Conference 1948: Encyclical Letter from the Bishops together with the Resolutions and Reports* (London, UK: SPCK, 1948), I.52, II.120. See also Wendy Fletcher-Marsh, *Beyond the Walled Garden* (Dundas, ON: Artemis Enterprises, 1995), 188-190, which tells how, despite considerable pressure from Archbishop Fisher, Bishop Hall did not back down from his decision to ordain Li Tim-Oi until he accepted her personal offer to resign in 1946. According to Fletcher-Marsh, Li Tim-Oi, who had been "ordained a well-qualified woman of the church to function as a priest behind enemy lines in the diocese of Hong Kong" during World War II "quietly resigned from the exercise of her priestly ministry to save further difficulties for Hall and the church. Li refused to officially resign her orders, however, saying that she never gave up her belief that her ordination was a 'spiritual gift from God which can never be erased.'" See further Florence Li Tim-Oi, *Raindrops of my Life: Memoirs of the Reverend Florence Li Tim-Oi* (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1996).

ference, but by 1958, it was the only one from the Church of China.²⁴ Although the diocese was listed among the members of the Council of the Church of Southeast Asia in the Report of the 1968 Conference, its bishop was described elsewhere in the same document as representing the Chinese church.²⁵

12) When Bishop Gilbert Baker consulted with the newly-constituted Anglican Consultative Council in 1970 about the ordination of women to the priesthood, he did so on the basis of a resolution of his Diocesan Synod, although he knew that the Council of the Church of Southeast Asia was opposed to such a measure.²⁶ When the bishop subsequently ordained two women priests in 1971, he also acted against the explicit advice of Archbishop Michael Ramsey of Canterbury.²⁷

13) Any comparison between the actions of the Bishops of Hong Kong between 1944 and 1971 and those of the Bishop and Synod of the Diocese of New Westminster decades later should obviously take into account the very different ecclesiastical contexts and accountability structures involved. Nevertheless, with the benefit of hindsight, a relative minority in the Anglican Communion might now argue that as a result of their periodic failures to observe “Anglican interdependence on matters of deep theological concern to the whole Communion,” either Bishop Hall or Bishop Baker acted wrongly in ordaining women to the priesthood.²⁸

14), As part of the Anglican Church of Canada, the Diocese of New Westminster has first responsibilities to consult with its provincial and national Houses of Bishops and with the Canadian General Synod. Furthermore, our diocese, in pursuing its decision to allow the blessing of same-sex unions, has clearly done much to go “through the procedures which might have made it possible for the church to hold together across differences of belief and practice.”²⁹ Not only have we consulted widely and frequently on this issue, as already noted. The world’s Primates themselves conceded in their recent Communiqué that “recent developments in North America,” which they criticized as seriously undermining “the standard of Christian teaching on matters of human sexuality expressed in the 1998 Lambeth Resolution 1.10,” have “proceeded entirely in accordance with [the] constitutional processes and requirements” of the Episcopal Church (USA) and the Anglican Church of

²⁴ Lambeth Conference 1948, I.8. The Lambeth Conference 1958: The Encyclical Letter from the Bishops together with the Resolutions and Reports (London, UK: SPCK, 1958; New York, NY: Seabury Press, 1958), I.11.

²⁵ *The Lambeth Conference 1968: Resolutions and Reports* (London, UK: SPCK, 1968; New York, NY: Seabury Press, 1968), 19, 60. The 1978 and 1988 Lambeth Conference reports indicate that the Diocese of Hong Kong was “extra-Provincial”; see *The Report of the Lambeth Conference 1978* (London, UK: CIO Publishing, 1978), 25 and *The Truth Shall Make You Free: The Lambeth Conference 1988* (London, UK: Church House Publishing for the Anglican Consultative Council, 1988), 256.

²⁶ *The Windsor Report 2004*, paragraph 14. Fletcher-Marsh 1995, 42-43.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 41-44. See also Owen Chadwick, *Michael Ramsey: A Life* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1990), 178-181.

²⁸ *The Windsor Report 2004*, paragraph 21.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, paragraph 35.

Canada.³⁰ Neither our General Synod nor the Canadian House of Bishops has ever directly asked us to call a halt to the blessing of same-sex unions and the theological case for doing so was presented in the course of our diocesan Dialogue Process of 1998-2001, of which the documentation remains widely available.³¹

15) The Lambeth Commission argues that “the third reason...why the present crisis has arisen is that many within the Episcopal Church (USA) and the Diocese of New Westminster hold to the opinion, at least by implication, that the questions they were deciding were things upon which Christians might have legitimate difference, while large numbers of other Anglicans around the world did not regard them in this way.”³² Although there are different opinions within our diocese, the majority view, as reflected in our synodical decision-making, is that there can indeed be “legitimate differences” among sincere Christians of good faith over the blessing of same-sex unions. Moreover, we have provided for this by ensuring that those who dissent from diocesan policy not only have the right and freedom to act according to the dictates of personal conscience. They also have access to a form of supplementary episcopal oversight from another bishop that clearly meets the criteria which the Lambeth Commission has itself recommended.³³

16) According to the Commission, “the fourth reason for our present problems is thus that it was assumed by the Episcopal Church (USA) and the Diocese of New Westminster that they were free to take decisions on matters which many in the rest of the Communion believe can and should be decided only at the Communion-wide level.”³⁴ But while we would not dispute this interpretation factually, we would also point out that our diocese did much to ascertain whether or not we had the canonical right to act as we did.

17) In its final report of February 2002, “In Service of Communion,” the Canadian General Synod Task Force on Jurisdiction stated that “the intention of the founders of General Synod was to place responsibility for matters of doctrine and discipline within the jurisdic-

³⁰ “The Anglican Communion Primates’ Meeting Communiqué,” 24 February 2005, paragraph 6. For Lambeth Resolution 1.10, see *The Windsor Report 2004*, Appendix 3:6.

³¹ See, for example, the reports of the diocesan Faith and Doctrine Commission, which remain available at: <http://www.vancouver.anglican.ca/default.asp?Menu=101&SubMenu=7&Item=8&Content=Dialogue/FaithDoctrine.htm>.

³² *The Windsor Report 2004*, paragraph 37.

³³ The full text of Motion #7 passed by the Synod of the Diocese of New Westminster in 2002, accepting Bishop Michael Ingham’s proposal regarding the blessing of same-sex unions, with safeguards for dissenting clergy and parishes, is contained in Appendix 2 to this document. *Ibid.*, paragraphs 151-152. For a theologically conservative perspective that defends recent diocesan policy on issues of conscience and supplementary episcopal oversight, see, for example, John Oakes, “An Open Letter to Members of the Essentials Clergy Group and Other Interested Parties” (Vancouver, BC: Unpublished paper, June 2002) and “Ten Reasons to Stay - Arguments for Remaining within the Diocese of New Westminster Following the Passage of Motion #7 by the Diocesan Synod of June 14-15” (Vancouver, BC: Unpublished paper, July 2002), available at: <http://www.churchinfoweb.com/newvision>.

³⁴ *The Windsor Report 2004*, paragraphs 39, 22.

tion of General Synod.”³⁵ But the task force also noted that “the confederal nature of our church means that undesignated powers rest with the dioceses and/or diocesan bishops.” The authors thus concluded that “this seems to suggest that when it is unclear at what level a matter should be decided, the power to decide it should rest at diocesan level, unless the ‘mind of the church’ deems it to belong to a higher level. In short, when jurisdiction in a contentious matter is not specified, it will be decided at the highest level that has the will to decide it.”³⁶

18) In the course of its detailed explorations of whether or not our diocese could canonically authorize the blessing of same-sex unions, a specially constituted Legal and Canonical Commission, which included two experts from elsewhere in Canada, determined that “the Bishop of New Westminster is not precluded by the Canons and Constitution of any one of the General Synod, the Ecclesiastical Province or the Diocese from authorizing the use of a rite for the blessing of covenanted same-sex unions.”³⁷ In June 2002, when our Diocesan Synod voted to pass Motion #7 and so accept our bishop’s proposal to allow the authorization of the blessing of same-sex unions with safeguards for those dissenting from it, delegates thus had every reason to believe that they were free to take such a decision. The fact that the Canadian General Synod later resolved on June 2, 2004, to “request that the Primate ask the Primate’s Theological Commission to review, consider and report to the Council of General Synod, by its spring 2006 meeting, whether the blessing of committed same-sex unions is a matter of doctrine” does nothing to change this. Indeed, we welcome General Synod’s decision and look forward to the resulting findings.³⁸

19) The Lambeth Commission lists a fifth “deeper symptom” of the “illness” that it sees currently afflicting the Anglican Communion, when it describes a widescale breakdown in mutual trust.³⁹ We endorse this analysis, together with the Commission’s statement that “we clearly need more mutual exploration and explanation of our theological beliefs, our understanding of the Bible, and of many aspects of our common life and witness.”⁴⁰

20) The authors of the Windsor Report conclude their consideration of “the purposes and benefits of communion” by highlighting “an elusive sixth element” of “authority.” “It is because we have not always fully articulated how authority works within Anglicanism,” the Commission contends, “and because recent decisions have not taken into account,

³⁵Archbishop David Crawley et al., “In Service of Communion: The Final Report of the General Synod Task Force on Jurisdiction to the Council of General Synod and the Canadian House of Bishops” (Toronto, 2002), 7, available at <http://www.anglican.ca/faith/identity/183_Task_Force_on_Jurisdiction.pdf>.

