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The Evangelical Fellowship in the Anglican Communion

Message from the President

THE MOST REV. H. R. GOUGH, O.B.E., D.D.
Archbishop of Sydney and Primate of Australia

AS first President of the Evangelical Fellowship in the Anglican Communion, I am pleased to have this opportunity of commending the work and aims of this newly formed Fellowship. I am convinced that it has an important contribution to make to the living witness of the Anglican Communion, especially as I believe that true Evangelicalism is Anglicanism in its purest form. The hospitality offered within the covers of so influential and respected a theological journal as *The Churchman* has been readily accepted, for history shows clearly enough that to be vigorous and progressive the life and witness of the Church must be closely allied to theology that is firmly founded on Holy Scripture and also relevant to the contemporary situation. My prayer is that God will bless and prosper the Evangelical Fellowship in the Anglican Communion in our world, desperately in need as it is of that Good News which is the mainspring of the Fellowship's existence.

HUGH SYDNEY.

INTRODUCING E.F.A.C.

EVANGELICALS have a name for being individualists. The reputation is not altogether undeserved. It is a sad fact that groups of evangelical Anglicans have existed for some years in different countries without being in fruitful contact, let alone living fellowship, with each other, while in other parts of the world there are evangelicals without any organization to draw them together.

But today evangelicals cannot afford the luxury of isolation. The Church of England has a precious evangelical heritage. Although gratefully "catholic" in the sense that it cherishes its historical continuity with the past and holds fast to the catholic faith of the Creeds, it is as yet outspokenly Protestant and Reformed in its repudiation of all doctrine which has no clear warrant in Holy Scripture. Nevertheless, there are Churches of the Anglican Communion which have sadly departed, to a greater or lesser extent, from biblical truth and Reformation principle. Even those Anglicans who are not themselves evangelical, but who value what they call the comprehensiveness of the Church of England, must grieve that in some areas the evangelical element is almost entirely absent.

At the same time, there do exist, wherever Anglicanism flourishes, fellowships of evangelical churchmen, some vigorous and vocal, some struggling and silent.

A number of evangelicals in several parts of the world have been concerned since the Lambeth Conference of 1958 to bring these evangelical groups into closer and richer contact with one another, for purposes of mutual counsel and encouragement. Evangelicals of all denominations are already in warm fellowship with each other through the World Evangelical Fellowship, and it seems that something similar is needed for evangelicals Anglicans as well.

In consequence, an Evangelical Fellowship in the Anglican Communion has been brought into being, with Archbishop Hugh R. Gough, Primate of Australia, as its first President, and Bishop Marcus Loane and the Rev. J. R. W. Stott as its co-secretaries. The founder group members are the Canadian Anglican Evangelical Fellowship, the Church of England Evangelical Council, the New Zealand Evangelical Churchmen's Fellowship, the Evangelical Fellowship of Sydney Churchmen, the Tanganyika Anglican Evangelical Fellowship, and the Evangelical Fellowship of Victoria, while founder individual members exist in America, Asia, and Africa. It is hoped to enrol other group and individual members in due course.

Owing to the cost of travel, it is not expected that the Council of the Evangelical Fellowship in the Anglican Communion (consisting of two representatives from each group member) will be able to meet more than once in every quinquennium, namely, during the Lambeth and the Pan-Anglican Congresses. An informal meeting of some members did, however, take place in November, 1961, in New Delhi during the Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches.

The purpose of the Evangelical Fellowship in the Anglican Communion is not partisan in any narrow or negative sense, but positive and eirenical. Its members are deeply concerned to see the truth of the Gospel, proclaimed in the Scripture and rediscovered at the Reformation, more thoroughly and widely embraced in the Anglican Communion, in order that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ.

CONSTITUTION OF THE EVANGELICAL FELLOWSHIP IN THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION

1. Name

The name of the Fellowship shall be "The Evangelical Fellowship in the Anglican Communion".

2. Aims

The aims of the Fellowship are :

(a) *To foster fellowship* between Anglican evangelicals throughout the world, and to encourage the isolated and the fainthearted, reminding them of the larger body to which they belong.

(b) *To federate* regional Anglican evangelical Fellowships, and to encourage the formation of such where none exists.

(c) *To bear witness* with courage and charity to the great Biblical and Reformation principles, so that the evangelical voice is heard and commended, and an increasing evangelical contribution made, throughout the Anglican communion.

(d) *To formulate policy* in matters of common evangelical concern, by taking counsel together, and to make advice available to those who ask for it.

(e) *To exchange news*, so that events, projects, books, etc., important to the evangelical cause, become known to the whole evangelical Anglican community.

