



The Rev. Todd H. Wetzel, Executive Director
 PO Box 763217,
 Dallas, TX 75376-3217
 1-800-553-3645

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Dear Members of Anglicans United,

The Anglican Church, of which the Episcopal Church is a small but significant part, had its beginning in the period of the Protestant Reformation. Today, the Anglican Communion numbers some 80 million plus in its membership worldwide.

From the beginning, the Constitution of The Episcopal Church (USA) has included the statement that we are "a duly constituted member of the Communion". But what does it mean to be part of the Anglican Communion? Initially, the only qualification for membership was connection with the Church of England, either through missionary zeal or like the US, Canada and Australia, immigration.

From its beginning, three core beliefs have been advanced in the Anglican Church and subsequently the Communion. One, Holy Scripture, in both the New and Old Testament, is the Word of God written; it is Truth and contains all things necessary to salvation. Two, the Church functions under the authority of Scripture (Article 20 of the 39 Articles of Religion, the definitive theological statement of the Communion, states "it is unlawful for the Church to ordain anything contrary to God's Word written"). And, three, the Church and its members, being disciples, are bound to obey the commandments and "plain teachings" of Scripture.

Since the mid 1970's, the Episcopal Church, and subsequently the Anglican Communion, have been embroiled in controversy involving two issues. The more obvious was that of whether or not to approve same gender relations. But, this actually masks the real issue, which is whether or not the Church functions under the authority of Scripture or whether Scripture is subject to the interpretation of the Church. Charles Bennison, Bishop of Pennsylvania, stated, "The Church wrote Scripture and the Church can thus rewrite it."

George Carey, former Archbishop of Canterbury stated, "The Bible is one, clear, unequivocal voice on that (i.e., same gender sexual relations) and that is, it's wrong." From Leviticus 18:22 ("Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman, that is detestable") through the witness of the New Testament same gender relations are proscribed (see also, Leviticus 20:13, Genesis 19:1-14, Romans 1:26-27, I Corinthians 6:9-11, 1 Timothy 1: 8-11, 2 Peter 2:6-10, Jude 1:7-8). To approve of same gender sexual relations is, then, for the Church to do what it believes itself to be prohibited from doing which is to contradict the teaching of Scripture and thus promulgate a lie.

Anglicanism rises or falls on the primacy of Scripture. Place Scripture in a secondary position and you no longer have Anglicanism. You may have a church but that "church" has departed from The Church. Since 1976, succeeding General Conventions have taken the Episcopal Church from its moorings in Anglicanism and in 2006, cut the final links. This didn't happen by mistake or chance but by design developed by a majority of bishops, priests and laity in both Houses of the Convention. They set out to take control of the political process and leadership of the church; and they succeeded. That is why the crisis is deep, traumatic and has divided the church.

What about you? Is Scripture primary in your life? This is no casual matter. It involves your salvation. Many of us have connections to the Episcopal Church that goes way back. We are physically, emotionally and spiritually tied to our churches and that's a problem when those ties are deeper than our connection to Truth, which is the Word of God written. Several weeks ago, a man called me from Northern California, over his bishop's participation in John-David Schofield's pending deposition. He said, "I've wasted 40 years of my life in this church." My reply was simple, "Yes, if you put your faith in the Episcopal Church, that time is gone. But, if you put your whole trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, you have a treasure that no Wall Street investment banker can equal."

What about you? Are you a church-person or a Christian? The difference is essential.

Anglicans United, and its predecessor Episcopalians United, has stood steadfastly for the Authority of Scripture since its inception in 1986. We have worked diligently for the development of faithful Anglicanism on the American Shore. Working first to reform and renew the Episcopal Church. Then, seeking to unite the fragments of Anglicanism that have departed the Episcopal Church. And, we have been working to sound the alarm and enlist the foreign bishops and archbishops of Anglicanism in the struggle. As the enclosed newsletter shows we have been diligent in our efforts to report the ongoing and important issues of the day. Now, the struggle has come to a climax.

You've stood with us as we've tried to make sense of the mess, formulate strategies and develop a means to oppose the apostate and heretical leadership of our church, and travel to speak with the leadership of Anglicanism. It has been difficult. We have known the encouragement of your prayers, the empowerment of your contributions and the refreshment of your notes and phone calls.

We need your prayers and without your financial contributions, this ministry cannot keep going. The first year after General Convention is always a time of minimal contributions, just when the results of the General Convention require more of this office than any other time. Please consider a generous contribution to this ministry this month.

People, like you, are growing weary of the struggle just at the time when their prayers, their contributions and their participation have become most crucial. I trust this is not happening with you. I value your every contribution, count on your letters and phone calls and stand with you in your attempt to make a difference in your local parish and diocese.

Be steadfast. Trust the Lord in this great struggle on a day-to-day, week-to-week basis. He is very much at work right now, re-aligning people, parishes and bishops across this country. Pray without ceasing! And, as God enables you, send us a goodly contribution to insure our continuing efforts to re-establish faithful Anglicanism in the USA.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Todd +

the Rev. Todd H. Wetzel, Executive Director

Anglicans United & Latimer Press * PO Box 763217, Dallas, TX 75376-3217 * **1-800-553-3645**

**anglicansunited@sbcglobal.net * anglicansunited.com * latimerpress.com*

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*I am enclosing \$ _____ for the continuing work of Anglicans United * September 2006*

Name _____

Address _____

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_____ prayer request on the back _____ new address or winter address on the back [start and end dates, please]