



# Anglican Network in Canada

## News release

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### Anglican Network in Canada (ANiC) parishes Appeal Court Decision

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 24 December 2009**

The trustees of four Anglican Network in Canada (ANiC) congregations in the greater Vancouver area have filed an appeal of Mr Justice Stephen Kelleher's BC Supreme Court decision of November 25, 2009, in order to preserve their vibrant Anglican ministries. The four parishes, St Matthew's (Abbotsford), St Matthias & St Luke's (Vancouver), St John's Shaughnessy (Vancouver) and Church of the Good Shepherd (Vancouver), have an average Sunday attendance of approximately 1500 people and are involved in many ministries throughout the week serving their communities.

The trustees of the churches had asked the courts in September 2008 to clarify their responsibilities after the bishop of the Diocese of New Westminster purported to replace the trustees and seize the parish bank accounts in two of the congregations. Mr Justice Kelleher found the bishop had no legal or canonical authority to replace the trustees, but he also said that the trustees owed a duty to use the church properties for the benefit of the diocese and the Anglican Church of Canada. This has left the parties in a difficult and unworkable position since both parties feel they are upholding the principles upon which the Anglican Church of Canada and the diocese were founded, but they have very different views about what that means.

"Our legal counsel have advised our parishes that there are strong legal arguments that warrant an appeal," said Cheryl Chang, Chancellor (in-house legal advisor) for the ANiC. "Since, the deadline for filing an appeal is 30 days from the date of judgment, and since this Christmas period is the busiest season in the church year with many additional worship services and events, the trustees felt it was necessary to file the appeal now in order to protect their rights and keep their options open. This will also allow the congregations more time to discern together and move forward in unity. It has been difficult over the Christmas season for the congregations to properly consult and determine what course of action is best for their Gospel witness and ministries. They plan to continue looking at their options in the New Year. Filing an appeal now preserves their rights and their ability to maintain their ministries."

ANiC now has 33 parishes and 8 forming congregations in North America, with more than 3500 people 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 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 Donald Harvey and is a diocese in the Anglican Church in North America which unites over 100,000 faithful Anglicans from across this continent.

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(\*Marilyn Jacobson is on holidays)