

THE CERTAIN TRUMPET*

Spring 2013 ♦ Wallace Spaulding, Editor

“Continuum” Issues Landmark Appeal to Anglican Church in North America

In December 2012, the leaders of five Continuing Anglican jurisdictions, comprising three-quarters of that movement (some 277 parishes out of 355*), issued a joint statement calling on the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) to come back into line with the Universal Church and classical Anglicanism by rejecting women’s ordination and the 1979 Prayer Book.

The leaders were quick to acknowledge the need to get their own house in order as well, admitting the failure of the “Continuum” to “present a united front” and in general “an attractive alternative to the growing heresy and absurdity of the Episcopal Church (TEC).” However, they noted that their movement had worked “against furious opposition” to raise up “hundreds of congregations in North America,” along with numerous ministries and new clergy. Moreover, the leaders said the Continuum is trending toward “greater unity and cooperation,” progress facilitated by the fact that “our divisions are largely matters amenable to improvement.” In contrast, the divisions facing ACNA are “fundamental and essential” - a consequence, they said, of the fact that some ACNA members, most of whom remained in TEC until just a few years ago, accepted elements of the “revolution” that has been underway in TEC since the 1970s.

THE ANTECEDENTS of the present Continuum had withdrawn from TEC after the latter’s 1976 General Convention approved female priests and bishops (by a narrow simple majority) and the new prayer book (on first reading). In the years following, the Continuum acquired a reputation in some circles for constant squabbling and splits that produced scores more Continuing Church bodies. However, the movement is largely concentrated within and represented by the five bodies that signed the Appeal to the ACNA – the Anglican Catholic Church (ACC), Anglican Church in America (ACA), Anglican Province of America (APA), Diocese of the Holy Cross (DHC), and United Episcopal Church in North America (UECNA) – and a few others that did not sign, most notably the Anglican Province of Christ the King. Moreover, the Appeal signers say relations among them are now marked by cordiality, cooperation “on many levels,” and “as great a level of communion as that which exists amongst the disparate groups of ACNA.”

The ACNA had developed during 2007-09 out of opposition to TEC’s acceptance of homosexual practice (especially as represented by the 2003 consecration of TEC’s first avowed active homosexual bishop) – a point of common ground with the Continuum. The ACNA is internally split, however, on the issues highlighted by the Appeal. And unlike the Continuum, it still has one foot in the “regular” (*i.e.*, Canterbury-based) Anglican Communion (which also has mixed practices on female ordination); the clergy of the four dioceses that came to ACNA directly from TEC (Pittsburgh, Fort Worth, San Joaquin, and Quincy) are officially members of the conservative-led Anglican Province of the Southern Cone, while others are similarly connected with African provinces, most notably Nigeria and Rwanda. However, while the provinces mentioned and others in the developing world officially remain part of the Canterbury Communion, the relationship has become more limited as global South prelates have seen their earnest efforts to bring an orthodox resolution and proper

discipline to the Communion's homosexuality dispute repeatedly thwarted by former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams and other liberals in the Communion's power structure. Consequently, they have sought to strengthen working relationships with theological kindred to work out a way forward. So it is that the primate of the ACNA, Archbishop Robert Duncan, sits with his counterparts from seven "kosher" global South* provinces on the Council of the Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON) (a.k.a. the Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans).

The approach by the Continuum, which lacks the same level of "regular" contacts or support, is quite noteworthy for 1) the fact that five of its jurisdictions could get together to act jointly; and 2) the concern it demonstrates for others (especially those who might be orthodox) outside its own grouping, after many years marked by little or no outreach in that direction (not that there was that much coming from the other direction, either). One probable reason for the change is that many other former Episcopalians have at last come around to the position that Continuers have taken held since the late '70s - that separation from TEC was necessary to maintain orthodox life. Thus, the creation of the ACNA also can be seen as improving the possibilities for trans-jurisdictional progress toward wider orthodox recovery and reunification.

Forward in Faith-North America Makes Similar Move Within ACNA

Also galvanized by the action of TEC's 1976 General Convention, an FiFNA predecessor organized itself to oppose women priests (albeit not women deacons or the '79 Prayer Book) from *within* TEC.

