

Task Force on Marriage, Family, and the Single Life
Report to the Provincial Council
June 23-24, 2014

In the Communiqué from its meeting in Orlando in January 2015, the College of Bishops stated the following:

Over the past fifty years there have been massive changes in the understanding and practice of marriage in Western society, including such matters as the sexual revolution, no-fault divorce, same-sex marriage, and abortion. These changes spring from a larger rejection of the Christian worldview in Western society.

There is an urgent need for the Anglican Church in North America to review our Anglican teaching and enrich our practice in areas relating to marriage. To this end, the College approved the formation of a task force, to be chaired by the Rev. Dr. Stephen Noll, that will work to strengthen marriage by developing a comprehensive provincial marriage initiative. This initiative will consider marriage from a variety of interlocking perspectives: theological, liturgical, pastoral, legal, canonical, ecumenical, and public policy.

The Archbishop has indicated that he believes marriage, family and the single life to be a critical part of the Church's work in the years ahead, and he wants the Anglican Church in North America, together with our ecumenical partners, to have a significant impact on our culture. It is significant that the ACNA had a strong delegation at the meeting of faith leaders in March that produced the "Defense of Marriage and the Right of Religious Freedom" statement and will also be represented at the Roman Catholic World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia in September of this year.

Over the past months, Dr. Noll, in cooperation with Bishop John Guernsey, the Dean of Provincial Affairs, has been working to form the membership and work plan for the Task Force. The Task Force will operate by means of three Working Groups – Theology; Pastoral Policy and Resources; and Legal, Canonical and Public Policy Issues – and two liaison persons, one with the Task Force on Liturgy and one with the Ecumenical Task Force. The current membership of these groups is appended; further members and consultants may be added.

The Task Force has met three times, twice telephonically and once in person on May 6. The Working Groups have also been forming and conversing through online and conference calls.

Theology

The Theology Working Group has addressed two major issues to date. The first was the drafting of a "Bearing Witness to Holy Matrimony" statement, which summarizes the theological position on marriage of the Anglican Church of North America and its conformity to biblical and

Anglican teaching. This statement was presented to the Task Force, which revised it for further consideration by the Church (see Appendix B).

The Theology Working Group also spent considerable effort in evaluating “The Marriage Pledge” proposal that clergy refuse to represent the state at weddings, especially in view of Archbishop Beach’s pastoral request to ACNA clergy to refrain from signing for the time being. The Group reported the following:

We are agreed on the following:

- that if the U.S. Supreme Court decision includes a redefinition of marriage, this will constitute an intrusion of the state on God’s institution of marriage “from the beginning” (Matthew 19:4);
- that the Church should boldly and publicly teach the biblical position and model it in our corporate life and where appropriate protest the government redefinition;
- that the day may come where the state forces its definition on churches and clergy, effectively “driving us out of the marriage business”;
- that clergy have a right to decline to perform a particular marriage, and that no clergy should be forced to perform a same-sex marriage.

We are not fully agreed at present on the following:

- whether ACNA clergy should be free or be encouraged to decline to officiate as agents of the state at legal marriages;
- whether the ACNA should provide some official provision for clergy who have conscientious objections to officiating as agents of the state at legal marriages;
- what the ecclesiological implications may be of the ACNA “getting out of the marriage business.”

The Task Force received this material and recommends that this discussion go forward, with final recommendations coming at a later date, in light of the upcoming Supreme Court decision and in conjunction with the Pastoral and Legal Working Groups.

The Theology Working Group collected the following set of topics for future study:

- sexual purity
- theology of the body (“nuptial theology”)
- male-female complementarity
- cohabitation
- divorce and remarriage
- genetic parenthood and adoption
- nurturing of children (including private or home-schooling)
- contraception and family planning
- church and culture (ecclesiology)

In particular, it was noted that the Church as a whole has not articulated an adequate theology of the single life, including young people (premarital), divorced people, older people (widows and widowers) and the homosexually inclined.

Pastoral Matters

The Pastoral Group has had to date one conference call and a number of planning conversations through email interchanges.

The following overarching themes have emerged to date:

- Matters of pastoral practice need to have firm biblical and theological grounding, particularly in terms of our understanding of human nature. Pastors are front-line theologians. For this reason the Task Force's Working Groups will need to work closely together.
- The entire society, including churches and families, is sexually broken and confused. We are not looking at a patch-up job but a comprehensive overhaul.
- The Christian view of sex and marriage needs to be positive, promoting human flourishing, rather than defensive, fighting the culture war.
- The Church needs to become a "household" where all may find friendship, care and healing prayer.

