

Windsor Report

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In 2003, the Lambeth Commission on Communion was appointed by the Anglican Communion to study problems stemming from the consecration of Gene Robinson, the first openly gay, noncelibate priest to be ordained as an Anglican bishop, in the Episcopal Church in the United States and the blessing of same-sex unions in the Diocese of New Westminster. The Commission, chaired by Archbishop Robin Eames, published its findings as the *Windsor Report* on 18 October 2004.

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Background

The 1998 Lambeth Conference of Anglican bishops passed a resolution on human sexuality stating that it "in view of the teaching of Scripture, upholds faithfulness in marriage between a man and a woman in lifelong union" and that it could not "advise the legitimising or blessing of same sex unions nor ordaining those involved in same gender unions".^[1]

Same-sex unions and Robinson's election



Bishop Gene Robinson.

One Canadian diocese, New Westminster, authorized a rite for the blessing of same-sex unions at its 2002 Diocesan Synod. The use of the rite by individual parishes was incumbent upon a specific request of the parish made through its annual vestry meeting or resolution of its parochial church council. In May 2003, six of the diocese's 76

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Anglican Communion



Canterbury Cathedral

Organization

Archbishop of Canterbury
(Rowan Williams)

Primates' Meeting

Lambeth Conferences

Anglican Consultative Council

Bishops / Dioceses

Episcopal polity

Background and history

Christianity · Christian Church
(Jesus · Christ · St. Paul)

Anglicanism (history)

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Ordination of women

Homosexuality · **Windsor Report**

Theology

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Christian theology

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The Books of Homilies

Caroline Divines

Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral

parishes received authorization to use the rite.^[2]

In 2003, the Episcopal Church's General Convention consented to the Diocese of New Hampshire's election of Gene Robinson as its bishop. Robinson's election prompted a group of 19 bishops, led by Bishop Robert Duncan of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, to make a statement warning the church of a possible schism between the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion.^[3] The Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, stated that it would "inevitably have a significant impact on the Anglican Communion throughout the world and it is too early to say what the result of that will be". He added, "It is my hope that the church in America and the rest of the Anglican Communion will have the opportunity to consider this

development before significant and irrevocable decisions are made in response".^[citation needed] Retired South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu stated that he did not see what "all the fuss" was about, saying the election would not roil the Church of the Province of Southern Africa.^[citation needed] Other senior bishops of the church, like Peter Akinola, Archbishop of the Church of Nigeria, stated that their churches were in an "impaired communion" with the Episcopal Church.^[citation needed]

As a result of the controversy over the consecration of Gene Robinson as bishop and the blessing of same-sex unions, on 15 October 2003, Anglican leaders from around the world met in Lambeth Palace in an attempt to avoid a schism on the issue. The day after, they released a lengthy statement:

We must make clear that recent actions in New Westminster and in the Episcopal Church (USA) do not express the mind of our Communion as a whole, and these decisions jeopardise our sacramental fellowship with each other...This will tear the fabric of our Communion at its deepest level, and may lead to further division on this and further issues as provinces have to decide in consequence whether they can remain in communion with provinces that choose not to break communion with the Episcopal Church (USA)...Similar considerations apply to the situation pertaining in the Diocese of New Westminster.^[4]

The Primates also asked the Archbishop of Canterbury to form a commission to provide "urgent and deep theological and legal reflection" to report back to the Primates in 12 months.^[4]

Lambeth Commission on Communion

In 2003, Archbishop Robin Eames, the Anglican Primate of All Ireland, was appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury as Chairman of the Lambeth Commission on Communion. This commission studied the state of unity in the Anglican Communion in light of the developments in the United States and Canada. The Commission published its findings, the *Windsor Report*, on 18 October 2004.

The report did not adopt a view on homosexual practice, but nevertheless recommended a moratorium on further consecrations of actively homosexual bishops and public Rites of Blessing of same-sex unions,^[5] and called for all involved in Robinson's consecration "to consider in all conscience whether they should withdraw themselves from representative functions in the Anglican Communion".^[6] However, it stopped short of recommending discipline against the Episcopal Church or the Anglican Church of Canada.

