

The Provincial Council of the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) unanimously recognized the Anglican Diocese of the South and the Diocese of the Great Lakes on June 9 at its meeting in Amesbury, Massachusetts. More than 1,500 Anglicans from 20 churches in four states (AL, GA, NC, TN) have joined together to form the new regional Diocese of the South. More than 1,500 communicants from 14 congregations in Ohio, Michigan and Indiana are uniting to form the regional Anglican Diocese of the Great Lakes.

Following the Provincial Council's meeting, the ACNA's College of Bishops elected the Rev. Dr. Foley Beach as the first bishop of the Diocese of the South. Bishop-elect Beach, who had been nominated by the diocese's inaugural Synod, is the Rector of Holy Cross Anglican Church in Loganville, GA. He is expected to be consecrated this Fall. The College of Bishops also approved the election of Bishop Roger Ames as the first bishop of the Diocese of the Great Lakes. Bishop Ames, who previously served as a suffragan bishop for the Convocation of Anglicans in North America, is tentatively scheduled to be formally installed as the diocesan bishop this coming October.

"I am looking forward to working together with the clergy and the people of the Anglican Diocese of the South in sharing the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ with those in our communities who don't know him," said Bishop-elect Beach. "Our purpose as a diocese is not to become a bureaucracy, but to become an agent for empowering congregations to share the Gospel through discipleship, teaching, and starting new congregations."

"We in the Diocese of the Great Lakes are working to build a diocese that will recruit younger people, set in place mentoring relationships, and pass on the historic faith," said Bishop Ames.

The churches who are members and partners of the Anglican Diocese of the South are all within a four hour driving distance from Atlanta. Churches in the Diocese of the Great Lakes are most numerous in Ohio, but also include congregations in Indiana and Michigan.

"At the ACNA's inaugural assembly last summer, we set a goal of planting 1,000 churches in North America within the next five years," said ACNA Archbishop Robert Duncan. "I am thankful that the new Diocese of the South and the Diocese of the Great Lakes are both committed to participating in that great work." Archbishop Duncan also thanked the Convocation of Anglicans in North America for their willingness to release a significant number of their congregations and clergy to participate in the formation of the new dioceses.

The Anglican Church in North America has 614 congregations in 20 dioceses. More than 200 other congregations are ministry partners with the Anglican Church, including the congregations of The Anglican Mission. The Anglican Church represents more than 100,000 Christians in North America.