

COMMUNIQUÉ FROM THE FIRST ANNUAL PROVINCIAL COUNCIL OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA

Grateful for the gracious guidance of the Holy Spirit and the leadership of the Most Reverend Robert Duncan, Archbishop and Primate, the Provincial Council of the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) held its first annual meeting in Toronto, Canada on 11 December 2009. The College of Bishops of ACNA met immediately prior to this meeting in Burlington, Ontario on 10 December 2009.

The Provincial Council is the governing body of the Anglican Church in North America and consists of bishops, clergy and laity representing each of the twenty-eight constituent dioceses, clusters or networks.

The Provincial Council and the College of Bishops devoted these first meetings to putting in place the officers and structures necessary to fulfill the mandate to reach North America with the transforming love of Jesus Christ as faithful Anglicans and members by God's grace in the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ.

In faithful obedience to the Great Commission we enthusiastically embraced the 1000 Churches Proclamation as presented to the College of Bishops by the Rev. Canon David H. Roseberry of Christ Church, Plano, Texas, and committed ourselves to the multiplication of one thousand new congregations within the Anglican Church in North America in five years.

We also welcomed the new Diocese of the Gulf Atlantic and consented to the election of the Reverend Neil G. Lebhar as its first diocesan bishop. The College of Bishops also welcomed the Right Reverends Todd Hunter, David M. Loomis and Silas Tak Yin Ng as missionary bishops serving in the Anglican Mission in the Americas, the Right Reverend Harry S. Seamans as an Assisting Bishop in the Diocese of Mid-America and the Right Reverend Richard W. Lipka as an assisting bishop in the Missionary Diocese of All Saints.

Gave thanks for the growing number of Provinces of the Anglican Communion that have declared themselves to be in full communion with the Anglican Church in North America, and the enthusiastic expressions of support from a growing number of Ecumenical partners.

Expressed profound appreciation for the recently released Manhattan Declaration that affirms core Christian values regarding Religious Liberty, the Sanctity of Life and Holy Matrimony and urged all clergy and people to sign it.

And, mindful of the controversy surrounding a bill concerning homosexual behavior that is being considered by the Uganda parliament, restated our commitment to the sacredness of every human person as made in the image of God, from conception to natural death and without regard for religious convictions or manner of life. We also gave thanks for the faithful witness of the Anglican Church of Uganda and encouraged them to stand firm against all forms of sexual exploitation and in their publicly stated commitment that "the Church is a safe place" for all persons, especially "those struggling with sexual brokenness."

The Provincial Council expressed its profound appreciation for the gracious hospitality shown it by the Anglican Network in Canada and in particular gave thanks for the servant leadership demonstrated by the moderator, the Right Reverend Donald Harvey.

Looking forward to the Christmas Season and the celebration of the birth of Jesus the Christ the Council was reminded that the angels announced it as Good News of Great Joy for all people. In light of this the Council urged all its congregations to make a special effort to reach out with the transforming love of Jesus Christ, especially to those in their surrounding communities who face economic hardship, or other challenges that lead to their marginalization.

This first meeting of the Provincial Council has been a rich expression of our common life. We leave encouraged in our mission to extend the Kingdom of God through Jesus Christ.