

Open letter to the Archbishops of Uppsala and Canterbury  
Tuesday, 24 November 2009

An Open Letter from the LGBT Anglican Coalition to

The Archbishop of Uppsala, the Most Revd Anders Wejryd  
The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Revd and Rt Hon. Rowan Williams

23rd November 2009

Dear Archbishop,

As Anglican clergy and lay people, we were dismayed to see that there was no official representation from the Church of England or any other Anglican Church from the British Isles at the service of consecration of Bishop Eva Brunne of Stockholm and Bishop Tuulikki Koivunen Bylund of Härnösand.

We do understand that, as the Church of England has not yet finalised plans for the ordination of women as bishops – though we hope and pray that will happen soon – it might not have been possible for an Anglican bishop to have laid hands on the ordinands as part of the consecration. But that should not have prevented a bishop from attending and representing the Archbishop of Canterbury at the consecration on November 8th in Uppsala.

It was also unfortunate that The Revd Nicholas Howe was unable to attend the service, though we were pleased to hear that The Revd Karen Schmidt was able to attend, and indeed participate in the service, representing the Diocese of Portsmouth, with which Stockholm has a partnership link.

Many of us are indeed very grateful that the Church of Sweden has taken such a clear lead in affirming the rightful place of lesbian and gay people at all levels in the life of the Church. The recent decision of the Church of Sweden's Kyrkomötet to conduct same-sex marriages has filled us with a real hope that such a courageous and prophetic act might one day be possible in the Church of England.

The Porvoo Agreement has brought many blessings to our sister churches, Anglican and Lutheran, which share so much in our inheritance of faith and action. The interchangeability of ministers and exchange of resources continues to bring many blessings to dioceses which have a partnership link with a Porvoo church. May these links increase and continue to bear much fruit.

It is our prayer that we may continue in an ever-deepening partnership of mission with the Porvoo member churches, and together celebrate the gifts of all God's people who are called to be ministers of God's Word and Sacraments, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Your partners in the Gospel,

The LGBT Anglican Coalition - including  
Revd Benny Hazlehurst - Accepting Evangelicals  
Revd Colin Coward - Changing Attitude  
Revd Chris Newlands - The Clergy Consultation  
Jeremy Marks - Courage  
Mike Dark - The Evangelical Fellowship of Lesbian and Gay Christians  
Canon Giles Goddard - Inclusive Church  
Revd Sharon Ferguson - Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement  
Revd Christina Beardsley - Sibyls

c/o  
St John's Vicarage  
1 Secker St  
London SE1 1HW

The LGBT Anglican Coalition is a new network of groups working for the full and equal inclusion of LGBT Christians within and beyond the Church of England.