

REPORT FROM THE EPISCOPAL HOUSE OF BISHOPS

The House of Bishops expresses sincere and heartfelt thanks to the Archbishop of Canterbury and members of the Joint Standing Committee of the Anglican Consultative Council and the Primates for accepting our invitation to join us in New Orleans. By their presence they have both honored us and assisted us in our discernment. Their presence was a living reminder of the unity that is Christ's promised gift in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Much of our meeting time was spent in continuing discernment of our relationships within the Anglican Communion. We engaged in careful listening and straightforward dialogue with our guests. We expressed our passionate desire to remain in communion. It is our conviction that The Episcopal Church needs the Anglican Communion, and we heard from our guests that the Anglican Communion needs The Episcopal Church.

The House of Bishops offers the following responses to our Anglican Communion partners. We believe they provide clarity and point toward next steps in an ongoing process of dialogue. Within The Episcopal Church the common discernment of God's call is a lively partnership among laypersons, bishops, priests, and deacons, and therefore necessarily includes the Presiding Bishop, the Executive Council, and the General Convention.

Summary

- We reconfirm that resolution B033 of General Convention 2006 (The Election Of Bishops) calls upon bishops with jurisdiction and Standing Committees "to exercise restraint by not consenting to the consecration of any candidate to the episcopate whose manner of life presents a challenge to the wider church and will lead to further strains on communion."
- We pledge as a body not to authorize public rites for the blessing of same-sex unions.
- We commend our Presiding Bishop's plan for episcopal visitors.
- We deplore incursions into our jurisdictions by uninvited bishops and call for them to end.
- We support the Presiding Bishop in seeking communion-wide consultation in a manner that is in accord with our Constitution and Canons.

- We call for increasing implementation of the listening process across the Communion and for a report on its progress to Lambeth 2008.
- We support the Archbishop of Canterbury in his expressed desire to explore ways for the Bishop of New Hampshire to participate in the Lambeth Conference.
- We call for unequivocal and active commitment to the civil rights, safety, and dignity of gay and lesbian persons.

Please note that the full text of this document is in the back of the church for your taking. The Rector will offer a discussion on the points next week after the 8:00 a.m. service as well as after the 10:00 a.m. service in the Parish Hall.