

AlbertMohler.com

Will Episcopalians Elect a Gay Bishop?

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The Episcopal Church USA will make a big decision this week, and the repercussions will be felt around the world. New Hampshire Episcopalians have elected an openly homosexual man as their new bishop, and the national church must decide this week whether to approve this election. Look for fireworks in Minneapolis.

Of course, this development is not a bolt out of the blue. Gay activists have been pressing mainline Protestantism for decades, and they are now poised on the brink of a total takeover of the liberal churches. Most of these denominations (including the Presbyterian Church USA, the United Church of Christ, the United Methodist Church, the Disciples of Christ, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) have spent the last several years debating homosexual ordination, homosexual marriage, and the total surrender of any moral claim against homosexual behavior. The gays are winning.

But the election of Canon Gene Robinson as bishop of New Hampshire will be certain to divide the Episcopal Church USA from Anglicans in other parts of the world. Anglican bishops in Africa have already broken fellowship with a Canadian diocese that surrendered to the homosexual agenda. If American Episcopalians approve the election of this gay bishop, the Anglican Communion will explode.

With the unity of his communion about to shatter, Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams issued a private letter to his fellow Anglican primates, imploring them to avoid any unilateral decisions that would lead to a break in fellowship. Canon Robinson was not named, but every bishop receiving the letter knew just who had drawn the archbishop's concern. The letter from Canterbury is all the more remarkable given the archbishop's own pro-homosexual convictions. In recent days his personal intervention led to the withdrawal of a homosexual candidate for an English bishopric.

The real issue, however, is not the unity of the church, but its very integrity. Any church that would elect an openly homosexual bishop has so abdicated the authority of the Bible that it will effectively cease to be a church at all. Unity does not produce theological integrity—it is the other way around. Christians of every denomination should be praying for the Episcopal Church USA as it meets in Minneapolis this week. Let's pray that this church convention will recover its wits, reclaim its own creedal commitments, and stand without apology on biblical authority. Otherwise, the fall of this house will be very great.