³⁶Ibid., 10.

³⁷George Cadman, Linda Barry-Hollowell and Stephen Toope, “Report of the Legal and Canonical Commission,” April 2001 at: <http://www.vancouver.anglican.ca/default.asp?Menu=101&SubMenu=7&Item=9&Content=Dialogue/Legal.htm>.

³⁸*The Windsor Report 2004*, Appendix 3:12, contains the full text of General Synod “resolutions concerning the blessing of same-sex unions,” which is reprinted in Appendix 3 to this document.

³⁹ Ibid., paragraphs 40-41.

⁴⁰ See also paragraph 63 of this document.

and/or worked through and explained, such authority as we all in theory acknowledge, that we have reached the point where urgent fresh thought and action have become necessary."⁴¹ We have already argued that the Diocese of New Westminster has sought to act responsibly and canonically within the constitutional framework provided by our provincial and national church structures. But we share the Commission's view that there is a need for further exploration and articulation of the nature and functions of authority within the Anglican Communion as a whole.

Section B Fundamental Principles

21) We have already affirmed the Windsor Report's statement that communion is both God's gift and our response to it.⁴² Through the work of the Holy Spirit Christians are bound together in a spiritual communion that cannot be abrogated by our imperfect efforts to embody it in the visible structures and activities of the church.

22) Communion, or to use the New Testament term, *koinonia*, is a divine gift which is expressed

(a) in our creation, male and female, in the image and likeness of God;

(b) in the mystery of the incarnation of the Word of God in the person of Jesus Christ and the events of our salvation accomplished through his life, death, resurrection, ascension, and promised coming again;

and (c) in our spiritual incorporation into Christ and the sacramental renewal and strengthening of our unity in the power of the Holy Spirit.

We share the biblical and inclusive view of the Lambeth Commission that

All those called by the gospel of Jesus Christ and set apart by God's gift of baptism are incorporated into the communion of the Body of Christ. This communion is primarily a relationship with God, who is himself a communion of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and it binds every member of Christ into the whole body.⁴³

23) A sense of *koinonia* as divine gift has found expression in the foundational theological reflections of the Anglican tradition. In *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* Richard Hooker uses the term "participation" to express this reality of human life.

⁴¹ The Windsor Report 2004, paragraph 42.

⁴² Ibid., paragraphs 5, 45.

⁴³ Ibid., paragraph 45. Cf. John Oakes, "Practical Priorities in a Conservative 'Crisis of Confidence' – A Traditionalist Alternative to David Short's 'Biblical Perspectives for Anglicans,'" (Vancouver, BC: Unpublished paper, July 2004), available at: <http://www.churchinfoweb.com/newvision>.

God hath his influence into the very essence of all things, without which influence of deity supporting them their utter annihilation could not choose but follow. Of him all things have both received their first being and their continuance to be that which they are. All things are therefore partakers of God, they are his offspring, his influence is in them, and the personal wisdom of God is for that very cause said to excel in nimbleness or agility, to pierce into all intellectual, pure, and subtile spirits, to go through all, and to reach into every thing that is.⁴⁴

He writes further that "[participation] is that mutual inward hold which Christ hath of us and we of him, in such sort that each possesseth other by way of special interest, property, and inherent copulation."⁴⁵

24) *Koinonia* is thus not an abstraction but a lived reality that finds its concrete expression, however imperfectly, in communities of faith throughout human history and around the world today. For Anglicans this is expressed in a community of national churches that share a common story. In the words of the Windsor Report

When "The Anglican Communion" describes itself as such, it is self-consciously describing that part of the Body of Christ which shares an inheritance through the Anglican tradition, that is, from the Church of England, whose history encompasses the ancient Celtic and Saxon churches of the British Isles, and which was given fresh theological expression during the period of the Reformation in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Reformers of that time looked back explicitly to the Bible and the early Fathers, and had every intention that their theology would be 'catholic' in the sense of sharing the faith of the universal Church. The very fact that the family of churches which traces its roots back to the ancient churches of the British Isles should call itself an Anglican Communion is itself indicative of the twin fundamental concepts on which the community is built: our shared inheritance ('Anglican') and our worldwide fellowship as God's children ('communion'). That shared inheritance has itself included a developing understanding of communion, which has been expressed, for instance, in some of our ecumenical dialogues. It also makes us aware of a responsibility, not only to our contemporaries within the Communion, but to those with whom we share in the Communion of Saints.⁴⁶

As a community of shared history, common patterns have emerged which characterize us as a distinct communion within the Christian world. We agree with the Lambeth Commission that

⁴⁴ Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, V.56.5.

⁴⁵ Hooker, *Laws*, V.56.1.

⁴⁶ *The Windsor Report 2004*, paragraph 47. Cf. James Griffiss, *The Anglican Vision*, The Church's New Teaching Series, No. 1 (Toronto, ON: The Anglican Book Centre, 1997), 65: "So we are using a very rich and deep word when we speak of Anglicanism as a communion of churches. The Anglican Communion is not an accidental coming together of like-minded people, but a community or fellowship that we have in Christ that transcends our differences. Thus, while in their origins the national churches of Anglicanism did have a common cultural and political center in the Church of England, as they have developed into a world-wide communion they are becoming something more which is yet to be realized."

Communion is, in fact, all about mutual relationships. It is expressed by community, equality, common life, sharing, interdependence, and mutual affection and respect. It subsists in visible unity, common confession of the apostolic faith, common belief in scripture and the creeds, common baptism and shared eucharist, and a mutually recognised common ministry. Communion means that each church recognises that the other belongs to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ, and shares in the mission of the whole people of God.⁴⁷

25) At the present time in the Anglican Communion the greatest challenge to our understanding of *koinonia* seems to arise from our struggle to discern the “common mind” of those who bear the name “Anglican”. Fundamental changes have occurred in our assumptions as the character of our Communion has shifted from a fellowship of national churches sharing an Anglo-Saxon culture into a world-wide fellowship of Christians whose cultural identities are not those of the founding missionaries. This diversity is also challenged by the influence of trans-denominational theological movements.

26) We affirm the Windsor Report’s call “to engage in our primary task, which is to take forward God’s mission to his needy and much-loved world”.⁴⁸ We would assert, however, that this mission is not undertaken in the abstract. We serve God in concrete social and cultural contexts that require us to embody the good news of God in Christ both as it has been spoken through the ages but also as it speaks to a particular people in a particular time and place.

27) The constant struggle that all Christians endure is to determine which course of action or which set of moral and ethical principles is most congruous to the demands of the gospel. This is complicated by the fact that our attempts at discernment are mediated through the agency of culture. The challenge is perhaps best illustrated with a biblical example.

28) In his letter to the Galatians, Paul wrote a brief manifesto regarding the implications of Christian initiation.

Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through

⁴⁷ *The Windsor Report 2004*, paragraph 49. Cf. *The Porvoo Common Statement* (London, UK: Church House Publishing, 1993), paragraph 28: “Such a level of communion has a variety of interrelated aspects. It entails agreement in faith together with the common celebration of the sacraments, supported by a united ministry and forms of collegial and conciliar consultation in matters of faith, life and witness. 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).”

⁴⁸ *The Windsor Report 2004*, paragraph 46.

faith. As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise.⁴⁹

In this passage Paul challenged both the existing social structures of the Greco-Roman world and the theological views of those believers who wished to maintain the Jewish character of the newly-emerging Christian community. Few, if any, contemporary Christians would find it difficult upon hearing these words to affirm that these are God's Word to the church in all times and in all places. Nevertheless, it is in the living out of this text that we encounter the possibility of the breakdown of *koinonia*.

