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# MEMORIALS TO GENERAL SYNOD 2007

## 1. ECCLESIASTICAL PROVINCES

### PROVINCE OF CANADA

#### *Handbook*

This Synod memorializes the General Synod with respect to the legislation awaiting second reading as follows: “The Synod of the Ecclesiastical Province of Canada concurs with the amendment to Canon XVII given first reading at General Synod 2004 and awaiting second reading in 2007, as printed in the Handbook of the General Synod, 14<sup>th</sup> Edition, in Appendix L, page 157.”

#### *Declaration of Principles*

This Synod memorializes the General Synod with respect to legislation awaiting second reading as follows: “The Synod of the Ecclesiastical Province of Canada concurs with the amendment to the Declaration of Principles given first reading at general Synod 2004, and awaiting second reading in 2007, as printed in the Handbook of the General Synod, 14<sup>th</sup> Edition, in Appendix L, page 158.”

#### *Interfaith Dialogue*

This Synod memorializes the General Synod to emphasize the importance of Interfaith Dialogue.

#### *St. Michael Report*

This Synod memorializes the General Synod to encourage the adoption of the St. Michael Report by General Synod 2007.

#### *Anglican Journal*

That this Synod send a memorial to General Synod regarding the future of the Anglican Journal and diocesan newspapers to the Council of General Synod, with copies to the National Financial Development Committee, the special task force on budgeting of the Council of General Synod, the Prioritized Operation Plan (POP) working group, and to Rob Towler, President of the Anglican Journal Board, Leanne Larmondin, Editor, Anglican Journal and Vianney Carriere, Director of Communications, Anglican Church of Canada.

We affirm the important contribution made by the Anglican Journal and diocesan papers to the life and unity of the Anglican Church of Canada.

We recognize and endorse the character of the Anglican Journal as defined in its charter as a newspaper with editorial independence.

Noting that these publications provide an essential service in connecting Anglicans on the local, provincial and national levels and beyond, we are concerned about their viability.

Special attention must be drawn to the unique nature of diocesan media vehicles when consideration of funding cuts to the national newspaper is undertaken, with every possible effort made to ensure the continuation of operations at or close to present levels in terms of the number of issues, size of issue, maintenance of mailing grant and otherwise.

## **PROVINCE OF RUPERT'S LAND**

### *St. Michael Report*

THAT this Provincial Synod of the Ecclesiastical Province of Rupert's Land urges the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada to accept the conclusion of the report of the Primate's Theological Commission on the Blessing of Same-Sex unions (St. Michael's Report) that the blessing of committed same-sex unions is a matter of doctrine, and therefore must be decided at the level of General Synod.

## **2. DIOCESES**

### **ALGOMA**

#### *Same-Sex Unions*

That this Synod of the Diocese of Algoma memorialize General Synod that the Diocese of Algoma disagrees with its affirmation of the 'sanctity of committed adult same-sex relationships' because this affirmation pre-empts the unresolved discussion of the doctrinal nature of same-sex blessings at the national level.

That the Synod of the Diocese of Algoma memorialize General Synod that:

- a) The Synod of the Diocese of Algoma assures homosexual persons that they are loved by God and that all baptized, believing and faithful persons, regardless of sexual orientation, are full members of the Body of Christ; and
- b) The Synod calls on all Anglicans to minister pastorally and sensitively to all, irrespective of sexual orientation and to condemn irrational fear of homosexuals. (Lambeth 1998, I.10).

### **BRANDON**

#### *General Synod 2004 – Motion A134*

Be it Resolved that the 42<sup>nd</sup> Synod of the Diocese of Brandon send a memorial to General Synod expressing its dissatisfaction with the amendment to Motion A134 passed at General Synod 2004 "affirming the integrity and sanctity of committed adult same sex relationships ", and respectfully requesting that General Synod reconsider this matter.

*Funding for Ministry in the North*

Be it resolved that this Synod memorialize General Synod asking it to make funding for ministry in the North an urgent priority.

