



The Prayer Book Society of Canada – Toronto Branch
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Dear members and friends of the PBSC Toronto Branch,

First of all, a quick heads-up: our annual Lenten Quiet Day will take place on Saturday, March 21st. I am delighted to announce that the leader will be the Revd. Robert Mitchell, formerly rector of the parish of Cookstown, and now associate priest at my own parish of St. Thomas's, Toronto. Besides being a fine preacher and an energetic pastor, Rob is also a past recipient of a PBSC bursary! I hope that as many as possible of you will come out and show your support. As in previous years, there is no charge for attending, but we suggest a contribution of \$5.00 to cover the cost of lunch and breaks. So that we have an idea of how much food to prepare, could you please let me know if you are planning to attend the event; if at all possible by the preceding Sunday, March 15th? You can leave a message on my voice mail at work: 416-739-4422. The schedule for the day is on the front page of this issue of *The Lamp*.

On to my usual reflections on current developments in global Anglicanism. The major recent event, as I am sure you are all aware, was the meeting of the global Primates in Alexandria, Egypt, at the beginning of this month. We can all draw a sigh of relief that there still does not seem to be a formal schism on the near horizon, and also that none of the Primates boycotted the meeting. On the contrary, all the Primates reaffirmed their wish to remain part of the Anglican Communion, and general support was expressed for the ongoing work of formulating an Anglican Covenant. Some important points were made: Lambeth resolution 1:10 was confirmed as remaining the official stance of the Anglican Communion, and there was renewed urging for the three moratoria from the Windsor Report to be observed. And the primates gave their much anticipated response to the fledgling new proposed North American Anglican province, which has now adopted the name "Anglican Church in North America". Spokesmen for the new province stressed that they were not a splinter group, but wished to obtain official recognition from the Anglican Communion. The Primates were very clear that the new province could not dictate the terms for its inclusion, and that this would be a difficult and

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THE PRAYER BOOK SOCIETY OF CANADA – TORONTO BRANCH

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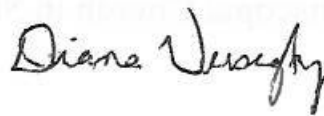
complex matter to resolve, but they did not reject it outright. In fact, the new group was recognized as being genuinely Anglican, despite the present anomaly of its status. This represents an important step forward for the ACNA; even though official recognition will probably be some years in the future, they now have a framework within which to consolidate their efforts. And although forbidden by the Primates to “proselytize” in the American Episcopal Church and the Anglican Church of Canada, it can hardly be doubted that groups from within those churches will continue to choose to join the ACNA of their own accord.

In view of these developments, I must confess myself mystified by the recent actions of our Toronto College of Bishops. As you are probably aware, just before the Primates’ meeting, the bishops issued a “discussion document” outlining a proposal for non-legislative, limited approval for same-sex blessings, not including authorized liturgical rites, and not treating the relationships as marriage. The proposal is not to be implemented until the bishops “deem it appropriate”. These disclaimers notwithstanding, it is hard to fathom how this proposal would not be seen by the rest of the Anglican Communion as moving towards providing formal, public, diocesan-approved, liturgical services of blessing, and therefore towards a direct contravention of the requested moratorium, thus jeopardizing our membership in the Communion. This is indeed a worrying development, but we must wait and see what ultimately transpires.

On a happier note, a very heartfelt “thank you” to those of you who responded so generously to the appeal in my last letter, for support for Volume III of Sue Careless’s series, “Discovering the Book of Common Prayer”. I am delighted to report that we have now raised two-thirds of the required cost for the book. We still have a good way to go, though, and the planned publishing date of this fall is looming ever nearer, so if you have not yet contributed (and even if you have!) I hope you can assist us with this. Nearly all of the draft chapters have now come back from the review panel, and more than half of the text has now gone out for illustration, so we are nicely on schedule. Your continued support is much appreciated!

With best wishes for a holy Lent and happy Easter,

Yours faithfully,



Diana Versegby.

We welcome your comments!
