



Diocese of Calgary

The Anglican Church of Canada

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Post-General Synod 2007 Pastoral Letter

Dear Friends in Christ,

Just as General Synod 2007 opened with an inspiring service in the Cathedral Church of St. John, it closed with a wonderful service in the inner-city Church of St. Matthew when the Most Rev. Frederick Hiltz was installed as the 13th Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada. The Church was packed with over 400 General Synod delegates, observers, and representatives from various Christian denominations and other world faiths. During the Service the Dinka congregation which worships at St. Matthew's shared a dance of joy. The intercessions were in the six or more languages used in Anglican worship in Canada. All in all the Service brought GS2007 to a close by providing a warm welcome for our new Primate as he took up his new responsibilities.

So, what happened at GS2007 regarding the blessing of committed same sex unions?

In response to the widespread concern expressed by church members across Canada regarding the blessing of committed same sex unions, GS2007 gave more than ten hours of its six day Agenda to conversations and debates on this topic.

There were seven Resolutions which in one way or another touched on the blessing of same sex unions. The result is that our Anglican Church of Canada has said that the blessing of same sex unions is to be taken seriously and treated as a matter of doctrine. As a matter of doctrine it is not a core doctrine, nor is it in conflict with the core doctrines of the church. The core doctrines of the church include what we teach about believing in God, the saving work of Christ, and our sanctification that is brought about by the presence of the Holy Spirit in us.

However, before we can implement the blessing of same sex unions some work needs to be done on a Canon which will tell us how we do this and under what conditions it is permissible. This work will include a review of the Marriage Canon.

GS2007 also agreed that we will work with the rest of the world-wide Anglican Communion in what is called a "Listening Process". This process invites bishops and dioceses to explore our understanding of human sexuality and is to be a part of the Agenda at Lambeth 2008.

I think that I can safely say that no one in the Anglican Church of Canada, nor in our Diocese, will be entirely happy with what GS2007 has done. GS2007 has said Yes to the blessing of same sex unions but No to the implementation of it at this time. In keeping with the decision of GS2007,

the National House of Bishops has maintained the moratorium on the blessing of same sex unions.

During the next couple of years the Primate's Theological Commission and the Faith and Worship Committee of General Synod will do further work as directed by GS2007. While they are doing their work, we can focus on our work: the development of Team Ministries and support for Parish life. At our Diocesan Synod in October we will do just this.

Thank you for your prayerful support throughout General Synod. Our members of General Synod: Stephen Koning, Allen Langlois, Pat Langlois, Richard LeSueur, Susan McWilliams, Gene Packwood, James Robinson, Jamie Sieuraj, and Shelia Vanderputten are to be commended for their participation and perseverance. It was a physically, emotionally, and spiritually challenging Synod.

If you wish to find out more about the daily proceedings of GS2007 there is a web site you can access www.anglican.ca . Look for two Links: one to the Anglican Journal Daily, and the other to the summary of the actions of General Synod provided in the Daily Report.

God be with you.

+ *Derek Calgary*

Bishop