

Global Realignment - A Canadian Chronology

1979 - House of Bishops Guidelines on same sex blessings: *"We do not accept the blessing of homosexual unions"*.

1997 - House of Bishops Pastoral Statement: *"We are not ready to authorize the blessing of relationships between persons of the same sex."*

1998 - Lambeth Resolution 1.10 states Anglican teaching rejects *"homosexual practice as incompatible with scripture"* and *"could not advise the legitimising or blessing of same sex unions nor ordaining those involved in same gender unions"*

2002 (June) - Diocese of New Westminster - becomes the first Anglican diocese in the world to formally authorize the blessing of same sex unions

2003 (May) - Primates Meeting in Brazil issue Pastoral letter:

"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."

Within one week, the bishop of New Westminster issues a Rite and the first blessing takes place in the diocese of New Westminster.

2003 (October) - Primates meeting at Lambeth,

- reaffirm 1998 Lambeth Resolution 1.10 and state:

" . . . as a body we deeply regret the actions of the Diocese of New Westminster and the Episcopal Church (USA) which . . . could be perceived to alter unilaterally the teaching of the Anglican Communion on this issue" and **"these decisions jeopardise our sacramental fellowship with each other"**

Then, referring to the impending **consecration of Gene Robinson**:

*" . . . If his consecration proceeds, we recognize that we have reached a crucial and critical point in the life of the Anglican Communion . . . the future of the Communion itself will be put in jeopardy . . . many provinces are likely to consider themselves to be out of Communion with the Episcopal Church (USA). **This will tear the fabric of our Communion at its deepest level, and may lead to further division** on this and further issues **as provinces have to decide** in consequence **whether they can remain in communion with provinces** that choose not to break communion with the Episcopal Church (USA).*

Similar considerations apply to the situation pertaining in the Diocese of New Westminster."

Then, **referring to those who** adhere to Anglican teaching and **dissent from the action of ECUSA and DoNW:**

“ . . . we call on the provinces concerned to make adequate provision for episcopal oversight of dissenting minorities within their own area of pastoral care in consultation with the Archbishop of Canterbury on behalf of the Primates.”

2004 - Canadian General Synod - St. Catherines, ON

Motion A134 affirms *“the integrity and sanctity of committed adult same-sex relationships”*

Motion to affirm “local option” is deferred to General Synod 2007, pending a determination by the Primate’s Theological Commission on whether same sex blessings are a matter of doctrine

No attempt to stop the diocese of New Westminster, nor to make provision for “Adequate Episcopal Oversight” for dissenting minorities (per October 2003 Primates’ Communiqué)

2004 (November) - The Windsor Report

§ 143 *“We believe that **to proceed unilaterally with the authorisation of public Rites of Blessing for same sex unions at this time goes against the formally expressed opinions of the Instruments of Unity** and therefore constitutes action **in breach of the legitimate application of the Christian faith as the churches of the Anglican Communion have received it, and of bonds of affection in the life of the Communion, especially the principle of interdependence.**”*

§ 144 *“we call for a moratorium on all such public Rites, and recommend that **bishops who have authorised such rites in the United States and Canada** be invited to express regret that the proper constraints of the bonds of affection were breached by such authorisation. Pending such expression of regret, we recommend that such bishops be invited **to consider in all conscience whether they should withdraw themselves** from representative functions in the Anglican Communion. **We recommend that provinces take responsibility for endeavouring to ensure commitment on the part of their bishops to the common life of the Communion on this matter.**”*

§ 151 *“In only those situations **where there has been an extreme breach of trust, and as a last resort, we commend a conditional and temporary provision of delegated pastoral oversight for those who are dissenting. This oversight must be sufficient to provide a credible degree of security on the part of the alienated community, so that they do not feel at the mercy of a potentially hostile leadership.**”*

Delegated Episcopal Pastoral Oversight (**DEPO**) in the U.S. and Shared Episcopal Ministry (**SEM**) in Canada have been shown to be clearly lacking in the provision of a “credible degree of security on the part of the alienated community” who feel “at the mercy of a potentially hostile leadership”.

The Windsor Report Concludes with:

§ 157 *“There remains a very real danger that we will not choose to walk together. Should the call to halt and find ways of continuing in our present communion not be heeded, **then we shall have to begin to learn to walk apart.**”*

2005 (February) Primates' Meeting in Dromantine, Ireland

- Asked the **ACC** (not just New Westminster) and ECUSA to **voluntarily withdraw from the Anglican Consultative Council** until 2008 while “they consider their place within the Anglican Communion” and “whether they are willing to be committed to the inter-dependant life of the Anglican Communion”;
- Called for “a **moratorium on public Rites of Blessing for Same-sex unions and on the consecration of any bishop living in a sexual relationship outside Christian marriage**”;
- **Re-affirmed the 1998 Lambeth Resolution 1.10** as the present position of the Anglican Communion;
- Called upon the Archbishop of Canterbury to “**appoint as a matter of urgency, a panel of reference to supervise the adequacy of pastoral provisions made by any churches of such members in line with the recommendation in the Primates' Statement of October 2003**”;
- Called for a **hearing in June 2005** for the ACC and ECUSA to appear before the Anglican Consultative Council to “**set out the thinking behind the recent actions of their Provinces**”.

