

Traditional Anglican Communion Concordat of 1990

As Amended at the Meeting of the College of Bishops of the Traditional Anglican Communion; November 26-28, 2003

PREAMBLE

DETERMINED to maintain the unbroken continuity of our tradition within the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ from its inception to the present day, especially as expressed in the precepts of the Ecumenical Councils of the Undivided Church;

ESTABLISHED in our particular identity of history, character and purpose within the constant tradition of the Church from its arrival in the British Isles in the earliest Christian centuries, and as expressed in its traditional formularies; and

REMAINING in Communion with all such Churches, Provinces and Dioceses throughout the world which have been established in and are faithful to the same constant tradition, to which the historic Chair of St. Augustine at Canterbury is called to bear witness:

WE, the Bishops of continuing Anglican Churches in full Communion with each other, with expressions of concurrence of the clergy and laity thereof, hereby unite in a worldwide Communion of orthodox Churches in the Anglican Tradition, and invite all faithful Bishops, Churches and Provinces which uphold the principles set forth in the Fundamental Declarations herein to participate in this our solemn purpose and act.

WE further declare that the Churches, Provinces and Dioceses of this Communion desire to be in full Communion with the whole of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ, and in endeavoring to promote Christian Unity shall continue to regard as the minimum basis for such unity the sharing of common Scriptures, Creeds, Sacraments and Ministry as identified in the *Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral* of 1886-88.

1. NAME

1.1. This Communion, which is the continuation of the body formed provisionally at Orlando, Florida, in the United States of America on February 3, 1989, and formally established at Victoria, British Columbia, Canada on September 29, 1990, is known as 'The Traditional Anglican Communion'.

1.2. The term 'Traditional' as used in this context refers to that living witness of the Spirit within the Church by which her continuity is assured from age to age. It is described in a letter of 1718 AD from the Eastern Patriarchs to the English Non-Jurors: "*We preserve the Doctrine of the Lord uncorrupted, and firmly adhere to the Faith He delivered to us, and keep it free from blemish and diminution, as a Royal Treasure, and a monument of great price, neither adding any thing, nor taking any thing from it;*" and by St. John of Damascus: "*We do*

not change the everlasting boundaries which our fathers have set, but we keep the Tradition, just as we received it."

2. MEMBER CHURCHES

2.1. The Churches forming this Communion are:

- (A) The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada;
- (B) The Anglican Catholic Church in Australia;
- (C) The Anglican Church in America;
- (D) The Anglican Church of India (legitimate successor to the Church of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon);
- (E) The Orthodox Church of Pakistan;
- (F) The Church of Ireland (Traditional Rite);
- (G) The Anglican Church of Southern Africa (Traditional Rite);
- (H) The Church of Umzi Wase Tiyopiya (South Africa);
- (I) The Traditional Anglican Church (England);
- (J) The Church of Torres Strait;
- (K) The Continuing Anglican Church in Zambia; and
- (L) The Nippon Kirisuto Sei Ko Kai (Japan)

NOTE: In October of 1991, the American Episcopal Church, virtually entire, merged with a significant portion of The Anglican Catholic Church (USA), and others, to form the Anglican Church in America, which immediately petitioned to be recognized as the American component of the Traditional Anglican Communion. Those Bishops of The Anglican Catholic Church (USA) who rejected this act of unification, along with the body of which they are still members (calling itself The Original Province of The Anglican Catholic Church) have since that time practically repudiated their signatures on the original Concordat and withheld their Church from participation in the Traditional Anglican Communion. The Bishops of the Anglican Church in America are all either signatories to the original Concordat or else petitioners thereto through the American Episcopal Church.

