

LA IGLESIA ANGLICANA DE MEXICO (IAM)

Historical Preface

This is not the first covenant made between the church in Mexico and the Episcopal Church in the United States. The first was written more than a century ago, in 1875, when the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, itself still a young church, entered into an agreement of support with the “Mexican Branch of the Catholic Church of our Lord Jesus Christ Militant on earth...until such time when the Mexican Branch would reach self-sufficiency in its Episcopate, and administer its own affairs.”

This “Mexican Branch” was a tiny indigenous religious community that owes its emergence to the widespread political reformist movements of the last century. Under the protection of favorable parliamentary legislation in 1857, reform-minded clergy and laity took advantage of the new freedom of thought and religious expression and gathered themselves into a community they called **la Iglesia de Jesus** (the Church of Jesus), the simple name by which they would be known for many years.

True to its word, the neighboring reform church to the north consecrated the Rev. Henry Riley, an American citizen who had been working with fellow Christians in Mexico, as bishop for the Church of Jesus in 1879, thus providing the much-desired gift of ministry in the apostolic succession. But PECUSA was less true to its word in others respects for in 1904 the General Convention created its own Missionary District of Mexico, with the Rt. Rev. Henry Damerl Alves as bishop. Presented with what amounted to a parallel diocesan Synod of the Mexican Episcopal Church (as the Church of Jesus had become known) successfully petitioned to be incorporated into the new missionary district.

The aspirations on the part of Mexico Episcopalians for autonomy have never flagged, through the years have seen many challenges to the existence of a truly self-governing, indigenous church. Government actions after the Mexican Revolution of 1917 severely restricted freedom of institutional religious practice. Churches could not own or property, clerics and to be born in Mexico and find their civil rights curtailed, religious schools were prohibited. Sadly, too, Episcopalians in Mexico, especially during the late 1940's, locally suffered attacks and persecution from Roman Catholic Church, which silently has the support of many government functionaries.

One positive consequence of state restrictions on institutional religious practice, however was the need to elect a national Suffragan bishop for the Missionary District of Mexico. Accordingly, on September 29, 1931, the Rt. Rev. Efrain Salinas y Velasco was consecrated in Denver. Three years later, on the resignation of the diocesan, Bishop Salinas assumed leadership as the first indigenous Mexican Bishop.

Anglican presence in Mexico has since grown, especially under the long, fruitful episcopate of the Rt. Rev. Jose Guadalupe Saucedo, presently the bishop of Cuernavaca. When Bishop Saucedo was consecrated in 1958, the Mexican Church was organized in one diocese, it now has five. A national structure established for mission has long been in place. A sizeable national autonomy fund created in 1990, largely from Venture in Mission funds unselfishly pooled by the five dioceses. Planning for full constitutional and financial autonomy proceeded over a decade in partnership with the General Convention, the Executive Council and the Presiding Bishop.

LA IGLESIA ANGLICANA DE MEXICO (PAM)

General Convention Resolution

Resolution Number: 1994-C041
Title: Approve Autonomy and Covenant with Mexican Episcopal Church
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, **That the 71st General Convention meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, in 1994, under the authority of Title I Canon 11.3 (f) releases the Dioceses of the Mexican Episcopal Church from the jurisdiction of the Episcopal Church of the United States of America for the purpose of forming a new Province of the Anglican Communion;** and be it further

Resolved, **That the 71st General Convention ratify the "Covenant between the Episcopal Church in the USA and the Mexican Episcopal Church," defining the basis, nature and mechanics of the new relationship and partnership in mission between the two churches;** and be it further

Resolved, **That the implementation of this resolution becomes effective at a date not later than January 1, 1995;** and be it further

Resolved, **That in accordance with the Covenant Agreement funding be appropriated for the 1995-1997 triennium, subject to funding in the budget, as follows:**

1995	1996	1997
\$918,964	\$882,206	\$846,918

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, 1994* (New York: General Convention, 1995), pp. 306-07.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

Author:
Originating House: House of Deputies
Originating Committee: Committee on World Mission

House of Deputies

Original Text of Resolution: (C041)