**CALEDONIA**

**ST. MARTIN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH  
PARISH OF NORTH PEACE**

*Blessing of Same-Sex Unions*

“That we (St Martin’s) do not support adoption of any motion at General Synod which would have at its center the church’s recognition for the blessing of same sex marriages.”

This vote was not found to be satisfactory to some people, so a subsequent motion was drawn up, presented, discussed, and voted upon (fifteen in favour, seven in opposition, with three abstentions):

“That this parish, recognizing the divisive nature of this topic, ask that General Synod step back from making any decision on the issue of same sex blessings at this time, to allow for further discussion, education and prayer.”

**FREDERICTON**

*Commitment to the Wider Anglican Communion*

That this Diocesan Synod memorialize General Synod as follows:

That this Diocesan Synod of Fredericton affirms that it regards being in full and visible communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Anglican Communion throughout the world as essential and vital, and

That any consideration of the Anglican Church of Canada ‘walking apart’ from the rest of the Anglican Communion is unacceptable and indeed contrary to the Solemn Declaration of 1893, and would thus seriously jeopardize the relationship between this Diocese and General Synod.

**HURON**

*General Synod 2004 – Act 72*

Be it resolved that this Synod memorialize the 2007 General Synod that the Diocese of Huron has considered the Declaration of Principles.

*This motion is in relation to Act 72, General Synod 2004 motions and namely the Amendment to the Declaration of Principles – Eligibility of Clergy, sections 3c) and 3f) vi).*

## KOOTENAY

### *Additions to the Calendar for the Anglican Church of Canada*

That in the interest of providing resources for the understanding and articulation of Anglican Identity, this Synod of Kootenay memorializes General Synod to add to the Calendar for the Anglican Church of Canada:

- Florence Li Tim-oi - first woman priest ordained in the Holy Catholic Anglican Church of Japan
- William Temple – Archbishop of Canterbury and major visionary prophet – theological and spiritual giant of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.
- Janani Luwam – Archbishop of Uganda, martyred during the oppressive rule of Edi Amin
- Clive Staples (C.S.) Lewis – writer, theologian and pietist of the last century and widely read today, and that the Worship and Ministry Committee actively pursue the counsel of the church to identify further heroes of the church to inspire our quest of Anglican Identity.”
- Ted Scott

## NEW WESTMINSTER

### *Rite for Blessing Couples in Covenanted Same-Sex Union*

This General Synod recognizes the Diocese of New Westminster’s engagement with issues of human sexuality, extending over many years and numerous Diocesan Synods, which has resulted in a rite for blessing couples in covenanted same-sex unions.

This General Synod further acknowledges that this process has involved:

- Votes at three Diocesan Synods (1998, 2001, 2002), each with an increasing majority in favour; with the Bishop withholding his assent until 2002;
- The affirmative conclusion of a national legal consultation into the authority of a diocesan bishop to authorize a rite of blessing of covenanted same-sex unions;
- A three-year program (1998-2001) of extensive, diocese-wide parish dialogues to explore theological issues surrounding human sexuality and to hear the stories of gay, lesbian and ex-gay Anglicans, and to consider a proposed rite of blessing;
- The careful development of a rite for blessing couples in covenanted same-sex unions;
- The provision that no individual, clergy or lay, must participate in any such rites;
- The development of a process and protocol for parishes to seek the Bishop’s authorization to conduct such blessings;
- The provision of an episcopal visitor for parishes and individuals opposed to the blessing of same-sex unions.

This General Synod further recognizes that the provision of this rite has enabled gay and lesbian people to feel safe, respected, and included in the full life of the church and that the sudden withdrawal of this rite would seriously undermine the progress that has been made.

In view of the deliberative process leading to a rite of blessing couples in covenanted same-sex unions in the Diocese of New Westminster, and the potentially damaging effects if this rite is abruptly withdrawn, and given affirmation ¶12 of the *St. Michael Report* that “history ... demonstrates that clarity emerges when thought and action occur simultaneously,” and notwithstanding any actions of its 2007 Synod, the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada affirms that the present practice of authorizing and conducting such blessings shall continue in the Diocese of New Westminster pending General Synod's resolution of the matter.