2005 (May) - Canadian Primate's Theological Commission issues the St. Michael's Report

- Determines that the blessing of same sex unions is a matter of Doctrine, though not core doctrine “in the sense of being credal”
- Determines the issue should not be “communion breaking”

2005 (June) - Anglican Consultative Council Hearing, Nottingham

Upheld the “voluntary withdrawal” (also called “suspension”) of the ACC until 2008

2006 - Archbishop of Canterbury's Panel of Reference issues report on the Diocese of New Westminster and affirms SEM.

- Report is immediately rejected by Archbishop Drexel Gomes (West Indies) : “ . . the Panel has failed to understand the political and theological reality of the situation in which the applicants find themselves. Consequently, in my opinion, the recommendations of the Panel do not respond adequately to the real situation.”
- And Archbishop Gregory Venables (Southern Cone): “Unless there is a radical revision of the Panel's operation, it does not appear that it will offer solutions of adequate or appropriate substance.”

2007 (February) Primates Meeting in Dar Es Salaam

- Once again affirmed 1998 Lambeth Resolution 1.10 as the “standard of teaching which is presupposed in the Windsor Report and from which the Primates have worked. . . The Primates have reaffirmed this teaching in all their recent meetings”.
- Affirmed that developments in the life and ministry of the ACC have “challenged the standard of teaching on human sexuality articulated in the 1998 Lambeth Resolution 1.10”

- Expressed gratefulness for the work undertaken by the Panel of Reference but did not endorse or discuss any of their recommendations.
- Commended the work of the Covenant Design Group and proposed that a revised draft would be discussed at the next Lambeth Conference (2008)
- Addressed ECUSA's (now TEC) General Convention response to the Dromantine requests saying: "there remains a lack of clarity about the stance of TEC, especially its position on the authorisation of Rites of Blessing for persons living in same-sex unions. There appears to us to be an inconsistency between the position of General Convention and local pastoral provision. . .It is the ambiguous stance of the Episcopal Church which causes concern among us"
- Acknowledged that Primates who have intervened in Provinces "do not feel it is right to end those interventions until it becomes clear that sufficient provision has been made for the life of those persons" and "For interventions to cease, what is required is a robust scheme of pastoral oversight to provide. . .adequate space to flourish within the life of that church in the period leading up to the conclusion of the Covenant Process"
- Recommended a scheme of Adequate Episcopal Oversight called "a Pastoral Council to act on behalf of the Primates"
- While the above recommendations were directed at TEC, they also acknowledged "that such pastoral needs . . . are not limited to TEC alone."
- Asked TEC House of Bishops to "1. Make an unequivocal common covenant that the bishops will not authorize any Rite of Blessing for same-sex unions in their dioceses or through General Convention" and "2. Confirm that. . . A candidate for episcopal orders living in a same-sex union shall not receive the necessary consent . . . Unless some new consensus on these matters emerges across the Communion"
- Requested the above unequivocal statement by September 30, 2007

As of September 30, 2007, the Pastoral Council was rejected and the unequivocal statements were not provided by the House of Bishops.

2007 (June) General Synod of the ACC, Winnipeg, MB

- Accepts the conclusion of the St. Michael's Report - same sex blessings are a matter of doctrine, not "core" in the sense of credal
- Rejects an amendment to Motion A183 which would have committed the ACC to uphold "Lambeth Resolution 1.10 as the current standard of Anglican teaching" and uphold a moratorium on same-sex blessings.
- Accepts that same sex blessings are "not in conflict" with the core doctrine of the ACC
- Rejects a motion to affirm "local option" but fails to address New West situation
- Requests a theological rationale to be brought to GS 2010 on the implications of the blessing of same-sex unions and/or marriages

2007 - Post September 30

- A number of bishops have failed to respond to the Lambeth Conference invitations

- Of those who have replied, many have said they cannot attend unless the actions of TEC and the ACC, and their unwillingness to commit to Lambeth Resolution 1.10 as the standard of Anglican teaching, is addressed.
- The Archbishop of Canterbury appears unwilling to call another Primates meeting before Lambeth.
- All Communion processes to seek AEO have been exhausted.
- The Dar Es Salaam Communiqué was the last hope for the Communion to cooperate on an interim solution but the lack of enforcement provisions make it impossible to resolve at this time through the Communion structures.
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- In an October letter to Bishop John Howe (Central Florida), the Archbishop of Canterbury wrote:

“Any Diocese compliant with Windsor remains clearly in communion with Canterbury and the mainstream of the Communion, whatever may be the longer-term result for others in The Episcopal Church. The organ of union with the wider Church is the Bishop and the Diocese rather than the Provincial structure as such.”
- What is Windsor compliance? Who decides? When?

2007 (September) Common Cause Council of Bishops

- This is another Presentation in this Conference

2007 - (November)

- Bishop Donald Harvey comes out of retirement to become an active bishop under Primate Gregory Venables in the Province of the Southern Cone
- The Council of General Synod denounces his move and claim any proposed Episcopal acts will not be recognized, are “not a valid expression of Anglicanism and are in contravention of the ancient and continuing tradition of the Church”
- CoGS makes no statement regarding the motions to bless same sex marriages, passed at the recent Synods of Ottawa, Montreal and Niagara.

2007 - (November) ANiC Conference

- ANiC offers Adequate Episcopal Oversight and Communion connection to biblically-faithful Canadian Anglicans in “serious theological dispute” with their bishop, diocese, or the ACC and who wish to remain “*in full communion with the Church of England throughout the world*” while the global Communion seeks to “repair the tear” through the Covenant process or other means.