

Sydney Synod has overwhelmingly endorsed Archbishop Peter Jensen's support of Global South Primate

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Sydney Synod has overwhelmingly endorsed Archbishop Peter Jensen's support of Global South Primates who are holding the line against liberal trends in the American and Canadian churches.

In a special statement before a debate last night, Archbishop Jensen said Sydney Anglicans had a role to play particularly in networking and theological education.

"Sydney happens to one of the few places with a concentration of evangelicals and concentration of theological scholarship," Archbishop Jensen said.

"We would be foolish to think we will play a major role, but we would be equally foolish to think we would not be involved at all."

Archbishop Jensen believes Sydney's support for Global South is crucial 'precisely because we are from the West'.

"The fact that we exist gives comfort to thousands of people around the world and be a beacon of hope of many," he said.

"It puts lie to the idea that this is a battle between the West and the South... the West with all its theological sophistication and the South that doesn't understand what its talking about."

Archbishop Jensen added that the debate is about core doctrine such as the authority of Scripture and the uniqueness of Christ.

On this point, he said that many leaders in the Episcopal Church were 'syncretistic'.

Archbishop Jensen was particularly critical of the inaugural sermon of Katharine Schori, America's Presiding Bishop-elect, where she described Jesus as 'our mother'.

Archbishop Jensen described the Episcopal Church as 'America's cultural elite at prayer' and said that US society's 'powerful individualism and triumphalist belief that it leads the world in civic freedoms has captured the church'.

"The new faith is a missionary religion," he said.

In contrast, Archbishop Jensen encouraged Synod to support the Global South, reminding representatives that it 'includes 70 per cent of the world's active Anglicans'.

"They have a new sense of maturity and independence from the West," he said.

"They are outward looking, missional and have strong leadership that is very impressive."

But he added that without good Bible teaching, the Global South, like any church, was only one generation away from disaster.

Debate on motion

Following Archbishop Jensen's statement, Synod debated a motion of support for the Global South primates.

Robert Tong in moving the motion said that true unity should not force Sydney Anglicans to be false to their biblical convictions.

To make his point, he quoted former British Prime Minister Harold McMillan, who said, when speaking to apartheid South Africa about remaining part of the Commonwealth, "Frankly there are some of your policies that make it impossible for us to support you without being false to our own convictions".

In seconding the motion, Bishop Peter Tasker said that Bishop Ivan Lee and himself had the privilege of visiting many dioceses in the past year.

He said that among the Dioceses seeking to discuss way Sydney can assist them with 'biblically faithful' theological training for their clergy included some in Asia, Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania, Zululand (South Africa), and Nelson (New Zealand).

Justice Michael Adams, representing St James' King Street, spoke against the motion.

However after debate on a number of amendments, the final motion passed easily on voices with only a few lonely 'nos'.

Pray for Archbishop Williams

The Rev Gwilym Henry-Edwards, rector of Enmore and Stanmore parish, proposed a motion acknowledging the divisions in the Communion and calling on Synod to pray for the Archbishop of Canterbury.

"I actually read what the Global South Primates wrote," he said.

"It was with great pain that they wrote what they wrote... that the Anglican Communion that they love is impaired."

Mr Henry-Edwards' motion was accepted by the movers and overwhelming supported by the Synod.

Theological training for Global South

Alan Hohne, the registrar of Moore Theological College, proposed an amendment to encourage Sydney Anglicans to make partnerships with like-minded Dioceses when invited.

Mr Hohne said that he was aware that many Global South bishops are keen to form links with seminaries that are faithful in teaching the Bible, but "We need to put on record our recognition that we must be invited... and not just force ourselves on them."

After some discussion of editorial improvements so that the amendment would not confuse the main point of the motion, it too was passed.

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