#### *The St. Michael Report*

On behalf of the 105<sup>th</sup> Session of the Synod of the Diocese of New Westminster, Diocesan Council memorializes General Synod 2007 of the following position statement concerning *The St. Michael Report*:

Although a minority continues to dissent from diocesan policy, the Synod of the Diocese of New Westminster has acted on the understanding that its 2002 decision to permit the blessing of covenanted same-sex unions in duly authorized requesting parishes constitutes a matter of church discipline over which local dioceses rightly have jurisdiction. We are grateful to the Primate's Theological Commission for its thoughtful consideration of whether “the blessing of committed same-sex unions is a matter of doctrine.” Although some find various aspects of the Report problematic, in particular the Commission's very general definition of “doctrine” (e.g., *St. Michael Report*, ¶8), we are able to affirm the following points of agreement:

- a) That the blessing of covenanted same-sex unions, is “related to the doctrines of salvation (soteriology), incarnation, the work of the Holy Spirit (pneumatology), our creation in the image of God (theological anthropology), sanctification, and holy matrimony” (¶2);
- b) That inasmuch as “the determination of this question will not hinder or impair our common affirmation of the historic creeds,” the “blessing of same-sex unions is not a matter of core doctrine in the sense of being credal” (¶10), as defined by the Commission, but rather constitutes an interpretation of existing doctrine;
- c) That because the blessing of same-sex unions is not a matter of “core” or “credal” doctrine, this should not be “a Communion-breaking issue” (¶10);
- d) That “what is required of the Church is to discern the leading of the Spirit in this matter in reasoned and faithful dialogue with Scripture and tradition, and then to respond in love and obedience” (¶12);
- e) That in view of the continuing strong disagreements on this issue among faithful Anglicans of differing theological persuasions in the Anglican Church of Canada, there is an ongoing need for “dialogue where participants agree to pay full, careful and transparent attention to the authority of the whole witness of Holy Scripture and its claim upon the Church” (¶23);
- f) That “history...demonstrates that clarity emerges when thought and action occur simultaneously” (¶12).

#### *Local Option*

On behalf of the 105<sup>th</sup> Session of the Synod of the Diocese of New Westminster, Diocesan Council, while acknowledging the continuing diversity of diocesan opinion on this matter and fully respecting the freedom of conscience of those who dissent from Synod's position, requests

General Synod to affirm that the constituent dioceses of the Anglican Church of Canada may facilitate the blessing of committed unions of adult gay and lesbian Christians providing that:

- a) the Synod of the Diocese enacts a resolution requesting the Bishop to authorize such blessings, to which he/she gives assent;
- b) the resolution indicates that such blessings shall occur in parishes only when the incumbent and the congregation reach agreement together to request permission of the Bishop to conduct such rites;
- c) the resolution indicates that no member of the Diocese, whether lay or ordained, shall be required to act against their conscience in the blessing of such unions or be subject to any form of discrimination for his/her personal position on the issue; and
- d) the resolution indicates that where requested, supplementary episcopal oversight of dissenting congregations shall be conducted according to the terms of "Shared Episcopal Ministry," or any other scheme officially authorized by the House of Bishops of the Anglican Church of Canada.

## **NIAGARA**

### **YOUTH SYNOD**

#### *Blessing of Same Gender Unions*

Whereas: The blessing of same gender unions and the full integration of the gay and lesbian community into the parishes of the Diocese of Niagara and the Anglican Church of Canada have been topics of discussion and dissension for the last thirty years

And Whereas: The 130<sup>th</sup> Synod of the Diocese of Niagara voted 67% in favour of asking the Bishop to "grant clergy permission to exercise their discretion in blessing the relationships of gay or lesbian couples who have been married civilly, once they with their congregations have petitioned the Bishop for permission to be a "blessing community"

And Whereas: The 37<sup>th</sup> Session of General Synod (2004) passed a motion that "affirmed the integrity and sanctity of committed adult same sex relationships"

