

# Timeline of the Controversy over Human Sexuality in the Anglican Communion since the General Convention of The Episcopal Church, 2003

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*Initial draft, Lent, 2007, by The Rev. Richard E. Helmer*

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**August, 2003** – At an emergency Primates’ Meeting, Rowan Williams calls for the formation of the Special Lambeth Commission on Communion led by Archbishop Eames, Primate of the Church of Ireland. The Commission is to issue a way forward for the Communion in light of the increasing tensions over the consecration of Gene Robinson as Bishop of New Hampshire, the actions of the Diocese of New Westminster (Anglican Church of Canada) in approving rites for blessing same-sex unions, and the cross-jurisdictional assumptions of authority over local churches by bishops of other Provinces. The Primates warn that the consecration of Gene Robinson will “tear the fabric of our Communion at the deepest level.”

Public statements by Archbishop Akinola of Nigeria and a few other Archbishops threatening schism with the Communion over human sexuality eclipse the calls of others to focus back on the plight of those suffering from AIDS, abject poverty, famine, and warfare on the African continent.

**November 2003** – Gene Robinson is consecrated Bishop of New Hampshire.

**December, 2003** – Network organizers, led by Bishop Robert Duncan of Pittsburgh, begin weighing the merits of seeking a new Anglican Province in North America to supplant the Episcopal Church in the Communion while at the same time possibly retaining assets in departing congregations’ control. They intentionally seek out ties and meetings with the emerging “Global South” Primates who are most opposed to the actions of the Episcopal Church.

**2004** – The Eames Commission produces [\*The Windsor Report\*](#), a lengthy document, to suggest a way forward for the Communion. It includes calls for moratoria on the blessing of same-sex unions, the consecration of gay and lesbian bishops, and bishops taking over local communities in provinces other than their own, and moreover commends Lambeth Resolution 1998.I.10 as the “mind of the communion” on matters concerning human sexuality. *The Windsor Report* is embraced by some, cherry-picked by others, and is generally met with greater controversy.

**February, 2005** – The Primates of the Anglican Communion meet again in Dromantine to reflect on *The Windsor Report*. A handful of Provinces confirm they are in “impaired” Communion with The Episcopal Church. A number of Primates meet with dissenting network leadership from the Episcopal Church during the meeting and refuse to celebrate communion with the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, Frank Griswold. The Episcopal Church is asked to withdraw from the Anglican Consultative Council until the Lambeth Conference in 2008.

**March, 2005** – In response to *The Windsor Report*, The House of Bishops in the Episcopal Church releases a statement expressing regret for the tensions and strained relations caused by the actions of 2003 General Convention, and covenants not to consecrate *any* new bishops until General Convention 2006, and declare a moratorium on authorizing public rites for same-sex blessings at least until 2006.

**~ 2005** – The Convocation for Anglicans in North America (CANA) is founded by Archbishop Peter Akinola, Primate of the Church of Nigeria, ostensibly as a missionary organization to support those Nigerian Anglicans who no longer find a home in the Episcopal Church in the United States. CANA joins the Anglican Mission in America (AMiA), founded in 2000 under the authority of the Church of Rwanda, as an alternative “Anglican”

structure to that of the local Provinces (The Episcopal Church and the Anglican Church of Canada). The Archbishop of Canterbury increasingly opposes such structures, which he calls “aggressive” in their violation of traditional provincial boundaries. CANA and AMiA enter conversation with the Anglican Communion Network (ACN) and other Common Cause partners about challenging the Episcopal Church’s place in the Anglican Communion.

**Autumn, 2005** – The Bishops of Latin America (absent the Southern Cone) issue the [Declaration of Panama](#) that rejects the polarization of the Global North and South in the Communion.

**June, 2006** – The General Convention of the Episcopal Church, meeting in Columbus, Ohio, elects and confirms Katharine Jefferts Schori as Presiding Bishop, the first woman Primate in the history of the Anglican Communion. A handful of Network Dioceses immediately appeal to the Archbishop of Canterbury for “alternative primatial oversight,” citing Jefferts Schori’s theological views on human sexuality. Later accusations of her Christology being “deficient” are raised.

General Convention, under considerable pressure from both the outgoing and new Presiding Bishops, passes B033, which responds to the Windsor Report by urging governing bodies of the Episcopal Church to exercise restraint in consenting to the consecration of any bishops “whose manner of life presents a challenge to the wider church and will lead to further strains on communion.”