2.2. The Regional Conferences of Bishops of this Communion are:

(A) The Conference of the Americas: consisting of the Bishops of the Anglican Catholic Church of Canada, and the Bishops of the Anglican Church in America;

(B) The Conference of Southern Asia: consisting of the Bishops of the Anglican Church of India, and the Bishops of the Orthodox Church of Pakistan;

(C) The Conference of Europe and Africa: consisting of the Bishops of the Church of Umzi Wase Tiyopiya, the Bishops of the Anglican Church in South Africa (Traditional Rite), the Bishops of the Continuing Anglican Church in Zambia, the Bishops of The Traditional Anglican Church (England, Scotland, Wales), and the Bishops of the Church of Ireland (Traditional Rite);

(D) The Conference of the Pacific: consisting of the Bishops of the Anglican Catholic Church of Australia, the Bishops of the Church of Torres Strait, and the Bishops of the Nippon Kirisuto Sei Ko Kai.

2.3. In each Regional Conference there shall be a President elected from among the Bishops represented at that Regional Conference, by such electoral procedure as they may decide to use. The President shall serve in that capacity for a period of five years, or until he resigns or retires as a Bishop Ordinary or dies in office, whichever occurs first. He shall be eligible to be re-elected for one additional five year term if he is still in office at the expiration of his first term.

3. FUNDAMENTAL DECLARATIONS

3.1. In the firm conviction that "we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ," and that "there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved," we acknowledge our duty to proclaim Christ's saving Truth to all peoples, nations and tongues.

3.2. We acknowledge that rule of faith laid down by St Vincent of Lerins: "Let us hold that which has been believed everywhere, always and by all, for that is truly and properly Catholic." Accordingly, we declare our intention to hold fast the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Faith of God and to transmit the same unimpaired to our posterity.

3.3. We affirm as integral to the history and essential to the formation of this Communion all of the doctrinal, moral and other theological principles set out in the Declaration of loyal Anglicans gathered in the Congress of St. Louis, Missouri, United States of America in the year 1977, generally known as *The Affirmation of St. Louis*.

3.4. Each member Church or Province of this Communion shall have authority to adopt its own Fundamental or Solemn Declarations consistent with *The Affirmation of St. Louis*, provided that each member Church or Province of this Communion does and shall disclaim expressly any authority to amend or depart in any substantive manner from the Fundamental Declarations hereof, or to derogate from Holy Scripture, or to determine unilaterally any question of Faith or Order, the authority for determining such residing in

the College of Bishops of this Communion acting with such competent advice as may be available to it.

4. RULING PRINCIPLES

4.1. This Communion retains and approves the formularies of the classical Anglican tradition authorized prior to the emergence, within some Churches or Provinces of 'The Anglican Communion,' of those departures from orthodox Faith and Practice which made necessary and precipitated the Congress of St. Louis.

4.2. The standard of Faith and Worship of this Communion is that expressed in the first *Book of Common Prayer*, and Ordinal, of Edward VI and in the following revisions:

(A) The Church of England, use of 1662, and its authorized translations;

(B) The Anglican Church of Canada, use of 1962;

(C) The Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, use of 1928, and its several authorized translations, in particular the *Oración Común*, use of 1928; and

(D) The Church of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon, use of 1963 with its authorized *Supplement*;

(E) The Church of Ireland, use of 1926, with the Canons as amended in 1989/90 (but excluding Canon 21a);

(F) The Church of the Province of South Africa, use of 1954.

4.3. The Church of England *Deposited Book* of 1928 and such other editions or revisions of the *Book of Common Prayer* where such have been ordered by lawful authority may continue in use in any Anglican Church, Province or Diocese admitted to this Communion, provided that the said editions or revisions conform to the standards of Faith and Worship set out in this Concordat.

4.4. This Communion acknowledges and respects the right and responsibility of each member Church or Province to order its own internal legislative and administrative affairs in accordance with local law and custom, and not inconsistently with the Preamble, Fundamental Declarations and Ruling Principles set out in this Concordat.

