



The Global South Fellowship Of Anglican Churches (GSFA)

3rd April 2023

Holy Week Message

By: Archbishop Justin Badi, Chairman of the Global South Fellowship of Anglican Churches (GSFA)

To: The Faithful People of God in GSFA Provinces and across the global Anglican Church

WE GO TO RESURRECTION THROUGH THE WAY OF THE CROSS

“Say to the Daughter of Zion, ‘See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’ ” (Matthew 21:5)

Dear brothers & sisters who hold to the faith once delivered,

It is my privilege to write to you this letter as we enter Holy Week and re-live the events that led to the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Holy Week begins with our Lord’s entry to Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. Jesus came to Jerusalem in humility, yet with appropriate dignity. Instead of coming on a horse as a conquering general, He came on a colt as the Prince of Peace. Christ’s glory appears in His meekness and humbleness. He was willing to suffer the greatest injuries and indignities for mankind’s cause. The Creator came down and died for those He created - willingly. The humility & resolve of Jesus is captured by his riding on a donkey - a creature used for service not for show, for burdens instead of battles – and his taking slow yet constant and steady steps towards His final mission on the Cross. It is a very powerful image celebrated by that well-loved Anglican hymn, ‘Ride on, ride on in majesty.’

We are to follow in Jesus’ footsteps and obey His will for our lives. This is true for us personally, for our families and local churches, and also for the Global South Fellowship of Anglican Churches as a whole. We must follow Jesus in taking the way of the Cross, the path of suffering and sacrifice, knowing that it leads to resurrection and new life in God. This is the sure hope that carries us forward.



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The Current Crisis in the Anglican Communion

By 'Anglican Communion' I mean the world-wide communion of Anglican Churches that spawned out of the Church of England since the 16th Century and that saw itself as part of and reflecting the 'one, holy, catholic & apostolic Church.' It is a Communion founded on apostolic doctrine, committed to Gospel proclamation and distinctively marked by its Formularies (the 39 Articles, the Book of Common Prayer, the Ordinal and the Book of Homilies) . I am not referring to the 'Anglican Communion' in its legal & technical sense of the Church and its Instruments as incorporated in the Statute Laws of England. I am referring to the global Anglican Church that God has built up over the centuries and that has been His instrument of Gospel blessing to so many countries ... the Anglican Church that we treasure as God's gift to us.

The recent decision in February this year by the General Synod of the Church of England to incorporate into the Church's liturgy the blessing of same sex unions has triggered a Communion-wide crisis. The decision is a clear departure from the biblical and historically handed down faith entrusted to the Church. That this has been done by the historic 'mother Church' of the Communion has brought untold pain and suffering to orthodox parts of the global Communion like the GSFA & others. Neither should we overlook the deep sorrow and lament of the faithful within the Church of England itself, many of whom now feel "[compelled to resist](#)" the Synod decision that the Archbishop of Canterbury and the majority in the House of Bishops led their General Synod to adopt.

The GSFA Ash Wednesday Statement (Feb 20th, 2023)

The response of GSFA to the crisis is contained in our [Ash Wednesday Statement](#) of 20 February 2023. This Statement was endorsed by 12 Primates acting as a collective group of GSFA leaders. The Statement makes it clear that in making this decision it is "the Church of England that has chosen to break communion with those provinces who remain faithful to the historic biblical faith expressed in the Anglican formularies." On its part, the GSFA finds that in its calling to be 'a holy remnant' it cannot be 'in communion' with revisionist provinces who pursue the path of false teaching that compromises the Gospel. Furthermore, the leadership role played by the Archbishop of Canterbury in the revisionist path adopted by the General Synod renders the GSFA unable to recognise the present incumbent as "the 'first among equals' Leader of the global Communion".



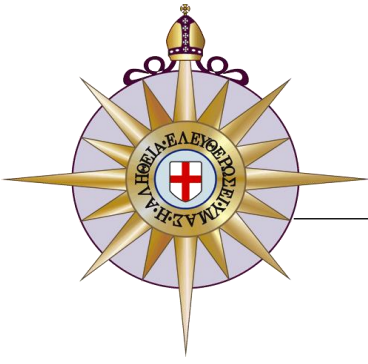
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What this means is that until the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Church of England repent of the path embarked on, a path contrary to the plain and canonical teaching of Holy Scripture and therefore unfaithful to the God who has spoken, **the Anglican Communion will need a re-setting that involves a new locus (a spiritual and ecclesiastical centre) for the maintenance of its common life and witness.**