29) The dissolution of ethnic divisions explicit in the Pauline text has not always been evident in the public life and witness of the Anglican Communion. We have been complicit in segregationist policies in many countries throughout the centuries. Likewise, while some Anglicans were champions of the anti-slavery cause, others were quite content to buy, sell and use human beings as commodities.

30) At the present time Anglicans are still divided by the implications of the gender equality expressed in the Galatians text. But to our knowledge, neither differing attitudes towards the ordination of women, nor, in previous years, to racial segregation and slavery have been used as occasions to break communion formally with one or more provinces of the Communion.⁵⁰

31) This example is obviously not an attempt to justify segregation, slavery or sexism. It does, however, suggest that continued reflection on the Word of God, using all the social, cultural and intellectual tools that God bestows on us, can lead to fresh conclusions and new interpretations. We have no choice but to embody our understanding of God's Word within the concrete processes of human living and we agree with the Lambeth Commission that

The current crisis thus constitutes a call to the whole Anglican Communion to re-evaluate the ways in which we have read, heard, studied and digested scripture. We can no longer be content to drop random texts into arguments, imagining that the point is thereby proved, or indeed to sweep away sections of the New Testament as irrelevant to today's world, imagining that problems are thereby solved. We need mature study, wise and prayerful discussion, and a joint commitment to hearing and obeying God as he speaks in scripture, to discovering more of the Jesus Christ to whom all authority is committed, and to being open to the fresh wind of the Spirit who inspired scripture in the first place. If our present difficulties force us

⁴⁹ Galatians 3.23-29 (New Revised Standard Version).

⁵⁰ There have, however, been unilateral declarations of "impaired communion" over women's ordination, among other issues. See, for example, Norman Doe, "Communion and Autonomy in Anglicanism: Nature and Maintenance --- A Paper for the Eames Commission," (London, 2004), 20-24, at <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/commission/documents/autonomy.pdf>.

to read and learn together from scripture in new ways, they will not have been without profit.⁵¹

32) We thus uphold those principles of unity which have already been received by the Communion as sufficient elements of the catholic tradition and have guided our relationships with other Christian communions. So with the Windsor Report, we re-affirm the "Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral" expressed in Resolution 11 of the Lambeth Conference of 1888:

a) The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as "containing all things necessary to salvation," and as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith.

b) The Apostles' Creed, as the Baptismal Symbol; and the Nicene Creed, as the sufficient statement of the Christian faith.

c) The two Sacraments ordained by Christ Himself --- Baptism and the Supper of the Lord --- ministered with unfailing use of Christ's words of Institution, and of the elements ordained by Him.

d) 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.⁵²

33) We share the Lambeth Commission's view of Scripture as "the Church's supreme authority" and both "a focus and means of unity." It is the authoritative witness to the triune God who accommodates the means of divine revelation to the limitations of human beings living in time and space.⁵³ We also recognize, however, that it is the task of every generation of Christians living in their differing cultural, social, political and historical contexts to discern God's Word to them. Indeed,

each church must find fresh ways to proclaim the Gospel of Christ into the context of the world in which it is living. The eternal truth of the gospel relates in different ways to the particulars of any one society, as we see already within the life of the earliest church as described in Acts. This combination of faithfulness to the gospel and inculturation into different societies will inevitably produce a proper and welcome diversity within the life of the Church. Such diversity sometimes raises the

⁵¹ *The Windsor Report 2004*, paragraph 61.

⁵² The Episcopal Church of the United States of America, *The Book of Common Prayer* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1979), 877-878. Cf. *The Windsor Report 2004*, paragraph 51 citing "Summary Argument from the IATDC's 'Communion Study'," 3; "IARCCUM Subcommittee Submission," 18: "The Lambeth Quadrilateral commits Anglicans to 'a series of normative practices: scripture is *read*, tradition is *received*, sacramental worship is *practised*, and the historic character of apostolic leadership is *retained*.'"

⁵³ *Ibid.*, paragraphs 53-56, especially 53.

question as to whether faithfulness has been abandoned . . . ; but diversity, as we have seen, is in principle to be welcomed and celebrated as normal and healthy.

As the 1988 Lambeth Conference put it:

“It is right and proper that the one faith and discipline of the Church should be ‘incarnate’ in varied cultural forms . . . the Gospel of Jesus does not come to people in the abstract, but to specific men and women.”⁵⁴

34) The Lambeth Commission argues that “It is by reading scripture too little, not by reading it too much, that we have allowed ourselves to drift apart.”⁵⁵ We too are concerned by any evidence of declining biblical literacy. But we would suggest that some aspects of the present crisis in the Anglican Communion have not so much been caused by insufficient Bible reading, as by differences in hermeneutical approach regarding both the social, cultural and historical contexts of biblical texts themselves and the present-day ethical dilemmas to which the church seeks to apply their teachings.

35) Because the Anglican tradition is not a confessional but a credal tradition, attempts to formulate overly precise limits to the theological diversity permitted within it are fraught with danger. We share the concern expressed in the Windsor Report to seek to define criteria for judging whether a development in one province of the Communion is more widely acceptable elsewhere.⁵⁶ But we would also stress the constant need for openness to new understandings of God’s will and purposes.

36) The testimony of the Bible would strongly support such an approach. The “reinterpretation” of the Hebrew Scriptures is clearly evident in the writings of the New Testament. In his teaching on marriage and divorce Jesus departed in significant ways from the requirements of the Levitical code by restricting the freedom of husbands and empowering the rights of wives.⁵⁷ The surprising success of the mission to the Gentiles undertaken by Peter and Paul required the early Jewish Christian community to consider whether the Mosaic code applied to Gentile converts.⁵⁸ In the Epistle to the Hebrews its writer responded to the loss of the Temple as a place of Jewish and Christian worship by applying sacrificial and liturgical imagery to the person of Jesus Christ.⁵⁹ Furthermore, the New Testament *corpus* itself witnesses to a diversity of theological emphases.

⁵⁴ Ibid., paragraph 85 citing *The Truth Shall Make You Free: The Lambeth Conference 1988*, “Dogmatic and Pastoral Concerns”, 87.

⁵⁵ *The Windsor Report 2004*, paragraph 67.

⁵⁶ Ibid., paragraphs 86-95.

⁵⁷ Matthew 19.3-9; Mark 10.2-11.

⁵⁸ Acts 9.1-11.18; 15.1-29.

⁵⁹ Hebrews 4.14-10.31.

Section C Our Future Life Together

37) The church's temptation to adopt more centralized authority-structures can be very strong. There would seem a natural, human propensity to seek greater structural certainty in face of the often uncomfortable and disconcerting challenges posed by a relationship with the living God who enters time and space to work out the mystery of redemption and sanctification. But throughout history Anglicans have generally upheld a more distributive, or "dispersed" model of authority, and like the Lambeth Commission, we view this as "a great strength".⁶⁰

38) The "essential" doctrines of our faith are clearly established in our creeds and founding formularies, whilst our basic principles of unity are plainly defined in the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral. Most of us believe that as long as we are joined to Christ by God's initiative and we participate in the life of the Holy Trinity, we are in communion. So we resist all attempts to posit the necessity of any other saving act for church or Anglican Communion membership beyond those of Christ's death and resurrection.

39) Our challenge is to maintain and to grow into that *koinonia* already given by God. But we have often disagreed over our definition of what constitutes a doctrinal matter, as opposed to one of discipline, especially in our understandings of ethical issues. A variety of Anglican belief and *praxis* is thus already evident in the treatment of such questions as artificial contraception, abortion, the remarriage of divorced persons and the vigour with which the Communion's teaching on polygamy is pursued in various national churches.

40) Divergent patterns of moral decision-making have sometimes led to assumptions that there are such deep divisions in our beliefs that Anglicans no longer share a common faith. But we agree with the Lambeth Commission that such diversity is often to be welcomed. "The nature of unity within the Anglican Communion necessarily includes the rich diversity which comes from factors such as local culture and different traditions of reading scripture," and we are inclined to see further evidence of the development of ethical understanding throughout the Communion in the lessons of history.⁶¹

41) A helpful example which shows a shift in the ethical attitudes of the Lambeth Conference of bishops over a period of just 10 years emerges from the history of their deliberations over the issue of artificial contraception between 1920 and 1930. In 1920, the "Report of the Committee appointed to Consider and Report upon Problems of Marriage and Sexual Morality" of the Lambeth Conference described marriage as "intended for the hal- lowing and control of natural sexual instincts; for the procreation of children, and their nurture and training; and for the mutual companionship and support of husband and wife in good and evil estate." The Committee then stated that "[to] ignore or defeat any of

⁶⁰ *The Windsor Report 2004*, paragraph 97.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, paragraph 71.

these purposes is a violation of God's institution."⁶² Thus, the Committee implied that the use by a married couple of artificial means of contraception contravened God's purposes for marriage.