The group identified a number of specific issues to address in the next six months, including:

1. Research and Development of a Biblical Understanding of Human Flourishing (clearly requiring close coordination with the Theology Working Group)
 - a. Maleness & femaleness in the Image of God
 - b. Marriage, family & children vis a vis human flourishing
 - c. *Oikos (Household)* & friendship: Singleness vis a vis human flourishing; singleness within the church as a multifaceted, multigenerational family
 - d. Right-sizing of sex: the purpose of sex versus "the exaltation of desire"; the possibility of "celibate and flourishing"

Our goal is to produce a 25-page "white paper" on each of these issues that summarizes our understanding of Scripture in a way that is fully accessible to lay and clergy alike, providing ample resources for further study and understanding.

2. Focus on Discovering, Gathering, and Assessing Basic Discipleship and Healing Resources and Ministries
 - a. Marriage Preparation
 - b. Marriage Revitalization
 - c. Divorce & Broken families
 - d. Marriage in Crisis and Domestic Abuse
 - e. Sexual Addictions & Pornography
 - f. Sexual Abuse
 - g. Focused Healing Prayer
 - h. Ministry to and with Singles
 - i. Single Parent Families
 - j. "Life after Marriage" & the Elderly within the Family / Church

Our goal is to discern and recommend approximately five workable programs and ministries that any church or Christian leader can access for use in each of these areas of ministry.

The group believes that this first six months of exploring and articulating the positive dimensions of human flourishing will lay the groundwork for a balanced biblical focus on same-sex issues for discipling the church and proclaiming the Gospel in our communities. The group foresees its work on same-sex issues coming to the fore in the second six months of our service. During that time period, significant energy will be focused toward the development of a comprehensive catechetical process for equipping the church to think, act, and stand biblically in these matters. That exploration and development of catechetical tools will include:

1. How do we backfill current catechetical tools with a more robust biblical theology of human flourishing, one that touches on issues of Marriage, Family, and Singleness?
2. How do we backfill these tools with a more comprehensive approach for healing in areas of brokenness as normative steps in Christian discipleship?
3. Preaching / Sermons
4. Broad evangelistic engagement, with tools and strategies for bringing the Gospel to the world
5. Focused Catechesis: children, teens, young adults, adults, parents
6. Training Parents to teach and disciple children

Legal Matters

The Legal, Public Policy, and Canonical Working Group has developed both a short-term and a longer-term strategy. In the short term, the Legal Group has initially prioritized legal risk assessment and legal resource deployment, in anticipation of the imminent U.S. Supreme Court decision in June, which may have profound implications for the Church. For the longer-term, the Group intends to widen its focus to broader public policy, legal, and potentially canonical issues arising out of the U.S. Supreme Court decision, as well as the experiences of the ACNA's Canadian churches, bishops, clergy, and laity during the decade since Canada federally mandated same-sex marriage.

The Working Group has identified five primary areas for its analysis and activities (both short and longer term):

- 1) **Risk Assessment:** Evaluate recent and ongoing legal developments; assess potential implications for the North American church; inform the church (Province, dioceses, congregations, bishops, clergy, and laity) about these developments and their potential implications.
- 2) **Resource Deployment:** Identify, develop, and distribute legal, policy, and practical resources for ACNA bishops, dioceses, congregations, clergy, and laity in responding to marriage, human sexuality, and religious liberty developments, initially focusing on preparations for the imminent U.S. Supreme Court decision but including the Canadian context; assist ACNA leadership in formulating communications statements and strategies to address legal and political developments in these areas; help develop networks for diocesan and congregational chancellors to share information, resources, and strategies.

- 3) **Relationship Development:** Cultivate relationships and opportunities for strategic involvement by the ACNA and its dioceses, congregations, clergy, and individuals in public policy efforts and in legal proceedings affecting marriage and family life.
- 4) **Review Canons:** Review ACNA and diocesan canons to identify provisions of potential legal value or risk; share potentially useful provisions within ACNA networks; at an appropriate time, review the ACNA Constitution and Canons in light of legal and public policy developments and of the work of the Theology and Pastoral Working Groups, and consider possible canonical amendments on issues of marriage, single life, human sexuality, sacraments, etc. to suggest to the ACNA Governance Task Force for consideration.
- 5) **Recurring Re-Prioritization:** The rapidly changing legal and cultural context will require adjustments in these planned priorities and activities. The Working Group intends prayerfully to review its priorities and tasks on an ongoing basis and to adjust its priorities and projects as needed in light of cultural, policy, legal, and spiritual developments.