**Autumn, 2006** – The Presiding Bishop proposes an office of Primatial Vicar who would function, within the boundaries of the Episcopal Church’s constitution and canons, in her stead for those dioceses seeking alternative primatial oversight. The proposal is summarily rejected by those demanding the alternative oversight.

The Diocese of San Joaquin votes to effectively secede from the Episcopal Church. A second vote will be required to make the decision final.

A group of some two dozen self-described “Windsor Bishops” of the Episcopal Church, who declare their intention to follow the full prescriptions of *The Windsor Report*, hold a special meeting in September with emissaries of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Truro and Falls Churches, along with 10 or so smaller congregations, depart the Episcopal Church for CANA. The Diocese of Virginia files suit to retain church properties. CANA remains unrecognized by the Archbishop of Canterbury, however Martyn Minns, rector of Truro Church, is elected and named bishop of CANA under Archbishop Akinola’s authority. Akinola and the Church of Nigeria now openly support legislation in Nigeria that will make gathering in the cause of gays and lesbians a crime punishable by imprisonment.

**Early 2007** – A lawsuit against the Diocese of Pittsburgh brings to light a number of documents indicating the desire of the dissenting networks to cooperate with Global South Primates in the formation of an Anglican realignment in North America, if not the greater Anglican Communion, with the goal of isolating or even removing the Episcopal Church from the Communion. In the ensuing months, these come to the attention of numerous bishops in the Episcopal Church.

**February, 2007** – After reviewing an initial draft for an Anglican Covenant proposed to better handle future discord in the Communion, a very tense Primates’ Meeting in Tanzania releases their [Communiqué](#) recommending that the Episcopal Church’s House of Bishops declare a moratorium on all same-sex blessings, whether done through pastoral provision (as referenced in [C051](#) from General Convention 2003) or authorized rites. They further ask the House of Bishops covenant not to consent to the election of any gay or lesbian bishop. Third, they propose an alternative primatial

oversight scheme for dissenting members of the Episcopal Church. The scheme includes oversight from bishops outside the Episcopal Church. The Primates give the House of Bishops a September 30<sup>th</sup> deadline to respond. The Archbishop of Canterbury announces he will immediately begin to implement the primatial pastoral scheme proposal.

**March, 2007** – Meeting in Camp Allen, the House of Bishops, through a substantial majority, respond to the Primates with a strongly-worded set of [resolutions and a statement](#) that the primatial oversight scheme would violate the constitution, canonical jurisdiction, and autonomy of the Episcopal Church. They urge Executive Council not to participate in the primatial oversight scheme. The House of Bishops also declares they cannot act unilaterally, without the assent of General Convention, to effect an indefinite moratorium on same-sex blessings or the consecration of gay or lesbian bishops. Affirming their desire to remain in the Anglican Communion, they further seek a direct conversation with the Archbishop of Canterbury as soon as possible, although the Archbishop of Canterbury has rejected such invitations in the past. Reaction to the statement ranges from relief to threats from the Global South and a brief response from the Archbishop of Canterbury describing the House of Bishops’ statement as “discouraging.” Word emerges that the House of Bishops also reviewed documents made public about network efforts to create an alternative Anglican Province to the Episcopal Church in the United States.

**April – May, 2007** – The Archbishop of Canterbury agrees to meet with the House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church in September. A number of lawsuits filed to retain church property in diocesan hands when parishes vote to secede begin to fall in favor of the dioceses and the Episcopal Church.

Schismatic efforts in the Episcopal Church become increasingly dominated by news about CANA and Archbishop Akinola, overshadowing the alliance of networks led by Bishop Duncan of Pittsburgh.

Martyn Minns, Rector of Truro Church and consecrated bishop in the Church of Nigeria, is installed as Missionary Bishop in charge of CANA by Archbishop Akinola, against the counsel of the Archbishop of Canterbury and without reference to the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church. This move alienates a number of network allies.