3. Basis of Faith

We accept the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion as a general exposition of the Reformed Faith, and desire to lay emphasis on the four particular doctrines which follow :

1. *Scripture.* We accept the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the true Word of God, the only rule of Christian faith and conduct, sufficient for salvation, and supreme in its authority, by which the Church must ever reform itself and judge its traditions.

2. *Justification by faith.* We believe that man, sinful and guilty, is justified by God, on the ground of the atoning death of Christ alone, through faith alone ; and that good works of holy living follow justification as its proper evidence.

3. *The Ministry and the Sacraments.* We acknowledge Jesus Christ as our only and all sufficient mediator between God and man, and His death as the only sacrifice for sins. We therefore believe that the distinctive functions of the ordained ministry are pastoral not sacerdotal ; that whilst the Holy Communion service is a proper occasion for the offering of praise and thanksgiving, and of ourselves and our gifts, these are responsive sacrifices offered by all the worshippers as members of the priesthood of all believers ; and that the Lord's Supper itself, and particularly the action with the bread and wine in which the minister alone engages, is a sacrament administered to man, not a sacrifice offered to God. We affirm, further, that all ceremonial used in worship should be a true expression of these biblical doctrines.

4. *The Church.* We believe that the Church is the Israel of God, redeemed by His Son and indwelt by His Spirit, whose calling is to worship God and to witness to Him in the world. Although we hold that the spiritual unity of the Church already exists and has never been destroyed, since the one Spirit animates the one Body, we welcome all efforts to effect full communion between the churches, provided that Biblical truth is not thereby compromised.

4. Membership

(a) The members of the Fellowship (other than the first members) shall consist of (i) those regional evangelical groups in the Anglican communion (hereinafter called "group members" and (ii) those individual evangelical Anglicans (hereinafter called "individual members") whom the Council shall, at its discretion, admit to membership.

(b) Upon admission to membership a member shall signify its or his agreement with the Aims and Basis of Faith.

(c) No group may be admitted to membership unless, in the opinion of the Council, it is representative of the evangelical Anglicans in its particular region (whether that region be national, provincial, or local) or in its particular Church.

(d) No individual may be admitted to membership if there is, in the region in which he normally resides, a group member of a group which is, in the opinion of the Council, eligible for membership.

(e) Unless and until the Council otherwise resolve there shall be no limit to the number of members.

(f) The first members shall be the Canadian Anglican Evangelical Fellowship, the Church of England Evangelical Council, the New Zealand Evangelical Churchmen's Fellowship, the Evangelical Fellowship of Sydney Churchmen, the Tanganyika Anglican Evangelical Fellowship, and the Evangelical Fellowship of Victoria.

5. Council

(a) The affairs of the Fellowship shall be administered and managed by the Council.

(b) The Council shall consist of two representatives from each group member, being the group member's President or Chairman and Secretary, or such other two persons as the Group member may by resolution of its governing body appoint.

(c) The Council may at any time co-opt any person as a Councillor either to fill a casual vacancy or by way of addition to the Council, provided that the number of co-opted Councillors at any time shall not exceed one quarter of the total number of Councillors for the time being.

(d) Upon joining or rejoining the Council a Councillor shall signify his agreement with the Aims and Basis of Faith.

(e) Each Councillor shall be entitled to one vote.

(f) The Council shall meet at least once in every five years.

(g) Subject to the provisions of this Constitution the Council may make such regulations as it thinks fit for the conduct of its own affairs and the affairs of the Fellowship (including the inviting of donations and/or subscriptions from members).

6. Executive Committee

If at any time, either because the Fellowship has grown unwieldy or for any other reason, the Council considers it expedient or desirable that the affairs of the Fellowship should be administered and managed by an Executive Committee or by any other Committees, the Council may delegate upon such terms as it thinks fit all or any of its powers to such Executive Committee or other committees, which shall consist of such persons as the Council shall appoint.

7. Officers

(a) The Council shall have power from time to time to appoint such persons as it thinks fit to hold the offices of President, Vice-President, Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, and such other offices as may be deemed necessary.

(b) The officers shall hold office for such periods and on such terms and with such duties as the Council shall determine.

(c) Upon election or re-election an officer shall signify his agreement with the Aims and Basis of Faith.

(d) The first President shall be the Most Rev. Hugh R. Gough, Archbishop of Sydney and Primate of Australia.

8. Amendments

This Constitution may be altered only by a Resolution of the Council passed by a three-quarter's majority of all the Councillors for the time being. Any meeting called to consider a resolution relating to the amendment of the Constitution shall be called by at least two calendar months written notice (calculated as from the date of posting), and such written notice shall set out the resolution to be considered and shall state that Councillors may vote either in person or by proxy or by post.