Whereas; The Mexican Episcopal Church in Convention (1987) has adopted the resolution on "Notice of Intention" to become an autonomous province of the Anglican Communion; and

Whereas; The same affirmative notice of intention was duly presented to, and approved by, the 1988 General Convention held in Detroit, Michigan; and

Whereas; In further compliance with the requirements for dioceses seeking as autonomy as set forth in the General Convention Resolutions A235a (adopted at the 1991 General Convention), the constituent dioceses and projected provincial bodies of the Mexican Episcopal Church have developed 25-year programs and budget projections; such 25-year plans describing in detail the mission, goals and objectives of the Dioceses and the Provincial structure in the areas of worship, stewardship, evangelism; Christian education, theological education for ministry, social ministries in the fields of education and community development; infrastructure and support facilities; and operation, management and support of church administrative structures; and
Whereas; The appropriate Diocesan and Provincial structures have been established such that autonomous decision-making processes are in place; and procedures for accounting, reporting and external control necessary to manage and safeguard the assets of the Dioceses and the Province are likewise in place; and

Whereas; The affected Dioceses, through their respective Diocesan conventions have given their consent to this intention for autonomy; and

Whereas; The Convention of the Mexican Episcopal Church meeting in Mexico City on March 25, 1994 enthusiastically endorsed the request of the Dioceses of the Mexican Episcopal Church to be released from the jurisdiction of the Episcopal Church in the United States of America for the purpose of forming a new province of the Anglican Communion; therefore be it

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, That the 71st General Convention meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, in 1994, under the authority of Title I Canon 11.3 (f) releases the Dioceses of the Mexican Episcopal Church from the jurisdiction of the Episcopal Church of the United States of America for the purpose of forming a new Province of the Anglican Communion; and be it further

Resolved, That the 71st General Convention ratify the "Covenant between the Episcopal Church in the USA and the Mexican Episcopal Church," defining the basis, nature and mechanics of the new relationship and partnership in mission between the two churches; and be it further

Resolved, That the implementation of this resolution becomes effective upon the installation of the Primate of the new province of the Mexican Episcopal Church at a date not later than January 1, 1995.

Proposed Committee Amendment:

~~*Whereas;* The Mexican Episcopal Church in Convention (1987) has adopted the resolution on Notice of Intention" to become an autonomous province of the Anglican Communion; and~~

~~*Whereas;* The same affirmative notice of intention was duly presented to, and approved by, the 1988 General Convention held in Detroit, Michigan; and~~

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~~*Whereas;* The appropriate Diocesan and Provincial structures have been established such that autonomous decision-making processes are in place; and procedures for accounting, reporting and external control necessary to manage and safeguard the assets of the Dioceses and the Province are likewise in place; and~~

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Resolved, That in accordance with the Covenant Agreement funding be appropriated for the 1995-1997 triennium, subject to funding in the budget, as follows:

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Motion carried
Resolution adopted with amendment

(Communicated to the House of Bishops in HD Message #215)

The deputations from Mexico were introduced, to the sustained applause of the House.

House of Bishops

The Committee on World Mission presented its Report #4 on House of Deputies Message #215 on Resolution C041a (Autonomy for Mexico) and moved concurrence.

The House concurred

(Communicated to the House of Deputies in HB Message #235)

Resolution Concurred by Both Houses, September 2.

Abstract: The 71st General Convention releases the Dioceses of the Mexican Episcopal Church from the jurisdiction of ECUSA for the purpose of forming a new province of the Anglican Communion, and ratifies the covenant between the two Churches defining their new relationship.

Annotated version after the first Evaluation/Implementation meeting held on October 7-10, 1998. The annotations are in Italics.

**A COVENANT
between
LA IGLESIA ANGLICANA DE MEXICO (PAM)**

**[Since January 1995 officially changed to Iglesia Anglicana de Mexico (IAM)]
and
THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN THE USA**

Historical Preface

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True to its word, the neighboring reform church to the north consecrated the Rev. Henry Riley, an American citizen who had been working with fellow Christians in Mexico, as bishop for the Church of Jesus in 1879, thus providing the much-desired gift of ministry in the apostolic succession. But PECUSA was less true to its word in others respects for in 1904 the General Convention created its own Missionary District of Mexico, with the Rt. Rev. Henry Damerl Alves as bishop. Presented with what amounted to a parallel diocesan Synod of the Mexican Episcopal Church (as the Church of Jesus had become known) successfully petitioned to be incorporated into the new missionary district.

