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Conservative Episcopalians Issue Warning

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The New York Times reports today that conservative leaders in the Episcopal Church USA and the international Anglican communion have served notice that their communion is about to be split apart on the issues of biblical authority and theological accountability.

The presenting issue is homosexuality, of course. The consecration of Gene Robinson as the church's first openly-homosexual bishop and the acceptance of "blessings" for same-sex unions framed the debate as the church's leaders met in Pittsburgh.

From the article: *About 2,400 Episcopal Church and Anglican bishops, clergy members and lay leaders from around the world gathered here Thursday for a three-day show of solidarity in preparation for a general convention of the Episcopal Church next June in Columbus, Ohio. While Episcopal and Anglican conservatives have warned before of the possibility of a split in the 77 million-member Anglican Communion over these issues, powerful primates of national and regional Anglican churches from Africa, Asia and the Caribbean said Friday that a break was all but inevitable if the Episcopal Church did not vote to change course at the Columbus meeting. "The primates will decide" if they consider the response of the Episcopal Church "adequate," said Archbishop Drexel Wellington Gomez, primate of the West Indies. He said, however, that he expected no change in the stance of the Episcopal Church, the American arm of the Anglican Communion, when it comes to gays. If that is the case, "given our present mood, the convention will most certainly be followed by some action," Archbishop Gomez said. "We have worked too hard, too long, to leave it like that."*

The Right Reverend Robert W. Duncan, bishop of the Pittsburgh Diocese, explained the leaders' sense of urgency: "There's no way for these two conflicted faiths to live under the same roof," he said.

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