

Provisional Constitution of the Anglican Church in North America

Preamble

In the Name of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen.

We are Anglicans in North America united by our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and the trustworthiness of the Holy Scriptures and presently members of the Common Cause Partnership.

We know ourselves to be members of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.

We are grieved by the current state of brokenness within the Anglican Communion prompted by those who have embraced erroneous teaching and who have rejected a repeated call to repentance.

We are grateful for the encouragement of Primates of the worldwide Anglican Communion who gathered at Jerusalem in June 2008 and called on us to establish a new Province in North America.

We believe that this Constitution is faithful to that call and consistent with the Historic Faith and Order of the Church and we invite the prayers of all faithful Anglicans as we seek to be obedient disciples of Jesus Christ our One Lord and Savior.

ARTICLE I – FUNDAMENTAL DECLARATIONS OF THE PROVINCE

As the Anglican Church in North America (the Province), being a part of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ, we believe and confess Jesus Christ to be the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no one comes to the Father but by Him. Therefore, we identify the following eight elements as characteristic of the Anglican Way, and essential for membership:

1. We confess the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired Word of God, containing all things necessary for salvation, and to be the final authority and unchangeable standard for Christian faith and life.
2. We confess Baptism and the Supper of the Lord to be Sacraments ordained by Christ Himself in the Gospel, and thus to be ministered with unfailing use of His words of institution and of the elements ordained by Him.
3. We confess the godly historic Episcopate as an inherent part of the apostolic faith and practice, and therefore as integral to the fullness and unity of the Body of Christ.
4. We confess as proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture the historic faith of the undivided church as declared in the three Catholic Creeds: the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian.

5. Concerning the seven Councils of the undivided Church, we affirm the teaching of the first four Councils and the Christological clarifications of the fifth, sixth and seventh Councils, in so far as they are agreeable to the Holy Scriptures.
6. We receive The Book of Common Prayer as set forth by the Church of England in 1662, together with the Ordinal attached to the same, as a standard for Anglican doctrine and discipline, and, with the Books which preceded it, as the standard for the Anglican tradition of worship.
7. We receive the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion of 1562, taken in their literal and grammatical sense, as expressing the Anglican response to certain doctrinal issues controverted at that time, and as expressing fundamental principles of authentic Anglican belief.
8. We affirm the Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON) Statement and Jerusalem Declaration issued 29 June 2008.

In all these things, the Anglican Church in North America is determined by the help of God to hold and maintain, as the Anglican Way has received them, the doctrine, discipline and worship of Christ and to transmit the same, unimpaired, to our posterity.

We seek to be and remain in full communion with all Anglican Churches, Dioceses and Provinces that hold and maintain the Historic Faith, Doctrine, Sacraments and Discipline of the one Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

ARTICLE II – THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE PROVINCE

1. The founding entities of the Anglican Church in North America are the members of the Common Cause Partnership namely:
 - The American Anglican Council
 - The Anglican Coalition in Canada
 - The Anglican Communion Network
 - The Anglican Mission in the Americas
 - The Anglican Network in Canada
 - The Convocation of Anglicans in North America
 - Forward in Faith – North America
 - The Missionary Convocation of Kenya
 - The Missionary Convocation of the Southern Cone
 - The Missionary Convocation of Uganda
 - The Reformed Episcopal Church
2. New dioceses, clusters or networks (whether regional or affinity-based) may be added to the Province by invitation of the Provincial Council, pursuant to the process outlined by canon.
3. Member dioceses (or groups of dioceses organized into distinct jurisdictions) are free to withdraw from the Province by action of their own governing bodies at any time.

ARTICLE III – THE MISSION OF THE PROVINCE

The mission of the Province is so to present Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit that people everywhere will come to know Him as Lord and serve Him as King in the fellowship of the Church. The chief agents of this mission to extend the Kingdom of God are the people of God.