**Late May, 2007** – [The Archbishop of Canterbury states](#) that +Gene Robinson and +Martyn Minns, along with a handful of other bishops of the Anglican Communion, will not be invited to Lambeth, 2008. Bishop Robinson, however, may be invited as a guest. [Archbishop Akinola threatens a Nigerian boycott](#) of the Conference (pointing to the dishonor on all Nigerian Bishops that +Martyn Minns was not invited), likewise does [Archbishop Orombi of Uganda](#) (if any bishops who consecrated +Gene Robinson attend). Several bishops of the Episcopal Church express deep concern over the decision to not invite Gene Robinson, while ++Katharine Jefferts Schori urges calm. Anglican Bishops from Latin American Provinces issue a [united statement](#) urging continued participation in the Communion, reaffirming their position as stated in the Declaration of Panama in 2005.

**June, 2007** – The Church of Kenya becomes the third Anglican Province to found a missionary organization in the United States, the North American Anglican Coalition (NAAC). Concerns are increasingly raised on all sides that the growing number of missionary organizations reflect a splintering of “orthodox” Anglicanism in the United States and North America. A September 30<sup>th</sup> common cause meeting for the leadership of these groups, disaffected bishops of the Episcopal Church, the Reformed Episcopal Church, and other continuing churches is planned by Bishop Duncan of Pittsburgh.

The Executive Council of the Episcopal Church [follows the House of Bishops' recommendation in rejecting the Primates proposed "pastoral scheme,"](#) noting that participation in it would ultimately require a decision of General Convention, particularly provisions that call for moratoria on the consecration of openly gay and lesbian bishops. Executive Council also passes a resolution declaring "null and void" clauses in disaffected dioceses' constitutions that have removed the accession to the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church.

The Church of Uganda announces it will consecrate The Rev. John Guernsey, an Episcopal priest in Woodbridge, Virginia, as a bishop for disaffected Anglicans in the United States. Guernsey's name, along with Martyn Minns and Bill Atwood (to be consecrated by the Church of Kenya) appear together in a 2004 [document](#) entitled *Draft proposal For Overseas AEO (Alternative Episcopal Oversight)*. It appears to a number of watchers that these cross-jurisdictional consecrations have been planned for quite some time.

The General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, its highest governing body, passes two [resolutions](#) affirming [The St. Michael Report](#) that same-sex blessings do not contradict core doctrinal matters of the Church and should not present a communion-breaking issue. Another [resolution](#) providing pastoral provision for same-sex blessings in the Church of Canada is very narrowly defeated by only two bishops' votes, while receiving majority support amongst the laity and other clergy. The Synod also passes a resolution dissenting from a call for Primates to serve on the Anglican Consultative Council.

On June 26<sup>th</sup>, the California Court of Appeals [rules in favor of the Diocese of Los Angeles and The Episcopal Church](#) against three congregations that disaffiliated with The Episcopal Church, joined the Province of Uganda, and wished to retain their church properties. This casts serious doubt on the possible departure of the Diocese of San Joaquin, and only adds to the precedence in favor of the greater denomination retaining property in the event of congregational schism.

The Bishops of the Church of Rwanda issue a [statement](#) that they will not attend Lambeth, 2008, unless The Episcopal Church in the United States "repents" of its actions, and all AMiA bishops under the jurisdiction of Rwanda are invited to Lambeth.

**July through mid-September, 2007** – The Church of Uganda and the Church of Kenya consecrate former Episcopal clergy as bishops. CANA plans to elect suffragan bishops, and Rwanda elects more AMiA bishops to be consecrated in January, 2008. Archbishop Drexel Gomez, Primate of the West Indies, notably preaches at the consecration of two new bishops for the Church of Kenya's North America missionary wing, drawing criticism. Archbishop Gomez was involved in the writing of the Windsor Report, which explicitly asks for an end to cross-jurisdictional bishops, and in the development of the draft Anglican Covenant.

**July, 2007** – Leaders of the "Global South Steering Committee" meet and publish a statement, [This is a Critical Time](#). The document levels a severe view of The Episcopal Church's House of Bishop's March, 2007 statement.

Towards the end of the month, 51 American and African bishops meet in Spain for a six-day conference, sponsored by Trinity Church, Wall Street, in an effort to renew North-South relationships in the Communion.

**July 30, 2007** – Bishop Duncan of Pittsburgh, in delivering a highly publicized address a meeting of the Anglican Communion Network and Common Cause partners, [dismisses The Episcopal Church as "lost" and is highly critical of the leadership of the Archbishop of Canterbury](#). Nevertheless, the ACN delegates votes to decline joining Common Cause articles that would violate the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church.

