

The Traditional Anglican Communion - Christians on the move!



Nothing is worse than the feeling of not knowing where one is going. Being lost is never a pleasant experience. Following press and news around matters within the Traditional Anglican Communion in 2011, some people have thrown up their hands and cried that all is lost. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Traditional Anglican Communion is emerging as a strongly unified and committed body of Continuing Anglicans, determined to carry the Gospel into the world with great vigour, the message enhanced by the beauty and grace of Anglican liturgy and worship and the use of the Book of Common Prayer.

The emerging leadership of the Traditional Anglican Communion is young and vigorous. The fellowship between the leaders, Bishops, Vicars General and Chancellors, is regular and congenial, and the commitment to growth and spiritual excellence is shared by all. The future for the TAC looks extremely bright. Many TAC leaders who were double-minded in terms of identity have indicated their intention to, or have moved on to Ordinariates, resulting in a more focussed, dedicated group of *Anglican* leaders now being in place. The sense of fellowship and inter-church co-operation is stronger than it has been for many years, and that bodes well for the future. The moment the leaders engaged in conversation and shared experiences and interpretations of events, a positive and dynamic interaction began. Soon it embraced the USA, Southern Africa, UK, Zambia, Zimbabwe, the Church of Umzi Wase Tiyopiya, Central America, India , Canada and parts of Australia.

The remaining Bishops and Vicars General of the Traditional Anglican Communion are determined that all faithful members shall have pastoral and Episcopal oversight. No-one will be left isolated or alone, even if some of their clergy or Bishops have left for an Ordinariate. We will ensure spiritual care for all our TAC people, no matter how remote their location may be.

Part of the task of the Continuing Anglican Movement was the need to reclaim, or retake Anglicanism from the liberal and secular men and women who have it by the throat. We are determined to fulfil that part of our mission. We will offer those cast out by their previous spiritual homes a place of stability and solace. We will continue in the Faith of our fathers.

The World Consultation on Continuing Anglicans held in Brockton, Massachusetts, in November 2011, saw our friendships as TAC clergy further cemented and developed. Present at that Conference were TAC delegates from the USA, India, Central America and Southern Africa, with interest and apologies from Canada and the UK. The TAC input at that Conference was powerful and vibrant. It was obvious to all that we are a globally cohesive

and focussed Communion, intent on spreading the Christian Gospel through our Anglican liturgy and worship and our preaching of the Word. Our fellowship with the other Continuing Anglican groups was warm and positive, with APA, ACC and FACA leadership all present. We were aware of a corporate mission and equally aware of there being room enough in Our Lord's vineyard for all to be allowed to prosper, despite some of our differences.

It is sometimes necessary to cut back a plant to allow for renewed growth. I think most gardeners are familiar with this necessity? The current situation is that the Traditional Anglican Communion is poised for a brilliant and sustained period of growth. We have shaken off the shackles of our recent past, broken our "Cone of Silence" and we are very much "on the move".

Although many Continuing Anglican churches in the developed world are filled with senior citizens, that is not the picture in the TAC in the developing countries. Here, our churches are filled with young people. Large numbers of young people are Baptised and Confirmed regularly, and the youth groups are overflowing. Youth Catechists lead worship and preach in the services and many "home-grown" young men are coming forward for Ordination and training for ministry. Women's groups are flourishing and there is a lively interaction between countries and churches. The churches and parishes have vibrant men's fellowship groups and there is a strong commitment to answering social problems such as poverty, teenage pregnancies and the scourge of HIV and AIDS. The future of the Traditional Anglican Communion is ensured and this energy will be carried into all parts of our Communion.

Brothers and sisters, we lose hope too quickly! We allow ourselves to be buffeted by negative moments in our own lives and in the life of the church. Our Lord will never forsake His people, and as long as we are faithful, diligent and obedient to His Word and commandments, He will continue to bless us!

I do hope that what you have read has warmed your heart. Whether you are in the cold of Alaska or the burning heat of Botswana, in a city or in the rural countryside, the Traditional Anglican Communion remains committed to your spiritual well-being, will provide you with ministry and the sacraments, and no matter what people say, will be there for you, your children and your children's children!

God bless and keep you

Bishop Michael Gill
TAC, Pretoria and Southern Africa