

## The Certain Trumpet

Spring 2009

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### **NEW PROVINCE GETS OFF GROUND WITH HALF ITS POTENTIAL BUT WITH AN ANTI-“PRIESTESS” MAJORITY**

In mid-February 2009, the new Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) announced it had 693 congregations with a total average Sunday attendance (ASA) of 83,311. This would make it larger than five of the nine provinces of The Episcopal Church (TEC) and 12 of the 38 in the whole Anglican Communion. These statistics appear largely accurate, though overstated in a few cases: e.g. its authors admitted to having given a Reformed Episcopal Church (REC) a communicant strength figure of 13,000 rather than that body's self-estimated ASA of 7,500; and the Anglican Mission in America (AMiA) wants to go with a 143 congregation figure rather than 180 in the survey. But these overestimations are somewhat offset by the survey's non-inclusion of a subsequent Forward-in-Faith/North America (FiF/NA) “cluster” or “sub-province” (composed of the Diocese of the Holy Cross, Communion of Christ the Redeemer, and the Missionaries of St. John), having at least 55 parishes and a communicant strength of 3,426. (The ASA figure for this group could not be ascertained, but we will conservatively estimate it at 50 percent or 1,623). With these additions and subtractions, we come up with 711 congregations with an ASA of 77,434, the latter, of course, being a mixture of “ball-park” estimates (e.g. the aforementioned REC's 7500) and more precise calculations.

The ACNA has its roots in the Common Cause Partnership (CCP), set up in December 2007, with the express purpose of forming just such a new province. But two CCP components failed to deliver all their respective elements to the new body: The Anglican Communion Network (ACN) did not bring in six of its erstwhile 10 TEC dioceses (Albany, Central Florida, Dallas, Rio Grande, South Carolina and Springfield - with a 2006 ASA of roughly 53,000) or some 175 additional parishes outside its member dioceses; and the Federation of Anglican Churches in the Americas (FACA) failed to enlist its Anglican Church in America (ACA), Anglican Province of America (APA) or Episcopal Missionary Church (EMC) components (with a total of some 195 congregations). While all these “non-joiners” knew the CCP was dedicated to forming such an ACNA, it appeared that when “push came to shove”, part of the ACN could not face the (non-spiritual) trauma of leaving the TEC, and part of the FACA could not stand to be yoked with the pro-“priestess” elements in the same organization.

The result of this less-than-total participation of the CCP in the new ACNA was to give anti-“priestess” elements a majority therein, or so it seems. We give the pro-“priestess” groups 269 congregations with an ASA of 36,492, minus an unknown number from 12 “deviant” parishes noted below plus those from three parishes in normally anti-“priestess” jurisdictions. The breakdown here is: the ex-TEC Diocese of Pittsburgh (ASA of 5,344 with 62 parishes, minus two of which are known to be anti-“priestess”); Convocation of Anglicans in North America

(CANA) (ASA of 9,828 with 69 parishes, minus three known to be anti-“priestess”); Anglican Network in Canada (ANC) (ASA of 930 with 16 parishes); Congregations of the Province of Uganda (ASA of 7,000 with 51 congregations); miscellaneous congregations of the Provinces of the Southern Cone and Kenya (for some reason grouped together by the survey) (ASA of 10,000 with 55 parishes, minus seven known to be anti-“priestess”); and presumably the one parish listed under West African jurisdiction.

In contrast, the anti-“priestess” component of the ACNA was calculated to have 442 congregations with an ASA of 40, 942 (plus the 12 “deviant” congregations noted above, minus those from the three noted below). Here we have: the three FiF/NA ex-TEC dioceses of Fort Worth, San Joaquin and Quincy (ASA of 11,149 with 101 parishes); AMiA (ASA of 21,600 minus 930 from the ACiC congregations originally included in the survey total, with 143 congregations, minus the 19 of the Canadian group as well as three pro-“priestess” parishes of the AMiA proper); the REC (ASA of 7,500 with 150 congregations); the FiF/NA cluster estimated ASA of 1,623 - see above - with 55 congregations); and the aforementioned “deviant” congregations - seven from the Southern Cone and Kenya, three from CANA and two from Pittsburgh.

The fact that the parish majority of the anti-“priestess” group is 62 percent while that of its ASA is only 53 reflects the fact that we had no figures on attendance for the “dissident” parishes, which, given the relative numbers involved, would most likely favor the anti-“priestess” group.

## **THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH (TEC) MAY NOW HAVE A NON-CHRISTIAN MAJORITY**

*The Evangelical Catholic* of 15 July, 1979 noted that an official TEC survey indicated that only 57 percent of its active members believed in the divinity of Christ. (The *Evangelical Catholic* was an organ of the Evangelical and Catholic Mission, a predecessor of the present-day Forward-in Faith/North America). The fact that little notice was taken at the time of this astounding information by the official Anglican/Episcopal Church media tells you more than you want to know about the latter.

