

REPORT OF THE IARCA COVENANT COMMITTEE (IGLESIA ANGLICANA DE LA REGION CENTRAL DE AMERICA)

Membership

TEC Members

The Rev. Dr. Lee Crawford, <i>Secretary</i>	Vermont, I
The Rt. Rev. Susan E. Goff, <i>President</i>	Virginia, III
The Rev. Deacon Charles Stewart	Central New York, II
The Rt. Rev. Lloyd Allen, <i>Liaison of Executive Council</i>	Honduras, IX

IARCA Members

The Rt. Rev. Juan David Alvarado	El Salvador
Mr. Marco Austin, Esq., <i>Vice-President</i>	Panamá
The Rev. Harold Dixon	Nicaragua
The Rt. Rev. Sturdy Downs, <i>Primate of IARCA</i>	Nicaragua
The Rt. Rev. Armando Guerra	Guatemala
The Rt. Rev. Hector Monterroso	Costa Rica
The Rt. Rev. Julio Murray	Panamá

Summary of Work

TEC Members of the Covenant Committee met February 16-17, 2016, at the Maritime Institute, Linthicum Heights, Maryland.

Present at this meeting on cold, icy days, were Allen, Crawford and Goff. We met with the Rev. Deacon Frank Castellon, who serves on the Mexico Covenant Committee and with the Rev. Glenda McQueen. We discussed at length the history and politics of the establishment of two (2) provinces in the central region of America, Mexico and IARCA, instead of one. We found ourselves particularly interested in the processes of movement toward autonomy for these two (2) provinces, and learned this history from the Rev. Glenda McQueen, Staff Officer for Latin American and the Caribbean Global Partnerships.

The group also discussed the parameters for revising existing IARCA Covenant documents and recognized that revisions would have to be adopted by the conventions of both IARCA and TEC.

The bulk of the meeting focused on planning and preparing for a full IARCA/TEC Covenant Committee gathering in Guatemala in the Spring of 2016.

The combined TEC/IARCA Covenant Committee met in Guatemala City, Guatemala, April 5-6, 2016. Present from IARCA were Alvarado, Austin, Dixon, Downs, Guerra, Monterosso and Murray. Present from TEC were Allen, Crawford, Goff and Stewart. Also present were the Rev. Ramón Ovalle, Chaplain, and the Rev. Glenda McQueen, staff.

Our time together was hemmed by daily prayer. We shared updates on realities and opportunities for ministry in our various dioceses and worked to build community and mutual support. Early in the time together we concurred that focusing on economic challenges would be more frustrating than helpful, and that rehashing disappointment over TEC budget cuts would be counterproductive. Instead, we committed to be a committee of equals among equals and determined that we would be a group that truly works together.

A theme to which the Covenant Committee returns with frequency is the desire and need to work together in common mission. Each diocese of IARCA presented a report on the life of the diocese, its challenges and mission opportunities. Common themes and challenges that we noted include internal displacement and immigration to the US, low numbers of and low (or no) salary for ordained leadership, the need for local theological education, and injustice experienced by indigenous populations, women and children.

In general, our brothers in IARCA report that relationships between the dioceses and IARCA are good. After twenty (20) years of walking together as a Province, there is much that is functioning well. Since forming the Province, three (3) bishops have been consecrated under the canons of IARCA and new bishops in the other two (2) dioceses will be consecrated in the next triennium. This is an indication of how fully IARCA is coming into its own. All of the dioceses are involved in theological education. The Province is moving toward the formation of a vocational diaconate. All desire to work together more closely in common mission and ministry. All seek to be supportive of women's ministry and of the United Thank Offering. The Provincial Synod remains at work to establish and maintain lines of good communication between the dioceses. Challenges, new and old, lie ahead, but a desire to walk together for the sake of the Gospel is strong.

We focused much time and conversation on a desire and need to revise the original Covenant, which was first adopted in July of 1997. We are half way through the Covenant period and there have been changes, some small, many significant, in that time. Part of the revision work would be to create a glossary of pertinent terms in the Covenant and how we understand them. It would also be vital to ensure that the English and Spanish documents say the same thing. Finally, a revised covenant would include a description of the common life of IARCA. A subcommittee was appointed to draft a revised Covenant. In the months after the Guatemala meeting, the President of the Covenant Committee

provided a first draft as a starting point for this work. As of this writing, further work on a revised Covenant has not yet been done and a revision will not be brought to General Convention 2018. Significant changes in episcopal leadership in three (3) of the five (5) IARCA dioceses are underway, making the work of Covenant revision even more important in the next triennium.

Report Submitted by

The Rt. Rev. Susan E. Goff, Bishop Suffragan, Diocese of Virginia

IARCA Covenant Committee President