

February 12, 2011

THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA – DIOCESE OF OTTAWA

DIOCESE REACHES AGREEMENT WITH ANiC LEADERS AT ST ALBAN’S AND ST GEORGE’S

After months of negotiations, the Diocese of Ottawa has reached an agreement with the leaders of two congregations that have left the Anglican Church of Canada. The agreement was approved by Diocesan Council on January 16 and recently by the vestries of the two congregations.

In 2008, clergy and congregations in the historic churches of St. Alban’s and St. George’s in downtown Ottawa voted to join the Anglican Network in Canada (ANiC) because of their opposition to the direction the Diocese and national church were taking, especially in regard to the blessing of same-sex civil unions.

Under the agreement, which follows a three-year dispute:

- The Diocese will disestablish the parish of St. George’s and sell the property to the ANiC congregation for a substantial sum of money. The property will be renamed once the sale is completed by March 1.
- At St. Alban the Martyr, the ANiC clergy will leave by July 1, with the understanding that members of the congregation are welcome to stay and become part of a renewed parish with Diocese of Ottawa clergy.

Bishop John Chapman says he is very grateful that this agreement has been accomplished without the need and expense of a trial. “We worked together in good faith, mindful that the people of God deserve nothing less.” In that spirit, he points out that the two ANiC congregations and their clergy were able to have use of the properties pending a settlement.

“We now look forward to renewing our ministry at St. Alban’s and investing the money received from the sale of St. George’s in new ministry elsewhere in the Diocese,” he adds.

The second oldest Anglican parish in the city, St. Alban’s, on King Edward Avenue, was established in 1865. Canada’s first prime minister and his wife, Sir John A. and Lady Macdonald, and six members of the cabinet were parishioners during the 1870s.

Between 1976 and 2000, the church was also home to Anglican Social Services - Centre 454. For 56 years, the Centre has provided a supportive community for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. As an integral part of renewing its ministry at St Alban’s, the Diocese intends for Centre 454, currently in a leased downtown location, to return home.

The parish of St. George’s began in 1885 with the purchase of the Methodist Episcopal Church on Metcalfe Street, and among its early parishioners was Sir Charles Tupper, who later became prime minister.

The Diocese of Ottawa, established in 1896, is part of the Anglican Church of Canada, which is recognized by the Archbishop of Canterbury as a member of the Anglican Communion, the world’s third largest Christian denomination.