

Some observations on the draft of “An Anglican Covenant” from the Province of the Episcopal Church in the Philippines

1. The Episcopal Church in the Philippines concurs with the intention for An Anglican Covenant as a part of a continuing process of growth within the Communion for united witness. We affirm the sufficiency of the instruments of unity in so far as it encourages consensus-building among leaders on matters affecting the whole. The latter is a time-tested principle in maintaining peace in many of our communities in the Philippines.
2. On Item 6, we propose the expansion of Matthew 18:15-18 to include verses 19 and 20 and the inclusion of 1 Cor. 8: 1 b-2, 9-13.
3. On 6.1 we propose the inclusion of the word "harmony" following "common good" thus, "common good of and harmony in the Communion.

Notes:

The Philippine Province is a young Province still struggling with its identity in this country, the various issues in the Communion and the gifts that it can contribute to this nation and the wider community where she belongs. We will certainly place the future text of the Covenant before our Synodical bodies.

Harmony is closer to the *symphonein* in Matthew 18:19 (Le. " ... agree on earth about anything, they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven [RSVJ). Being in agreement is essential for answered prayers. In our experience, harmony is not only among people - families and communities - but also with the rest of creation. While humanity is important, the stewardship of creation teaches us valuable lessons in humility, harmony, balance and is also an impetus for united witness. Harmony places the responsibility and leadership on each member. This is an important experience of the ECP whose constituency are largely indigenous peoples in the northern and southern portions of the country. It is a communal and collective responsibility - a shared leadership that is not strange to Anglicans.

1Cor 8:tb-2, 9-13 is proposed mainly for the values of charity and forbearance. In terms of relationship, an older brother and sister is always asked to exercise charity and forbearance to a younger sibling. It is a mark of maturity, too. It also implies vs. 9. We hope that these two key words find their place in Item 6 of the Covenant.