4.5. Other than the final authority to determine questions of Catholic Faith and Apostolic Order (which authority resides by virtue of the nature of the episcopal office in the College of Bishops acting, however, not independently of the whole Church but with the counsel and advice of the clergy, and with the assent of the whole body of the faithful), this Communion does not take to itself any power to establish any legislative or judicial authority inhibiting member Churches and Provinces from establishing such local synods

and tribunals or adopting such local constitutions and canons as may be appropriate to their good order and government.

5. THE PRIMACY

5.1. There shall be a Primate of this Communion who shall preside in charity among the Bishops thereof, not as a prelate, but in the Patristic sense as an elder brother.

5.2.

(A) The first Primate shall be elected by the College of Bishops of this Communion from among its members. He shall serve in that Office until his resignation or retirement as Primate, or until his death if he should die in office. Upon his 72nd birthday, if he has not yet retired or resigned, he shall place before the College of Bishops his standing offer of retirement, which shall become effective upon acceptance, by secret ballot, by the said College.

(B) All subsequent Primates shall be elected from among the Chief Bishops of the Member Churches or Provinces of this Communion by a two-thirds majority of the College of Bishops thereof. Such Primate, so elected, shall serve until his resignation or retirement, or until his death if he should die in office. Upon his 72nd birthday, if he has not yet retired or resigned, he shall place before the College of Bishops his standing offer of retirement, which shall become effective upon acceptance, by secret ballot, by the said College.

5.3. In any election of a Primate, the name of every such Chief Bishop in this Communion shall appear on the first ballot paper. Following a method of voting agreed upon by the College of Bishops, three ballots shall be held. The first will reduce the number of candidates by one-half. The second will reduce the number of remaining candidates to two. The third will determine the election. Should the third ballot be a tie, further ballots shall ensue until an election is determined. Unanimity on the first or second ballot shall determine the election and eliminate the need for further balloting.

5.4. Each member Church or Province of this Communion shall contribute to the temporal support and maintenance of the Office of the Primate according to its ability. The Scriptural standard of ten percent of Church or Provincial revenues should guide the member Churches and Provinces in determining the level of support to be provided.

6. THE COLLEGE OF BISHOPS

6.1. There shall be a College of Bishops of this Communion, consisting of all Bishops in good standing and actively holding Episcopal Office in any member Church or Province thereof. Except in elections, each such Bishop shall have one vote in the College; and, in addition, each member Church or Province shall have one vote to be determined among the Bishops thereof by such method as they shall choose. Concurrent majority votes (as may be

required by the provisions of this Concordat), both among the Bishops and among the Churches or Provinces, shall be required to determine an action of the College.

6.2. The College of Bishops shall appoint a Secretary, who shall be responsible to the Primate.

6.3. In order to provide for mutual support and confidence in and amongst the episcopal *collegium* it shall be competent for the College of Bishops to consider any credible allegation of dereliction of consecration vows in the life or teaching of one of its members where such dereliction, if proved, could constitute a threat of impairment to the relationship of *communio in sacris* amongst the members of this Communion.

(A) Any such accusation must be presented first within and according to the canonical or other procedures of the national Church or Province of the Bishop accused. If that Church or Province fails or refuses to hear the matter, any Bishop who is a member of this College of Bishops may bring the accusation before the College.

(B) The Primate shall then appoint a Tribunal consisting of three members of the College of Bishops (other than the accused). One shall be a Bishop chosen by the accused; one shall be a Bishop of a member Church of this Communion other than that of the accused Bishop. The third shall be the Primate, or another Bishop chosen by him, who shall preside. The Tribunal shall examine the charges and recommend appropriate disposition to the full College. Final disposition of the matter shall be made by the Primate with the Advice and Consent of not less than two-thirds of the College of Bishops.

(C) The Tribunal shall proceed according to recognized and customary procedures of ecclesiastical tribunals in the Anglican tradition. Should the Primate be the accused, the next senior Bishop in order of consecration who is a Metropolitan (or equivalent) in his own Church or Province shall fulfill his duties under this provision.

