

# **A Statement to the Anglican Church of Canada**

## **from the House of Bishops**

### **of Rupert's Land**

In the course of our prayers for General Synod in Winnipeg in June 2007, the Bishops of the Province of Rupert's Land wish to draw the wider Church's attention to two concerns regarding the resolutions which the Council of General Synod (CoGS) is forwarding to General Synod about the blessing of same-sex unions.

Our first concern is with Resolution #3—"that the blessing of same-sex unions is consistent with the core doctrine of the Anglican Church of Canada", and thus consistent with Christian core doctrine. In the two months remaining before June, we do not believe that it is possible for members of General Synod—or the broader Church—to undertake the required education and discussion to be in a position to determine whether the blessing of same-sex unions is scripturally sound and theologically consistent with core doctrine. While there has been a huge amount published on these matters from both sides of the question, there is no one Canadian Anglican position paper that we as a Church own and can use to help others engaging this question. If the blessing of same-sex unions is consistent with core doctrine and right, then it is incumbent upon us to help educate Anglicans, and other Christians, in Canada and around the world. Accordingly, we request General Synod to direct the Primate's Theological Commission (PTC) to prepare a report that answers this important question. This request to the PTC needs to be carefully worded and more comprehensive than the 2004 request about whether the blessing of same-sex unions is a matter of doctrine.

Our second concern is that the set of resolutions which CoGS has drafted does not squarely address the effect of passing those resolutions on our membership in the Anglican Communion. If the blessing of same-sex unions proves to be scripturally sound and consistent with core doctrine, we believe that General Synod needs to develop a vehicle for considering whether it is better for us to stay at the table and insisting on ongoing conversation with all of the other parts of the Communion—particularly those where gay and lesbian relationships constitute illegal or even criminal activity—or to walk away now from our Anglican brothers and sisters, and our ecumenical partners, thereby communicating that "I have no need of you" (1 Cor. 12:21).

We are deeply mindful that these concerns and requests will cause great frustration within the Canadian gay and lesbian community. However, we believe that it is important to be sure of our doctrine, and not to unduly quickly walk away from the international table, especially as the Canadian Church has a unique contribution to make to the Communion in light of the developing experience of civil same-sex marriage within Canada.

We offer these comments in the name of the Risen Christ.