Please know that the position taken by GSFA in its Ash Wed Statement was made after careful consideration and after due warnings were communicated to the Archbishop of Canterbury. GSFA's position that same sex blessing is contrary to the Word of God and not a secondary 'Faith & Order' issue can be traced back to the [1998 Lambeth Resolution 1.10](#) (para e). This position was further unequivocally stated in 2019 in [GSFA's Covenantal Structure](#) (paras. 1.7; 2.1.6; and Appendix 1 para. 15). The seriousness of the matter was underlined at Lambeth 2022 when GSFA & other orthodox bishops abstained from receiving Holy Communion alongside revisionist and practising gay bishops to indicate they cannot have sacramental union with those who preach & practise 'a different gospel.' The vital need to return to biblical faithfulness on the matter of marriage and sexual union, and the unacceptability of same sex unions was again sounded in the [Communique by Orthodox Bishops at Lambeth 2022](#) (paras 5.7 and 5.8), that was spearheaded by the GSFA Primates Steering Committee. Despite all these & other admonishments, the Church of England went on to appoint a person in same sex civil union as the Dean of Canterbury Cathedral in October 2022, and finally to pass a Motion in General Synod (Feb 2023) in favour of same sex blessing. The chosen trajectory of the official leadership of the Church of England is lamentable but clear, and it warrants a firm response.

GSFA's posture in pursuing a re-setting of the Communion

With sorrow yet with resolve & humble boldness, the orthodox in the Communion must now rise up to this task of re-setting the world-wide Communion with a new locus, that is a new ecclesiastical centre. This new locus is needed to conserve all that God has gifted our Church with in being a historic, world-wide Communion. It is needed so that across the Communion, we who share the 'faith once delivered' can truly be 'one body' globally in our ecclesial life together, in being joint stewards for guarding and propagating the Gospel and in conserving all that is good and solid in our Anglican heritage, ecclesiology and ethos. Therefore, GSFA will work patiently, thoughtfully and lovingly with other orthodox leaders in the Communion, such as those in the GAFCON



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movement and other Primates & groupings, to forge this re-setting of the Communion on a strong and stable foundation.

In seeking to re-set the Communion, GSFA will stay true to the objectives it formulated at the time of the Lambeth Conference 2022 (see Editor's Notes to the [First Press Conference of Orthodox Bishops attending Lambeth Conference 2022](#)); namely to (1) foster the unity of the orthodox, (2) sound a clarion call to biblical faithfulness, (3) stand by its principle of not being a breakaway group but being part of 'the holy remnant', and (4) spur the faithful in the Communion to get the Gospel out into the world.

The re-setting of the Communion is an uphill task that requires faith, love and wisdom from above. It cannot be undertaken without the empowerment of the Spirit. Dear people, pray fervently for GSFA & all the orthodox components of the Communion in this endeavour.

Encouragement along the way

The Lord is good and has renewed our strength through encouragement we have received along the way. In an expression to signify solidarity among the orthodox, The **Primate of the Church of Nigeria**, The Most Rev Henry Ndukuba, has on March 13th 2023 **added his endorsement to the GSFA Ash Wednesday Statement**. We thank God for this and for the news we are receiving that other orthodox Primates are also considering adding their endorsement.

We are heartened by the opportunity we will have to interact with and encourage GAFCON leaders as we participate in the 4th GAFCON Conference in Kigali in a few weeks' time. Happily, the core leadership of both **GSFA & GAFCON have recently agreed to build a more collaborative relationship** as we seek God's will for His Church at this time and seek to keep in step with the Holy Spirit.

In terms of the GSFA family, we are delighted that **two more Provinces** have applied for and been **accepted as Ordinary Members of GSFA** with effect from 2nd April 2023. They are The Church of the Province of **Uganda** and the Iglesia Anglicana de **Chile** (the Anglican Church of Chile). This means that there is a total of 11 Ordinary Member Provinces in GSFA, with 2 more Provinces in the pipeline at the moment.



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We are prayerfully working towards our **1st GSFA Assembly in Cairo** under our Covenantal Structure scheduled for **May 28th- 31st, 2024**. We are very grateful to the Province of Alexandria for being willing to host our 1st Assembly. Pray that it will be a timely gathering of representatives of Ordinary Member Provinces as well as Associate Members and Mission Partners to build up a biblically faithful, renewed and re-set Communion to be 'a light to the nations.' (Isaiah 42:1-9)

Moving Ahead

One important reflection as we meditate on the way of the Cross this Holy Week is **the steadfastness with which Jesus our King kept moving forward** despite the hostility, spiritual warfare and suffering He had to face. He 'set His face like flint' (Is 50:7) to complete the work the Father gave Him to do. And the Scriptures tell us that He kept going because of the joy that was set before Him beyond the Cross (Heb 12:1-3). Indeed, the way of the Cross leads to resurrection and a glorious new age. May it be so even for our GSFA churches and all the faithful in the Communion. For the glory of our great God and Saviour!

May the Lord Jesus fill you with His steadfast love that led Him to Calvary for the sins of the world, yours and mine.

Yours in His grace,

The Most Revd Dr Justin Badi
Chairman of GSFA and Primate of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan