

The Diocese of Virginia

A Letter from the Rt. Rev. Peter James Lee, Bishop of The Diocese of Virginia

Dear Friends,

The meeting of the House of Bishops this week at Camp Allen in Navasota, Texas may prove to be an historic turning point in the life of the Anglican Communion. The Bishops overwhelmingly rejected a “Pastoral Scheme” that was proposed by the Primates of the Anglican Communion at their February meeting in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. By doing so, the bishops reaffirmed that the Episcopal Church is a self-governing, autonomous church, and that it is not divided. We also served notice that we cannot accept intervention in the governance of our Church by foreign prelates.

In addition, we affirmed very strongly our passionate desire to remain in communion with other Anglican churches across the world, and we adopted a unanimous resolution, introduced by the Rt. Rev. John Howe, the Bishop of Central Florida and leader of the more conservative bishops, asking the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Steering Committee of the Primates to meet face to face with our House of Bishops at the earliest opportunity. We believe that many foreign primates do not have an accurate sense of the Episcopal Church and we think such a meeting is imperative.

We believe that the bonds of affection which tie us to churches all across the world remain strong even if they are strained, especially with some churches in the global south. But even with those churches, we have many points of contact and shared ministry.

Differences among Episcopalians are ours to resolve, and the spirit of the House of Bishops was respectful of differences. But we are also united in protecting the integrity of the Episcopal Church as an independent, autonomous and undivided Church.

I ask you to continue to pray for our Church, for the Anglican Communion, for the Primates, for those who suffer oppression, for the poor, the needy and for all who seek the redeeming love of Christ.

Faithfully yours,

Peter James Lee

The full text of the resolutions can be found online here:

http://www.episcopalchurch.org/3577_84148_ENG_HTM.htm.

A statement issued from the House of Bishops can be found online here:

http://www.episcopalchurch.org/3577_84198_ENG_HTM.htm.

Bishop Jefferts Schori’s closing homily for the House of Bishops’ Meeting can be found online here:

http://www.episcopalchurch.org/3577_84199_ENG_HTM.htm.

Additional coverage of the House of Bishops meeting can be found here:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/03/21/AR2007032102511.html>.

Read *The Virginia Episcopalian Special Edition* article about the House of Bishops here:

http://www.thediocese.net/News_services/pressroom/ve_special5.html