



Anglican Network in Canada

News release

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Vancouver-area parishes' case to be heard May 25

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Vancouver – The trial involving four Vancouver-area Anglican Network in Canada (ANiC) churches and the Anglican Church of Canada's (ACoC) Diocese of New Westminster will begin on May 25 in British Columbia Supreme Court. Three weeks have been set aside to hear the case.

The four parishes – St. Matthew's (Abbotsford), St Matthias and St Luke's (Vancouver), St John's Shaughnessy (Vancouver) and Church of the Good Shepherd (Vancouver) – had asked the courts in early September 2008 to clarify their trustees' responsibilities in light of hostile action taken by the ACoC diocese.

In a move designed to take control of the parish properties, Bishop Michael Ingham, of the Diocese of New Westminster, had informed the elected wardens and trustees of two parishes in late August that they had been summarily dismissed and replaced by officials appointed by the bishop. Bank accounts for the churches were frozen causing administration difficulties for the congregations that had raised the funds in those accounts. The other two parishes expected similar actions to be taken against them as well.

All four parishes voted overwhelmingly in February 2008 to disaffiliate with the Anglican Church of Canada and realign with the Anglican Network in Canada as a result of a growing doctrinal disagreement.

"All churches in the Anglican Church of Canada are held "in trust", and the fundamental question for the courts to decide is, 'Who are the beneficiaries of that trust and the rightful owners of the property – the diocese or the congregation?' says Cheryl Chang, ANiC Chancellor.

The parish trustees believe the parish properties are held in trust for the benefit of the current congregations who have paid for and maintained these properties, and who are continuing to practice and maintain traditional Anglican ministry in accordance with the founding principles of the Anglican Church of Canada (contained in the *Solemn Declaration 1893*), and the current doctrine of the global Anglican Communion. The Diocese of New Westminster, which has acted unilaterally and contrary to those principles, asserts the property is held in trust for the diocese. Various actions are currently in the Canadian courts to determine who is the rightful beneficiary of such trusts in light of the growing divisions in the global Anglican Communion.

"The trustees of all four parishes decided act together in this matter since the issues in dispute are the same with respect to the trusts surrounding the church properties and assets, as well as the duties of the Trustees," says Mrs Chang.

As part of the Anglican Network in Canada, the four congregations are under the Episcopal authority of Bishop Donald Harvey and the jurisdiction of the Anglican Province of the Southern

Cone – one of the 38 Provinces in the global Anglican Communion. The Anglican Church of Canada is also one of these 38 Provinces.

The four congregations have been in “serious theological dispute” with the Diocese of New Westminster since June 2002, when the diocese unilaterally proceeded with same sex blessings in clear defiance of leaders of the global Anglican Communion and the beliefs of the vast majority of Anglicans worldwide that such action is contrary to Scripture.

Since 2003, the Primates of the Anglican Communion have repeatedly asked the Anglican Church of Canada and the Diocese of New Westminster to return to Biblically-faithful Anglican practice and teaching and to provide adequate episcopal oversight for dissenting parishes, but to no avail. In fact, the communion-breaking actions of the Diocese of New Westminster sparked the current crisis and the global realignment which is now taking place in the Anglican Communion.

Members of the Anglican Network in Canada are committed to remaining faithful to Holy Scripture and established Anglican doctrine and to ensuring that orthodox Canadian Anglicans are able to remain in full communion with their Anglican brothers and sisters around the world.

Since it launched its ecclesial structure in November 2008, ANiC has received 26 parishes and 67 clergy, including two bishops – Donald Harvey and Malcolm Harding.

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Backgrounder

About the parishes

St Matthias and St Luke Anglican Church (Vancouver) - www.stmstl.org

- Average Sunday attendance of 160; over 200 members
- St Matthias and St Luke's was formed a decade ago when two congregations were merged
- It is a multicultural church with a 9:30am English service, followed by am 11:15am Cantonese/Mandarin service and a 2pm Japanese service

St Matthew's (Abbotsford) - www.stmatthewsanglicanchurch.com/

- Average Sunday attendance of 240
- Ministries to children, youth, men, women and seniors
- Holds two services Sunday mornings (8:30 and 10:15 am), a service Wednesday mornings and a healing service the first Sunday of the month

St John's Shaughnessy (Vancouver) - www.stjohnsvancouver.org/

- Is the largest Anglican parish in Canada with average Sunday attendance of 800
- Has ministries to children, youth, young adults, women, men and the community
- Is renowned for its music ministry
- Traces its roots to 1925, although the current structure was completed in 1950

Church of the Good Shepherd (Vancouver) - <http://goodshepherdchurch.no-ip.org/>

- Average Sunday attendance of 250
- Holds English and Cantonese services: 9am English service; 11am Cantonese service
- Is the largest Chinese Anglican congregation in Canada
- Will celebrate its 120th anniversary in 2009

About the Anglican Network in Canada

Since the Anglican Network in Canada launched its ecclesial (Church) structure in November 2007 under the jurisdiction of the Anglican Province of the Southern Cone, it has received two bishops (the Rt. Rev. Donald Harvey and the Rt. Rev. Malcolm Harding) and 26 parishes. These parishes have elected to seek episcopal oversight from Bishop Harvey and ANiC because they are determined to stay biblically faithful and true to historic Anglican doctrine and teaching and within mainstream Anglicanism.

