



THE DAILY ENCOMPASS



GENERAL CONVENTION 2006 NEWS & COMMENTARY FROM THE AMERICAN ANGLICAN COUNCIL

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A CALL TO MISSION

The American Anglican Council (AAC) is a network of individuals (laity, deacons, priests and bishops), parishes and specialized ministries who affirm Biblical authority and Christian orthodoxy within the Anglican Communion. In response to the Lord's calling and by His grace, we commit ourselves to proclaim the Good News to every person and to reform and renew the Church of Jesus Christ. We are uniting in order to fulfill our apostolic mission and ministry, working to build a faithful Anglican witness in the Americas.

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms." (Eph. 6:10-12)

Windsor Report

REPENT + REAFFIRM + ROLLBACK

The Daily Encompass

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Bishops Choose Jefferts Schori to Lead Episcopal Church

BY RALINDA GREGOR

On the fifth ballot, the Rt. Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori was elected as the 26th presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church. Bishop Jefferts Schori received 95 votes from the House of Bishops, the minimum number of votes necessary to be elected.

Bishop Jefferts Schori was ordained a priest in 1994 and consecrated as the bishop of Nevada in 2001, making her the least experienced of the seven nominees. Her diocese of 6,000 members is one of the smallest in ECUSA. Average Sunday attendance in the diocese of Nevada decreased by one percent from 1999 to 2004. Conversely, the state population grew by 66 percent between 1990 and 2000 according to the 2000 census data.

Bishop Jefferts Schori's voting record at her first General Convention (2003) and subsequent public statements clearly paint her as a committed revisionist. She voted for the consecration of V. Gene



Robinson. She also voted against resolution B001 which sought to affirm such basic beliefs as: the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments contain all things necessary to salvation; it is not lawful for the Church to ordain or approve anything contrary to God's written word; and the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds are sufficient statements of the Christian faith.

At a press conference following the announcement of her election, when asked about her support for same-sex blessings, Bishop Jefferts Schori made the statement that

"ALL OF THIS IS A VERY LONG WAY OF SAYING THAT NEITHER THIS [LAMBETH] COMMISSION, NOR THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, NOR THE GATHERING OF PRIMATES, CAN MAKE RULES OR LAWS THAT BIND THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH."

JEFFERTS SCHORI, ON THE CREATION OF THE LAMBETH COMMISSION, 2004 DIOCESAN CONVENTION ADDRESS

"BEFORE WE GET THERE [DEBATE OF A RESOLUTION], I WANT TO SAY THAT PART OF OUR DIFFICULTY LIES IN NOT HAVING A FULLY DEVELOPED AND UNIFORMLY HELD THEOLOGY OF MARRIAGE, LET ALONE WHAT IS BEING ASKED FOR IN BLESSING SAME-SEX RELATIONSHIPS. THAT IS LARGELY THE RESULT OF THE WAY IN WHICH ANGLICANS DO THEOLOGY..."

JEFFERTS SCHORI, 2003 CONVENTION ADDRESS

pastorally, many congregations are doing same-sex blessings, and she supports this. In 2003, she encouraged passage of a Nevada diocesan resolution

Jefferts Schori,
continued on page 2...

How Sticky Will the Toffee Be?

BY CHRIS SUGDEN

Giles Fraser wrote in the *Guardian Online* on Saturday that dialectical Anglicanism is an encouragement to war. I do not often agree with Giles Fraser, but I do on this. The Archbishop of Canterbury does not believe that the issues of sexuality over which the communion is divided can be resolved by appeal to biblical texts or theology. Therefore, both contradictory positions are to be continued in the belief that in the long run, a solution will emerge. This is the current philosophical argument for Church unity. It has not been an approach that worked in Northern Ireland or South Africa.

This approach to unity leaves a series of conundrums for members of the Special Legislative Committee on the Episcopal Church and Anglican Communion to resolve:

- + In an array of motions, this Convention affirms the concept of same-sex relations, partnerships and even marriage as the policy of the Church.
- + The convention wishes to remain a part of the Anglican Communion.
- + In order to remain part of the Anglican Communion, the Convention has been given a number of firm requests in the *Windsor Report*.
- + In order to accede to those requests, it would need to appear to draw back on its affirmation of same-sex relations.

Jefferts Schori, from page 1...

that approved “ceremonies to celebrate relationships of mutuality and fidelity between same-sex couples.”

Bishop Jefferts Schori is a member of the Special Commission on the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion, the team that drafted ECUSA's response to the *Windsor Report* that is slowly being reviewed and revised during this General Convention. According to the Rev. Dr. Kendall Harmon, Canon Theologian for the Diocese of South Carolina, it is clear she had a strong influence on the language of the Special Commission report. During her post-election press conference, she did not offer her opinion about a moratorium on future consecrations of non-celibate homosexuals, saying that is up to the Special Committee and the General Convention to decide.

Canon Martyn Minns, Rector of Truro Church, Fairfax, Va., said, “We are grateful for the clarity that this vote demonstrates, but sad because it seems that Bishop Jefferts Schori is against everything that *Windsor* is for.”

The Rt. Rev. Robert Duncan, Bishop of Pittsburgh and Moderator of the Anglican Communion Network, commented on the implications of Jefferts Schori's election for the Episcopal Church and Anglican Communion. “While many of us have supported

- + Therefore, the primary concern is how to say to the gay and lesbian activists that we are still with you; we still affirm you; we therefore apologise to you and want to say again that we affirm you, but without patronizing you.

This conundrum showed itself most visibly in the Sunday morning meeting of the Special Resolution Committee which spent the vast majority of its time perfecting wording that appreciated the burden and hurt being imposed on the gay and lesbian activists and that expressed respect for them without patronizing them, and yet recognizing that those who were not gay or lesbian could not appreciate the full experience of their hurt. No wonder that the nature of the conversation had a feeling of walking on eggshells. When one very senior bishop indeed made a slip of the tongue in an involuntary reference to “coming out” that possibly served to release some of his tension, he was slapped down immediately in a headmistressly tone that his words were neither funny nor helpful. All sorts of unknown rules must be observed in this earnest new morality, and humor—even self-deprecating humor (a wonderful medicine for good community and personal relations)—is not allowed.

No wonder the Archbishop of Canterbury calls the day when he was appointed the day the roof fell in. Perhaps Presiding Bishop-elect Jefferts Schori should have a roofer on stand-by. +

women in holy orders, this election puts three Network dioceses within the Episcopal Church in an untenable situation,” Bishop Duncan said. “The same is true for one of the Convocations of the Network (Forward in Faith) and for countless orthodox souls in every part of our nation who have endured with us despite their pain in doing so. For the Anglican Communion worldwide, this election reveals the continuing insensitivity and disregard of the Episcopal Church for the present dynamics of our global fellowship. This election asserts once again that it is our autonomy and revolutionary character that is most dear to us. Any words the General Convention might speak about compliance with the *Windsor Report* will have to be read in light of this election.”

AAC president Canon David Anderson joined Minns and Duncan in offering his prayers of support for Presiding Bishop-elect Jefferts Schori, noting that she is inheriting “the tragedy of a fractured church that has lost its sense of mission and lost touch with its grass roots.” When asked what Bishop Jefferts Schori could do to work towards reconciliation with biblically faithful Episcopalians, Canon Anderson said she could allow clergy who wish to transfer to overseas dioceses to be lawfully transferred, allow those clergy to continue pension fund participation, and allow dissenting parishes to disengage from the Episcopal Church. +