

April 11, 2008

Open Letter to the House of Bishops of the Anglican Church of Canada

Greetings in the name of our risen Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

As a former member of this House, and a friend to many of you over the years, I am writing to appeal to you on behalf of all the parishes, clergy and congregations that have joined the Anglican Network in Canada (ANiC).

As you know, litigation has occurred in various parts of Canada as a result of the votes of some parishes to join ANiC. Further litigation is contemplated or expected in other places. I think we can all agree that such litigation has been damaging for the mission of the church and is a poor witness to the very people with whom we are called to share the good news of Jesus Christ. At the end of the day, neither the Anglican Church of Canada (ACoC) nor ANiC will end up a "winner" in the courts and we will both find our mission hindered by the distraction and cost of such litigation.

We would like to propose a meeting at the earliest possible opportunity with the Primate, the Most Reverend Fred Hiltz, and any affected ACoC bishops, together with representatives from ANiC, and our respective legal counsel, to discuss the possibility of pursuing alternate dispute resolution mechanisms (i.e. negotiation, mediation or arbitration) to address the outstanding issues between the ANiC parishes and the ACoC bishops or dioceses. It would be much better for everyone concerned if we could work out some interim arrangements between ourselves without the necessity of resorting to the civil courts.

We recognize that any decisions will have national impact and therefore propose that all affected bishops be at such discussions, which would be without prejudice to either party's legal rights to employment issues, ownership and use of parish property and assets or any other issue that should arise from the discussions.

In the spirit of 1 Corinthians 6, we pray that you will consider meeting with us in a spirit of peace and in a more amicable setting to discuss the way forward in light of the profound theological differences that have arisen between us and that are currently being addressed in the global Anglican Communion. Peaceful negotiations will always leave the door to future reconciliation open but we fear that further litigation will lead to irreparable harm that will close that door forever.

If you are willing and able to meet with us, please contact me as soon as possible so that we can consider how this might assist in postponing further action and fostering a greater spirit of cooperation and negotiation.

In His Service,



The Right Reverend Donald F Harvey
Moderator, Anglican Network in Canada