**August 9, 2007** – The bishops of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney [delay their response to the invitation to the 2008 Lambeth Conference](#) until after the September House of Bishops meeting in The Episcopal Church in the United States.

**August 14, 2007** -- A Rwandan bishop [publicly accuses American](#) and Western European Churches of pushing “satanic behavior,” escalating already highly charged rhetoric.

**Early September, 2007** – The Dioceses of Pittsburgh, Quincy, and Fort Worth announce plans to begin formal exploration of processes to remove themselves from The Episcopal Church.

**Mid-September, 2007** – The House of Bishops of the Church of Nigeria writes [an open letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury](#) suggesting the 2008 Lambeth Conference be postponed, citing concerns over their safety at attending a conference in the U.K.

Archbishop Barry Morgan of Wales, speaking to Synod, [repudiates the Anglican Covenant](#) as it is presently drafted.

The California State Supreme Court [agrees to hear the case](#) over the property dispute between the Diocese of Los Angeles and parishes that have joined the Church of Uganda and refuse to relinquish church properties to The Episcopal Church.

**September 20, 2007** – The Episcopal House of Bishops meeting opens with the Archbishop of Canterbury and members of the Anglican Communion Steering Committee in New Orleans.

**September 21, 2007** -- The Archbishop of Canterbury [states unequivocally](#) in public that the Dar Es Salaam Communiqué’s September 30<sup>th</sup> deadline was never intended as an “ultimatum.” He expresses hope that the conversation with the House of Bishops will lead to a renewed way forward through the ongoing controversy.

As soon as the Archbishop of Canterbury departs, a [handful of Network bishops depart the House of Bishops meeting early](#) for a Common Cause meeting in Pittsburgh.

The Church in Wales, meeting in Synod, [votes against approving the draft Anglican Covenant](#), responding in part to [Archbishop Barry Morgan’s concerns](#) that in its present form, the Covenant would promote enforced exclusion in the Communion.

***The Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion (from the Late 18<sup>th</sup> Century)  
Culture, Communion, and Controversy***

<b>Key Events in the Life of the Anglican Communion</b>	<b>International Events</b>	<b>American Cultural and Episcopal Theological Shifts</b>
<p><i>Late 18<sup>th</sup> Century</i> - Church of England spreads through British Colonialism – all colonial churches are under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of London.</p> <p>1787 – Charles Inglis becomes the first colonial bishop when he is consecrated for Nova Scotia</p> <p>Communion emerges first between the Scottish Episcopal Church and the developing Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States. Neither are in Communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury at the time.</p>	<p>The Age of Revolution. Over the next century, the world is increasingly dominated by Northern European colonial powers both economically and militarily.</p> <p>The Industrial Revolution grows, and resourcing its increasing hunger for raw materials demands economic hegemony over poorer nations and colonies. Slavery burgeons to support agricultural production and the building of infrastructure, drawing largely on the tribes of West Africa.</p> <p>Abolitionist movement gains momentum in England, particularly with reference to the slave trade connecting England, Africa, and the West Indies.</p> <p>1807 – 1838 – With a series of increasingly severe economic and penal sanctions, and then emancipations in the 1830's, slavery is abolished in the British Empire. The abolitionist movement is led in large part by evangelicals.</p> <p>A large number of freed slaves return to Africa, carrying Christianity with them.</p>	<p>1776 – The American Revolution begins; Members of the Church of England in the Colonies are largely Loyalists.</p> <p>1783 – Samuel Seabury elected Bishop of Connecticut. The Church of England cannot consecrate him, so in 1784, he is consecrated in the Scottish Episcopal Church, which provides significant influence on the new American church's theology and <i>Book of Common Prayer</i>.</p> <p>1787 – Following Parliamentary changes in England, the C of E is able to consecrate two American bishops.</p> <p>1789 – The Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States holds its first General Convention. Polity is modeled after the democratic principles embodied in the fledgling country's Constitution.</p> <p>1803 – The Louisiana Purchase – the largest land purchase in world history expands U. S. Territory three-fold. French domination falters with financial difficulties, making way for growing U. S. influence and British Imperialism.</p> <p>1812 – A brief war between England and the United States over trade route control</p>