The Group's short term efforts are focusing primarily in the first two of these five areas: risk assessment and resource deployment. The Group is preparing to distribute to Provincial, diocesan, and congregational leaders several legal resources to use in preparation for the expected U.S. Supreme Court ruling. The Group also intends to distribute additional legal and practical resources after it has analyzed the decision the Supreme Court issues. Areas in which the Group may provide guidance and resources include:

- Risk management tools for evaluating and strengthening religious identity and religious liberty claims;
- Sample language for church organizational documents to address human sexuality, marriage, and other related issues;
- Guidelines for communicating in the wake of a U.S. Supreme Court ruling; and
- Sample church policies, such as facility use policies, marriage policies, etc.

Much of the Group's longer-term work will require and be shaped by its careful analysis of the eventual U.S. Supreme Court ruling and its implications. The Group expects that at that point, its public policy activities will substantially increase, with corresponding expansion in the members and/or consultants from public policy fields working with the Group. Further, clearer legal guidance as to the state and trajectory of the law will provide additional focus to the Group's legal activities. For example, a U.S. Supreme Court ruling that leaves the same-sex marriage issue to resolution by the individual states will lead to increased focus on deploying resources for assisting dioceses and congregations in addressing such issues on a state-by-state basis. Conversely, a ruling that recognizes a fundamental constitutional right to same-sex marriage will lead to increased focus on strengthening religious liberty claims for congregations and conscience protections for clergy.

Conclusion

In all things, the Task Force was encouraged to adopt the following approach from the Book of Daniel:

- Prayerfully consider and propose constructive solutions.
- Act with complete integrity at all times and all settings.
- Be faithful, no matter the cost (lions' dens, fiery furnaces) and trust God.
- Pray! Pray! Pray!
- Recognize and rest in God's sovereignty and goodness.

We are grateful for the fact that our work has been included on the Provincial prayer list and an intercessor attended our meeting in Virginia to provide prayer support.

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith--that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. (Ephesians 3:14-19)

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Noll
Chairman

Submitted May 26, 2015

APPENDIX A: Membership

TASK FORCE MEMBERS

The Rev. Dr. Stephen Noll (Chairman)

Professor Emeritus, Trinity School for Ministry
Special Advisor on the Global Anglican Future, ACNA

The Rt. Rev. John Guernsey

Dean of Provincial Affairs, ACNA
Bishop, Diocese of the Mid-Atlantic

Scott J. Ward, Esq.

Provincial Chancellor, ACNA

The Rt. Rev. Steve Breedlove

Bishop Ordinary of the Atlantic Coast, PEAR USA

The Very Rev. Ryan Reed (Liaison with Task Force on Liturgy)

Dean, St. Vincent's Cathedral, Fort Worth

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Ray Sutton (Liaison for Ecumenical Matters)

Dean of the Province and Dean of Ecumenical Affairs
Bishop Coadjutor Diocese of Mid America

The Rev. Samuel D. Ferguson

Associate Pastor, The Falls Church Anglican, Falls Church, VA

The Rev. Dr. Tara Jernigan

Director of Deacon Formation, Diocese of Pittsburgh

The Rev. Canon James Lewis

Canon to the Ordinary, Diocese of South Carolina

The Rev. Bob Ragan

Northern Virginia Director, Regeneration Ministries

The Rev. Dr. Brent Stiller

Bishop's Clergy Support Chaplain, Anglican Network in Canada

Rector, New Song Parish, Port Perry ON

The Rev. Cathie P. Young

Associate Rector, St. James Anglican Church, Newport Beach, CA

THEOLOGY WORKING GROUP

The Rev. Dr. Stephen Noll (Chairman)

(see under Task Force)

The Rev. Samuel D. Ferguson

(see under Task Force)

The Rev. Dr. Henry Jansma

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Canon Theologian, Missionary Diocese of CANA East

The Rev. Dr. Tara Jernigan

(see under Task Force)

