

JOURNAL OF THE GENERAL CONVENTION

of the Protestant Episcopal Church
in the United States of America
—otherwise known as

the episcopal church

*Held in Detroit, Michigan, from July Second to Eleventh,
Inclusive, in the Year of Our Lord 1988*

1988



Clarence C. Pope, Jr.
 Alden Hathaway
 Charles F. Duvall
 Gerald N. McAllister
 B. Merino, Colombia
 Edward Haynsworth
 David S. Ball
 A. Carral
 John F. Ashby
 William C. R. Sheridan
 Don A. Wimberly
 Howard S. Meeks
 Alexander D. Stewart
 A. Donald Davies
 Robert H. Cochran
 William L. Stevens
 Victor M. Rivera
 Scott Field Bailey
 William C. Wantland
 Donald M. Hulstrand
 David B. Reed
 Bob G. Jones

John Joseph Meakin Harte
 John L. Thompson
 Francis C. Gray
 Robert O. Miller
 Edward H. MacBurney
 Earl N. McArthur
 Donis D. Patterson, Dallas
 Donald J. Parsons
 Robert M. Moody
 Charles I. Jones
 Robert M. Wolterstorff
 David S. Rose
 Jose Saucedo
 Herbert D. Edmondson
 Roger J. White
 Joseph T. Heistand
 William C. Frey
 L. Garnier
 Stanley Atkins
 Robert L. Ladehoff
 Duncan M. Gray, Jr.
 Robert C. Witcher

1979 Statement

Bishop Krumm moved to include in the Journal of the General Convention the following statement from the 1979 General Convention, along with the signatures of any new bishops who wish to sign it.

Motion carried

1979 STATEMENT

WE—BISHOPS IN THE CHURCH OF GOD WHO ASSOCIATE OURSELVES WITH THIS STATEMENT—affirm our belief that Holy Matrimony between a man and a woman as a covenanted, exclusive, and (by God’s help) a permanent relationship is the predominant and usual mode of sexual expression, blessed by God, for Christian people particularly and for humankind generally. To this state the vast majority of persons have clearly been called.

We also affirm the sacrificial sign of celibacy, for the small minority genuinely called to that state, as a valid and valuable witness to a broken and selfish world of the virtues and spiritual power of Christian self denial in the service of others.

Nothing in what follows is intended to deny or to weaken either the vocation to Christian marriage or to Christian celibacy, and nothing, especially, intended to weaken or demean, or deny the centrality of, the institution of the Christian family.

However, there is a minority of persons who have clearly not been called to the married state, or given the graces for it—whether they realize this before, or painfully and often tragically discover it afterwards—and who are incapable in the very nature of their formed personalities of conforming to the predominant mode of behavior. Why this is so is a mystery known only to God; even the researchers of modern science have been unable to provide an adequate answer for it. Nor is there convincing evidence that these people, of homosexual orientation, have been given the very special and extraordinary grace the Church has always seen to be necessary for the healthy expression of Christian celibacy.

We who associate ourselves with this statement are deeply conscious of, and grateful for, the profoundly valuable ministries of ordained persons, known to us to be homosexual, formerly and presently engaged in the service of this Church. Not all of these persons have necessarily been celibate; and in the relationships of many of them,

maintained in the face of social hostility and against great odds, we have seen a redeeming quality which in its way and according to its mode is no less a sign to the world of God's love than is the more usual sign of Christian marriage. From such relationships we cannot believe God to be absent.

Furthermore, even in cases where an ideally stable relationship has not, or has not yet, been achieved, we are conscious of ordained homosexual persons who are wrestling responsibly, and in the fear of God, with the Christian implications of their sexuality, and who seek to be responsible, caring and non-exploitive people even in the occasionally more transient relationships which the hostility of our society towards homosexual persons—with its concomitants of furtiveness and clandestinity—makes inevitable.

We believe that the action of this House, which declares that "it is not appropriate for this Church to ordain a practicing homosexual or any person who is engaged in heterosexual relations outside of marriage," while it has the specious appearance at first glance of reaffirming and upholding time honored verities, carries with it a cruel denial of the sexual beings of homosexual persons—against whom, given the title of this resolution, it is principally aimed. It also carries with it, in implied logic, a repudiation of those ministries, by homosexual persons and to homosexual persons, already being exercised in our midst; and it invites, furthermore, the prospect of retroactive reprisals against ordained homosexual persons, with consequences of untold harm to the Church and its people, whether homosexual or heterosexual.

This action also speaks a word of condemning judgement against countless laypersons of homosexual orientation who are rendered by its implications second-class citizens in the Church of their baptism, fit to receive all other sacraments but the grace of Holy Order—unless, in a sacrifice not asked of heterosexual persons generally, they abandon all hope of finding human fulfillment, under God, in a sexual and supportive relationship. This action, thus, makes a mockery of the vow and commitment which the Church has made to them in that same sacrament of baptism, to "do all in [its] power to support these persons in their life in Christ"—all of these persons, without exception—and calls into question the vows of us all to "strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being."

Furthermore, speaking for the future, if these recommendations were to be carried out as this House seems to intend, they would fatally restrict our traditional freedom and duty as Bishops in the Church of God—with the concurrence of our Standing Committees, Ministry Commissions, and the like—to determine the fitness and calling of individual persons to Holy Orders—with each case being decided, not on the basis of the individual's belonging to a particular category or class of excluded persons, but on the basis of his or her individual merits as a whole human being, and in the light of the particular circumstances obtaining in this case.

We have no intention of ordaining irresponsible persons, or persons whose manner of life is such as to cause grave scandal or hurt to other Christians; but we do not believe that either homosexual orientation as such, nor the responsible and self-giving use of such a mode of sexuality, constitutes such a scandal in and of itself.

