

## **Anglican Church of Canada**

Dear Friends, as you know, in recent weeks there have been a few parishes across our beloved church that have had meetings and serious discussions that have resulted in decisions to withdraw from the Anglican Church of Canada. With you, I am saddened by these developments because they represent a fracture in the body of Christ and a break in our fellowship, one with another.

As we hear the reporting around these developments, there is repeated reference to the blessing of same-sex unions as the tipping issue in what is described as a crisis in faith, within the Anglican Church of Canada. My conviction is that we can only challenge that kind of rhetoric by the fact that across this land, you and thousands of other Anglicans gather week by week to hear once again, the story of the loving purposes of God through history and in the fullness of time through Christ and in those same gatherings, to confess the divinity and the lordship of Jesus Christ as we recite the Creed and celebrate the Eucharist week by week.

The Anglican Church of Canada remains firm in its resolve, as we say in our Mission Statement, as a partner in the worldwide Communion and in the universal church, to proclaim by word and action the gospel of Jesus the Christ.

I also want to set before you another reality and that is that while a huge amount of attention is given to those who are considering leaving the Anglican Church of Canada, there are a host of other people who continue to struggle over issues of sexuality and unity. They do that from both very conservative perspectives and very liberal perspectives, but it is so clear that they intend to remain loyal members of the Anglican Church of Canada. I want to say that I rejoice in their determination to remain.

I believe that their commitment represents something of the very stuff of that Anglican capacity to live together gracefully with difference. This capacity, this broad capacity for a breadth of theological perspective is inherent in the heritage of our tradition and it is indeed a heritage that we continue to cherish.

As we continue to wrestle over issues of sexuality and unity within the Anglican Communion, I ask for your prayers for our beloved church and particularly for those whom we have tasked through the General Synod to help us in these conversations.

We are now moving quickly toward Palm Sunday, the journey through Holy Week to the glory of Easter and my hope and prayer is that all of us will be renewed in our life together in Christ and that in Him, we will remain forever one. Thank you.

**-- February 28, 2008**