<p>Into the early- to mid- nineteenth century, numerous other missionary dioceses are founded throughout the growing British Empire, including New Zealand, Australia, India, the West Indies, and South Africa.</p> <p>1840's – 1850's – Provincial autonomy begins to emerge under the authority of Metropolitan bishops (Archbishops). This institutes a contrasting model of authority (hierarchical) with that of the Episcopal Church and several other new Provinces (more democratic).</p> <p>1850's and after – Freed slaves return to Africa, planting evangelical churches with help from the Church Missionary Society and other evangelical missionary groups.</p> <p>1860's – Disestablishment begins in colonial provinces.</p> <p><b>1864 – Full Communion between the Church of England, Scottish Episcopal Church, and the Episcopal Church in the</b></p>	<p>1859 – Darwin publishes <i>On the Origin of Species</i>, launching a revolution in thinking about Creation and human anthropology</p> <p>The Bible, for the first time, starts to undergo historical, textual, and archaeological scrutiny using modern scientific methods.</p>	<p>Evangelicals begin agitating for emancipation and abolition in the United States.</p> <p>1830's – the Oxford Movement (the root of Anglo-Catholic and the liturgical revivals) begins in the Church of England and also spreads to the Episcopal Church in the United States</p> <p>Revivalism, and “The Great Awakening” begins to dominate the Christian scene in the United States, and influences evangelicals within the Episcopal Church. Revivalism and Restorationism coincide with American notions of Manifest Destiny. Modern American evangelicalism is born.</p> <p>1850's - Missionary efforts from the Episcopal Church lead the way in the founding of several provinces, including the Nippon Sei Ko Kai, modeled more on ECUSA polity.</p> <p>1861 – The Civil War begins. Dioceses in the Confederacy make plans to form their own independent church. General Convention during the war lists the Southern dioceses only as absent. At the end of the war, the southern dioceses are reconciled to The Episcopal Church, narrowly avoiding the indefinite schism that other protestant churches experience.</p>
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<p><b>United States is reconstituted</b></p> <p>Samuel Ajayi Crowther, first African Bishop in the Anglican Communion, consecrated.</p> <p><b>1867 – Archbishop Longley convenes the first Lambeth Conference</b> to “discuss matters of practical interest, and pronounce what we deem expedient in resolutions which may serve as safe guides to future action.” Modern form of the Anglican Communion begins to take shape. In the same year, the first schism in the modern Communion centers around Bishop Colenso in South Africa.</p> <p>1885 onward – Colonial missionary efforts in Africa are divided between the more evangelical Church Missionary Society and the more high church University Missions, sowing seeds of later theological rifts in the Communion.</p> <p>1888 – Lambeth Conference Adopts the “Chicago-Lambeth” Quadrilateral as essential principles for Communion.</p> <p>1908 – Lambeth rejects the use of contraception.</p> <p>1920 – Lambeth Conference approves of women as lay representatives in synods.</p> <p>1930 – Lambeth Conference rejects war as a means for settling international disputes.</p>	<p>1885-1914 – Great Britain comes to dominate European colonialism in Africa. Missionary societies from the Church of England plant the seeds of evangelical Christianity throughout, challenging and supplanting tribal traditions.</p> <p>1914-1918 – World War I dominates affairs in Northern Europe and firmly establishes colonial/imperial power amongst the Allied Powers around the world</p> <p>1921 – British Empire reaches its apex, spanning some 458 million people around the world</p> <p>1939-1945 – World War II reshapes the geographical map of much of the world</p> <p>1947 – Colonialism begins a rapid decline</p>	<p>1868-1871 – A series of resolutions by Evangelicals against the Oxford Movement in The Episcopal Church fail at General Convention.</p> <p>1873 – <i>The Reformed Episcopal Church</i> breaks with The Episcopal Church</p> <p>1886 – House of Bishops in the Episcopal Church adopt four essential features for Communion with other churches (the forerunner of the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral).</p> <p>Late nineteenth and early twentieth Century sees the creation of fundamentalism as a counterpoint to secular industrialization, the rise of science, and the excesses of social Darwinism.</p> <p>1920 – Women’s suffrage is a turning point in the quest for equal rights for women in the United States</p> <p>1928 – The longest-standing version of the <i>Book of Common Prayer</i> in the Episcopal Church’s history is adopted.</p> <p>Post-War Church boom sees the apex of “Mainline Denominations,” including the Episcopal Church, as social institutions in</p>