42) By 1930, however, the report of the committee charged with "The Life and Witness of the Christian Community" came to an explicitly different conclusion.

It follows, therefore, that it can never be right to make pleasure or self-indulgence the motive for determining to limit or refuse parenthood. Equally it can never be right for intercourse to take place which might lead to conception, where a birth would involve grave danger to the health, even to the life, of the mother, or would inflict upon the child to be born a life of suffering; or where the mother would be prematurely exhausted, and additional children would render her incapable of carrying out her duties to the existing family.⁶³

The reasons why the Committee rejected the stand of the Roman Catholic Church are particularly interesting:

- (a) there is no New Testament direction regarding artificial contraception;
- (b) there is no statement of any ecumenical council; and
- (c) even the Roman church acknowledges that there may be circumstances in which a rigid adherence to the prohibition of artificial contraception is impossible.

The Committee further acknowledged that the Communion must speak frankly on this matter because there were "facts and conditions which were not present in the past, but which are due to modern civilisation."⁶⁴

43) Here we have an example of a significant shift in the theological opinion of the bishops gathered at Lambeth occurring over a ten-year period. Their motivation was to give guidance within the context of the contemporary challenge of living out the Christian faith in an ethically consistent manner. They turned to Scripture and tradition and then used their God-given reason to ascertain a way forward. Their conclusion was that responsible sexual behaviour is more faithful than irresponsible conduct. Even though previous generations might have considered artificial contraception an affront to God's purposes, the Committee of 1930 did not.

44) When the resolution regarding artificial contraception came before the bishops for a vote, it passed. However, in a manner unlike the reporting of any other resolution from

⁶² *Conference of Bishops of the Anglican Communion holden at Lambeth Palace, July 5 to August 7 1920: Encyclical Letter from the Bishops, with the Resolutions and Reports*, 2nd ed. (London, UK: SPCK, 1920), 110.

⁶³ *The Lambeth Conference 1930: Encyclical Letter from the Bishops with Resolutions and Reports* (London, UK: SPCK, 1930), 91.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 90.

the Conference, the actual tally was reported: 193 votes in favour, 67 opposed.⁶⁵ Despite the opposition of one-quarter of the bishops to a motion clearly relating to an ethical issue, there is no evidence that communion between those in favour and those opposed was deemed to be impaired.

45) Here we see the mind of the Communion at work not only attempting to resolve a significant moral question, but determining that a particular ethical position was necessary neither for salvation nor for the maintenance of communion. We also see the process of how this opinion was reached, a reconsideration of the scriptural evidence and traditional attitudes in light of contemporary knowledge and experience.

46) The Windsor Report recapitulates and stresses the role and importance of the four “instruments of communion” first articulated in the Virginia Report. But this document has yet to be received by all the constituent churches of the Anglican Communion and it has been criticized for its tendency to centre authority in episcopal bodies like the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Primates’ Meeting and the Lambeth Conference.⁶⁶

47) It is significant to note that the Windsor Report also tends to focus on episcopal “Instruments of Unity”. However, this limitation does not reflect the synodical character of church government in a significant portion of the Anglican world where episcopal structures alone cannot be adequate to address the diversity of needs and situations that have the potential to impair communion. We would hope that subsequent reflection will take into deeper consideration the obligation for “the churches of the Anglican Communion, if that Communion is to mean anything at all...to move together, to walk together in *synodality*” in the most inclusive sense of that word.⁶⁷

48) We affirm the ministry of the episcopate as a vital and fruitful dimension of our life as a Communion. We share the Lambeth Commission’s view that “an episcopate at once local and universal is . . . an essential element of the life of the Anglican Communion.” We value the historical role of bishops within Anglicanism as “chief pastors and teachers of the faith, as the focus of unity and source of ministry.”⁶⁸ We also agree that “a bishop is

⁶⁵ Ibid., 43-44.

⁶⁶ *The Virginia Report - The Report of the Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission* (London: Anglican Consultative Council, 1997). Resolution III.8 passed by the 1998 Lambeth Conference requested “the Primates to initiate and monitor a decade of study in each province on the report” (<http://www.aco.org/lambeth/3/sect3rpt.html>), a process which is obviously yet to be completed. In the meantime, criticisms of the Virginia Report have included those voiced by members at the 11th Meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council in Dundee, Scotland, which pinpointed, among other things, a “perceived slide into curacy.” Then Primus of Scotland, Bishop Richard Holloway, stated, for example, that the Council was one of the few structured vehicles in Anglicanism that might resist the tendency in the [Virginia Report] to increase the authority of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the primates and the episcopate in general. According to a report from the Anglican Communion News Service (18 September 1999), Holloway said that he felt anxiety about some of its trends, for the bishops “are servants at best of a Church that is self-governing.” See “ACNS 1888 – 18 September 1999 – Dundee” at <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/acns/acnsarchive/acns1800/acns1890.html>.

⁶⁷ *The Windsor Report 2004*, paragraph 66.

⁶⁸ Ibid., paragraph 63.

more than simply the local chief pastor. Bishops represent the universal Church to the local and *vice versa*."⁶⁹ But most of us cannot wholeheartedly endorse the model of the episcopate set forth in the Windsor Report.

49) As a church in full communion with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, Canadian Anglicans have acknowledged, for example, that apostolicity is vested in the whole church and is expressed in a variety of dimensions. We understand the episcopate as a servant of, rather than a guarantor of, the apostolicity of the church. We have come to expect the whole church, lay and ordained, to be involved in determining matters of doctrine, discipline and worship by means of diocesan, provincial and national synods. We share what the Windsor Report describes as "the desire of the Communion to work together, with bishops, clergy and laity all involved as fully as possible."⁷⁰ We cannot, therefore, see any conception of the exercise of authority that centres on one order of ministry as adequate. In this context, we offer the following, more specific comments on the Lambeth Commission's understandings of and recommendations about the four "Instruments of Unity," as they define them.

50) The Archbishop of Canterbury. We affirm the Lambeth Commission's view that "from the beginning, the Archbishop of Canterbury, both in his person and his office, has been the pivotal instrument and focus of unity; and relationship to him became a touchstone of what it was to be Anglican."⁷¹ When the Lambeth Conference of 1930 "described the Anglican Communion as a fellowship of churches in communion with the see of Canterbury," its members were simply recognizing an historical fact that persists to this day and we value the Archbishop of Canterbury's more or less informal leadership role across the Communion.⁷² However, as long as the Archbishop of Canterbury is constitutionally linked to the established Church of England, many of us believe that the role of the archbishop as a spokesperson for international Anglicanism is compromised.

51) Notwithstanding the respect in which their ministry is rightly held, the appointment of Archbishops of Canterbury by the British Crown, as well as their official responsibilities as Diocesan Bishop of Canterbury, Metropolitan for the Southern Province of the Church of England and Primate of All England, already limit their right and ability to represent Anglicans worldwide.⁷³ We would prefer to see the office of Archbishop of Canterbury restructured so that it might better reflect those principles of synodality and accountability in episcopal ministry that we have sought to uphold in this document. In the meantime, we would resist attempts to strengthen the role and influence of the Archbishop of Canterbury of the kind advocated in the Windsor Report.⁷⁴

⁶⁹ Ibid., paragraph 64.

⁷⁰ Ibid., paragraph 66.

⁷¹ Ibid., paragraph 99.

⁷² Ibid., paragraph 48, referring to Resolution 49 of the Lambeth Conference 1930.

⁷³ On the different responsibilities of the Archbishop of Canterbury, see, for example, <http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/role/index.html>.

⁷⁴ *The Windsor Report 2004*, paragraphs 108-112.

52) The Lambeth Conference. As Canadians we are keenly aware that the summoning of the first Lambeth Conference in 1867 was in response to a request from our bishops. The Lambeth Conference has been and continues to be a valuable forum in which those exercising the personal ministry of *episkope* in a given place consult with their peers from throughout the world on issues of mutual concern. We agree with the view expressed in the Windsor Report that “from its inception, the Lambeth Conference has proved to be a powerful vehicle for the expression of a concept central to Anglican ecclesiology, the collegiality of the bishops.”⁷⁵

53) Yet it was not and has not been the intention of our household of the Anglican Communion to create a new, extra-provincial, legislative body. Indeed, as the Lambeth Commission rightly observes, “it had been a precondition of its calling that the Conference should not regard itself as a pan-Anglican Synod, with legislative powers.” We continue to value the role of the Lambeth Conference in enabling the world’s bishops to consult and express their views on a wide range of topics. But as long as the Anglican Church of Canada remains a synodical church, committed to the shared authority of bishops, presbyters, deacons, and laity meeting in national, provincial, and diocesan synods, the majority of us maintain that the Conference can and should exercise no more than a monitory, consultative and advisory function for us.