And Whereas: Several Youth Synods of the Diocese of Niagara have passed motions with overwhelming support that affirm the full integration of gays and lesbians into our parishes and the blessing of the same gender unions

And Whereas: The 37<sup>th</sup> Session of General Synod (2004) deferred consideration of a motion affirming the authority of diocesan synods to authorize the blessing of committed same sex unions until the 38<sup>th</sup> Session of General Synod (2007), June 19 – 25, 2007



Be it resolved that:

1. Youth Synod 2006 affirms that the blessing of the unions of committed same sex partners is both just and righteous, and that to withhold this blessing is to continue discrimination against gays and lesbians as well as perpetuating the brokenness of the community of Christ Jesus.
2. A memorial is to be sent to the 133<sup>rd</sup> Session of Diocesan Synod affirming the support of Youth Synod 2006 for the Bishop to “grant clergy permission to exercise their discretion in blessing the relationships of gay or lesbian couples who have been married civilly, once they with their congregations have petitioned the Bishop for permission to be a “blessing community”.
3. A memorial is to be sent to the 133<sup>rd</sup> Session of Diocesan Synod recommending that a vote be allowed on the matter of the blessing of the unions of committed adult same sex partners so that the work of the Holy Spirit as reflected in the mind of the Diocese of Niagara can be made clear to the 38<sup>th</sup> Session of General Synod.
4. A statement is issued to the Niagara Anglican by Youth Synod Council on behalf of Youth Synod 2006 encouraging parishes to engage in respectful, civil dialogue about the issue of blessing same gender unions before the 133<sup>rd</sup> Session of Diocesan Synod on November 25, 2006 so that delegates do not impede discussion or motions on the grounds that their parish has not discussed the issue.
5. A memorial is sent to the 38<sup>th</sup> Session of General Synod affirming the support of Youth Synod 2006 of the Diocese of Niagara for authorizing the “local option’ at the diocesan level for the blessing of the unions of committed adult same sex partners.

#### **NOVA SCOTIA & PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND**

##### *St. Michael Report*

1. This synod ask the 2007 General Synod to receive the St. Michael Report.

##### *Commitment to the Wider Anglican Communion*

2. Remembering our history and our heritage, this synod asks the 2007 General Synod to affirm its commitment to the wider Anglican communion in the spirit of the Solemn Declaration.

#### **SASKATCHEWAN**

##### *Blessing of Same-Sex Unions*

Be it resolved that this Diocesan Synod memorialize General Synod as follows:

1. That this Diocesan Synod affirms and upholds the continuing authority of the Solemn Declaration of 1893 as the charter document of the Anglican Church of Canada;

2. That this Diocesan Synod objects, along with our two Bishops, to the consecration of Gene Robinson as a bishop in the Episcopal Church of the United States of America (ECUSA);
3. That this Diocesan Synod regards any decision by the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, with respect to the endorsement of the blessing of same-sex unions, which would jeopardize our full and visible communion with the Anglican Communion throughout the world as deplorable, and seriously affecting the relationship between this Diocese and General Synod.

#### **RUPERT’S LAND**

##### *St. Michael Report*

That this Synod of the Diocese of Rupert’s Land urge the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada to accept the conclusion of the Report of the Primate’s Theological Commission (The St. Michael Report) that the blessing of committed same-sex unions is a matter of doctrine, and further we recommend that this be decided at the level of General Synod.

That this Synod of the Diocese of Rupert’s Land urge the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada to support the concept of an Anglican covenant and commit the Anglican Church of Canada to working with Anglicans throughout the world in its drafting, within the belief standards of the Lambeth Quadrilateral and the Solemn Declaration of the Canadian Church of 1893.

#### **WESTERN NEWFOUNDLAND**

##### *Copyright Fee - BAS*

“The Synod of Western Newfoundland requests the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, or the appropriate body, to waive its annual copyright fee for Anglican parishes and congregations who wish to reproduce materials from the Book of Alternative Services.”