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<p>Approves the use of birth control in some circumstances.</p> <p>1944 – Florence Li Tim-Oi in Hong Kong becomes the first woman ordained a priest in the Anglican Communion, sparking the first major controversy in modern times that threatened the Communion. Following World War II, she was compelled to give up her license, and was not reinstated as practicing priest until 1983.</p> <p>1948 – Lambeth Conference initially rejects the ordination of women. Condemns racism.</p> <p>1968 – Lambeth Conference revisited women’s ordination, allowing ordination of women to the diaconate, and unable to conclude about the ordination of women to the priesthood. <b>Lambeth also forms the Anglican Consultative Council</b> to serve as an “instrument of common action” for the</p>	<p>over two decades; numerous British colonies and members of the Commonwealth declare and gain independence.</p> <p>The Cold War begins. The United States and the Soviet Union emerge as world superpowers, dominating the world socially, politically, and economically for nearly fifty years.</p> <p>In poorer countries, dictatorships rise and fall, often aided by either of the two superpowers, leading to continued social upheaval.</p> <p>1962-1965 – the Second Vatican Council leads to sweeping reforms in Catholicism and a wider international ecumenical discussion about Christianity in the modern world.</p> <p>Liberation theology comes to a fore in Latin America.</p> <p>1970’s and beyond – economic exploitation and post-colonial institutions come to dominate Africa’s relationship with the West.</p>	<p>the United States.</p> <p>1957 – 1967 – the Civil Rights Era, the rise of feminism, and the sexual revolution coincides with theological reforms in the Church.</p> <p>Conservatives in the Episcopal Church become alarmed at the gradual erosion of supernatural theism (as epitomized in the “God is dead” movements) and the rise of Liberation theology, contemporary Bible scholarship, and questions of traditional church authority. The Episcopal Church ultimately sides with the Civil Rights movement, causing considerable internal discord.</p> <p>The return of the dominical sacraments -- baptism and eucharist – to the heart of the church’s life, along with the reforms of Vatican II, and the ecumenical movement, leads towards the development of a new <i>Book of Common Prayer</i> in the Episcopal Church.</p> <p>1973 – In the light of mounting empirical evidence, homosexuality is no longer declared pathological by the American Psychological Association.</p> <p>1974 – Women are ordained for the first time in the Episcopal Church.</p> <p>1976 – General Convention regularizes the ordination of women. The origins of some of the contemporary networks and schismatic groups can be traced to here, if not before. Dioceses and bishops opposing the ordination of women are permitted to persist in a process of reception. The General Convention also affirms the</p>
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<p>Communion.</p> <p>1978 – Lambeth Conference recognized autonomy of member provinces to decide whether or not to allow the ordination of women, largely settling the controversy with a process of “reception.” <b>The Primates Meeting is first established</b> to cultivate “leisurely thought, prayer and deep consultation,” amongst the leaders of the Anglican Communion.</p> <p>1979 – Province of Nigeria forms, along with a number of other West African Provinces. Evangelical movements in these churches provide refuge and assurance in a period of social and political instability. The churches blossom and, in a few decades, burgeon into some of the largest provinces of the Anglican Communion.</p> <p>1980’s – The evangelical movement, which has been growing since the end of the Second World War, gains a major foothold in the Church of England and begins building alliances worldwide. Active membership in the Church of England reaches historic lows.</p> <p>1988 – Lambeth Conference agrees to allow each Province autonomy to decide whether</p>	<p>AIDS begins to appear.</p> <p>1980’s – AIDS spreads rapidly and is identified as a pandemic, especially in Africa, decimating entire communities and generations. Famine also emerges as a world concern.</p> <p>John Paul II becomes Pope of the Roman Catholic Church and turns back a number of the Vatican II reforms and reasserts strong hierarchical control.</p> <p>In the West, a media-led global consciousness emerges.</p> <p>The Reagan-Thatcher years build up considerable Western economic and military might in opposition to the Soviet Union, which begins to falter.</p> <p>1985 – the Jesus Seminar forms. Their conclusions regarding the gospels and the historical person of Jesus will be revolutionary and highly influential, not to mention controversial.</p> <p>Radical Islam, with an anti-Western bent, begins to rise to prominence in Africa and the Middle East.</p> <p>1990’s – With the collapse of the Soviet bloc, democracy begins to spread rapidly in Africa, but violence is fueled by the free</p>	<p>place of gays and lesbians in the life of the Church, so long as they remain celibate.