

THE COLLEGE OF BISHOPS
Resolution Concerning Prayer Books and Historic Rites

12 January A.D. 2017

Whereas

The College of Bishops of the Anglican Church in North America has received a request from a Diocese of the Church, the Anglican Network in Canada, to include, in the Book of Common Prayer 2019, the (contemporized) Holy Communion Rite of the 1552 Book of Common Prayer; and

Whereas

The College is committed, within the boundaries of historic and orthodox Anglicanism, to the highest degree of unity possible within this Church, deeply honoring its Cranmerian (Evangelical), Laudian (Catholic) and Wesleyan (Pentecostal) streams; and

Whereas

This request has raised a significant number of matters not previously addressed, or inadequately addressed, to date, by the College;

Be it therefore resolved:

1. That Title II, Canon 2, section 1 means that the Book of Common Prayer 1662 and its predecessor books, including versions updated or contemporized as to language, are, with the permission of the local bishop, completely appropriate for use in this Church.
2. That the renewed 1552 Rite submitted by the Anglican Network in Canada should be, without delay, placed among the liturgy web resources of the Province.
3. That historic rites, per se, are not appropriate for inclusion in contemporary Prayer Books, but are rightly used in shaping new rites, consistent with those texts. (Thus the Eucharistic rites proposed for the 2019 Prayer Book are not 1662 or Hippolytus/John Chrysostom, but reflect them.) *The Book of Common Prayer 1662* together with the Ordinal attached remains the authoritative standard for the Anglican tradition of worship within the Province.
4. That the College a) commends the commitment to the Province's common-language-at-prayer by those who authored the renewed 1552 Communion rite (using the texts of Commandments, Nicene Creed, Prayers of the People, Prefaces and Gloria, etc., adopted for the 2019 Book), and b) commends the 1552 revision, in this regard, as a model for those desiring to renew other historic Prayer Book rites for contemporary use.
5. That the Governance Task Force be instructed to re-shape the second half of Title II, Canon 2, section 1, to make it clear that when the Book of Common Prayer (2019) is adopted – while it will be the Prayer Book of the Province - the College sees no route to making it mandatory at the Provincial level (principle of subsidiarity) or to ruling out continuing use, under the authority of the local Bishop, (of not only 1662 and its predecessor books but) of the Prayer Books that were in use at the time the Province came together.