54) The Anglican Consultative Council. Ever since its establishment in 1968, Canadian Anglicans have taken part enthusiastically in the Anglican Consultative Council. We have particularly welcomed its role in providing “a voice to lay people . . . now fully participating in the governance of their provinces across the world.” We also note that as a result, this body more accurately represents the synodical character of the majority of Anglican national churches than any of the Lambeth Commission’s other “Instruments of Unity”.⁷⁶

55) The more inclusive membership of the Anglican Consultative Council does not grant it legislative authority and it, “like the Lambeth Conference, has always disavowed any intention to develop a more formal synodical status.”⁷⁷ But the Council, meeting more frequently and having a more representative character, has a vital part to play in helping to shape processes for common consultation, mission, and ministry.

56) The Primates’ Meeting. As the Windsor Report makes clear, the regular meeting of all the world’s Primates provides “an important element in the life of the Communion” and we value such gatherings inasmuch as they offer opportunities for senior bishops to engage in mutual “thought, prayer and deep consultation.”⁷⁸ Most of us also welcome the fact that “like the other Instruments of Unity . . . the Primates’ Meeting has refused to acknowl-

⁷⁵ Ibid., paragraph 102.

⁷⁶ Ibid., paragraph 103.

⁷⁷ Ibid., paragraph 103.

⁷⁸ Ibid., Appendix 1, paragraph 5; paragraph 104, citing *The Report of the Lambeth Conference 1978*, 123.

edge anything more than a consultative and advisory authority," and we should like to see that limitation continue.⁷⁹ In this connection, we would draw particular attention to the fact that not all Primates are understood to be exercising the office of "chief pastor," nor are the constitutional responsibilities exercised by them the same throughout the Communion.

Section D The Maintenance of Communion

57) The Lambeth Commission makes a series of "unanimous recommendations" in relation to five matters which it specifically lists as causes of "regret." These include:

the decisions by ECUSA to proceed with the consecration of Bishop Gene Robinson of New Hampshire and to resolve, in its 74th General Convention of 2004, 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;"

our diocese's approval of "the use of public Rites for the Blessing of same-sex unions;"

the passage by the Canadian General Synod in 2004 of a resolution "affirming the integrity and sanctity of committed same-sex relationships;"

the intervention of "a number of primates and other bishops... in the affairs of other provinces of the Communion."⁸⁰

58) It does not fall within the purview of this document to comment directly on the affairs of other provinces within the Anglican Communion. Instead we will confine our response to Section D of the Windsor Report to the Lambeth Commission's recommendations on issues which directly concern the Diocese of New Westminster, especially "public rites of blessing of same-sex unions" and "care of dissenting groups."⁸¹

59) We noted earlier that we do not agree with the Commission that our diocese has not consulted widely before approving the blessing of same-sex unions. For reasons that we have already stated, we thus reject the conclusion of the Windsor Report that "there is no record of any formal attempt to consult the wider province or Communion on the theological issues, or to delay processes to allow such consultation to take place, beyond participation in an emergency debate at ACC-12 in Hong Kong in September 2002."⁸² Most of us would also argue that in authorizing a particular rite for same-sex blessings, our diocesan authorities not only acted canonically, but within the established norms of our liturgical tradition.

⁷⁹ Ibid., paragraph 104.

⁸⁰ Ibid., paragraph 123.

⁸¹Ibid., paragraphs 136-155.

⁸²Ibid., paragraph 137. See Appendix 1.

60) However, we agree with the Lambeth Commission that “very many people within the Communion fail to see how the authorisation of such a rite is compatible with the teaching of scripture, tradition and reason,” including a significant number within our diocese, whose convictions we respect and whose freedom of conscience we are determined to protect.⁸³ Although the majority of us believe that we have acted justly and responsibly within the prevailing structures of the Anglican Church of Canada, we also acknowledge that in authorizing the blessing of same-sex unions, we have proceeded “against the formally expressed opinions of the Instruments of Unity.”⁸⁴ In the words of Bishop Michael immediately following the release of the Windsor Report, “we realize that many have not understood what we have been attempting to do..., or have even received news of our actions with dismay” and we sincerely regret such consequences.⁸⁵

61) The Primates’ Meeting has recently acknowledged that in authorizing public rites of blessing of same-sex unions, we acted within the constitutional procedures of our national church. But the Commission calls for a full moratorium on such rites and the Primates’ Communiqué of February 24, 2005 has effectively echoed that call.⁸⁶ In addition, since our Diocesan Synod first authorized them in 2002, there has been a significant new development in the Anglican Church of Canada.

The General Synod of 2004 deferred any decision on whether to “affirm the authority and jurisdiction of any diocesan synod, with the concurrence of its bishop, to authorize the blessing of committed same sex unions” until 2007. It also asked the Canadian Primate to refer the question of “whether the blessing of committed same sex unions is a matter of doctrine” to the Primate’s Theological Commission.⁸⁷ We thus face a situation, where the central ruling body of our national church, which has never directly asked the Diocese of New Westminster to change its policy on the blessing of same-sex unions, has now reserved judgement on whether this falls within diocesan jurisdiction. Because of canonical provisions surrounding any change in official church doctrine, General Synod may not pass final judgement on the question until at least 2010.⁸⁸ The Canadian House of Bishops

⁸³Ibid., paragraph 142. See Appendix 2.

⁸⁴Ibid., paragraph 143.

⁸⁵Ingham, “Media Statement” (October 18, 2004).

⁸⁶ *The Windsor Report 2004*, paragraph 144. “The Anglican Communion Primates’ Meeting Communiqué,” 24 February 2005, paragraph 18: “we ask our fellow primates to use their best influence to persuade their brothers and sisters to exercise a moratorium on public Rites of Blessing for same-sex unions.”

⁸⁷ See Appendix 3 to this document for the full text of General Synod 2004’s resolutions on the blessing of same-sex unions.

⁸⁸ If General Synod were to accept the view that “the blessing of committed same sex unions is a matter of doctrine” in 2007, the matter would then fall under its direct jurisdiction. Moreover, in view of the constitutional provisions that apply to making changes to doctrinal canons, Synod could not finally authorize same-sex blessings across Canada until 2010 at the earliest. See Anglican Church of Canada, *Handbook of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada*, 14th ed. (Toronto: General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, 2005), “Declaration of General Principles,” 11. c) i.

has meanwhile stated its commitment “neither to encourage nor to initiate the use of such rites until General Synod has made a decision on the matter.”⁸⁹

62) In view of the decisions of General Synod 2004 and the statement of the House of Bishops, as well as our respect for both the request of the Lambeth Commission and the opinions of the world’s Primates, our considered decision is thus to enact a moratorium on the authorization of any additional parishes as communities in which same-sex unions may be blessed pending the actions of our General Synod in 2007.

In taking such an action, we wish to make clear that some of us consider a partial moratorium of this kind to be a retrograde step, whilst others regard it as insufficient. But the Synod, as a body, believes this to be the best way forward in our current situation. We are also mindful of the possible negative consequences of our decision for some gay and lesbian members of our diocese, and many of us regret them. Our decision allows the blessing of same-sex unions to continue in those parishes that have already been authorized to offer such a rite prior to our Diocesan Synod of 2005 and we re-affirm our commitment to offer pastoral care to everyone in the Diocese of New Westminster, whatever their sexual orientation.

63) In the meantime, we welcome the Lambeth Commission’s call for “continuing study of biblical and theological rationale for and against [same-sex] unions,” together with its recognition that “debate on this issue cannot be closed whilst sincerely but radically different positions continue to be held across the Communion.”⁹⁰ Such study and debate proceeds within our diocese and our bishop has already stated that “we are certainly open to wider consultations, especially with those who have not understood our actions.”⁹¹

64) We fully endorse the Commission’s view that “any demonising of homosexual persons, or their ill treatment, is totally against Christian charity and basic principles of pastoral care.” So we join with its members in urging “provinces to be pro-active in support of the call of Lambeth Resolution 64 (1988) for them to ‘reassess, in the light of...study and because of our concern for human rights, its care for and attitude toward persons of homosexual orientation’.”⁹²

65) Ever since the passage of Motion #7 by our Diocesan Synod in 2002, our diocese has sought to offer supplementary episcopal oversight to dissenting parishes and clergy, first through the appointment of an Episcopal Visitor and now through our commitment to the system of “Shared Episcopal Ministry” established by the Canadian House of Bishops in November 2004. In so doing, we have clearly recognized what the Commission has described as “the hurt and alienation felt by individual Anglicans, parishes and dioceses as a

⁸⁹ House of Bishops of the Anglican Church of Canada, “Statement of Commitment by the Bishops of the Anglican Church of Canada,” 27 April, 2005, paragraph 6, at http://www.anglican.ca/news/news.php?newsItem=2005-04-27_statement.news.