(D) Any Bishop of this Communion who is charged and tried by a Tribunal of his own Church or Province, having exhausted all available procedures of appeal within that Church or Province, may appeal a decision of such Tribunal to the College of Bishops of this Communion. The College, functioning according to the provisions of this Section, shall act as an Appellate Tribunal in such cases.

(E) The member Churches of this body commit themselves to abide by such decisions as shall be made under this provision.

6.4. In exercising its Pastoral responsibilities as provided in this Concordat, the College of Bishops, by consensus, may act by means other than face-to-face meetings as conditions may require. All such proceedings shall be duly recorded by the Secretary.

7. ADVISERS AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

7.1. Member Churches and Provinces of this Communion may, and are encouraged to, select Clerical and Lay Advisers to meetings in conference of the College of Bishops. Each member Church or Province may select up to three Clerical and three Lay Advisers to such meetings. Alternates may be provided for if desired. Each member Church or Province may determine its own method of selection or designation of Advisers.

7.2. The College of Bishops of this Communion may also appoint up to three such Advisers, Clerical or Lay, from among the member Churches and Provinces.

7.3. The sole function of the Advisers provided for in Sections 7.1 and 7.2 shall be to provide consultation, open discussion and advice to the College of Bishops meeting in conference, upon matters referred thereto by the Primate or by the appropriate Synods or equivalent bodies of the member Churches or Provinces.

7.4. The College of Bishops shall establish an Advisory Committee to advise the College of Bishops and the Primate on matters of importance between meetings in conference of the College of Bishops. This Advisory Committee shall consist of one Clerical member and one Lay member selected by and from each member Church or Province of this Communion, and one person appointed by the Primate. The Executive Director of the International Anglican Fellowship shall meet with the Advisory Committee and have seat and voice therein.

7.5. Selection of members of the Advisory Committee by the member Churches and Provinces of this Communion shall be by such method as each member body may determine. Those responsible are requested to seek as wide a diversity of expertise among the members of the Advisory Committee as may be practicable.

7.6. At the invitation of the College of Bishops the Advisory Committee may give oversight to the coordination of the activities of the International Anglican Fellowship.

8. ADMISSION TO MEMBERSHIP

Only Churches and Provinces (and other appropriate jurisdictions) which accept the terms and principles set forth in the Preamble and Fundamental Declarations of this Concordat may be admitted into membership in this Communion.

8.2. Petition for membership shall be made in the first instance to the Primate, and should be supported by evidence of an authoritative synodical resolution or other appropriate evidence that the decision so to petition was lawfully taken in the petitioning body, together with a certified copy of that body's Constitution or other governing statute(s).

8.3. Upon receipt of such petition and supporting documents, the Primate shall refer the petition without delay to the College of Bishops, which may then seek such advice from the Advisory Committee as it may require. Before advising the Primate the College shall take particular care to ascertain the continuity and integrity of Faith and Order within the petitioning body, making such inquiries as may be necessary in a spirit of charity.

8.4. Upon due consideration, the College of Bishops shall furnish a formal report to the Primate including its recommendations in the matter of the petition.

8.5. Upon receipt of a report recommending admission of the petitioning body to this Communion, endorsed by not less than three-fourths of the members of the College of Bishops, the Primate, upon such advice and consent, may admit the body concerned to membership in this Communion.

8.6. Ratification of the membership of any body so admitted may be brought before the highest Synod of any existing member Church or Province during a period of two years following the admission of the new member body. A positive vote to withhold ratification (according to the voting rules of each member body relating to the establishment, recognition and determination of *communio in sacris*) by more than one-third of the bodies which were members prior to the admission of the new body, will annul the reception of the new body in question into membership in this Communion.

9. WITHDRAWAL FROM MEMBERSHIP

The Churches enumerated in Section 2.1 above pledge themselves, and any Church or other appropriate jurisdiction seeking membership in this Communion shall likewise pledge itself, that no member body of this Communion shall withdraw itself from the same except by a concurring vote of two-thirds of the full membership of each House of the highest Synod of that body.

