



Anglican Network in Canada NEWS RELEASE

Ontario Superior Court Deprives Congregation of Church Property

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The Ontario Superior Court has decided that the property and assets of St Aidan's in Windsor, Ontario, are held in trust for a St Aidan's "parish" within the Diocese of Huron of the Anglican Church of Canada.

In his decision released 15 August 2011, Mr Justice Little leaned heavily on the court decisions in the BC case involving four Vancouver-area parishes which also had left the Anglican Church of Canada and joined the Anglican Network in Canada (ANiC) in 2008. Mr Justice Little concluded that "Parish" and "congregation" were interchangeable words which referred to a "*distinct separate unit, rather than a compilation of its congregants at any one time*", and that the separate entity in this case was the "*St Aidan's Parish of the Diocese of Huron*".

The decision should soon be available [on the Ontario Superior Court website](#).

Within hours of the decision being released, the Diocese of Huron changed the locks on the building and asked the ANiC clergy and parish leaders come to remove all personal belongings. The Rev Tom Carman, Rector of St Aidan's, as well as their legal counsel, were both away on holidays when the decision was handed down.

"We were astounded by this unnecessarily hasty and harsh action," said Rev Carman, *"especially since they have little need for the building for their small congregation. Nevertheless, we have been blessed by the outpouring of love from the Christian community here in Windsor. We have had generous offers of assistance – including facilities for our congregation of 165 people."*

Cheryl Chang, Special Counsel to ANiC said, *"While we are extremely disappointed with this decision, we are not surprised given previous decisions in the Canadian courts. From our perspective, nothing has changed. The church is the people or the "congregation", despite the judge's interpretation of that word and the ANiC congregation of St Aidan's will continue to worship and carry out their mission and ministry regardless of location."*

The trustees of St Aidan's (ANiC) have instructed their legal counsel to file a Notice of Appeal and seek an immediate stay of the order of Mr Justice Little. If successful, this will continue the sharing arrangement that has been in place for several years, pending the outcome of the appeal.

Background

On 28 September 2008, parishioners of St Aidan's (Windsor, ON) voted unanimously to realign with the Anglican Network in Canada, moving from the Anglican Church of Canada. The decision resulted from recognition that the Anglican Church of Canada was fundamentally changing its theology, abandoning 2000 years of Christian teaching and practice. St. Aidan's voted to affiliate with and come under the episcopal authority of the Anglican Network in Canada (ANiC) in order to maintain their faith in line with the majority of global Anglicans while the Anglican Communion was in the midst of a worldwide split.

The case to decide the beneficial ownership of St Aidan's property and financial assets was heard in the spring, beginning on April 26.

About the Anglican Network in Canada (ANiC)

The [Anglican Network in Canada](#) now numbers 45 parishes and 13 congregations in various stages of formation – with more than 4000 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 fellowship with their Anglican brothers and sisters around the world.

ANiC is under the Episcopal authority of Bishop Donald Harvey and is one of 21 dioceses in the [Anglican Church in North America](#) which unites about 100,000 faithful Anglicans in nearly 1000 churches across this continent. ANiC is also affiliated with South America's Anglican Province of the Southern Cone, one of the 38 Anglican Churches officially in the worldwide Anglican Communion.

The Anglican Church in North America has been growing rapidly since its inception and has set a goal of planting 1000 new churches in five years – primarily through reaching unchurched North Americans with the life-transforming good news of Jesus Christ.

More information is available [on the Anglican Network in Canada website](#).

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