The aspirations on the part of Mexico Episcopalians for autonomy have never flagged, through the years have seen many challenges to the existence of a truly self-governing, indigenous church. Government actions after the Mexican Revolution of 1917 severely restricted freedom of institutional religious practice. Churches could not own or property, clerics and to be born in Mexico and find their civil rights curtailed, religious schools were prohibited. Sadly, too, Episcopalians in Mexico, especially during the late 1940's, locally suffered attacks and persecution from Roman Catholic Church, which silently has the support of many government functionaries.

One positive consequence of state restrictions on institutional religious practice, however was the need to elect a national Suffragan bishop for the Missionary District of Mexico. Accordingly, on September 29, 1931, the Rt. Rev. Efrain Salinas y Velasco was consecrated in Denver. Three years later, on the resignation of the diocesan, Bishop Salinas assumed leadership as the first indigenous Mexican Bishop.

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was consecrated in 1958, the Mexican Church was organized in one diocese, it now has five. A national structure established for mission has long been in place. A sizeable national autonomy fund created in 1990, largely from Venture in Mission funds unselfishly pooled by the five dioceses. Planning for full constitutional and financial autonomy has proceeded over the last decade in partnership with the General Convention, the Executive Council and the Presiding Bishop.

Furthermore, recent constitutional reform in Mexico has opened new horizons for the life and mission of la **Iglesia Anglicana de Mexico**, which now enjoys its own legal status (and a new name, differentiating itself from the "Mexican Episcopate" of the Roman Catholic Church). New responsibilities have in consequence been placed before it, which it accepts as a joyful challenge in fulfilling its mission, therefore, the new Anglican Province of Mexico (PAM) establishes with the Episcopal Church in the United States (ECUSA) the following

COVENANT

I. TRANSFER OF THE METROPOLITICAL AUTHORITY

- a) The Diocese of Mexico, Cuernavaca, Northern Mexico, Southeastern Mexico and Western Mexico having complied with the requirements for autonomy established by the General Convention, including the writing and approving of a provincial Constitution and Canons in the forms recommended by the Anglican Consultative Council, and with the approval of the General Convention and the support of ECUSA, constitute itself into an autonomous Province of the Anglican Communion.
- b) Metropolitan Authority for the Mexican dioceses will be transferred from the General Convention to the General Synod of PAM upon action of General Convention. ***Transference officially took place on May 1995.***
- c) In like fashion, any titles of real properties not already transferred will be transferred by its action from the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society (DFMS) of ECUSA to PAM. ***There are three (3) properties under the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society ownership that need to be transferred. For that purpose the original property titles must be provided.***

II. PARTNERSHIP IN MISSION

In the spirit of **partnership in mission**, PAM and ECUSA agree to:

- a) Establish the means to continue their partnership in mission and ministry in a wide variety of fields, including evangelism, Christian education, theological and liturgical studies, training and stewardship, programs for social action and specific programs by and for women, minorities, youth and children. ***More work needs to be done in this area for implementation. The weakness here is that Mexico still lacks a Provincial National Program Committee.***
- b) Collaborate to strengthen ecumenical participation and witness in their respective countries and in the larger region. ***ECUSA shared with IAM its negotiations of Full Communion with the Evangelical Lutheran Church.***
- c) Encourage and nourish companion diocese relationships and other means for grassroots sharing of human, spiritual and material resources. ***It is necessary to promote further the partners in mission relationship. Only 40% of the Mexican dioceses have a Companion Diocese Relationship.***
- d) Continue participation in the United Thank Offering and the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief. ***Sharing with UTO will continue. It has been decided to create a fund to send 25% to UTO/ECUSA and keep 75% to create their own UTO. The same is valid in terms of the PBFWR.***

- e) Welcome and seat bishops of the two churches as collegial members of their respective house of bishops. ***This is been partially accomplished; it must be broadened.*** Requests for major resources in the form of grants, loans and mission personnel originating in the dioceses of PAM and directed to ECUSA should first have the authorization of the General Synod or Provincial Council of PAM.