The work of the Province is to equip each member of the Province so that they may reconcile the world to Christ, plant new congregations, and make disciples of all nations; baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son and, and teaching them to obey everything commanded by Jesus Christ.

The Province will seek to represent orthodox North American Anglicans in the councils of the Anglican Communion.

ARTICLE IV – THE STRUCTURE OF THE PROVINCE

1. The fundamental agency of mission in the Province is the local congregation.
2. Congregations and clergy are related together in a diocese, cluster, or network (whether regional or affinity-based), united by a bishop.
3. Each diocese, cluster or network (whether regional or affinity-based) shall be represented in the Provincial Assembly.
4. Dioceses, clusters or networks (whether regional or affinity-based) may band together for common mission, or as distinct jurisdictions at the sub-Provincial level.
5. Each bishop in active episcopal ministry shall be included in a Provincial College of Bishops as provided by canon.
6. There shall be a Provincial Council elected by the Provincial Assembly.
7. This Constitution recognizes the right of each diocese, cluster or network (whether regional or affinity-based) to establish and maintain its own governance, constitution and canons not inconsistent with the provisions of

ARTICLE V – AREAS OF PROVINCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

The Provincial Council, subject to ratification by the Provincial Assembly, has power to make canons ordering our common life in respect to the following matters:

1. Safeguarding the Faith and Order of the Province
2. Supporting the mission of the Province
3. Common Worship
4. Standards for ordination
5. Clergy support and discipline
6. Ecumenical and international relations
7. Norms for Holy Matrimony
8. Providing for the proper administration of the Province

ARTICLE VI – THE PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY

1. The chief work of the Provincial Assembly shall be strengthening the mission of the

Province.

2. The Provincial Assembly shall ratify Constitutional amendments and Canons adopted by the Provincial Council. The process of ratification is set forth by canon.
3. The Provincial Assembly shall elect the Provincial Council.
4. The Provincial Assembly shall be composed of representatives of all the dioceses, clusters and networks (whether regional or affinity-based) in balance and in number from the laity, bishops and other clergy as from time-to-time determined by canon.
5. The Provincial Assembly may meet as often as annually, but shall meet as an Electing Assembly at least quintennially. Meetings shall be called as provided for by canon.

ARTICLE VII – THE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL

1. The Provincial Council is the governing body for the Anglican Church in North America and shall have the authority to establish the program and budget of the Province.
2. The Provincial Council shall be composed of an equal number of bishops, clergy and lay persons, chosen by the Provincial Assembly from among its members. Initially, the Provincial Council shall be composed of the members of the Common Cause Leadership Council, as constituted under the Common Cause *Articles*.
3. Provincial Council members hold office for five years. The term of office ends at the close of the Provincial Assembly meeting which elects the successor.
4. A retiring member of the Provincial Council is eligible for re-election for one additional term, but not for a third.
5. The Provincial Council may appoint up to six persons as full members.
6. The Provincial Council may appoint a deputy chair, a secretary, a treasurer and such other office bearers as it deems necessary.
7. The Provincial Council will meet at least once in each calendar year. A minimum of fifteen days notice must be given for each meeting.
8. Special meetings of the Provincial Council may be called by the Chair or by the request of one-third of the Provincial Council's membership.
9. The Chair with the assistance of the other office bearers will be responsible for the agenda of each Provincial Council meeting. Any member has a right to have items of business placed on the agenda for consideration.
10. The Provincial Council shall have an Executive Committee, whose membership and duties may be established by canon. Initially the Executive Committee shall be composed of the members of the Common Cause Executive Committee, as constituted under the Common Cause *Articles*.

ARTICLE VIII – THE LIMITS OF PROVINCIAL AUTHORITY

1. The member dioceses, clusters or networks (whether regional or affinity-based) and those dioceses banded together as jurisdictions shall each maintain all authority they do not yield to the Province by their own consent. The powers not delegated to the Province by this constitution nor prohibited by this Constitution to these dioceses or jurisdictions, are reserved to these dioceses or jurisdictions respectively.
2. The Province shall make no canon abridging the authority of any member dioceses, clusters or networks (whether regional or affinity-based) and those dioceses banded

together as jurisdictions with respect to its practice regarding the ordination of women to the diaconate or presbyterate.

