

# **No longer Episcopalians, North American Anglicans launch own conservative church**

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PLANO (RNS)—Conservative Anglicans disenchanted with the liberal drift in their North American churches say they are confident a newly launched church body one day will gain a seat in the worldwide Anglican Communion.

The Anglican Church in North America has been organized, its leaders say, as an alternative for Anglicans who disagree with the theology of the Episcopal Church in the United States and the Anglican Church of Canada.

Delegates representing about 69,000 active Anglicans from 650 North American parishes met June 22-25 at St. Vincent's Cathedral in Bedford to ratify their church constitution and nine canons, or laws.

They installed former Pittsburgh Episcopal Bishop Robert Duncan as archbishop in a ceremony at Christ Church, a Plano megachurch that cut its ties with the Episcopal Church three years ago.

The Episcopal Church removed Duncan last year for leading his diocese to secede from the denomination.

Nine of the 37 provinces in the Anglican Communion sent official representatives to the inaugural Provincial Assembly, most of them from Africa and Asia.

To become recognized as an official province within the Anglican Communion, the new body will need the approval of two-thirds of the

world's 38 Anglican primates and a key international Anglican council.

The North Texas gathering also drew solid ecumenical support from groups such as Southern Baptists and the National Association of Evangelicals.

Speakers included California megachurch pastor Rick Warren.