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CNS documentary service

Anglican Leaders Sanction Episcopal Church

Primates of the Anglican Communion

Because of the U.S. Episcopal Church's moves to unilaterally change canon law to allow same-sex marriage, Anglican leaders voted to suspend Episcopalians from positions representing the Anglican Communion and from participating in some Anglican bodies. Primates meeting in Canterbury, England, said that for three years members of the Episcopal Church will be barred from sitting on Anglican bodies making decisions on doctrine and polity and from representing the communion on ecumenical and inter-faith bodies. The move comes in response to a policy allowing gay marriages, adopted last

"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."

year by the General Convention, or governing body, of the Episcopal Church, the U.S. member of the Anglican Communion. The change in canon law in the U.S. has been strongly opposed by many of the theologically conservative African churches, some of whose leaders had threatened to walk out of the five-day primate meeting if the Episcopal Church was not penalized for its actions. The primates said the changes in teaching on marriage in the Episcopal Church represent a "fundamental departure from the faith and teaching held by the majority of our provinces on the doctrine of marriage," which it defined as a lifelong union between a man and a woman. The suspension was announced in a statement issued by the primates Jan. 14, a day earlier than planned because of leaks to the media. That statement was an addendum to the primates' full communiqué, which was released Jan. 15. The full communiqué follows.

the meeting of Anglican primates, the senior bishops of the 38 Anglican provinces, joined by the archbishop of the Anglican Church of North America, took place in Canterbury between Monday Jan. 11 and Friday Jan. 15 at the invitation of Justin Welby, the archbishop of Canterbury. The first morning was spent in prayer and fasting.

We came knowing that the 2016 primates' meeting would be concerned with the differences among us in regard to our teaching on matters of human sexuality. We were also

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Jan. 28, 2016
Volume 45
Number 34