About the Anglican Province of the Southern Cone

Archbishop Gregory Venables, Primate (or leader) of the Anglican Province of the Southern Cone, has responded to the needs of biblically faithful Canadian Anglicans for spiritual protection and care on an emergency and interim basis – pending a resolution to the crisis in the worldwide Anglican Communion.

Archbishop Venables is well respected as an orthodox leader in the global Anglican Communion. He leads the Anglican Province of the Southern Cone which is one of 38 Provinces that make up the global Anglican Communion. It encompasses much of South America and includes Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay and Argentina.

By accepting the Primatial oversight of Archbishop Venables, these Canadian Anglicans, who are in the mainstream of global Anglicanism, were able to re-establish full communion status with global church by being aligned with a Province which is in "full communion with the Church of England throughout the world", unlike the Anglican Church of Canada, which is currently in a broken relationship with many of the largest Anglican Provinces.

About Anglicanism in Canada and around the world

While orthodox Anglicans are in a minority in Canada, they are in the majority worldwide. ANiC parishes stand firmly in the mainstream of global and historic Anglican teaching and orthodoxy. Our beliefs are shared by roughly two-thirds of the 80 million Anglicans worldwide.

Since 2003, the Primates of the Anglican Communion have repeatedly asked the Anglican Church of Canada to return to biblically faithful Anglican practice and teaching and to its own founding principles. They have also called upon the Anglican Church of Canada (ACoC) to provide adequate episcopal oversight to dissenting parishes while the Communion addresses the resulting division, but to no avail. This forced a number of parishes in Canada to seek protection and Communion connection through ANiC.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has said he is in full communion with members of ANiC and many international leaders have acknowledged their support and fellowship with the ANiC. This was evidenced by the inclusion of ANiC representatives at the Global Anglican Future Conference in June 2008 in Jerusalem

We stand for historic Christian and Anglican teaching and want to faithfully preserve what has been entrusted to us by our forebears so we can pass it on, intact and unaltered, to future generations. We are determined to stay true to the fundamental and historic tenets of Anglican Christianity and stay in full communion with the global Anglican Church.

About the crisis in the Anglican Church of Canada

Because the Anglican Church of Canada has departed from the faith of, and is “walking apart” from, the global Anglican Communion, parishes have felt compelled to align with ANiC and the Anglican Province of the Southern Cone in order to uphold the trusts and founding principles upon which the churches were established and built.

Parishioners in Vancouver-area ANiC churches voted overwhelmingly to request the care and protection of a biblically faithful Anglican bishop, Bishop Donald Harvey, and the orthodox Anglican Province of the Southern Cone in order to realign with orthodox Communion-committed Anglicans worldwide.

Why parishes have realigned under the Anglican Province of the Southern Cone

The people of these parishes took the decision to realign:

- To be faithful to historic Christian and global Anglican teaching.
- To have the freedom to “further the mission of Christ in the Anglican tradition”
- To be recognized as in “full communion with the Church of England throughout the world” per the Solemn Declaration 1893 - the founding statement of the ACoC.
- To keep faith with their spiritual forebears who built the parishes on established Christian convictions and historic Anglican practices.
- Because they value their Anglican heritage and want to stay true to global and historic Anglican teaching and orthodoxy

This is fundamentally about staying true to historic Christian teaching that the Bible is the inspired Word of God and that there is only one way to God through faith in Jesus Christ. The issue of the Bible’s teaching on sexual practice is merely the tip of the iceberg. The realignment of ANiC parishes with an orthodox Anglican Province was an act of conscience.

Why must the Diocese react so harshly? Why will they not negotiate?

We see no reason why the Diocese and the ACoC cannot accept this alternative arrangement gracefully and in good faith while the global Communion deals with the crisis which extends well beyond Canada. There are examples of parallel jurisdictions existing in the Anglican Church of Canada already, and one more in the interim, does not have to be rancorous. For example, the ACoC provides for the spiritual needs of the armed forces and indigenous peoples with bishops whose jurisdiction crosses diocesan boundaries.

More information can be found at: www.anglicannetwork.ca