But when the homosexual agenda triumphed within TEC as well, much if not most of FiFNA's membership moved into the ACNA. Indeed, FiFNA was a founding member of the new North American province, and three of the dioceses earlier noted as having left TEC for ACNA were led by bishops aligned with the organization. FiFNA continues to oppose attempts to ordain women as priests, now within the ACNA, and on this issue has the support of at least 432 out of the ACNA's reported total of 812 congregations in the U.S. and Canada.*

In July 2012, the FiFNA Assembly petitioned the ACNA bishops to stop ordaining women as priests until a proper theological study of the subject (which traditionalists say was not done in TEC) is undertaken and completed by the ACNA. Within its own dioceses, moreover, FiFNA has begun backing away from its previous policy of allowing the ordination of women deacons.

And according to the FiFNA president, Bishop Keith Ackerman, his organization is trying to ensure that nothing is included in a new ACNA Prayer Book currently being compiled that would inhibit relations with Rome, Orthodoxy, or Polish National Catholicism.

FCC Spring Conference To Discuss Continuum and FiFNA Efforts

*See *The Certain Trumpet*, fall 2011, for the jurisdictional breakdown of 337 of these, and *TCT*, fall 2012, for the notation of some 95 such that came to ACNA from the Anglican Mission in the Americas that year. The 812 figure is from the ACNA website.

With the Continuing Church and FiFNA efforts topping its agenda, the FCC's Spring Conference May 24-25 in Fredericksburg, Virginia, south of Washington, D.C., promises to be one of the organization's most momentous gatherings ever!

Starting at 6 p.m. Friday, May 24, and ending at noon the next day, the conference will be held at Fredericksburg's Comfort Suites (541 Warrenton Rd.) through breakfast on Saturday and at St. Luke's Anglican Church (65 Warrenton Rd.) thereafter. The schedule is as follows:

Friday, May 24:

6:00 p.m.	Evening Prayer
6:30 p.m.	Social Hour
7:00 p.m.	Dinner
8:30 –9:30 p.m.	1st address: <u>The Continuum Appeal to the ACNA</u> <i>Speaker:</i> The Rt. Rev. Paul Hewett, leader of the DHC and Federation of Anglican Churches in the Americas, and a signer of the Appeal <i>Discussant:</i> The Rev. Dr. Robert Whitaker (ACC)

Saturday, May 25:

7:45-8:30 a.m.	Breakfast and move from motel to church
8:45 – 9:45 a.m.	2nd address: <u>Relevant FiF Actions Within the ACNA</u> <i>Speaker:</i> The Rt. Rev. David Hicks of the Reformed Episcopal Seminary, FiFNA negotiator within ACNA <i>Discussant:</i> The Rev. Edward Rix, Diocese of Lusaka
9:45 a.m.	Break
10:00-11:00 a.m.	3 rd address: <u>The View from Russian Orthodoxy</u> <i>Speaker:</i> The Rev. Anthony Bondi, pastoral vicar for Western Rite parishes, Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia <i>Discussant:</i> The Rev. Dr. Kenneth Gunn-Walberg (ACC)
11:15 a.m.	Holy Eucharist

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COSTS: Your checks will serve as your registration for the May 24-25 FCC Conference

Meeting and Friday night dinner only:	\$25
Meeting, meals and lodging:	\$100 per person for a shared room; \$150 for single occupancy

Please send checks made payable to the **Fellowship of Concerned Churchmen**, to: **Ms. Auburn Tracyk, Secretary-Treasurer, 1215 Independence Ave. SE, Washington, DC 20003-1445**

TRANSPORTATION and DIRECTIONS: **If driving:** Take exit 133 off of I-95 and go west a short distance on U.S. 17 (Warrenton Rd.); Comfort Suites is on the left. **If taking the train:** From points north, AMTRAK has trains arriving in Fredericksburg on Friday at 11:57 a.m., 3:41 p.m., and 5:13 p.m. (the first originates in New York and the other two in Boston). From points south, AMTRAK has trains arriving in Fredericksburg at 12:04 p.m. and 3:12 p.m., the first from Virginia Beach, the second from Charlotte and Greensboro, with both going through Richmond. If you will arrive by train or bus, please phone in your arrival details to 540-842-0037, and every effort will be made to send someone to pick you up.

Returning from Fredericksburg on Saturday, AMTRAK has a train at 3:12 p.m. going as far as New York. GREYHOUND has a bus leaving for points north at 1 p.m. Going south, AMTRAK leaves Fredericksburg for Richmond at 4 p.m. and for Virginia Beach via Richmond at 6:07 p.m.