

APPENDIX G

News Resource

Full Text of the Request to the Global South Primates

REQUEST FOR
ALTERNATIVE PRIMATEAL OVERSIGHT AND PASTORAL CARE
On Behalf of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh

6th November, A.D. 2006

TO OUR BELOVED IN THE LORD,
PRIMATES REPRESENTING THE GLOBAL SOUTH,
AFFECTIONATE GREETINGS IN CHRIST JESUS:

Summary

The Bishop and Standing Committee of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh, meeting on 26th and 28th June, adopted a resolution calling for “immediate alternative Primatial oversight and pastoral care so that a unifying solution might be found to preserve an authentic Anglican community of witness within the United States of America and [to] provide pastoral and apostolic care to biblically orthodox Anglicans in this country regardless of geographical location...”

At the annual synod of the Diocese, meeting at Pittsburgh on November 3rd, 2006, a resolution confirming the actions of the Bishop and Standing Committee was passed by overwhelming majorities of both clergy and laity. In addition to confirming the request for “alternative Primatial oversight and pastoral care” the synod also confirmed the Standing Committee’s decision to withdraw from the administrative structure known as the Province of Washington, or “third province,” under Article VII of the Constitution of the Episcopal Church, in order to re-emphasize our contention that the struggle we are engaged in is a constitutional crisis in which the progressive majority has walked away from its constitutional responsibility to remain as a “constituent member of the Anglican Communion.”

Thanksgiving

We in the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh are deeply grateful to Almighty God and to the Global South Primates for the witness from and decisions of the Global South Primates Meeting at Kigali, Rwanda. We rejoice with you at the work accomplished by the Economic Empowerment Track and by the Theological Formation and Education Task Force at that meeting. We are also

humbled by the continuing concern expressed for our embattled situation here in the States. We are particularly thankful for your assessment of the General Convention of 2006 as having acted "contrary to the Windsor Report," for your recognition of "the continued faithfulness of the Network Dioceses," and for your stated willingness, in consultation with the Archbishop of Canterbury, to "develop a proposal ... by which the requested Primatial oversight can be adequately provided." We also appreciate the call for a bishop representing the orthodox to be present at the next Primates Meeting, and for "initial steps toward the creation of ... a separate ecclesiastical structure of the Anglican Communion in the USA." We pray that the entire Primates gathering in February will come to similar decisions.

Our Need

We ask for and urgently require the following:

Connection.

1. We need to be connected to the Instruments of Unity of the Communion, and especially to the Primates Meeting. We cannot be represented in the Communion through the person of the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church. Bishop Jefferts Schori teaches a manifestly defective Christology as well as embraces moral actions and teaching directly contrary to the Windsor Report. We seek to be accountable.
2. We need a means of connecting among ourselves. All of the roles assigned under our Constitution to the Presiding Bishop need to be carried out among us, but cannot reasonably or impartially be carried out by Bishop Jefferts Schori. In seeking alternative Primatial oversight and pastoral care, we are seeking a Primate from elsewhere in the Communion who will carry-out, or cause to be carried-out, the constitutional and canonical duties of the Presiding Bishop.
3. We need an antidote to the inherent independence of action that has characterized relations among bishops and dioceses in the American Church. In the time between the present and the point at which some permanent structure can emerge, alternative Primatial oversight and pastoral care seems to us a wise interim strategy.

Cover.

4. During the period in which a "separate ecclesiastical structure" can be worked out among us, we need protection from those who would "seek to destroy the child." The moral influence of the Primates, one of the Instruments of the Communion, can, we believe, provide the protection necessary to counter-balance the historic hostility of the majority Episcopal Church.
5. A Primate in the role of alternative overseer, agreed by the Primates Meeting, allows us to continue our domestic legal and property battles as that part of the Episcopal Church that remains "a constituent member of the Anglican Communion in communion with the see of Canterbury."

Consultation.

6. We are fully prepared to take responsibility for our own future and to commit to a plan of action from which we will not retreat. Nevertheless, in this transitional period under alternative Primatial oversight and pastoral care, we would be immensely aided by the wisdom, insight and perspective that an outsider, discharging (and as appropriate assigning) the roles of "presiding Bishop," might achieve among us.