In the same year, 1979, The TEC claimed 2,049,700 communicants in good standing, according to *The Episcopal Church Annual* 1981. (The statistics reported therein are of two years earlier.). The 2009 edition of this book will note TEC communicant strength for 2007 as 1,720,477 - a 16 percent decline. This will not have included the some 25,000 who left the TEC when their parishes did so in 2008 as a result of the defection to the Southern Cone by the dioceses of Fort Worth, Pittsburgh and Quincy that year. (This figure was gotten by adding the pertinent parish statistics from *The Episcopal Church Annual*, 2008. Of course, not all left, but these persons might have been somewhat offset by those joining from “loyal” parishes, a strong possibility in the cases of the larger parishes in this category.)

In any case, all other things being equal, current TEC communicant strength should be below the 1,700,000 mark.

It can be assumed that the some 300,000 who left between 1979 and today did so by either death or defection - in either case more likely to have diminished the “believing” than “non-believing” sector of the TEC. The aged are notoriously “conservative”. We have much anecdotal evidence of defections to Orthodoxy or Rome and “extramural Anglicanism”, and movement to other Anglican provinces is an almost entirely ex-TEC phenomenon. Are the persons involved here “non-believers”? Come on now. Remember: eight percent of 2,000,000 is only 160,000 - the amount that would have been needed to bring TEC's “believers” down to 49 percent in 1979.

## **STABILITY AND INSTABILITY IN THE "CONTINUING" ANGLICAN MOVEMENT**

In the June 1986 issue of *The Christian Challenge* are noted 379 congregations in the U.S. and Canada which belonged to jurisdictions which left official Anglicanism in the mid-1970s in opposition to “women Priests” and the new Book of Common Prayer (usually called “Continuing Anglicans” or , collectively, “The Continuum”). Of these, we can account for only 162, or less than half, today. (Though many new parishes have arisen to fill the gap, this does not lessen the instability shown here.). Of this remaining 162, we can find only 76, again less than half, having the same jurisdictional affiliation today as in 1986: 44 in the Anglican Catholic Church (ACC), 19 in the Anglican Province of Christ the King (APCK, then the Diocese of Christ the King or DCK), 11 in the Anglican Catholic Church of Canada (ACCC), and two in the United Episcopal Church of North America (UECNA). These four jurisdictions have all remained out of the Federation of Anglican Churches in the Americas (FACA), in turn a member of the Common Cause Partnership (CCP). Though the FACA is composed entirely of “anti-priestess” elements, the CCP has a pro-priestess majority, and both groupings have a wide variety of Prayer Book usages.

The other 86 surviving parishes have changed jurisdictional affiliations at least once since 1986 and have generally found their way into the FACA/CCP complex. The landmarks of this development were:

- (1) The late 1980s/early 1990s implosion of the Anglican Rite Jurisdiction in the Americas (ARJA). Of the ARJA parishes in the 1986 list, five are currently in other jurisdictions: two in the Episcopal Missionary Church (EMC), two in the Anglican Church in America (ACA - see below), and one in the Anglican Province of America (APA - again, see below). Twelve other ARJA parishes on the 1986 list seem to have disappeared.
- (2) The 1991 formation of the ACA. This was a fusion of all of the American Episcopal Church (AEC, founded 1968 and 20 percent of the currently active parishes of the 29 total on the 1986 list) plus a segment of the ACC (14 of the 70 ACC survivors on the 1986 list - 100 others apparently did not survive).
- (3) The 1995 withdrawal of a group from the ACA to form the APA. This second change involved 17 parishes from the 1986 list (14 from the old AEC and three from the ACC). None of the 14 parishes which left the APA in 2008 to join the Reformed Episcopal Church (REC, formed 1873) appeared to have been in existence in 1986.

(4) The 1997 withdrawal of a group from the ACC to form the Holy Catholic Church-Anglican Rite (HCC-AR). Eight parishes from the 1986 list were involved there.

(5) The 2003 departure of the Diocese of the Holy Cross (DHC) from the APCK. Five parishes on the 1986 list went along with this defection.

The above actions account for more than half of the surviving “mixed parentage” parishes on the 1986 list (52 out of 86), the rest resulting from individual parish rather than group activity. The EMC, ACA, APA, REC and DHC joined the FACA. Only the HCC-AR, which pursues a policy akin to that followed by the group discussed in the first paragraph, stayed out.

But of these bodies, only the REC and the DHC have seen fit to have joined the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) into which much of the CCP has evolved. This puts the remaining EMC/ACA/APA grouping into a middle third faction.

### **GAFCON/FCA PRIMATE'S RECOGNITION OF ACNA PUTS MAJORITY OF REAL ANGLICANS BEHIND NEW BODY**

The April 2009 London meeting of the Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON) / Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans (FCA) primates gave approval to the new Anglican Church in North America (ACNA). According to the *2008 The Episcopal Church Annual*, the primates represented here (in order of communicant strength): Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, West Africa and the Southern Cone) now account for over 31 million of the total Communion strength of some 76.7 million. Included in the latter, however, are four South Asian pan-Protestant, ex-Anglican groupings (North and South India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan) numbering about 4 million, and 26 million for the Church of England. Giving the latter a huge benefit of the doubt at 3 million (average Sunday attendance for the Church of England has hovered around the 1 million mark for years); we come up with a more realistic figure of just under 50 million for the Communion as a whole. Using this figure, we have over 60 percent of the “real Anglicans” supporting the new, relatively conservative ACNA.