The Rev. Dr. Peter C. Moore

Director, Anglican Leadership Institute

Former Dean/President, Trinity School for Ministry

The Rev. Dr. Robert S. Munday

Rector, All Saints' Anglican Church, Montrose CO

Former Dean/President, Nashotah Theological Seminary

The Rev. Dr. Joseph P. Murphy

Adjunct Professor, Northern Baptist Theological Seminary

Marriage Mentoring Ministry, St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church, Willow Grove, PA

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Ray Sutton
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Dr. William Witt
Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology and Ethics, Trinity School for Ministry

PASTORAL WORKING GROUP

The Rt. Rev. Steve Breedlove (Chairman)
(see under Task Force)

The Rev. Dave Abels
Rector, Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Boise, ID

Mrs. Sally Breedlove
Author, Speaker, Spiritual Director, Co-Founder of JourneyMates Ministries, Chapel Hill, NC

The Rev. Amanda Goin Burgess
Pastor of Community Life, Christ Church Anglican, Overland Park, KS

Mrs. Gillian Fernie
Parish Administrator, St. George's, Burlington, Ontario

The Rev. Dr. Stephen Gauthier
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Mrs. Sarah Graham
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Mr. Jay Haug
Executive Director, Jacob's Well, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL

The Rev. Bill Henry
Associate Pastor, St. Stephen's, Sewickley, PA

The Rev. Tommy Hinson
Rector, Anglican Church of the Advent, Washington, DC

The Rev. C. Allen Kannapell
Rector, His Church Anglican, Livonia, MI

Mr. Mike McManus
Syndicated Columnist and President, Marriage Savers

The Rev. Dr. Michael Petty
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The Rev. Bob Ragan

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The Very Rev. Ryan Reed

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LEGAL, CANONICAL AND PUBLIC POLICY WORKING GROUP

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(see under Task Force)

The Rev. Canon James Lewis

(see under Task Force)

The Rev. Dr. Brent Stiller

(see under Task Force)

APPENDIX B: “Bearing Witness to Holy Matrimony”

The following statement is intended to make clear the position of the Anglican Church of North America with regard to the nature of marriage.

THE SCRIPTURE BEARS WITNESS

The Anglican Church of North America grounds its doctrine and discipline on the authority of the Bible as God’s word written (Constitution, Art. 1.1). The Bible from beginning to end is clear and consistent in its teaching about marriage. The following passages testify to the essential character of marriage as a faithful lifelong union of a man and a woman.

Human Nature in the Image of God

Genesis 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

God’s Design of Marriage and Family

Genesis 1:28: And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

Genesis 2:24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

Jesus’ Affirmation of Lifelong Monogamous Marriage

Mark 10: 7-9 [Jesus said,] “‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.”

The Mutual Love of Husbands and Wives Based in Christ's Love for the Church

Ephesians 5:24-27 Now as the church is subject to Christ, so also wives should be subject in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

The Sanctity of Marriage

Hebrews 13:4 Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.

THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA BEARS WITNESS

The Anglican Church of North America bears witness to the biblical and traditional teaching concerning marriage in its Constitution and Canons (2012) and in its Catechism (2014). This teaching is in agreement with the historic Anglican tradition of the Book of Common Prayer (1662), the Lambeth Conferences of Anglican Bishops, and the Jerusalem Declaration of the Global Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans (2008).

CONSTITUTION AND CANONS (2009, 2012)

Article I: Fundamental Declarations of the Province

As the Anglican Church in North America (the Province), being a part of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church of Christ, we believe and confess Jesus Christ to be the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no one comes to the Father but by Him. Therefore, we identify the following seven elements as characteristic of the Anglican Way, and essential for membership:

1. We confess the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired Word of God, containing all things necessary for salvation, and to be the final authority and unchangeable standard for Christian faith and life.

6. We receive The Book of Common Prayer as set forth by the Church of England in 1662, together with the Ordinal attached to the same, as a standard for Anglican doctrine and discipline, and, with the Books which preceded it, as the standard for the Anglican tradition of worship.

In all these things, the Anglican Church in North America is determined by the help of God to hold and maintain, as the Anglican Way has received them, the doctrine, discipline and worship of Christ and to transmit the same, unimpaired, to our posterity.

We seek to be and remain in full communion with all Anglican Churches, Dioceses and Provinces that hold and maintain the Historic Faith, Doctrine, Sacraments and Discipline of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.

