

THE DANGER TO THE ANGLICAN FAITH POSED BY THE 2007 DAR ES SALAAM PRIMATES' MEETING COMMUNIQUE

The purpose of this paper is to alert those churches of the Anglican Communion, that adhere to the Anglican Faith, of the grave danger presented by the plan set forth in the 2007 Dar es Salaam Primates' Meeting Communiqué, to deal with the controversy over the teaching that the Communion's churches should approve of same gender sexual relations. If the Dar es Salaam plan is accepted by the churches that hold to the Anglican Faith, it will destroy their ability to preserve the faith. This becomes evident when the details of the plan are considered, after first briefly describing the relevant tenets of the Anglican Faith.

The Anglican Faith, as defined by the Church of England's Articles of Religion and 1662 Book of Common Prayer and Ordinal, holds that the Church is under the sovereign authority of Scripture and may not ordain anything contrary thereto. Article XX of the Articles of Religion provides that "it is not lawful for the Church to ordain anything that is contrary to God's Word written" and the Church "ought not to decree anything against the same." The Anglican Faith also holds, as provided in Article VII, that all members of the Church must obey the "moral commandments given from God by Moses" set forth in Scripture, of which one is the commandment: "do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman, that is detestable" (Leviticus 18:23). The Anglican Faith further requires the Church's bishops to defend the Church from anti-Scriptural teaching by having them take the 1662 ordination vow: "with all faithful diligence, to banish and drive away from the Church all erroneous and strange doctrine contrary to God's Word; and both privately and openly to call upon others to do the same."

The Dar es Salaam plan holds out the possibility that the churches of the Anglican Communion may approve of same gender sexual relations, despite Scripture's specific prohibition thereof, if a "consensus" in favor thereof is obtained in the Communion. Under the plan, the proponents of the Church's approval of same gender sexual relations are free to so teach with a view of obtaining such a "consensus." They may take the teaching into all of the churches of the Communion. They may use a dialogue program, based on the

“listen to the experience of homosexual persons” provision of the 1998 Lambeth Resolution I.10, to do so. The only restraint asked of them is that they refrain from acting on the teaching by authorizing the blessing of same-sex unions or consenting to the ordination of bishops engaged therein until they obtain a favorable consensus therefore in the Communion. This appears in the following paragraphs of the communiqué:

In particular, the Primates request, through the Presiding Bishop, that the House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church 1. make an unequivocal common covenant that the bishops will not authorize any Rite of Blessing for same-sex unions in their dioceses or through General Convention (cf TWR, par. 143, 144); and 2. confirm that the passing of Resolution B033 of the 75th General Convention means that a candidate for episcopal orders living in a same-sex union shall not receive the necessary consent (cf TWR, par. 134); **unless some new consensus on these matters emerges across the Communion** (cf TWR, par. 134).

13. The 1998 Lambeth Resolution I.10, committed the Provinces “to listen to the experience of homosexual persons” and called “all our people to minister pastorally and sensitively to all irrespective of sexual orientation and to condemn irrational fear of homosexuals.” The initiation of this process of listening was requested formally by the Primates at Dromantine and commissioned by ACC-13. We received a report from Canon Phillip Groves, the Facilitator of the Listening Process, on the progress of his work. We wish to affirm this work in collating various research studies, statements and other material from the Provinces. **We look forward to this material being made more fully available across the Communion for study and reflection,** and to the preparation of material to assist the bishops at 2008 Lambeth Conference. (Boldface added).

The Dar es Salaam plan thus goes directly against Scripture and the Anglican Faith. The plan replaces the authority of Scripture over the churches of the Anglican Communion with the authority of a “consensus” in the Communion. The plan directly contravenes Articles VII and XX of the Articles of Religion. The

plan also directly contravenes the 1662 ordination vow. Instead of banishing and driving the anti-Scriptural teaching from the churches of the Communion, the plan helps the teaching to enter the churches.

The Dar es Salaam plan also reverses everything that the bishops of the 1998 Lambeth Conference did to uphold the Anglican Faith. The bishops adopted Resolution I.10 as one of three resolutions designed to stop the increasing rejection of the authority of Scripture and approval of same gender sexual relations in ECUSA. In Resolution III.5 and III.6 the bishops upheld Scripture as the sovereign authority over the Communion's churches and the ultimate rule of their faith and practice. In Resolution I.10 the bishops prohibited the approval of same gender sexual relations on the ground that such conduct is "incompatible with Scripture," and provided a guide in its "listen to the experience of homosexual persons" provision for bishops to counsel individuals inclined to engage in such conduct to refrain therefrom. In Resolution III.6, the bishops encouraged the Primates' Meeting, under the presidency of the Archbishop of Canterbury, to intervene in the Communion's churches to obtain compliance with the authority of Scripture. In short, the bishops: (1) established the authority of Scripture over the churches of the Anglican Communion; (2) specifically held that same gender sexual relations are contrary to Scripture and therefore should not be approved by the Communion's churches; (3) provided a guide for bishops to counsel members of their flocks from engaging in such conduct; and (4) authorized the Primates under the leadership of the Archbishop of Canterbury to intervene in ECUSA to obtain compliance therewith.

The Dar es Salaam plan does just the opposite of what the Lambeth bishops sought to achieve. Instead of the Primates' Meeting entering into ECUSA to obtain compliance with Scripture, the proponents of same gender sexual relations will enter into every other church in the Communion to obtain non-compliance with Scripture. Instead of the "listen to the experience of homosexual persons" provision being used as a guide for bishops to persuade individuals inclined to engage in same gender sexual relations to refrain therefrom, it is being used as a means for them to persuade bishops to approve of the conduct.

The Society for the Propagation of Reformed Evangelical Anglican Doctrine

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The Society is dedicated to the preservation and propagation of the Anglican Faith, as defined by “the Anglican Formularies” comprised of the Church of England’s Articles of Religion, 1662 Book of Common Prayer and Ordinal.

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