⁹⁰ *The Windsor Report 2004*, paragraphs 145-146.

⁹¹ Ingham, “Media Statement” (October 18, 2004).

⁹² *The Windsor Report 2004*, paragraph 146.

result of decisions made and actions taken by autonomous provinces within which there is profound disagreement” and we have striven to make special provision to meet resulting pastoral needs.⁹³

66) We also share the concern of the Lambeth Commission “to uphold the importance and relevance of the historically sanctioned role of the bishop as a core principle of Anglican ecclesiology,” together with “the ancient norm of the Church that all the Christians in one place should be united in their prayer, worship and the celebration of the sacraments.” So like the Commission, most of us do not “favour the establishment of parallel jurisdictions” and we object to the intervention of primates and bishops from outside our diocese who have sought to offer alternative jurisdiction to some of our clergy and congregations.⁹⁴ Although we are prepared to acknowledge that such bishops have often been motivated by “principled concerns,” we regard their interference in our diocesan affairs as unhelpful and unnecessary and we join with the Lambeth Commission in calling for their withdrawal from and public regret for such actions.⁹⁵

67) Some in our diocese do not regard it as sufficient.⁹⁶ But the majority of us believe that the “Shared Episcopal Ministry” scheme recently sanctioned by the Canadian House of Bishops fully meets the Windsor Report’s recommendation of “a conditional and temporary provision of delegated pastoral oversight for those who are dissenting” along the lines of the “DEPO” proposal adopted by the bishops of the Episcopal Church (USA) last year.⁹⁷ As we continue to work towards healing and reconciliation within our diocese and beyond, many of us hope that dissenting parishes will give serious consideration to taking advantage of this provision.

Concluding Thoughts on Healing and Reconciliation

68) In conclusion, although most of us do not agree with all the Lambeth Commission’s interpretations of our actions and we cannot fully support its recommendations, we very much endorse its overriding call upon all parties to “seek ways of reconciliation, and to heal our divisions.”⁹⁸ We deeply regret that differing convictions held in good faith over issues of human sexuality have come to divide the Anglican Communion as they have, and we declare ourselves willing to do all in our power to work for the resolution of current difficulties. We are very grateful to the authors of the Windsor Report for the open,

⁹³Ibid., paragraph 147.

⁹⁴Ibid., paragraph 154.

⁹⁵Ibid., paragraph 155.

⁹⁶See, for example, Trevor Walters et al., “Shall We Walk Together? Reflections on the Windsor Report and the Diocese of New Westminster,” (Vancouver, BC: Unpublished paper, January 2005), 6.

⁹⁷*The Windsor Report 2004*, paragraphs 151-2. The DEPO [Delegated Episcopal Pastoral Oversight] proposal adopted by the bishops of the Episcopal Church (USA) in 2004 is reprinted in *ibid.*, Appendix 3:11. For the Canadian “Shared Episcopal Ministry” scheme, see Appendix 4 to this document.

⁹⁸Ibid., paragraph 156.

honest and often helpful ways in which they have sought to address a highly complex situation and we welcome the Primates' initial response to the report. We join with others in hoping and praying that member churches will "find ways of continuing in our present communion" and that God will once more enable us to cooperate fully in exercising our shared "ministry of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 5:18) all around the world.⁹⁹

⁹⁹Ibid., paragraph 157.

Appendix 1

Chronology of events relating to Consultations by the Diocese of New Westminster with the Wider Anglican Church on Issues of Human Sexuality and the Blessing of Same-Sex Unions, 1976-2003

1976

The House of Bishops of the Anglican Church of Canada seeks advice as it faces the issue of homosexuality in contemporary society. In particular, they ask how the church should respond pastorally, and in terms of ordination. A national task force is created to examine the issue, and Canadian bishops commit themselves to a period of study and dialogue.

1979

The House of Bishops makes its first major statement on homosexuality, ordination of gays and same-sex unions in 1979. These guidelines remain in effect, although amended in 1997. They state: "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." The bishops state that they "do not accept the blessing of homosexual unions."

1987

The Synod of the Diocese of New Westminster adopts a resolution encouraging congregations "to undertake the study of sexuality and the influences of societal attitudes and our faith on our understanding of sexuality."

1992

Diocesan Synod asks Archbishop Douglas Hambidge to initiate a study of human sexuality for both clergy and laity. The archbishop appoints a Task Force on Human Sexuality.

Diocesan Synod debates and tables a motion endorsing the 1979 Canadian House of Bishops guidelines. It passes a motion asking the House of Bishops to change its discipline regarding the ordination of heterosexual and homosexual persons so that the requirements and standards for ordination are the same for all.

Delegates to the national General Synod hold an open forum on the topic of sexuality. Delegates request that the House of Bishops and the National Executive Council commission a study of homosexuality and homosexual relationships.

1993

The Diocese of New Westminster's Task Force on Human Sexuality reports and leads a presentation at Diocesan Synod, including work in small groups. The task force recommends a two-year programme of study throughout the diocese. The Diocesan Synod also directs the Commissary to reconstitute the Task Force on Human Sexuality so that it reflects the range of theological opinion and expertise in the diocese.

1994

Motions endorsing the 1979 Canadian House of Bishops guidelines are again debated by Diocesan Synod and tabled.

1995

Delegates to the national General Synod receive the report on homosexuality and ask that the 1979 statement be updated. The Synod resolves "that the Anglican Church of Canada affirms the presence and contributions of gay men and lesbians in the life of the church and condemns bigotry, violence and hatred directed toward any due to their sexual orientation." Another motion directing the Doctrine and Worship Committee "to initiate broad-based consultations within the Anglican Church of Canada concerning the liturgical recognition of committed monogamous same-gender unions" is tabled.

1997

February – A diocesan "Day of Dialogue on Homosexuality" is held in the Diocese of New Westminster with several hundred participating. The event was in response to a motion of Diocesan Synod the year before.

The Canadian House of Bishops meets and after lengthy debate votes to direct a task force to redraft the 1979 guidelines in light of new pastoral awareness, while retaining their original intent. New guidelines concerning the ordination and pastoral care of homosexuals are adopted in October.

1998

May - Diocesan Synod of the Diocese of New Westminster votes 179 to 170 to request Bishop Ingham to authorize clergy in the diocese to bless covenanted same-sex unions, subject to such conditions as the bishop deems necessary. The bishop withholds his consent from the motion, pending further consultation with the wider church.

May – The national General Synod votes to affirm the House of Bishops in their October, 1997 guidelines, which state that they are not ready to authorize the blessing of same-sex unions and that gay and lesbian persons seeking ordination are required to remain chaste. Delegates participate and inform the national church of what has been happening within the diocese.

June - At the Lambeth Conference in England Anglican bishops vote "rejecting homosexual practice as incompatible with Scripture" and say they "cannot advise the legitimizing or blessing of same-sex unions nor ordaining those involved in same gender unions." The vote is 526 to 70 with 45 abstentions. The bishops also state, "We commit ourselves to listen to the experience of homosexual persons..."

1999

January - Bishop Ingham establishes a "dialogue process" in the Diocese of New Westminster. He sets several commissions to work on the issue. He says that he will authorize the blessing of same-sex unions only if a Legal and Canonical Commission rules that there are

no impediments under civil or church (canon) law, and Diocesan Synod in 2001 votes again to ask him to authorize such blessings by a clear and substantial majority.

Approximately 80 parishes “twinned” in 40 groups in the Diocese of New Westminster engage in the dialogue process. Each pair of parishes is to hold eight meetings. Parishioners meet to read and discuss four theological papers, to listen to stories of gay and lesbian Anglicans and an ex-gay Anglican, to consider a proposed rite, etc. The process continues until 2001.

April – Bishop Ingham reports to and consults with the Canadian House of Bishops meeting in Québec City on the progress of the dialogue process.

October – Bishop Ingham reports to and consults with the House of Bishops meeting in Mississauga, Ontario on the progress of the dialogue process.

November - A diocesan “Day of Dialogue on the Authority and Interpretation of Scripture” is held with several hundred participants.

