



ENCOMPASS

News and Events from the American Anglican Council • Third Quarter 2014

New Leader for Anglican Church in North America

The American Anglican Council welcomes the election of The Rt. Rev. Dr. Foley Beach as the next Archbishop of the Anglican Church in North America. “Archbishop-elect Beach loves Jesus Christ and loves His Church,” said the Rev. Canon Phil Ashey, CEO of the American Anglican Council. “I have seen Bishop Foley preach the good news of Jesus Christ, personally disciple others and lead his congregation with great passion and prayerfulness and we are thankful for his election.”

Archbishop-elect Beach has served on the American Anglican Council’s Board of Trustees for several years. His active participation has greatly helped the Council develop faithful leaders, equip the church for mission and renew orthodox Anglicanism.

“I’ve been privileged to watch and work with Foley in his ministry as rector of Holy Cross Anglican Church, then Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of the South and also on our Board,” said the Rt. Rev. David C. Anderson, President and Chairman of the American Anglican Council’s Board of Trustees. Bishop Anderson has recognized for many years Archbishop-elect Beach’s character and service-oriented heart. “When I was consecrated as a Bishop I asked Foley to be my chaplain and he graciously agreed. He not only prayed with me and offered advice but did the little things like help carry my robes. I appreciated his clear-headed demeanor and humble willingness to serve during those days and know the ACNA will appreciate these qualities also.” †

Above: Archbishop Bob Duncan (left) transfers authority to incoming Archbishop-elect Foley Beach on the final day of the Anglican Church in North America’s 2014 Provincial Assembly.



ACNA Conclave, Council, and Assembly

BY THE RT. REV. BILL ATWOOD

Come Holy Ghost, our souls inspire—And lighten with celestial fire

These ancient words of the Veni Creator were said and sung many times over the three days that the Bishops of the Anglican Church in North America met in conclave. As the church waited, the bishops met over three full days to discern who the next Archbishop would be.

The Anglican Church in North America, like other Provinces, is made up of people who have many different points of emphasis and different emphases of importance. Rather than engaging in a political process in which groups rally not only to win but also to defeat others, our bishops reported that they were committed to discerning the person whom God was calling and anointing to lead as the next Archbishop. They also said that they were committed to

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The Next Five Years for the ACNA

BY THE REV. CANON PHIL ASHEY, CEO

Much has been written about the Anglican Church in North America's (ACNA) recent Provincial Assembly. The addition of 12,000 new members, 488 new church plants, and several thousand adult baptisms shows that we are a church looking forward into mission—to reach North America with the transforming love of Jesus Christ. So let me offer just three observations, from my standpoint.

1. Together, we have changed the conversation:

No, we did not plant 1000 churches in five years



About Archbishop Foley Beach:

Born October 31, 1958, Foley Thomas Beach graduated from North Fulton High School, Atlanta, GA in 1976. He went on to earn degrees from Georgia State University, The School of Theology at the University of the South and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. Dr. Beach has been married for 30+ years to Allison (left), a public school teacher. Together they have two children - both of whom are graduate students. Archbishop Beach left The Episcopal Church in 2003 and helped found Holy Cross Anglican Church in Loganville, GA. Consecrated the first Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of South in 2010, Beach lives in Monroe, GA. The official investiture ceremony for the new archbishop will be October 9, 2014 in Atlanta, GA.

(2009-2014). But we planted 488 more than we would have if we had kept looking in the rear view mirror at our past and our exodus. And those 488 new churches are in addition to somewhere around 100 plants that did not succeed. Church planting expert Ed Stetzer of Lifeway Ministries told us at Assembly that this accomplishment is extraordinary by any measurement, and that what we need to be thinking about is how to build on this momentum in the next five years. We are no longer defined by what we are NOT—we are defined by the Great Commission and the imperative of reaching people who do not yet know Jesus Christ. This is perhaps the greatest legacy Archbishop Duncan leaves us—changing the conversation from conflict with The Episcopal Church (TEC) to Christ's Great Commission—and we are all much better for it spiritually, emotionally, and institutionally. Archbishop-elect Foley Beach's sermon calling us to personal, relational evangelism, witness and discipleship in the workplace and beyond builds on that legacy with crystal clarity. Here at the American Anglican Council, we stand ready to promote this vision and mission of the ACNA as we continue to develop faithful leaders and equip local congregations to fulfill Christ's Great Commission to make disciples.

2. We face a great, missional question: Like a bright red thread, one question ran through virtually every speaker and every workshop—How do we present the unchanging Gospel of Jesus Christ to an ever changing world? In fact, this is not a new question. This question is at the heart of the struggle for the soul of Anglicanism, as former Archbishops Drexel Gomez (West Indies) and Maurice Sinclair (Southern Cone) wrote back in 2001:

“How, in the midst of the pressures of time, do the Churches [of the Anglican Communion] both remain faithful to the teaching and practice of the Apostles and yet witness relevantly and in context to the truth of the Gospel among these changes and chances of history?” To Mend the Net (Ekklesia, 2001)

The next five years will require deeper and more prayerful soul searching on what we need to change about ourselves and our churches that is not essential to the unchanging Gospel of Jesus Christ—especially if those things stand in the way of reaching people who do not yet know Jesus Christ and his transforming love.