</p> <p>1979 – Adoption of the new <i>Book of Common Prayer</i> leads to a small number of schismatic groups departing. Several more conservative para-church organizations (i.e. the <i>Prayer Book Society</i>) stand in opposition.</p> <p>Fundamentalism overtakes the Southern Baptist Convention and contributing to a growing synergy between conservative political movements and many American evangelicals and fundamentalists. This movement is held to some degree over and against mainline Christian denominations as well as secular liberalism.</p> <p>Rise of the “Christian Right” and “Moral Majority” in American politics.</p> <p>1985 – General Convention calls for deeper listening to the experiences of gays and lesbians.</p> <p>1988 – The Episcopal Church moves to allow woman bishops.</p> <p>1989 – Barbara Harris consecrated as first woman bishop in The Episcopal Church.</p> <p>1990’s and beyond – a cluster of small networks form in the Episcopal Church, some in opposition to gay and lesbian clergy, others to women’s ordination, and yet others to the 1979 <i>Book of Common Prayer</i>.</p>
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<p>or not to permit the consecration of women to the episcopate</p> <p>1989 – Penelope Jamieson, first woman to serve as full diocesan bishop in the Communion, is consecrated in New Zealand.</p> <p>1998 – New evangelical African Bishops dominate an acrimonious Lambeth Conference. Evangelicals, with the support of rapidly rising “Global South” churches, force through resolution 1998.I.10, which becomes a keystone in the current controversy over human sexuality.</p> <p>Hong Kong becomes the latest new Anglican Province.</p> <p>2002 – After years of debate, the Diocese of New Westminster (Anglican Church of Canada) approves rites for same-sex</p>	<p>flow of arms and long-standing tribal and territorial disputes.</p> <p>1994 – Apartheid collapses under fierce internal and international pressure in South Africa, epitomizing the growing independence of the African people and the continuing collapse of colonial institutions. Nevertheless, economic hegemony of the West continues to dominate African affairs.</p> <p>The United States emerges as the world’s remaining superpower. The European Union and other post-national economic alliances form as counter-balances. The global economy emerges.</p> <p>Post-modernism, pluralism, and multiculturalism begin to take hold as world-views in parts of the West, influencing theological, ecclesiological, as well as political discourse and decisions.</p> <p>Upheaval, abject poverty, and rampant disease in the developing world continues largely unabated. The United Nations adopts debt relief and the Millennium Development Goals, ascribed to by a majority of nations.</p> <p>Christianity in China explodes, as does its economy.</p> <p>The rise of the Internet makes broad-based organizing possible without reference to geographical boundaries. High-speed communication has a profound effect on the</p>	<p>Mid- 1990’s – The “Christian Right/Moral Majority” in the United States reaches its political apex and then begins a slow decline. The mega-church evangelical movement dominates the American Christian scene.</p> <p>1996 – Ecclesiastical charges against Bishop Righter for ordaining a gay priest living in a committed relationship are dismissed, opening the way for other bishops to begin ordaining gays and lesbians living in committed relationships.</p> <p>Some evangelicals and theological conservatives begin organizing networks of dissent and possible schism in mainline denominations, including the Episcopal Church. Meanwhile, an explosion of theology, music, and renewed spiritual and prayer traditions signal the rise of the “emerging church.”</p> <p>Denominationalism as a mark of social identity begins to disappear in the American context. Membership becomes much more fluid.</p> <p>2003 and beyond – The consecration of Gene Robinson and the passage of Resolution C051 (acknowledging pastoral provision for same-sex unions in some dioceses of the Episcopal Church) galvanize dissenting Episcopal networks and become flashpoints in the growing tensions in the Anglican Communion. Episcopal Networks</p>
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<p> blessings, sparking dismay amongst some leaders in the Anglican Communion.</p> <p> 2003 and after – Amidst threats of schism and ultimatums by a number of Archbishops with the support of a handful of Provinces, Primates gain considerable sway as an Instrument of Unity. The Archbishop of Canterbury calls for <i>The Windsor Report</i> and subsequent Primates’ Communiqués to help the Communion navigate the ongoing crisis.</p>	<p> climate of dis-ease in the Anglican Communion.</p>	<p> rally, build alliances with “Global South” Provinces and appeal for intervention by the Primates; a handful of local congregations leave the Episcopal Church for other provinces, giving rise to inter-provincial boundary crossings by bishops that have little, if any precedence in over 1,500 years of church history.</p>
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