Our position is based, consistent with our Anglican tradition—which values the gifts of reason and welcomes truth from *whatever* source—on the insights of what we understand to be the best and most representative current findings of modern science and psychology on this subject. But even more, our position is based, ultimately, on the total witness of Holy Scripture. For we are persuaded that modern exegesis and interpretation of the Scriptures—in the light of the original languages and our enhanced understanding of the cultural context of the particular passages which relate, or seem to relate, to the subject of homosexuality—gives no certain basis for a total or absolute condemnation either of homosexual persons or of homosexual activities in all cases.

Holy Scripture indeed condemns homosexual excesses and exploitation, but it no less condemns heterosexual excesses and exploitation as well; and as the cure for the latter is a more responsible and less selfish expression of heterosexuality, so the cure for the former is a more responsible and less selfish expression of homosexuality, not a conversion from the one to the other. On the other hand, the total witness of Holy Scripture is to a gracious God of justice, mercy, and love. It is to that witness we take our stand, and it is to that God we make our appeal.

Taking note, therefore, that this action of the House is recommendatory and not prescriptive, we give notice as we are answerable before Almighty God that we cannot accept these recommendations or implement them in our Dioceses insofar as they relate or give unqualified expression to Recommendation 3. To do so would be to abrogate our responsibilities of apostolic leadership and prophetic witness to the flock of Christ, committed to our charge; and it would involve a repudiation of our ordination vows as Bishops, in the words of the new Prayer Book, boldly [to] proclaim and interpret the Gospel of Christ, enlightening the minds and stirring up the conscience of [our] people, and to encourage and support all baptized people in their gifts and ministries . . . and to celebrate with them the sacraments of our redemption; or in the words of the old, to be to the flock of Christ a shepherd, not a wolf. Our appeal is to conscience, and to God. Amen.

Signatories to the above message in 1979 were as follows:

Robert M. Anderson, Minnesota	H. Coleman McGehee, Michigan
Charles E. Bennison, Western Michigan	Paul Moore, Jr., New York
Edmond Browning, Hawaii	J. Brooke Mosley, Delaware
John Burgess, ret. (Massachusetts)	C. Kilmer Myers, California
Otis Charles, Utah	Lyman C. Oigilby, Pennsylvania
David C. Cochran, Alaska	Frederick W. Putnam, Suffragan, Oklahoma
Ned Cole, Central New York	Francisco Reus-Froylan, Puerto Rico
William A. Dimmick, Northern Michigan	William B. Spofford, Eastern Oregon
Wesley Frensdorff, Nevada	Richard M. Trelease, Jr., Rio Grande
John M. Krumm, Southern Ohio	John T. Walker, Washington

Bishops Signing Statement in 1988

John Shelby Spong	Newark
Otis Charles	(resigned)
John M. Krumm	Southern Ohio (retired)
Thomas K. Ray	Northern Michigan
C. Shannon Mallory	El Camino Real
Herbert D. Edmundson	Assistant, Central Florida
Douglas E. Theuner	New Hampshire
Paul Moore, Jr.	New York
Donald P. Hart	Hawaii
Walter D. Dennis	New York
Quintin E. Primo, Jr.	Chicago
Herbert A. Donovan, Jr.	Arkansas
Lyman C. Oigilby	Pennsylvania (retired)
John-Charles, SSF	Polynesia (retired)-collegial
Daniel L. Swenson	Vermont
Frederick H. Borsch	Los Angeles
Philip A. Smith	New Hampshire (retired)
William G. Burrill	Rochester
Donald J. Davis	Northwestern Pennsylvania
Robert M. Anderson	Minnesota
A. Theodore Eastman	Maryland
Charles J. Child, Jr.	Atlanta
Stewart C. Zabriskie	Nevada
Orris G. Walker, Jr.	Long Island
Frank T. Griswold	Chicago
Frederick W. Putnam	Navajoland (retired)

George N. Hunt
 William G. Black
 David E. Richards

Rhode Island
 Southern Ohio
 (resigned)

Prayer Book and Liturgy

The Committee on Prayer Book and Liturgy presented its Report #17 on A107 (Commentary on Common Baptismal Liturgy) and moved adoption as amended by the Committee.

Original Text of Resolution:
 (A107)

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, That *The Commentary of the Common Baptismal Liturgy* of the Consultation on Common Texts be studied by this Church in the next triennium.

Proposed Amendment:

On line one, after the word "That" add the words "*The Common Baptismal Liturgy* and."

Motion carried
Resolution adopted with amendment
 (Communicated to the House of Deputies in HB Message #181)

The Committee on Prayer Book and Liturgy presented its Report #28 on A102 (Common Baptismal Liturgy) and moved that the Committee be discharged from further consideration since the matter was already acted upon in Resolution A107.

Motion carried
Committee discharged
 (Communicated to the House of Deputies in HB Message #182)

The Committee on Prayer Book and Liturgy presented its Report #4 on A100 (Preparation of Baptismal Sponsors) and moved adoption as amended by the Committee.

Original Text of Resolution:
 (A100)

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, That the following rite be authorized for use in this Church:
 (for text see Blue Book, pp. 184-86)

Proposed Amendment:

On page 185 of the Blue Book, under "Rite 3. Holy Baptism," line three, of the first paragraph, delete the words "will receive the Holy Communion" and insert the words "may receive Holy Communion."

The Bishop Coadjutor of Long Island moved to replace the word "it" with the words "the child" in line three of the same paragraph. The motion was accepted by the Committee.

Motion carried
Resolution adopted with amendment
 (Communicated to the House of Deputies in HB Message #183)

The Committee on Prayer Book and Liturgy presented its Report #31 on D129 (Program Coordinator for Liturgy and Music) and moved adoption as amended by the Committee.