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Anglican Church in North America bishops during their conclave to elect the next archbishop met in the crypt of St. Vincent's Basilica in Latrobe, PA, June 19-21.

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doing so in a way that unites the church. In order to do that, bishops shared their hearts and priorities. To engage differences in a way that preserves relationships took open communication and time.

There were several things which were notable and encouraging. First of all, each bishop was given three minutes to share what was on their heart in regards to the church and their view of the direction and priorities for the next phase of our life together. There was a lot of time for worship and prayer, with Scripture being both read and acclaimed as authoritative. There was also time for bishops to share their sense of "words from the Lord," as distinguished from personal points of view for which there was also ample time to share. Each time someone spoke there was time for weighing the words that had been given, seeking to honor not only our thoughts and decisions, but also to listen to what God was saying. This is something which must be weighed very carefully and measured against Scripture, but the fact that God's voice is taken seriously is a great encouragement.

The process led to repentance and acts of reconciliation, prayers, brotherly hugs, and even tears. As relationships were strengthened, agreement on what next steps to take and how to engage challenges emerged. In many ways, this was a time of "being the church" and "doing the work of the church." As trust increased, consensus more readily grew, ultimately resulting in enthusiastic

and unanimous selection of the new Archbishop. On Sunday afternoon the bishops' shout of acclamation rose from the crypt under the Basilica and was heard by those nearby as they reached their decision.

The Provincial Assembly began a few days following the election of the Most Rev. Foley Beach as the new Archbishop. Most of the Assembly time was taken pursuing the mission of the Church, with inspiring plenary sessions given by people like Eric Metaxas (Author of *Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy*), Os Guinness, and Evangelical icon, Dr. J.I. "Jim" Packer (a dear friend). The idea is to encourage and further equip the church to reach North America with the transforming love of Jesus Christ. It was hugely successful.

Over the last twenty years I have visited countless diocesan and Provincial Synods all around the world. I have been privileged to be a plenary speaker at almost a dozen Provincial Synods around the Anglican Communion. As encouraging and wonderful as those meetings can be, the content and character of this (admittedly exhausting!) Provincial gathering was as wonderful as one can find anywhere in the Anglican world. In fact, it was head and shoulders above the wrangling and political posturing that often takes place in some other Provinces. Those who are part of the Anglican Church in North America can be very proud of what is happening. Those in other Provinces would do well to take note. There are many things to learn from this young Province. †
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Opportunities abound to share Christ and his love, but we won't be given the opportunity until people know that we personally care about them. I'm convicted afresh by my need as a follower of Christ to simply love others, listen, reach out and build relationships, trusting God for the timing to share Christ. How about you? How about the ACNA? “Building trust” is one key to sharing Christ in our ever changing culture. We have a long way to go to overcome mistrust and misinformation about Christianity. It will require missional creativity and personal, relational outreach on a scale that neither we nor our churches have known up to this point. But it will require even more.

3. We need a new Pentecost: We need a fresh outpouring and enabling of the Holy Spirit that will enable us to become the kind of missional church where courage, compassion and conversion are the inevitable outcomes (Acts 2:42-47). We need grace. We need the power of the Holy Spirit to make the necessary changes, personally and institutionally, to reach people with the love of Jesus Christ. As a canon lawyer, I find myself wanting

to make sure that we honor our Anglican polity. But structures must serve mission. I am reminded of a quote by Charles Hummell from a book he wrote about the charismatic renewal in the 1990's—*Fire in the Fireplace* (Downers Grove: IVP). In his book, he made the point that the church needs both the fireplace (structure and order) and the fire (the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on every believer and church). Without the fireplace, the fire can rage out of control. We Anglicans are great at the fireplace stuff—the stuff of constitution, canons, ecclesial structures, etc. But, as Hummell also notes, without the fire the fireplace is simply a collection of bricks or stones that are cold and dead.

We need both the fireplace and the fire in the next five years. Yes, we need to address those things that keep us from fulfilling Christ's Great Commission. But oh how we need the fire! So come Holy Spirit come...Come as the wind that blows, come as the fire that refines, come as the dew that refreshes. Convict, convert and consecrate us until we are wholly yours, and wholly committed to reaching people with the transforming love of Jesus Christ. †

The American Anglican Council is a network of individuals, dioceses, parishes and ministries who affirm biblical authority and Christian orthodoxy within the Anglican Communion. By the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit, the mission of the American Anglican Council is to build up and defend Great Commission Anglican churches in North America and worldwide through advocacy and counsel, leadership development and equipping the local church. *Encompass* is a quarterly publication of the American Anglican Council.

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