Way Forward

1. Appoint a Primate who will discharge the constitutional and canonical duties historically assigned to the Presiding Bishop, offering alternative Primatial oversight and pastoral care until a permanent and constituent Anglican Communion entity is in place in the United States.
2. Permit orthodox U.S. bishops and others to assist with sharing in the burdens placed upon the Primate charged with alternative Primatial oversight and pastoral care on behalf of the Communion's other Primates, by authorizing such delegations of authority and function as are deemed appropriate or possible.
3. Assemble the various Network and Windsor dioceses, and the Network and other Windsor-committed parishes in non-Network or non-Windsor dioceses, as well the congregations under foreign Anglican jurisdictions, in regular synods to prosecute ministry and mission in the period of transition before a permanent structure emerges.
4. Convene, when the time is right, an organizing ("constitutional") convention for the purpose of approving the infrastructure necessary to the permanent Anglican entity in the U.S., and to choose the domestic leader for, and Anglican Communion representative of, that structure.

Pittsburgh Particulars

Because the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh is a diocese that has embraced the ordination of women, the Standing Committee has requested that, if possible, a means be found in exercising alternative Primatial oversight, for a Primate whose Province also ordains women to have a significant role, if the Primate who exercises alternative Primatial oversight for all be from among those Provinces that do not ordain women.

Constitutional and Canonical Roles asked of the Primate Exercising Alternative Oversight

1. Chief Pastor and Primate. Canon I.2.4 (a).
2. Responsible for leadership in
 - initiating and developing policy and strategy, and
 - speaking for [APO dioceses] as to its policies, strategies and programs. Canon I.2.4 (a) (1).
3. Speak God's words to [APO dioceses] and to the world, as the representative of [APO dioceses] and its episcopate in its corporate capacity. Canon I.2.4 (a) (2).
4. In the event of a vacancy within a Diocese, consult with the Ecclesiastical Authority to ensure that adequate interim Episcopal Services are provided. Canon I.2.4 (a) (3).
5. Take order for the consecration of Bishops, when duly elected, and assemble the [APO] Bishops to meet. Canon I.2.4 (a) (4).
6. Preside over meetings of the House of Bishops; ...and recommend legislation to [APO dioceses or any national Council] . Canon I.2.4 (a) (5).

7. Visit every [APO] Diocese for the purpose of:

- Holding pastoral consultations with the Bishop or Bishops thereof and, with their advice, with the Lay and Clerical leaders of the jurisdiction;
- Preaching the Word;
- Celebrating the Eucharist. Canon I.2.4 (a) (6).

8. Report annually to [the APO dioceses] and, from time to time, issue pastoral letters. Canon I.2.4 (b).

9. Make appointments and delegate authority as appropriate to carry out his duties assigned by the canons. Canon I.2.4(c).

10. Appoint a Chancellor. Canon I.2.5.

Functions and authority of Presiding Bishop under disciplinary canons (Title IV).

Serve as focal point for all disciplinary procedures relating to a bishop under Title IV (The Disciplinary Canons):

- Charges against a Bishop. Canon IV.3.24 & 26.
- On his own initiative may require the Review Committee to investigate any Bishop whom he believes has committed an offense. Canon IV.23 (b).
- Appoints the five bishops who make up the episcopal membership of the Review Committee whose job it is to cause the charges to be investigated and to determine whether to issue a presentment against the Bishop charged. Canon IV.3.27 and 43.
- May issue temporary inhibitions against bishops (Canon IV.1.4-6); and may determine punishment and sentence of bishops who may submit voluntarily to the discipline of ECUSA without trial (Canon IV.2.9-14).
- Receives and acts upon the certificate of the Review Committee when it finds that a Bishop has abandoned communion of ECUSA, including the imposition of an inhibition of such Bishop. (Canon IV.9.1).
- If a Bishop inhibited under Title IV.9 does not recant within two months of inhibition, the Presiding Bishop presents the matter to the [APO] House of Bishops for the Bishop to be deposed. (Canon IV.9.2).

In addition to the foregoing functions and authorizations, there are a number of administrative functions provided in Title III (i.e., giving notice of a Bishop's election, preparing a list of episcopal resignations, etc.), not viewed as substantive and not included here.

- Posted January 29, 2007 -