2000

March - Primates of the 38 Anglican provinces declare that “disagreement over sexual ethics...that clearly exists within and among the Provinces does not necessarily amount to a complete and definitive rupture of communion.” However, the Primates also say that if dioceses ordain non-celibate homosexuals or bless same-sex unions, such actions “threaten the unity of the Communion in a profound way.” The Primates “urge such dioceses to weigh the effects of their actions, and to listen to the expressions of pain, anger and perplexity from other parts of the Communion.” The Primates add: “[A] careful, patient and pastoral process must be encouraged; it is not created by the demonising of opponents or by overheated, politicised and polarised language in our conflicts.”

2001

April – A Legal and Canonical Commission reporting to Bishop Ingham rules that a diocesan bishop has the authority to authorize a rite of blessing of same-sex unions, if he or she wishes to. The three lawyers on the commission (one from the diocese and two from outside) say that any such rite must not be confused with (heterosexual) marriage. The bishop accepts the report.

April - Bishop Ingham brings the matter before the national House of Bishops meeting in Niagara Falls. The House of Bishops makes no statement, but asks that the matter be brought back to them for consultation during the national General Synod, if the Diocesan Synod again approves the motion and the Bishop decides to proceed.

June – The Diocesan Synod of New Westminster votes a second time on the same motion asking Bishop Ingham to authorize blessings of same sex unions. The motion passes by an increased majority, 226-174, or 56.5%. Bishop Ingham refuses consent, stating that the margin is insufficient.

2002

June - Bishop Ingham states that if Diocesan Synod agrees, he will authorize the blessing of same-sex unions, but in so doing establish a conscience clause to ensure that no cleric or parish must participate, if they oppose such blessings. He will also offer to invite a Canadian bishop to offer episcopal pastoral care to dissenting clergy and parishes which request this. Bishop Ingham will retain the authority of a diocesan bishop, and perform all episcopal acts.

June - Diocesan Synod - After a lengthy debate and via a secret ballot, by a vote of 215 to 129, a majority of 62.5%, the members of the Synod of the Diocese of New Westminster approve a motion asking the bishop to authorize a rite of blessing of same-sex unions in parishes that wish to proceed with this. As soon as the result of the vote is announced and before the bishop gives his consent to the motion, lay delegates and clergy representing eight parishes stage a walkout of synod. Later on in the proceedings, the following motion is 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."

September – Archbishop David Crawley, Bishop Ingham, Diocesan Chancellor George Cadman and other diocesan members attend the Anglican Consultative Council meeting in Hong Kong. They host a well-attended session at which the diocesan position is explained.

October – Bishop Ingham reports to and consults with the Canadian House of Bishops meeting in Mississauga, Ontario. The House takes up the issue and urges the Diocese of New Westminster and protesting parishes to enter into a process of reconciliation.

November – Accepting the advice of the House of Bishops, Bishop Ingham works with the protesting parishes to engage the services of an experienced mediator and talks begin. Bishop Ingham delays issuing a rite of blessing to facilitate the reconciliation process.

2003

February – Mediated talks reach an impasse.

March – Seven of the eight parishes vote to accept an offer by Bishop Terry Buckle of the Diocese of Yukon to take jurisdiction as their bishop. Chancellor Cadman writes to the Metropolitan of British Columbia and Yukon to prefer charges against Bishop Buckle for interfering in the affairs of a diocese under the jurisdiction of another bishop.

April – Bishop Ingham reports to and consults with the Canadian House of Bishops.

May – Bishop Ingham, acting on the request of the parish of St Clement's, North Vancouver, appoints Bishop William Hockin of the Diocese of Fredericton as an "Episcopal Visi-

tor" to provide pastoral care to parishes where members oppose the blessing of same-sex unions but have continued to participate fully in the life of the diocese.

May – Meeting in Brazil, the Primates of the Anglican Communion issue a "Pastoral Letter" in which they state, among other things, that "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 authorisation of such rites."

May – Bishop Ingham issues a rite of blessing for committed same-sex unions and authorizes six parishes who have voted to become congregations in which such unions are blessed to use it. On May 28 the first blessing of a male couple who have been together for twenty-one years takes place at St Margaret's, Vancouver.

October 28-30 – At the House of Bishops meeting, a motion is proposed that requests that Bishop Buckle withdraw his offer to assume episcopal jurisdiction in the Diocese of New Westminster, that Archbishop Crawley then stay charges against Bishop Buckle and that Bishop Ingham also stay previously preferred charges against the rectors of seven protesting parishes. Bishop Buckle initially says that he cannot comply. The House passes the motion for the record and asks the Primate to appoint a task force to review the issue of Adequate/Alternative Episcopal Oversight. The House also urges the dissenting parishes to talk to Bishop Hockin to see if he can bring about some form of reconciliation.

November 7 – Bishop Buckle reconsiders and in a letter to the Metropolitan states that he has withdrawn his offer of episcopal oversight to protesting parishes of New Westminster. In response, the Metropolitan stays charges against Bishop Buckle, as does Bishop Ingham against diocesan clergy.

N.B. In addition to the consultations noted above, Bishop Ingham informed and consulted annually with the Provincial House of Bishops of British Columbia and Yukon from 1997 to 2004.

The minutes of the House of Bishops show that at several points during the period in question some members brought forward motions calling for New Westminster not to proceed with same-sex blessings. In every case, these motions were withdrawn after it was clear that they would not pass the House. Bishop Ingham considers that the diocese not only consulted but complied with directions from the House throughout the period in question.

Appendix 2

Proposal from Bishop Ingham regarding the Blessing of Same-Sex Unions (subsequently known as Motion 7)

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.¹⁰⁰ 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.

¹⁰⁰ Motion 9, to which Bishop Ingham had declined episcopal assent in 1998 and 2001, resolved that "that the Synod of the Diocese of New Westminster asks the Bishop to authorize clergy in this diocese to bless covenanted same-sex unions, subject to such conditions as the Bishop deems appropriate."

Appendix 3

The Actions of the General Synod 2004

A 134 Blessing of Same Sex Unions

Be it resolved that this General Synod:

- 1) Affirm that, even in the face of deeply held convictions about whether the blessing of committed same-sex unions is contrary to the doctrine and teaching of the Anglican Church of Canada, we recognize that through our baptism we are members one of another in Christ Jesus, and we commit ourselves to strive for that communion into which Christ continually calls us;
- 2) Affirm the crucial value of continued respectful dialogue and study of biblical, theological, liturgical, pastoral, scientific, psychological and social aspects of human sexuality; and call upon all bishops, clergy and lay leaders to be instrumental in seeing that dialogue and study continue, intentionally involving gay and lesbian persons;
- 3) Affirm the principle of respect for the way in which the dialogue and study may be taking place, or might take place, in indigenous and various other communities within our church in a manner consistent with their cultures and traditions;
- 4) Affirm that the Anglican Church is a church for all the baptized and is committed to taking such actions as are necessary to maintain and serve our fellowship and unity in Christ, and request the House of Bishops to continue its work on the provision of adequate episcopal oversight and pastoral care for all, regardless of the perspective from which they view the blessing of committed same-sex relationships; and
- 5) Affirm the integrity and sanctity of committed adult same-sex relationships.

Motion to Defer

That Resolution A 134 be amended by:

- 1) Deferring consideration of section 2 until the meeting of General Synod in 2007;¹⁰¹ and during the period of deferral:

Request that the Primate ask the Primate's Theological Commission to review, consider and report to the Council of General Synod, by its spring 2006 meeting, whether the blessing of committed same-sex unions is a matter of doctrine;

That on receipt of such a report, the Council of General Synod distribute it to each province, diocese and the House of Bishops for consideration.

¹⁰¹ The deferred section 2 reads "That this General Synod affirm the authority and jurisdiction of any diocesan synod, with the concurrence of its bishop, to authorize the blessing of committed same-sex unions." Resolution A 134 was subsequently renumbered and Section 5 was added by a later amendment.

Appendix 4 Shared Episcopal Ministry

Addendum to the Primate's Task Force Report on AEO

Introduction

The original report of the Task Force offered background information leading to the development of several models of AEO all of which presumed the existence of a high level of generosity of spirit, which would permit some temporary ceding of jurisdiction in a number of areas of episcopal authority. The models, recognizing the gravity of the situation, were premised on the need for a solution which would require neither lengthy time to implement nor extensive debate leading to canonical change and yet would retain a degree of legitimacy by working from within the current hierarchical structures. The models also responded to the clearly expressed views of the many people interviewed by the Task Force. The discussion of the Task Force Report at the April meeting of the house of bishops in Regina made it very clear that while the seriousness of the situation and the urgency to act was understood, there was no consensus amongst the bishops as to how this might be achieved. Nevertheless, it was agreed that the report was a good starting point for further discussion. This addendum to the report recommends a model (based largely on the 3rd model of the original report) to replace those proposed. It is our hope that it will find a greater level of support from both the bishops and the Church at large.

