

COMMUNION PARTNERS

In the context of discussions about the Episcopal Visitors concept announced by the Presiding Bishop at the House of Bishops meeting in New Orleans, we the undersigned have considered a need to maintain and strengthen

- our ties with the Anglican Communion
- our commitment to the observance of diocesan boundaries within The Episcopal Church
- and our exercise of our office as a focus of unity.

We believe such ties will provide the opportunity for mutual support, accountability and fellowship; and present an important sign of our connectedness in and vision for The Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion as we move through this time of stress and renewal.

PURPOSE:

Communion Partners is intended to

- provide for those concerned a visible link to the Anglican Communion

Many within our dioceses and in congregations in other dioceses seek to be assured of their connection to the Anglican Communion. Traditionally, this has been understood in terms of bishop-to-bishop relationships. Communion Partners fleshes out this connection in a significant and symbolic way.

- provide fellowship, support and a forum for mutual concerns between bishops.

The Communion Partner bishops share many concerns about the Anglican Communion and its future and look to work together with Primates and Bishops from the wider Communion. In addition, we believe we all have need of mutual encouragement, prayer, and reassurance. The Communion Partners will be a forum for these kinds of relationships.

- provide a partnership to work toward the Anglican Covenant and according to Windsor Principles

The Communion Partner bishops will work together according to the principles outlined in the Windsor Report and seek a comprehensive Anglican Covenant at the Lambeth Conference and beyond.

SCOPE:

Communion Partners

- is a relational fellowship
- are committed to honoring diocesan boundaries
- will be governed by mutual respect
- and will proceed by invitation and cooperation

PARTICIPANTS:

- Communion Partner Bishops (William H. Love, Albany; John W. Howe, Central Florida; James M. Stanton, Dallas; Russell E. Jacobus, Fond Du Lac; Michael G. Smith, North Dakota; Edward S. Little, Northern Indiana; Geralyn Wolf, Rhode Island; Mark J. Lawrence, South Carolina; John C. Bauerschmidt, Tennessee; Don A. Wimberly, Texas; Gary E. Lillibridge, West Texas; James M. Adams, Western Kansas; D. Bruce MacPherson, Western Louisiana)
- Communion Partner Primates (initially Tanzania, West Indies, and Burundi)
- Clergy and congregations who share Communion Partner commitments
- Other interested Bishops of The Episcopal Church

TRANSPARENCY:

Communication of activities with

- the Presiding Bishop of TEC,
- the Archbishop of Canterbury,
- the Meeting of Primates, and
- the Anglican Communion Office, and therewith the Anglican Consultative Council