III. TOWARD ECONOMIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY

A church is authentically autonomous when it is self-governed, self-propagated, and self-supporting financially, in order to have such self-sufficiency, PAM and ECUSA agree that:

- a) ECUSA will continue to contribute to the general budget of PAM through its national program budget for a period of twenty five (25) years, based on a reduction of 4% annually of the present 1994 appropriation of \$918,864.00, the reduction to begin one year after the effective date of autonomy, that is, January 1, 1996. This contribution is subject to adoption by the General Convention on a triennial basis and to review by the ECUSA Executive Council and the PAM provincial Council as circumstances dictate. ***It is necessary to renegotiate the % of reduction given the constant devaluation of the Mexican peso.***
- b) PAM will make an annual contribution to the national program budget of ECUSA as mutually determined. ***The amount contributed to ECUSA is US\$3,000.00.***
- c) ECUSA and PAM, with the advice and cooperation of the Church Pension Fund (CPF), will devise and PAM will implement a national pension plan for the clerical and lay employees of PAM, based upon t and comparable to the present plan now enjoyed by the clergy of PAM. The Church Pension Fund will be asked to maintain PAM clergy in the present plan provided by the CPF for a period of three (3) years following the transfer of metropolitanical authority to PAM. ***The necessary studies have been done with the assistance and support of the CPF. La Iglesia Anglicana de Mexico (IAM) is confident that a viable pension program will be in place by the year 2000.***
- d) ECUSA will provide appropriate technical assistance to PAM and its constituent dioceses in the development of stewardship programs and the raising of capital funds for missionary expansion. ***This is in process of outlining; effort needs to continue.***

IV. IMPLEMENTATION

- a) This covenant will be in effect from the first day of January of the year immediately following the approval by General Convention for the dioceses of Mexico to form La Iglesia Anglicana de Mexico (IAM) and will continue for as long as mutually agreed. ***This has occurred as of January 1, 1995.***
- b) An evaluation of the covenant is to be undertaken periodically and at least every five (5) years, by the joint Covenant Committee (appointed by the two primates) and the results reported to the Executive Council and the Provincial Council, respectively, of ECUSA and PAM. ***This is the first evaluation.***

(end)

November 1998

LA IGLESIA ANGLICANA DE MEXICO (IAM)

Covenant Committee

EPISCOPAL CHURCH PANEL

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La Iglesia Anglicana de Mexico (IAM)

Companion Diocese Relationships

Formal Companion Diocese Relationships:

The Dioceses of Chicago and Southeast Mexico (February 2002)

Contact: Aimee Delavett for CHI – revaimee@sbcglobal.net

The Dioceses of Fort Worth and Northern Mexico (January 1997)

The Dioceses of Utah and Mexico (June 2007)

Contact: Bishop Carolyn T. Irish for UT – cirish@episcopal-ut.org

Informal Companion Diocese Relationships:

The Dioceses of Arizona and Western Mexico

Contact: Bishop Kirk S. Smith for ARZ – cathy@azdiocese.org

The Dioceses of Los Angeles and Mexico

Contact: Barbara R. Stewart for LA – bstewart@stjohncm.org

The Dioceses of San Diego and Western Mexico

Contact: Jennifer R. Vervynck for SD – vervynck@n2.net

The Dioceses of West Texas and Northern Mexico

The Dioceses of West Texas and Southeast Mexico

Other Relationships:

The Dioceses of Texas and Cuernavaca

**EPISCOPAL MISSIONARIES SERVING
LA IGLESIA ANGLICANA DE MEXICO (IAM)**

**Kai Harris – YASC Missioner
Communication Liaison
Diocese of Southeast Mexico
E-mail: kai.harris@gmail.com**

9/9/2002 – 10/15/03

Served as a Communication Liaison with the Diocese of Southeast Mexico for one year.