Canon II. 7: Of Christian Marriage

The Anglican Church in North America affirms our Lord's teaching that the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony is in its nature a union permanent and lifelong of one man and one woman. (Section 1)

Members of the Clergy of this Church shall conform to the Canons of this Church governing the solemnization of Holy Matrimony. (Section 3)

As marriage is a lifelong covenant between a man and a woman in which the two become one flesh, it is both an ordinance of Creation, affirmed as such by our Lord, and commended by Saint Paul as a sign of the mystical union between Christ and His Church (Matthew 19:3-9; Ephesians 5:22-32). (Section 4)

The Clergy shall require the parties to sign the following declaration:

“We, A. B. and C. D., desiring to receive the blessing of Holy Matrimony in the Church, do solemnly declare that we hold marriage to be a lifelong union of husband and wife as it is set forth in the Book of Common Prayer. We believe it is for the purpose of the procreation (if it may be) of children, and their spiritual and physical nurture, for mutual fellowship, encouragement, and understanding, and for the safeguarding and benefit of society, and we do engage ourselves, so far as in us lies, to make our utmost effort to establish this relationship and to seek God’s help thereto.

(Section 6)

Canon II.8: Of Standards of Sexual Morality and Ethics

In view of the teaching of Holy Scripture, the Lambeth Conference of 1998 and the Jerusalem Declaration, this Church upholds faithfulness in marriage between a man and a woman in lifelong union, and believes that abstinence is right for those who are not called to marriage, and cannot legitimize or bless same sex unions or ordain persons who engage in homosexual behavior. Sexual intercourse should take place only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (Section 2)

TO BE A CHRISTIAN: AN ANGLICAN CATECHISM (ACNA 2014)

128. What is marriage?

Marriage is a lifelong covenant between a man and a woman, binding both to self-giving love and exclusive fidelity. In the rite of Christian marriage, the couple exchange vows to uphold this covenant. They do this before God and in the presence of witnesses, who pray that God will bless their life together. (Genesis 2:23-24; Matthew 19; Mark 10:2-9; Romans 7:2-3; 1 Corinthians 7:39)

129. What is signified in marriage?

The covenantal union of man and woman in marriage signifies the communion between Christ, the heavenly bridegroom, and the Church, his holy bride. Not all are called to marriage, but all Christians are wedded to Christ and blessed by the grace God gives in marriage. (Ephesians 5:31-32)

130. What grace does God give in marriage?

In Christian marriage, God establishes and blesses the covenant between husband and wife, and joins them to live together in a communion of love, faithfulness and peace within the fellowship of Christ and his Church. God enables all married people to grow in

love, wisdom and godliness through a common life patterned on the sacrificial love of Christ.

THE ANGLICAN BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER BEARS WITNESS

As noted in the Constitution (I.6), the ACNA recognizes the 1662 Book of Common Prayer as its standard for worship. This Prayer Book defines Holy Matrimony as follows:

DEARLY beloved, we are gathered together here in the sight of God, and in the face of this congregation, to join together this Man and this Woman in holy Matrimony; which is an honourable estate, instituted of God in the time of man's innocency, signifying unto us the mystical union that is betwixt Christ and his Church; which holy estate Christ adorned and beautified with his presence, and first miracle that he wrought, in Cana of Galilee; and is commended of Saint Paul to be honourable among all men..."

It goes on to state three purposes of holy matrimony

First, It was ordained for the procreation of children, to be brought up in the fear and nurture of the Lord, and to the praise of his holy Name.

Secondly, It was ordained for a remedy against sin, and to avoid fornication; that such persons as have not the gift of continency might marry, and keep themselves undefiled members of Christ's body.

Thirdly, It was ordained for the mutual society, help, and comfort, that the one ought to have of the other, both in prosperity and adversity.

This definition is in full accord with the biblical witness and is consistent with the canons and catechism of the Anglican Church of North America.