The report also recommended solidifying the connection between the churches of the Communion by having

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each church ratify an "Anglican Covenant" that would, in part, commit them to consulting the wider Communion when making major decisions. It also urged those who had contributed to disunity to express their regret.

Aftermath

In February 2005, the issue of homosexuality was heavily discussed at a regular meeting of the Primates of the Anglican Communion at Dromantine in Northern Ireland. Of the 38 Primates, 35 attended. The Primates issued a communiqué that reiterated most of the Windsor Report's statements, with the addition that The Episcopal Church USA and Anglican Church of Canada were asked to voluntarily withdraw from the Anglican Consultative Council, the main formal international entity within the Anglican Communion until the next Lambeth Conference in 2008.^[7]

The Windsor Report was criticized by liberals (for example, in *The Windsor Report: A Liberal Response*^[8]) for seeming to take for granted that the actions of New Hampshire and New Westminster—and homosexuality in general—were wrong. For example, while it calls for both conservatives and liberals to apologise for disunity, it acknowledges that the conservatives may have acted out of a sense of duty. However, it concedes no such acknowledgement to New Westminster and New Hampshire.^[citation needed]

On February 12, 2008 the Archbishop of Canterbury announced the formation of the Windsor Continuation Group (WCG). The WCG was formed to address the remaining questions around the Windsor Report and the various formal responses to the Windsor Report from the provinces and instruments of the Anglican Communion. The WCG is chaired by Bishop Clive Handford.^[9]

See also

- Anglican views of homosexuality
- Religion, Christian, Anglican
- Homosexuality
- Global Anglican Future Conference
- Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement
- IntegrityUSA
- Integrity Toronto
- American Anglican Council

References

1. ^ Lambeth Conference 1998 Resolution I.10 Human Sexuality (<http://www.lambethconference.org/resolutions/1998/1998-1-10.cfm>)
2. ^ Diocese of New Westminster, Information on Same-Sex Blessings Chronology of Actions taken by the Anglican Church Of Canada & the Diocese of New Westminster in regard to the Issue of Same Sex Unions (<http://www.samesexblessing.info/Overview/Chronology/tabid/72/Default.aspx>) . Accessed 2007-07-22.
3. ^ Skidmore, David (August 6), "Bishops Approve Robinson: Historic vote called 'a big step' for gays and lesbians" (http://ecusa.anglican.org/3577_18343_ENG_HTML.htm) , *Episcopal News Service*, http://ecusa.anglican.org/3577_18343_ENG_HTML.htm, retrieved 2010-03-03
4. ^ *a b* 16 October 2003 Primates' Statement (<http://www.anglicancommunion.org/acns/news.cfm/2003/10/16/ACNS3633>) . Anglicancommunion.org. Accessed 2010-03-03.
5. ^ The Windsor Report 2004. On public Rites of Blessing of same sex unions (http://www.anglicancommunion.org/windsor2004/section_d/p3.cfm) . Accessed 2007-07-17.
6. ^ The Windsor Report 2004. On elections to the episcopate (http://www.anglicancommunion.org/windsor2004/section_d/p2.cfm) . Accessed 2007-07-17.

7. ^ The Primates' Meeting February 2005 Communique (http://www.anglicancommunion.org/communion/primates/resources/downloads/communique%20_english.pdf) . Accessed 2010-03-03.
8. ^ Clatworthy, Jonathan; Talyor, David, eds. (17 February 2005). *The Windsor Report: A Liberal Response*. O Books. ISBN 1905047290.
9. ^ Press Release. Anglican Communion News Service Archbishop of Canterbury appoints Windsor Continuation Group (<http://www.anglicancommunion.org/acns/news.cfm/2008/2/12/ACNS4370>) . Accessed 2008-07-23.

External links

- The Windsor Report (<http://www.anglicancommunion.org/windsor2004/>) Complete text at the Anglican Communion official website.

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Categories: Anglicanism | Anglican realignment

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