Shared Episcopal Ministry

This model recognizes the reality that one Canadian diocesan synod has and that in the future others may also deal with the question of whether to allow the blessing of same-sex relationships to take place within the parishes of their dioceses. In the event of a diocesan synod and bishop agreeing to such blessings we believe that it is important that a binding conscience clause for parishes and clergy be available. Regardless of the outcome of those Synods some parishes may feel disenfranchised and vulnerable, and therefore desire to seek Shared Episcopal Ministry, where the diocesan bishop would share his/her episcopal oversight with another bishop. When a diocese is considering the question of blessings, we believe that the same synod should consider a motion that would allow Shared Episcopal Ministry in their diocese. Such a resolution should include the provisions outlined in para 3) and 4) below.

The Process of *Shared Episcopal Ministry*

1) The Metropolitan of each Province would be responsible for assembling a list of current and retired bishops in good standing in the Canadian Church and who would be willing to participate in providing Shared Episcopal Ministry within the province. The provincial house of bishops must approve the list. The Metropolitan will not be included on the list for his/her Province. It would be important to have a number of bishops from different theological perspectives so that all parishes requesting Shared Episcopal Ministry might be served. A bishop from another province of the Communion would be eligible to be on the Metropolitan's list with the assurance that he/she would participate under the

terms of these arrangements as outlined. The bishop would be designated as an episcopal assistant to the Metropolitan.

2) When a diocese has agreed to Shared Episcopal Ministry through a synod resolution the costs of that ministry, like all episcopal ministry is deemed to be an expense of the diocese. A suitable budget must also be agreed to between the individual parish and the diocese for the provision of Shared Episcopal Ministry.

3) If the incumbent and members of the parish believe that they cannot work with their bishop in the light of the current disagreements on issues of human sexuality, the rector and the canonically designated lay leadership shall meet with the bishop in a spirit of openness to seek reconciliation. After such a meeting, it is hoped that a mutually agreeable way forward can be found. If it is not a parish may elect the option of Shared Episcopal Ministry by a resolution passing with a 2/3 majority of those present and voting at a duly constituted parish meeting.¹⁰² The incumbent must also concur with the decision.

4) In order for the parish resolution to become effective the following provisions are to be followed:

- a) The parish and the diocesan bishop would choose a suitable bishop from the provincial list to provide Shared Episcopal Ministry taking into account such things as theological perspective and proximity to the parish. Their decision will be conveyed to the Metropolitan who may be asked to assist with the process.
- b) The parish would retain its voice and vote at synod and would be free to participate in the councils of the Church at all levels.
- c) The parish must maintain its current and future financial commitments to the diocese.
- d) The parish would be free to undertake new Church developments subject to diocesan procedures.
- e) Both the parish and the diocesan bishop would review the decision every three years or earlier if desired.

5) The duties of the bishop involved in Shared Episcopal Ministry takes as its point of origin the example of dioceses where there is/are suffragan bishop(s). He or she would not have jurisdiction but would be part of the process on appointments, episcopal visits, confirmations, pastoral care of clergy, advice on potential ordinands and participate in ordinations. This model would honour the process of appointment that each diocese currently follows. The diocese would insure that wide ranges of theological perspectives were represented on the committee dealing with postulants for ordination.

¹⁰² Whenever the term "parish meeting" is used in this document, it refers to the full members of the parish that have the right to be present and to vote at its annual meeting as defined by the canons of the diocese.

6) In the event that the parish seeking Shared Episcopal Ministry is in the diocese of the Metropolitan the senior bishop by date of consecration would fulfill the role given to the Metropolitan.

The model described above is designed to deal with circumstances in which all sides acknowledge that there is a level of dissent between a parish and their diocesan bishop, however negotiated oversight is feasible. *Shared Episcopal Ministry* as defined can provide a means of episcopal pastoral care and direction for the parish.

A Process in Circumstances requiring Conciliation

What follows is designed to deal with the circumstances in which all sides acknowledge that there is such a level of dissent and/or distrust between a parish and their diocesan bishop that negotiated oversight is not feasible. To overcome the obstacle posed by such a high level of dissent, some means must be identified to provide Shared Episcopal Ministry from outside of the diocesan structure. The parish or the diocesan bishop may appeal to the Metropolitan using the following process.

1) The Metropolitan of each Province would be responsible for assembling a list of current and retired bishops in good standing in the Canadian Church and who would be willing to participate in providing Shared Episcopal Ministry within the province. The provincial house of bishops must approve the list. The Metropolitan will not be included on the list for his/her Province. It would be important to have a number of bishops from different theological perspectives so that all parishes requesting Shared Episcopal Ministry might be served. A bishop from another province of the Communion would be eligible to be on the Metropolitan's list with the assurance that he/she would participate under the terms of these arrangements as outlined. The bishop would be designated as an episcopal assistant to the Metropolitan.

2) If the incumbent and members of the parish or the diocesan bishop believe that they cannot work together in the light of the current disagreements on issues of human sexuality, the rector and the canonically designated lay leadership shall meet with the bishop in a spirit of openness to seek reconciliation. After such a meeting, it is hoped that a mutually agreeable way forward can be found. If it is not, a parish may elect the option of Shared Episcopal Ministry by a resolution passing with a 2/3 majority of those present and voting at a duly constituted parish meeting. The incumbent must also concur with the decision.

3) The diocesan bishop would seek the consent of his/her diocesan council (or equivalent) to implement Shared Episcopal Ministry. The parish or the diocesan bishop would advise the other party that they were petitioning the Metropolitan to appoint a bishop to provide Shared Episcopal Ministry.

4) The Metropolitan shall meet with all involved to endeavour to resolve the outstanding issues. The Metropolitan may request two others who are acceptable to both par-

ties to join him/her to review the situation, to consider the appeal, and to make recommendations to all parties.

5) Prior to implementation the Metropolitan will have ensured that there is an agreement between the parish and the diocese on how all costs related to Shared Episcopal Ministry will be borne, including diocesan assessment.

6) With the consent of the Diocesan Bishop and of the parish, the Metropolitan will appoint a bishop to provide Shared Episcopal Ministry from the list approved by the provincial house of bishops. The Metropolitan would take into account the question of reasonable proximity to the parish and diocese and the theological position of the parish.

7) The parish would retain its voice and vote at synod and would be free to participate in the councils of the Church at all levels.

8) The parish would be free to undertake new Church developments subject to diocesan procedures.

9) Both the parish and the diocesan bishop would review the decision every three years or earlier if desired.

10) The duties of the bishop involved in Shared Episcopal Ministry takes as its point of origin the example of dioceses where there is/are suffragan bishop(s). He or she would not have jurisdiction but would be part of the process on appointments, episcopal visits, confirmations, pastoral care of clergy, advice on potential ordinands and participate in ordinations. This model would honour the process of appointment that each diocese currently follows. The diocese would insure that wide ranges of theological perspectives were represented on the committee dealing with postulants for ordination.

11) In the event that the parish seeking Shared Episcopal Ministry is in the diocese of the Metropolitan the senior bishop by date of consecration would fulfill the role given to the Metropolitan.

Conclusion

Shared Episcopal Ministry provided under either circumstance is based on a spirit of reconciliation, co-operation and goodwill. In order not to institutionalize schism it is always to be understood as a temporary arrangement directed toward reconciliation between the parties. Changes in parish or diocesan leadership are appropriate times for renewed efforts towards the ultimate goal of full restoration of the relationship between the parish and its bishop.

Endnote

The document says that

“The duties of the bishop involved in Shared Episcopal Ministry takes as its point of origin the example of dioceses where there is/are suffragan bishop(s). He or she would not have jurisdiction but would be part of the process on appointments, episcopal visits, confirmations, pastoral care of clergy, advice on potential ordinands and participate in ordinations. This model would honour the process of appointment that each diocese currently follows.”

In reference to suffragan bishops and appointments there are a variety of models that are followed across the Canadian Church

- In **Huron** the suffragan appoints and the diocesan signs the license
- In **Nova Scotia and PEI** the diocesan appoints and signs the license
- In **Toronto** the Area (or suffragan) signs the appointment letter and co-signs the license with the diocesan.

We would recommend that the diocesan bishop and the bishop involved with Shared Episcopal Ministry clarify the process they will use prior to the bishop beginning his/her ministry in a parish.