ARTICLE IX – THE ARCHBISHOP

1. The Archbishop will be known as the *Archbishop and Primate of the Anglican Church in North America*. The Archbishop will be elected by the College of Bishops.
2. The person elected as Archbishop will hold office for a term of five years concluding at the end of the meeting of the College of Bishops which elects the next Archbishop. An Archbishop who has served one term of office may be elected for a second term of office but not a third. Initially, the Moderator of the Common Cause Partnership shall serve as Archbishop and Primate of the Province.
3. The Archbishop convenes the meetings of the Provincial Assembly, Provincial Council and College of Bishops and represents the Province in the Councils of the Church.

ARTICLE X – COLLEGE OF BISHOPS

1. The chief work of the College of Bishops shall be the propagation and defense of the Faith and Order of the Church, and in service as the visible sign and expression of the Unity of the Church.
2. Each bishop in active episcopal ministry shall be included in the College of Bishops as provided by canon.
3. The College of Bishops shall elect the Archbishop from among its members.
4. The College of Bishops will meet with such frequency as best serves its chief work, and at the call of the Archbishop or of the episcopal members of the Provincial Council.
5. The College of Bishops shall have authority in the election of bishops of the Province which may be: a) consent to an election from a diocese, cluster or network (whether regional or affinity-based), or b) the actual choice and consent from among two or more nominees put forward by a diocese, cluster or network (whether regional or affinity-based), in the manner set forward by canon.

ARTICLE XI – PROVINCIAL TRIBUNAL

There shall be an ecclesiastical court of final decision to be known as the Provincial Tribunal consisting of seven members, both lay and clergy, who shall be appointed by the Provincial Council on such terms and conditions as determined by canon. The jurisdiction of the Provincial Tribunal shall be to determine matters in dispute arising from the Constitution and Canons of the Province and such other matters as may be authorized by canon.

ARTICLE XII – OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY

All church property, both real and personal, owned by each member congregation now and in the future is and shall be solely and exclusively owned by each member congregation and shall not be subject to any trust interest or any other claim of ownership arising out of the canon law of this Province. Where property is held in a different manner by any diocese or grouping, such

ownership shall be preserved.

ARTICLE XIII – FINANCES

Each member diocese, cluster or network (whether regional or affinity-based) or any group of dioceses organized into a distinct jurisdiction agree to share the cost of operating the Province as provided by canon.

ARTICLE XIV – REMOVAL FROM MEMBERSHIP

As may be provided by canon, a member diocese, cluster or network (whether regional or affinity-based) or any group of dioceses organized into a distinct jurisdiction may be removed from membership in the Province, after due warning from the Executive Committee, if agreed to by two-thirds of the members present and voting and at least a majority in two of the three orders of bishops, clergy and laity within the Provincial Council.

ARTICLE XV – ADOPTION AND AMENDMENT OF THIS CONSTITUTION

1. This Constitution has been adopted by the Leadership Council of the Common Cause Partnership serving as initial Provincial Council. It shall be submitted to the Provincial Assembly for ratification at a meeting to be called by the Provincial Council not later than 31 August 2009.
2. This Constitution may be amended by the Provincial Assembly by two-thirds of the members present and voting at any regular or special meeting called for that purpose. Any changes or amendments to the Constitution shall not become effective in less than ninety days following that meeting.

We certify that the text of the Provisional Constitution set out above is the text of the Provisional Constitution of the Anglican Church in North America adopted by resolution of the Common Cause Leadership Council functioning as Provincial Council on the third day of December in the Year of our Lord 2008.

The Right Reverend Robert Duncan
Moderator of the Common Cause Partnership

The Venerable Charlie Masters
Secretary of the Common Cause Partnership