**Austin & Jill Rios – YASC Missioners
Communication Liaison
Diocese of Southeast Mexico
E-mail: aurospeedwagon@yahoo.com**

2/1/04 - 1/31/05

Austin served as Communication Liaison with the Diocese of Southeast Mexico for one year.

**Denise Forrest – YASC Missioner
4/30/06
Diocese of Cuernavaca, Mexico
E-mail: forrestd22@yahoo.com**

3/14/2004 -

Served in the Diocese of Cuernavaca as Communications Assistant for two years.

LA IGLESIA ANGLICANA DE MEXICO (IAM)
United Thank Offering Grants

1995

PROVINCIAL: Autonomy-Anglican Church of Mexico II: To share costs of the newly autonomous province's administrative infrastructure so that projected workshops, conferences, planning meetings and materials development can be achieved: \$50,000

1995

Diocese of Mexico: Mexico City: Housing for Our Clergy II: To buy an apartment as a rectory in a diocese where parishes are doing their best to meet diocesan quotas and pay salaries of their priests in spite of decreasing incomes with the economic crisis: \$35,000

1996

PROVINCIAL GRANT: Publication of Hymnal: To pay for editing and publication of Anglican Hymnals in Spanish, which is part of Mexico's autonomy plans, and is essential to the furtherance of spirituality in a Spanish language country: \$20,000

1996

COLONIA SAN FRANCISCO DE ASIS: Diocese of Cuernavaca: Chacampalco, Lomas of Juitepec: To build a chapel in one of three communities where services have been held in private homes. They will help establish an Anglican identity and will be an outward sign of the Church's presence: \$16,666

1997

CUERNAVACA: MODESTO: To help purchase vehicles and insurance for four priests and the bishop for a diocese with 31 missions and one parish church and 8 priests that attend to them: \$17,000

1997

SOUTHEASTERN MEXICO: TUXTEPEC, OAXACA: To purchase land for a school of theology by extension and a chapel with room for events and programs for a congregation that grew from house churches started as priests traveled by: \$55,000 (FUNDS RESCINDED BY UTO EXEC. COMM.)

Diocese of Northern Mexico: La Resurreccion Chapel (Valle Hermoso): To build a chapel for a congregation of one hundred thirty members; members of other congregations helped local members build the temporary chapel which will continue to be used: \$30,000.00

2000

Diocese of Southeastern Mexico: Xalapa, Ver.-\$65,638.29: To acquire land and buildings where annual synod meetings of the standing committee; workshops and meetings of church women, and youths groups; lay reader training; plus worship activities of a mission congregation will be carried out; rental property is now used.

2001

Diocese of Cuernavaca: Alta Palmira, Morelos: Join with the congregation and diocese to purchase land and build a house for the new minister of an established and still growing church; only in recent years has housing for clergy been possible in Mexico. \$40,000

2002

Diocese of Southeastern Mexico: Construction of Three Clergy Houses: To build housing for a clergy person who serves in a rural area, covering large distances: \$40,000.00

2003

Diocese of Southeastern Mexico: Construction of a Clergy House: Vera Cruz: To construct a house for a diocesan clergy person and his family, serving a generally rural and indigenous population. Building the house will save money now paid as rent, and will help the diocese toward self-sufficiency: \$48,000.00

2004

Diocese of Southeastern Mexico: Episcopal House Renovation: Vera Cruz: To renovate the bishop's house, including the water pipes and the electrical system, which is not safe: \$25,000.00

2005

Provincial Vehicles*Province-wide: Americas: To purchase a vehicle for the province so they can carry out their work of being connected with the dioceses and congregations of the church throughout Mexico. \$25,000.00

Episcopal House Restoration*Guadalajara City : To renovate a damaged and uninhabitable house belonging to the diocese so that it may be used once again as the bishop's residence. \$30,000.00

2006

Mexico; Renovation of Diocesan Conference Center*Mexico City; Diocese of Mexico; To renovate the Diocesan Conference Center so that it can be used by many organizations as a meeting place; \$30,000.00

2007

Diocese of Southeastern Mexico: Multipurpose Building: Tuxtucpec: To build a multipurpose building at the Anglican Centre, where there are existing clergy houses and a kitchen, but no indoor meeting place: \$30,000.00