10. EXPULSION FROM MEMBERSHIP

10.1. Where it becomes evident to the College of Bishops that any member Church or Province, or any Bishop thereof, is responsible for promoting or endorsing any doctrine, teaching or other activity contrary to the Fundamental Declarations or Ruling Principles of this Concordat, it shall be competent for the College of Bishops to deal with such matter by means of:

(A) Education and moral suasion; and/or

(B) Reduction of the membership of the Church or Province concerned from full to provisional; and/or

(C) Suspension or expulsion of any or all of the Bishops of the Church or Province concerned from membership in the College of Bishops; and/or

(D) Suspension or expulsion of the Church or Province concerned from membership in this Communion, as the case may

10.2. No cause for reduction in membership, suspension or expulsion shall be entertained unless supported by a formal written statement submitted to the Secretary of the College of Bishops, signed by at least three members of the College.

10.3. This Communion relies upon its College of Bishops to take such measures as may be proper and necessary to protect the integrity of the Faith and Order of Christ's Church throughout the Communion, and to conduct any inquiries pertinent thereto with propriety, charity and equity, including reliance upon such assistance as may be rendered by the Advisory Committee.

11. MEETINGS

11.1. The College of Bishops of this Communion shall meet in plenary session upon the summons of the Primate, but in any case not less often than once every seven years, and not (unless for good cause waived by a vote of a majority of the College) twice consecutively within the geographical borders of any one Member Church or Province. The College shall meet also within six months of any petition to meet, signed by a majority of its members, being served upon the Primate.

11.2. The Presidents of the Regional Conferences of Bishops of this Communion shall meet together for mutual consultation upon the summons of the Primate, but in any case not less often than once every year. So far as may be practicable, the location of these meetings shall be rotated among the several Regional Conferences.

11.3. The Primate shall preside in the meetings of the College of Bishops and the Regional Presidents. Each body may order its proceedings as it sees fit.

11.4. The Bishops of each regional Conference shall meet together for mutual consultation upon the summons of the President as he determines the need to do so, or within six months of any petition to meet, signed by a majority of the Bishops of the Regional Conference, being served upon its President.

12. CREATION OF NEW BISHOPRICS AND ELECTION OF BISHOPS

12.1. Without prejudice to the domestic good order and government of the Churches and Provinces of this Communion, but having regard to:

(A) The tradition of assent to the expansion of the episcopate, and

(B) The need to provide for cohesion and stability in the development of this Communion and its several constituent Churches and Provinces, and in the affairs of its College of Bishops,

12.2. The Bishops of this Communion agree that no new diocese or bishopric shall be created in any member Church or Province without prior consultation with the College of Bishops of the Communion for the purpose of attempting to secure advice and consensus on the matter.

12.3.

(A) Upon the election of a man (not already a member of the College of Bishops) to the episcopate or to a vacant or new bishopric in any member Church of Province, the name of the said Bishop-elect shall be forwarded to the Primate, with his *curriculum vitae* and satisfactory information indicating he is a man of significant pastoral experience at the parish, deanery and/or diocesan level;

(2) a man of spiritual discipline in private prayer, the daily offices and the regular resort to the Sacraments of the Church;

(3) a man who has studied and demonstrated competence at an academic level such that he is able to participate capably in international and ecumenical discussion and debate on theological topics; and

(4) a signed Profession of Faith by the Bishop-elect.

The Primate shall forward these documents to each member of the College of Bishops.

(B) Within 30 days of receipt of the notice of election and accompanying documents from the Primate, each Bishop shall forward to the Primate his *votum* (which shall not unreasonably be withheld), or his refusal to approve, regarding the Bishop-elect.

(C) Upon receipt of favorable *vota* from a majority of the members of the College, the Primate shall confirm the election and issue documents of Confirmation and (where needed) a Warrant for Consecration, to the appropriate officials of the member Church or Province involved.

