

# Extra Session on Homosexuality in the Church

01 JUL 2005 2230  
Holiday Inn Hotel  
SeaTac WA

(opinions stay, name withheld)

(mostly Chinese convocation, but with members from other convocations)

- Same issue discussed last year in EAM CC 2005, and this is a continuation
- Question: EAM has stand on issue? Answer: No.
- Was discussed last year, but went nowhere, and we cannot table the issue again this year
- We should address the issue, seems to be a conflict between ECUSA and the general feeling within our communities
- General statement: Asians don't talk about sexuality; two years ago in Minneapolis, a resolution of non-consent was suggested to be drafted (EAM will not be consent of the Gene Robinson)
- In Vancouver four Chinese congregation has left the Canadian Anglican church; left in the form of stop sending money to the bishop
- In Toronto, national church of Canada will decide if same sex blessing will be granted, the four Chinese congregation will leave if that's the case
- Opinion: theologies on both sides are good, it's a cultural issue, Canadian minorities (Eskimos, native Canadians) will also leave the CAC
- Not a good thing to associate homophobia with Asian cultures; simplistic argument is not going to settle the issue (\*)
- This is a theological issue, not political correct or culture; as a Christian, we believe that our faith transcend culture; example of some of the culture treated women like property; we should become more Christ like in our way of treating people, call to seek Christ in every person; how Christ will treat a homosexual person (that's what Christ would do and that's what we should do); we have to make it a theological issue and shouldn't use the bible to justify discrimination

against homosexuals (like some did with slavery, crusade, etc.); God does not justify bigotry against anybody

- What is God's calling us to do in this situation? "Everybody is welcomed, no one is excluded;" if we are faithful, we need to do this (example of woman clergy was brought up here)
- Believe: homosexuality is not a choice (personal story of a relative "coming out" brought up here); we follow the bigotry of our culture until we meet the first homosexual person; we need to look at our own theology in dealing with this issue; the bible was written by people with agenda
- Difficulties: act of God creation (the two sexes); until this day still no scientific fact on formation of sexuality; family live (structure of society); major Chinese Christian churches still against this, so difficult for individual pastors to deal with this, need more time to study the issue
- The fourth point may be deal to people lack of understand of Episcopal principle; "you don't check you brain at the door"; "Episcopal church welcomes you"; we should make time in our convocation for dialog and put it in the agenda
- Need to be more proactive in terms of setting agenda during the rest of the year
- EYE has workshop on this issue, may be we should
- Gays are there all the time, no homophobia there, defining Holy Sacrament
- How do you define "acceptance?"
- Our differences is not big, just the label we used on people and the line is drawn (example of being interviewed by local media outlet about the Gene Robinson ordination)(can't tell for or against); can't reject homosexuals if they behave themselves (example of people asking about ECUSA/Gay issue on the street)(parishioners facing problems from members of other denomination)
- Diocese of CA are going to discuss same sex blessings; Diocese of CA is very liberal and very welcoming of gays, but a recent study shows membership decline
- Some of the words are fighting words and means nothing ("homophobic" "stand for nothing")
- Misunderstanding of procedures/cannons at general convention
- Interpretation of the numbers can be problematic

- Young adults need to hold diocesan office accountable; ask for resources
- We don't know how to plan churches and growth
- In SEP the church will do a major media campaign; let god decide whether homosexuals are sinners
- Need to watch what's happening in the national church
- Don't sit on the sideline
- We are definitely making progress (one brought up the experience of right before coming out of closet/coming out is difficult, coming out as a Christian is even harder); listen to each other and appreciate the other side
- The church needs to take a stand
- Shouldn't stop using the word "homophobia"
- Gene Robinson was not really the "first gay bishop"
- Thanks a certain member for being open and frank with his/her own experience; frankness means much to the rest of the group (more personal experience brought up here)
- With gene Robinson, the entire church has "come out"; we should be saying to others "yes, we're from that church!" Not the only thing we're about (Desmond Tutu brought up)
- Gene Robinson thing got headline because he's a candidate to be a bishop, other denominations have the same problems
- Pastoral care for those who left church because of this issue
- Experience of part of congregation leaving brought up with misconception of the gene Robinson's situation: sitting down with these people and conduct serious conversation, some's opinion remain, but there are some changes, be honest about one's personal opinion and what one think of the message of Christ; not bringing up enough the situation of gaining new member because the church taking a stand on this issue; this has spoken to a lot of people; Episcopal church is a prophetic church, we do the hard thing, but we do the right thing; no prejudice on other's opinion
- Never ending discussion, but a very good opportunity to express opinion of each side

- Try to talk to each other and respect each other's opinion
- Suggesting that this convocation send suggestion to EAM council to put this on the agenda for 2006; will be brought up at EAM council meeting on Monday, 04 JUL 2005

(Prayer by the Rev. Fran Toy)

(meeting adjourned at 2356)