

DIOCESE OF FREDERICTON

MEMORIAL TO GENERAL SYNOD

Re: Marriage and Sexuality

This Synod of the Diocese of Fredericton resolves:

a. This Synod reaffirms the Diocese of Fredericton's commitment to the Godly care and pastoral support of people of all sexual orientations. This Diocese along with the whole Church is challenged (as the Archbishop of Canterbury stated on March 28, 2007) to ensure that our Churches are "truly (a) safe place(s) for people to be honest and where they may be confident that they will have their human dignity respected, whatever serious disagreements about ethics may remain." In keeping with Lambeth 1998 – Resolution 1.10 we commit ourselves to ongoing listening to the experience of homosexual persons and assure them that "they are loved by God and that all baptised, believing and faithful persons, regardless of sexual orientation, are full members of the Body of Christ." We encourage the Bishop and Diocese to initiate and engage in a sustained Biblical and theological conversation about human sexuality using the listening process requested in preparation for the 2008 Lambeth! conference.

b. In accordance with the teaching of Lambeth Conference 1998 Resolution 1.10, this Synod reaffirms the position taken at our 127th and 128th Synods that:

1. Marriage (as understood by the Church) is the lifelong union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others; and
2. that no clergy person may bless any union or marriage of the same sex

c. In line with the St. Michael Report we regard the blessing of same-sex unions as a matter of doctrine, with implications that are integral to the doctrines of salvation, incarnation, the person and work of the Holy Spirit, theological anthropology, sanctification and holy matrimony. Given that any change in Christian teaching on this doctrinally serious matter has significant implications for the unity of the Church we believe that any change ought to require wide consultation and no less than a two-thirds majority in each house of the General Synod over two successive General Synods in order to be regarded as canonical.

d. This diocese is determined to remain an integral part of the worldwide Anglican Communion, thus we reaffirm the decision of Synod 2005 and make clear to the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada that, should it decide not to follow the doctrine and discipline of the Communion this will cause a tear in the fabric of our relationship with the General Synod.

e. This Synod, recognizing that catholicity is one of the marks of the Anglican Church, and recognizing that each of the Instruments of Unity (the Archbishop of Canterbury, the

Lambeth Conference, the Anglican Consultative Council and the Primates Meeting) have affirmed that the worldwide Communion should take no action concerning authorization of the blessing of same sex unions unless a new consensus emerges, we therefore urge General Synod to do all in its power to preserve the 'bonds of affection' within our Communion.

f. We urge the General Synod to take seriously the request of the Archbishop of Canterbury, made in his Presidential Address to the General Synod of the Church of England (Feb 26, 2007) to the effect that the worldwide Anglican Communion should lay aside the currently divisive matters around human sexuality and address the more difficult issue of how the Anglican Communion becomes "a body attempting to live in more than one intellectual and cultural setting and committed to addressing major problems in a global way...."

g. In light of the above, the Synod of the Diocese of Fredericton does not intend to return to this matter unless the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada takes precipitant action concerning the contentious issues around human sexuality. We have made a definitive statement and it is our intention to move ahead with other important matters in the areas of mission and ministry.

The Secretary of Synod is directed to send a copy of this entire motion to the Archbishop of Canterbury and to memorialize the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada 2007 with the same.