13. COMMON LIFE AND WITNESS

13.1. Acknowledging that "We who are many are one body in Christ, for we all share in the one bread," and recalling the Apostolic injunction to do good unto all men and especially unto them that are of the household of faith, the Churches and Provinces of this Communion rejoice in the opportunities that our common life may provide for common effort and witness in the areas of evangelism, education, works of mercy and other imperatives of the Gospel, for the greater glory of God and the salvation of all men.

13.2. Towards these ends we rely upon the Primate, with the advice and consent of the College of Bishops of this Communion, to continue all efforts to establish relationships of intercommunion with other ecclesial bodies attempting in good faith to maintain

traditional and orthodox Faith and Order with a view to eventual full union in this Communion.

13.3. Upon the Primate, with the advice and consent of the College of Bishops, we also devolve specific responsibility for entering into and initiating such conversations with Bishops of other orthodox communities within the One, Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church as may promote that Unity which is Christ's will for His Church.

14. AMENDMENTS TO THIS CONCORDAT

14.1. Proposals for alterations, additions or amendments to this Concordat may originate from:

(A) The Primate;

(B) The College of Bishops;

(C) The Advisory Committee; or

(D) The National or Provincial Synod or equivalent body of any member Church of this Communion; and should be lodged in writing with the Secretary of the College of Bishops.

14.2. Upon receipt of any such proposal the Secretary of the College of Bishops shall refer it to each member of the College and of the Advisory Committee.

14.3. Each member of the College of Bishops may refer any such proposal to such appropriate advisory body or bodies as may exist within his jurisdiction.

14.4. At its next meeting in conference following the receipt of any such proposal the College of Bishops may consider the proposal together with any report furnished by the Advisory Committee, and subject to the provisions of Section 14.5 below, may alter, add to or amend this Concordat as it sees fit; or it may defer consideration of any such proposal until its next subsequent meeting pending further consultation and advice.

14.5.

(A) Ratification of such amendment may be brought before the highest Synod of any member Church or Province during a period of three years following its enactment.

(B) If an objection is lodged during that period by any of the said Synods, the amendment objected to will not go into effect, but instead will be considered again at the next subsequent meeting of the College of Bishops, at which meeting it may be withdrawn, amended or re-adopted. If amended or re-adopted, the amendment will then be in full affect only after a period of three years has elapsed, without objection by the highest

Synod of any member Church or Province, since its most recent consideration and enactment by the College of Bishops.

(C) If the amendment has not gone into affect within six years after its initial enactment, it shall have failed.

15. EFFECTIVE DATE, DEFINITIONS AND INTERIM PROVISIONS

15.1. This Concordat shall come into effect upon ratification, endorsement or similar indication of acceptance by at least two-thirds of the appropriate Synods or equivalent bodies of the initial member Church and Provinces of this Communion as set forth in Section 2.1 herein, by such procedure as shall be established in each such member body.

15.2.

(A) Where the phrase, "appropriate Synods or equivalent bodies of the member Churches and Provinces" is used in this Concordat, it refers to the highest legislative body of each such Church or Province by whatever designation, such as 'Provincial Synod,' 'Holy Synod,' 'General Synod,' 'Bishop-in-Council,' 'General Council,' or the like.

(B) The expressions, "Churches and Provinces" and "Church or Province" may be read to include such single dioceses (or where necessary even isolated congregations or groups of congregations in need of episcopal oversight) or other appropriate ecclesiastical jurisdictions as may become member bodies of this Communion.

15.3. The Acting Primate of the provisional body known as the Traditional Anglican Communion elected by the Bishops of this Communion gathered at Orlando, Florida, in the United States of America, on February 2nd and 3rd, 1989, shall continue in office as Acting Primate of this Communion until such time as a Primate has taken office in accordance with the provisions of this Concordat.