

The founding of a new church

Dennis Coday | Jun. 25, 2009 NCR Today

The Anglican Church in North America -- that's the conservative group that broke with the Episcopal Church (USA) and the Anglican Church of Canada and claims 100,000 members in 700 parishes -- invited megachurch pastor and best-selling Purpose Driven Life author Rick Warren to address its first assembly Tuesday in Bedford, Texas. The headline in the Dallas Morning News says [Rick Warren shows support for breakaway Anglicans at Bedford gathering](#) [1]

Roots of the split among Episcopalians are deep but the wedge issue that forced the break was the ordination to bishop of an open, partnered gay man. (If you need more background do a search on NCR for "Gene Robinson" and you should find a few stories.)

Warren told the new Anglicans: "We stand with you in solidarity as God does something new in your midst."

Warren also made reference to one messy aspect of this ecclesial divorce: Dividing up the property. There are suits and counter suits between Episcopal dioceses and departing parishes over who owns and who gets to keep church buildings, furnishings and other properties, the diocese or the people who built the parishes. Catholics will be familiar with these arguments.

Warren's message to the new Anglicans: "You may lose the steeple, but you won't lose the people,"

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[1] http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/dn/religion/stories/DN-anglicans_24met.ART.State.Edition1.4abb98f.html