



Statement from Primates 2016

14 Jan 2016

Today the Primates agreed how they would walk together in the grace and love of Christ. This agreement acknowledges the significant distance that remains but confirms their unanimous commitment to walk together.

The Primates regret that it appears that this document has been leaked in advance of their communiqué tomorrow. In order to avoid speculation the document is being released in full. This agreement demonstrates the commitment of all the Primates to continue the life of the Communion with neither victor nor vanquished.

Questions and further comments will be responded to at a press conference tomorrow at 1500. Full details are available [here](#).

The full text is as follows:

1. We gathered as Anglican Primates to pray and consider how we may preserve our unity in Christ given the ongoing deep differences that exist among us concerning our understanding of marriage.
2. Recent developments in The Episcopal Church with respect to a change in their Canon on marriage represent a fundamental departure from the faith and teaching held by the majority of our Provinces on the doctrine of marriage. Possible developments in other Provinces could further exacerbate this situation.
3. All of us acknowledge that these developments have caused further deep pain throughout our Communion.
4. The traditional doctrine of the church in view of the teaching of Scripture, upholds marriage as between a man and a woman in faithful, lifelong union. The majority of those gathered reaffirm this teaching.
5. In keeping with the consistent position of previous Primates' meetings such unilateral actions on a matter of doctrine without Catholic unity is considered by many of us as a departure from the mutual accountability and interdependence implied through being in relationship with each other in the Anglican Communion.
6. Such actions further impair our communion and create a deeper mistrust between us. This results in significant distance between us and places huge strains on the functioning of the Instruments of Communion and the ways in which we express our historic and ongoing relationships.
7. It is our unanimous desire to walk together. However given the seriousness of these matters we formally acknowledge this distance by requiring that for a period of three years The Episcopal Church no longer represent us on ecumenical and interfaith bodies, should not be appointed or elected to an internal standing committee and that while participating in the internal bodies of the Anglican Communion, they will not take part in decision making on any issues pertaining to doctrine or polity.
8. We have asked the Archbishop of Canterbury to appoint a Task Group to maintain conversation among ourselves with the intention of restoration of relationship, the rebuilding of mutual trust, healing the legacy of hurt, recognising the extent of our commonality and exploring our deep differences, ensuring they are held between us in the love and grace of Christ.