

The Reconciliation Group

The Bishops of the ACA and the APA have formed a committee to address the issues that need to be clarified so that full reconciliation of the two bodies can take place. Currently, Bishops Chandler Jones and George Langberg serve with Fr. Walter Crites V.G. Archdeacons Zwingert, Hawtin and Canon Ryan as the initial clerical leadership for the committee; others will join this group shortly.

The first issue that was addressed concerned our attitude and the way we would present our work to the church. Since we had been one body and we are seeking to reconcile the two into one, Reconciliation is the term we will use for our work. We do not see any difficulty in reconciling the two bodies, but we do share a common understanding that this work needs to be done in an orderly fashion.

We have an outline for our process and that outline is as follows:

I. Constitution and Canons - it is our plan to take a pastoral approach to this work and communicate regularly with the Bishops so that we will have a completed and approved body of work to present to legal counsel for review. Once that process has been completed, the work will be disseminated throughout both jurisdictions for review.

II. Liturgy - There is agreement that we need to be clear about the intentions of this committee and the Bishops of our jurisdictions concerning worship. We are asking the Bishops of both jurisdictions to make a joint statement concerning worship in the Anglican Tradition, making clear that there is no one style or approved liturgy, other than the Standard Book of Common Prayer, which both jurisdictions embrace.

Variation from High Church to Low Church is a fact in the Anglican Tradition and we embrace the freedom that implies. The Bishops recognize such existing local variations in worship, and there will be no required change to this situation.

III. Governance and Structure - when the other work is complete and we have time both to embrace our Sacred Communion and become comfortable with each other, we will address the issues of governance. This is the last step of applying what we have agreed upon in our revised Constitution and Canons to the life of the Church.

Questions concerning the number of diocese, boundaries and so forth will then allow us to move forward together, sharing the work of proclaiming the Gospel and working in the most effective way.

During this process we welcome any comments, suggestions or questions. Please remember, however that each of us has responsibilities beyond this work and so an immediate reply may not be possible. Each correspondence that we receive will be shared and discussed as time permits.

Above all pray to God our Father, that if it is His Will, we may work towards reconciling this church and take one step closer to living in the reality of His One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.

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