

Evidence That Demands A Decision

Remain Faithful Position Paper

Executive Summary

Remain Faithful is a group of orthodox Episcopalians drawn from member parishes of the Diocese of Fort Worth who have formed an organization comprised of and led by lay Episcopalians to respond to what we see as a proliferation of misinformation concerning the pending split between the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth and The Episcopal Church (TEC). To that end, a formal and detailed Position Paper has been written and posted on the group's website www.remainfaithful.org

This Executive Summary outlines the purpose and contents of the larger Position Paper, which aims to:

- Spotlight the vast differences that now exist between the erroneous beliefs espoused by TEC and General Convention, and the essential and historic truths of our faith as Christians and members of the Anglican Communion.
- Clarify and correct a number of misconceptions TEC has spread in response to common questions that are troubling many Episcopalians (as well as other faithful, orthodox Anglican parishes in Canada and throughout the world) as they consider the practical aspects of remaining aligned with the Anglican Communion.
- Provide a glimpse as to what additional changes are on the horizon for TEC, General Convention, and those who choose to remain fully aligned with them.

Beliefs of Remain Faithful

The members of Remain Faithful believe two essential truths which are the cornerstone of our orthodox Christian faith:

- Jesus Christ is the Son of God, truly man and truly God, who died on the Cross for our sins, was resurrected from the dead, and is the sole source of eternal salvation.
- The Bible is the revealed and inspired word of God. It contains all things necessary for salvation, and is the final authority and unchangeable standard for Christian faith and life.

Remain Faithful is committed to speak the truth in love, communicating clearly the position of faithful orthodox Episcopalians upholding the authority of Holy Scripture. Remain Faithful stands firm with the vast majority in the worldwide Anglican Communion in its commitment to serve our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, to support orthodox Christian ideals and beliefs, and to spread the Good News of Jesus' gift of salvation to all who accept him.

Revised Beliefs of The Episcopal Church

The General Convention of the Episcopal Church and The Episcopal Church itself have progressively moved away from, and in some instances repudiated, these essential truths of Christianity and our historic apostolic faith.

The following quotes from the leadership of TEC provide clear examples:

- Presiding Bishop Jefferts Schori on the subject of Jesus: “We who practice the Christian tradition understand him as our vehicle to the divine. But for us to assume that God could not act in other ways is, I think, to put God in an awfully small box.” (*Time*, July 10, 2006).
- Former Presiding Bishop Griswold on the subject of the Bible: “And while I think we would all say as our ordination liturgy has us say – those of us who are ordained – that we believe that the Old and New Testament contain all things necessary to salvation, there is a broad interpretation of what precisely that means in actual terms as one looks at various issues and concerns in the life of the church. ... So when we think about church, I think many of us think first of all about that sacramental experience rather than the Book” (AAC Equipping the Saints, 2007)

Furthermore, the General Conventions of 2003 and 2006 failed to pass resolutions that would have reaffirmed the historic Anglican doctrines of Jesus as the Son of God and the Bible as the Word of God.

Reactions by The Episcopal Church to Orthodox Views

Rather than debate these theological issues with the orthodox, the leadership of TEC has chosen the purely secular approach of 1) deposing bishops and priests who disagree with the revisionist view of the faith and of 2) filing lawsuits in an attempt to retain possession of the buildings and land used by parishes that would seek to realign with an orthodox diocese or province. Such a response plainly shows that TEC is aware that its theological positions are untenable, as do its efforts to distract from the essential matters of Christ and the Bible by focusing on other issues such as the ordination of women and the matter of sexuality.

Future Intentions of The Episcopal Church

It is clear the TEC intends to try to enforce its authority in addition to its theological views. For example, pending resolutions on “discipline” that are scheduled to be presented at the 2009 General Convention include a proposed change to Title I, Canon 17, Section 8 which would allow for the disciplinary action towards lay persons for the first time in TEC history. The proposal would apply to “any person accepting an office in this Church” - which would include all lay positions in the Church of any kind - and provides for “removal without cause.”

The Choice Facing All Episcopalians

A crisis point has been reached, resulting in a situation in which personal and corporate decisions must be made. We take seriously St. Jude’s admonition: “I felt I had to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once delivered to the saints. For certain men whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among

you. They are godless men, who change the grace of our God into a license of immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.” (*Jude* 1:3-4)

We at Remain Faithful prayerfully encourage you to read and reflect on the full Position Paper and then take action as your conscience and prayers guide you.

“...but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” (*Joshua* 24: 15)