Individual Membership, according to the Constitution above, is open to evangelical Anglicans who live and work in regions where no group member exists. The individual membership subscription is £1 per annum, or its equivalent, which includes the receiving of *The Churchman*. Application forms may be obtained from the Rev. J. R. W. Stott, 12 Weymouth Street, London, W.1.

SUMMER SCHOOL: Oxford, July 7-14, 1962

The Evangelical Fellowship in the Anglican Communion is arranging a Summer School at St. Michael's House, Oxford, from July 7th to 14th, 1962. It is designed primarily for Anglican clergy from overseas who are visiting England. There may also be vacancies for parish workers and teachers from overseas, for some who are working in England, and for missionaries on furlough. The course will include biblical, theological, and pastoral lectures, and the opportunity both for the deepening of devotional life and for the enrichment of international fellowship. Visits and expeditions to places of interest will be arranged during the afternoons.

Other suggestions: It is anticipated that many who attend the Summer School will wish to go on to the Keswick Convention (July 14th to 21st). Further, when requested, every effort will be made to help clergy (and parish workers) from overseas to widen their experience through participation in evangelical parishes in England before or after the Summer School.

Cost: The fee for the Summer School will be £7, which includes a 10s. booking fee (not returnable in the event of cancellation). But a reduction can be made on application, especially for visitors from Africa and Asia.

Application: Application forms may be obtained from the Rev. J. R. W. Stott, Hon. Joint Secretary E.F.A.C., 12 Weymouth Street, London, W.1.

Programme:

Host and Hostess: The Rev. Alan M. Stibbs, Vice-Principal of Oak Hill Theological College, and Mrs. Stibbs.

Daily Bible Readings will be given by Mr. Stibbs.

A Course of 5 Lectures will be given by the Rev. Dr. Philip E. Hughes, Editor of *The Churchman*, on "Evangelical Essentials".

Other Lectures, by resident or visiting lecturers, will include the following:

"Personal Relationships" by Canon R. W. F. Wootton, formerly of West Pakistan, now Principal of the Church Army Training College.

" Preaching " by the Rev. A. M. Stibbs.

" Our Devotional Life " by the Rev. Basil C. Gough, Rector of St. Ebbe's Church, Oxford.

" Reading and Books " by the Rev. William Leathem, Vicar of St. John's, Harborne, Birmingham.

A Public meeting to commemorate the tercentenary of the Book of Common Prayer is being organized by the Church Society, in consultation with the Church of England Evangelical Council. It will be held in the Central Hall, Westminster, on Saturday, May 19th.

STATEMENT OF INTERCOMMUNION

Published by the Church of England Evangelical Council
(*founder member of E.F.A.C.*)

The Church of England Evangelical Council cordially welcomes the Open Letter addressed to the Archbishops of Canterbury and York on All Saints' Day last, especially in so far as it is a reaffirmation of historic Anglicanism.

The Council cannot question the full validity and efficacy of non-episcopal ministries simply on the ground that they lack the historic episcopate.

The Council holds that such freedom of intercommunion as is historic within the Church of England should be continued, not as a means to an end, but as a conscientious expression before the world of that unity which undeniably exists between those who through faith in Christ as God and Saviour are one with Him and therefore one with each other in Him.

The Council is convinced that to discourage or forbid Anglicans to receive the sacrament from the hands of ministers who have not been episcopally ordained is contrary both to the truth of the Gospel and to the historic position of the Church of England.

The Council believes that it is a scandal in the Church, which is the Body of Christ, that the Lord's Table should be so fenced around as to become a symbol of exclusive denominationalism. It should indeed be fenced—not, however, against non-episcopalians, but against unbelievers, heretics, and notorious evil livers.

The Council deplors the present tendency whereby the status of being in full communion with the Church of England is conferred upon episcopalian but unreformed churches and denied to Reformed but non-episcopalian churches. This it sees as nothing less than a reversal of historic Anglicanism, whereby in the past reciprocal intercommunion was a reality between the Church of England and other Reformed, albeit non-episcopal, churches.

The Council, finally, while deeply concerned at the appalling and crippling disunity within the Church, would wish to stress the danger of regarding the achievement of outward unity as an end in itself. True outward unity can be founded only upon the inward unity which already exists between all whom are Christ's. Unity in the Spirit, in truth, and in love is the first unity for which Christians must pray and work, and, until such time as organic unity may be achieved, that unity is rightly expressed in intercommunion.