



Anglican Essentials Canada (AEC) Consultation Toronto, Ryerson College, August 23-24, 2006

Concerned Anglicans from across Canada – including laypeople, clergy and bishops – gathered in Toronto for two busy days of consultation, information and spiritual refreshment. Delegates were provided with reports from the US General Convention, updates from the global Communion, and news of the Essentials movement within Canada. From listening to one another during the highly productive consultations, we gained new appreciation for the diversity of views within orthodox Anglicanism in Canada and advanced preparations for the June 2007 General Synod.

Special guest, **Bishop Bob Duncan**, Bishop of Pittsburgh and Moderator of the Anglican Communion Network in the United States stated that the Episcopal Church's decisions at the June General Convention dashed any hope that the global Communion can "walk together". A meeting in September of the Global South Primates will shed light on the Communion's response to the US General Convention. This will be followed by a meeting of all Primates in February. Currently, seven US dioceses are making a united appeal to the Archbishop of Canterbury for Alternate Primatial Oversight.

The Anglican Communion is in the midst of a reformation, Bishop Duncan said. In a recent media interview, the **Archbishop of Canterbury** stated that conversion means conversion of habits, behaviours, ideas and emotions. "Ethics is not a matter of a set of abstract rules; it is a matter of living the mind of Christ. That applies to sexual ethics," he said.

Bishop Donald Harvey, Moderator of the Anglican Network in Canada, reported that the international view is that the Anglican Church of Canada (ACC) has been asked to temporarily withdraw from the global Communion to allow time to reconsider and repent. The Primates have made it clear that only after the ACC repents and commits to uphold Communion teaching, will it be fully recognized globally. During this time of suspension, Anglican Essentials Canada is seen globally as representing faithful Canadian Anglicans and Bishop Harvey is now being invited to global Communion events normally reserved for the Primate of Canada. For example, Bishop Harvey was invited to the February 2006 consecration of the new Primate for South East Asia, Archbishop John Chew, while Archbishop Andrew Hutchison was not invited.

The **consultations** took attendees through a process of "listening reverently" – for our strengths, our concerns, and God's direction for ways to move forward together. These consultations have provided valuable guidance to Essentials leadership for future planning and decision-making. Already, the AEC Board has met by teleconference and we have taken into consideration much of what we heard at these meetings. The next face-to-face meeting of the Board will be in October, where more work will be done.

The **Committee on Strategy and Motions** reported on preparations for **General Synod**, particularly the motions being developed. These motions, reflecting the desire to keep church unity – to the degree this unity can be based on truth – were discussed in light of the wide diversity of views within Essentials. Discussion centred on whether motions that were godly but passable would be sufficient to respond definitively and satisfy the requirements of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Primates. There was a general consensus that Essentials’ motions should conform to the language in the Windsor Report.

Considerable preparatory work is yet to be done, both at the local and national level. The AEC Board has been developing an Essentials policy, which they hope to finalize at the October meeting, to provide support and direction to the Committee on Motions and Strategy going forward. We want to express our appreciation for the work done by the Committee to date and ask for your prayers in the months ahead.

Rev. Dr James Packer, representing the **Ginger Group**, introduced the Anglican Agenda Series – a series of booklets designed to address pressing issues in the Anglican Church. The three booklets already in print – *Taking Faith Seriously*, *Taking Love Seriously*, and *Taking the Anglican Communion Seriously* – can be obtained by ordering copies from Anglican Essentials Canada website (www.anglicanessentials.org) and either by paying online or printing an order form found on the website and sending in a cheque.

During the Eucharist, **Rev. Canon Dr. Bill Atwood, General Secretary** of Ekklesia (a society of global orthodox Primates and bishops) challenged the group to expand the vision of Essentials, live transformed lives, commit completely to God’s Kingdom, and change the world. “We are more than conquerors through Christ.... Start acting like it!”