



Anglican Network in Canada

News release

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Vancouver Island parish joins Anglican Network. Requests mediation.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 11 February 2009

The congregation of St Mary's Anglican Church, in Nanoose Bay, British Columbia voted overwhelmingly on Sunday, February 8, to come under the episcopal oversight of Bishop Donald Harvey, Moderator of the Anglican Network in Canada (ANiC), and under the Primatial authority of Archbishop Gregory Venables of the Anglican Province of the Southern Cone.

St Mary's rector, the Rev Guy Bellerby, met today with the bishop's commissary from the Anglican Church of Canada BC Diocese to request an amicable arrangement that would enable the congregation to remain in the church building pending a mediated process. This is in the spirit of the request made by the Primates (leaders of Anglican Churches worldwide) at their recent meeting in Egypt. The Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada said earlier this week that he would like to participate in such a mediation process.

In response to the Rev Bellerby's request for an amicable arrangement, the bishop's commissary would only say the request would be considered. A trial is already set for May 25, 2009 in Vancouver on the issue of ownership of church buildings, so further legal action in this situation would be redundant.

St Mary's is the 27th parish and the 15th former Anglican Church of Canada parish to join ANiC this year. The official vote was 85 per cent in favour of realigning with ANiC - 81 votes in favour and 14 opposed. In addition, there were at least 15 other members of the congregation who were not able to attend the meeting but who have expressed their support for the motion

"I am delighted to welcome the people of St Mary's into our Biblically faithful Anglican Church family," said Bishop Harvey. "By aligning with the Anglican Network in Canada, they join a growing movement of Anglicans throughout North America seeking to remain in the mainstream of global and historic Anglicanism."

St. Mary's is a semi-rural parish located mid-way between Nanaimo and Parksville on Vancouver Island. The congregation has an average Sunday attendance of 100-120, with a diverse mixture of retired members and young families. They are an active parish with strong community outreach and offer a 9am family service as well as an 11am traditional service.

The people of St Mary's acted because they are determined to remain Biblically faithful and true to historic Christian and Anglican doctrine, as evidenced by their membership in the Anglican Essentials movement since 1995. The Primates recently acknowledged that members of ANiC are fully Anglican, and that the global Anglican Communion is clearly divided over these serious theological differences, particularly in relation to the authority and interpretation of the Bible. While orthodox Anglicans are in a minority in Canada, they are the overwhelming majority worldwide.

The decision to join ANiC demonstrates the deep faith, conviction and courage of the people of St Mary's. Parishes that earlier made this decision are now facing hostile court proceedings,

threats of eviction and other punitive action by Anglican Church of Canada bishops simply because they seek to continue worshipping in the buildings – which they paid for and maintained through the years – while the Anglican Communion addresses the theological divide in the global church.

St Mary's is the second Anglican congregation on Vancouver Island and the ninth in BC to join ANiC since November 2007. The first congregation, St Mary's Metchosin (Victoria, BC), was forced to leave their church building pending the outcome of a trial that will determine for whom the property is held in trust.

Today, ANiC numbers 27 parishes, three bishops, 67 priests and deacons and 3300 Canadians in church on an average Sunday.

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.

ANiC is under the Episcopal authority of Bishop Harvey and the jurisdiction of the Anglican Province of the Southern Cone – one of the 38 Provinces in the global Anglican Communion – which encompasses much of South America and includes Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay and Argentina. The Anglican Church of Canada is also one of these 38 Provinces.

Archbishop Gregory Venables, Primate of the Anglican Province of the Southern Cone, has responded to the need 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.

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