THE LAMBETH CONFERENCE OF ANGLICAN BISHOPS BEARS WITNESS

The Lambeth Conference of Bishops has borne witness consistently on the subject of marriage at its decennial meetings over the past 150 years. Several examples of this teaching are as follows:

1920

Recognising that to live a pure and chaste life before and after marriage is, for both sexes, the unchangeable Christian standard, attainable and attained through the help of the Holy Spirit by men and women in every age, the Conference desires to proclaim the universal obligation of this standard, and its vital importance as an essential condition of human happiness. (Resolution 66)

The Conference affirms as our Lord's principle and standard of marriage a life-long and indissoluble union, for better or worse, of one man with one woman, to the exclusion of all others on either side, and calls on all Christian people to maintain and bear witness to this standard. (Resolution 67)

1948

Faced with the great increase in the number of broken marriages and the tragedy of children deprived of true home life, this Conference desires again to affirm that marriage

always entails a life-long union and obligation; it is convinced that upon the faithful observance of this divine law depend the stability of home life, the welfare and happiness of children, and the real health of society. It calls upon members of the Church and others to do their utmost by word and example to uphold the sanctity of the marriage bond and to counteract those influences which tend to destroy it. It is convinced that maintenance of the Church's standard of discipline can alone meet the deepest needs of men; and it earnestly implores those whose marriage, perhaps through no fault of their own, is unhappy to remain steadfastly faithful to their marriage vows. (Resolution 92)

1998

This Conference:

- in view of the teaching of Scripture, upholds faithfulness in marriage between a man and a woman in lifelong union, and believes that abstinence is right for those who are not called to marriage.
- recognises that there are among us persons who experience themselves as having a homosexual orientation. Many of these are members of the Church and are seeking the pastoral care, moral direction of the Church, and God's transforming power for the living of their lives and the ordering of relationships. We commit ourselves to listen to the experience of homosexual persons and we wish to assure them that they are loved by God and that all baptised, believing and faithful persons, regardless of sexual orientation, are full members of the Body of Christ;
- while rejecting homosexual practice as incompatible with Scripture, calls on all our people to minister pastorally and sensitively to all irrespective of sexual orientation and to condemn irrational fear of homosexuals, violence within marriage and any trivialisation and commercialisation of sex;
- cannot advise the legitimising or blessing of same sex unions nor ordaining those involved in same gender unions. (Resolution I.10)

THE GLOBAL FELLOWSHIP OF CONFESSING ANGLICANS BEARS WITNESS

In June 2008, 280 Anglican bishops held a special “Global Anglican Future Conference” in Jerusalem. This Conference adopted the Jerusalem Declaration, which reaffirms the biblical and historic standards of Anglicanism and states:

We acknowledge God’s creation of humankind as male and female and the unchangeable standard of Christian marriage between one man and one woman as the proper place for sexual intimacy and the basis of the family. We repent of our failures to maintain this standard and call for a renewed commitment to lifelong fidelity in marriage and abstinence for those who are not married. (Clause 8)

The Conference led to the formation of the Global Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans, to which the Anglican Church of North America was admitted in 2009 as a full member.

ECUMENICAL STATEMENTS BEAR WITNESS

The Anglican Church of North America is party to a wider fellowship of Christian churches that share its biblical understanding of Holy Matrimony. The Archbishop of the Anglican Church of North America has borne witness by signing several recent ecumenical statements on the nature of marriage:

“The Two Shall Become One Flesh: Reclaiming Christian Marriage” by Evangelicals and Catholics Together (March 2015) endorsed by the Archbishop of ACNA along with more than thirty Roman Catholic and Protestant leaders.

Available at www.firstthings.com/article/2015/03/the-two-shall-become-one-flesh-reclaiming-marriage-2.

“An Affirmation of Marriage” by Anglican Church in North America, Lutheran Church-Canada, North American Lutheran Church and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (May 2013).

Available at <http://thenalc.org/wp-content/uploads/Documents/Ecumenical/Ecumenical-Marriage-Affirmation-Final-with-Signatories.pdf>.

“The Defense of Marriage and the Right of Religious Freedom: Reaffirming a Shared Witness: An Open Letter from Religious Leaders to All in Positions of Public Service” (April 2015), signed by the current and former Archbishops of the ACNA, along with ecumenical leaders from the Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant churches, as well as representatives of the Mormon, Jewish, and Muslim communities.

Available at <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/marriage/promotion-and-defense-of-marriage/upload/Open-Letter-on-Marriage-and-Religious-Freedom-April-2015.pdf>.

“Pledge in Solidarity to Defend Marriage” signed by the Archbishop along with Christian leaders and 55,000 others (and counting). Available at <http://defendmarriage.org/pledge-in-solidarity-to-defend-marriage>.