

Changes in ACNA

The Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) has announced to all ACNA clergy that one of its founding partners, [the Anglican Mission in the Americas](#) (formerly known as AMiA and now known as “theAM”) has changed its status with ACNA. Assuming the move is approved at the ACNA Provincial Council meeting in June, theAM will become a Ministry Partner, joining other ACNA ministry partners such as the American Anglican Council, the Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans, Forward in Faith and the Federation of Anglican Churches in America. This change includes theAM’s Canadian churches in the Anglican Coalition in Canada.

Bishop Don Harvey commenting on this development said, *“I do not see this as good news, in fact it is a sad development in many ways. But it seems to be the best solution for now given the relationship between the Rwandan Church and theAM. The good news, I believe, is that this change will not hinder our working together both to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to people who desperately need our Saviour and to plant churches in Canada and the US.”*

About theAM

TheAM was established in 2000 under the Church of Rwanda as a missionary outreach in North America. The bishops of theAM are members of the Rwandan House of Bishops and the constitution of the Church of Rwanda integrates theAM into the Rwandan church. Over the years, theAM has grown and developed a strong missional culture. Today theAM numbers 156 congregations in the US and Canada. When the ACNA was constituted in June 2009, theAM formed nine of the ACNA dioceses. ACNA will now have 20 dioceses.

About theAM’s changed relationship with ACNA

An [ACNA announcement to clergy](#) states that the change was precipitated by “...a January resolution by the Rwandan House of Bishops objecting to the dual membership of Rwanda’s missionary bishops in the [ACNA] North American College of Bishops.”

The constitution and canons of ACNA were written “...so theAM might be practically integrated in the structure of the ACNA as a jurisdiction, while sustaining identity as a missionary outreach of Rwanda.” However, *“The jurisdictional approach has led to a number of areas of confusion for bishops and congregations of the Anglican Mission.”*

[TheAM website states](#), *“...the Anglican Mission initially chose the jurisdictional option for membership in the ACNA while maintaining its identity as a missionary outreach of Rwanda. This “dual citizenship” approach, however, has resulted in significant confusion within the Anglican Mission and the ACNA regarding membership in two provinces, and more importantly, is inconsistent with the Constitution and Canons of the Province of the Anglican Church in Rwanda. Practically speaking, this jurisdictional/membership status became untenable and non-sustainable.”*

In the ACNA announcement, ACNA Archbishop Robert Duncan stated, *“The vision of a biblical, missionary and united Anglicanism in North America remains the vision of every North American Anglican. Jurisdictional integration also remains a future hope as Rwandan canons do provide for the transfer of the Anglican Mission to the Anglican Church in North America when the time seems right.”*

What it means to be an ACNA ministry partner

The following excerpts from the ACNA statement explain what the AM's new relationship to ACNA will entail:

***“Local congregations** continue to work together in ministry, and are free to transfer between the Anglican Mission in the Americas and the Anglican Church in North America (or vice versa) in consultation with the bishops concerned.”*

***“Clergy** of the AM remain canonically resident in the Province of Rwanda and subject to their Norms, Prescripts, and Disciplines, but Ministry Partner status does provide canonically for clergy of the AM and the ACNA to minister in both ecclesiastical entities provided they are in good standing.”*

Bishops – *“The most significant change brought by Ministry Partner status is that AM Bishops would no longer be regular members of the ACNA College of Bishops.”*