

RMS State Episcopalians repudiate church

By Bobby Ross Jr.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Aggieland

ARLINGTON, Texas — The Episcopal bishop of Fort Worth led a special convention of clergy and lay delegates Saturday to send a message that conservative dissidents won't acquiesce to the national church's confirmation of an openly gay bishop.

"We cannot remain silent," Bishop Jack Iker told 66 clergy representatives and 118 lay delegates at St. Peter and St. Paul Episcopal Church in Arlington. "We must speak up and will be heard."

To no one's surprise, delegates in the conservative diocese heeded Iker's call.

On voice votes with no roll call taken, they overwhelmingly passed resolutions that accused the Episcopal General Convention of violating the church constitution by confirming the Rev. V. Gene Robinson in Bedford.

Iker said the meeting's purpose was "to take a stand for the gospel of Jesus Christ in a time of great dissension and confusion in our church."

The bishop received a standing ovation after a half-hour sermon in which he said the diocese must deal with national actions that "have precipitated a serious crisis in the Anglican communion and have created a pastoral emergency in the

United States and abroad."

The Texas meeting came hours after Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh delegates overwhelmingly approved a statement declaring

the General Convention's actions "null and void, and of no effect" in the 20,000-member diocese in southwestern Pennsylvania.

The meetings were part of a national drive among conservative dioceses and clergy seeking to distance themselves from the Episcopal Church for making moves they believe go against the worldwide Anglican Communion.

On Aug. 5, the General Convention met in Minneapolis and approved the confirmation of Robinson, who has lived with his partner, Mark Andrew, for more than 13 years.

National convention delegates also voted to let dioceses continue to decide on their own whether to perform same-sex blessing ceremonies. However, confusion remains about the language in the measure. Some Episcopalians argue that the wording means the ceremonies are consistent with church teaching.

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— Bishop Jack Iker
Fort Worth Episcopal

NEWS IN BRIEF

Gun rights lobby in search of younger membership

HOUSTON (AP) — Gun rights advocates said Saturday during a national conference that they must recruit a younger following and exercise their right to bear arms as much as possible to keep their cause alive.

Waldron said it is important for aging gun rights advocates to pass along the history of the Second Amendment to younger generations.

Damaso Torres, 27, was among the younger of the 500 conference attendees who paid nothing for admission, literature or food. He said he began a student group called Students for the Second Amendment at St. Mary's University in San Antonio in 1999. He said the group has expanded

to nine Texas campuses and has worked to establish itself in 17 other states.

General Land Office to house reporters' land scandal papers

AUSTIN (AP) — Documents in a Pulitzer Prize-winning report on a Texas veterans' land scandal will be housed in the General Land Office where the scheme was uncovered in the 1950s.

Wednesday, former reporter Ken Towery of Austin will donate the papers related to his efforts at The Cuero Record in South Texas that won the 1955 Pulitzer Prize for local reporting.

His reports made longtime Land Commissioner Bascom Giles the state's first elected official imprisoned for a crime committed in office.

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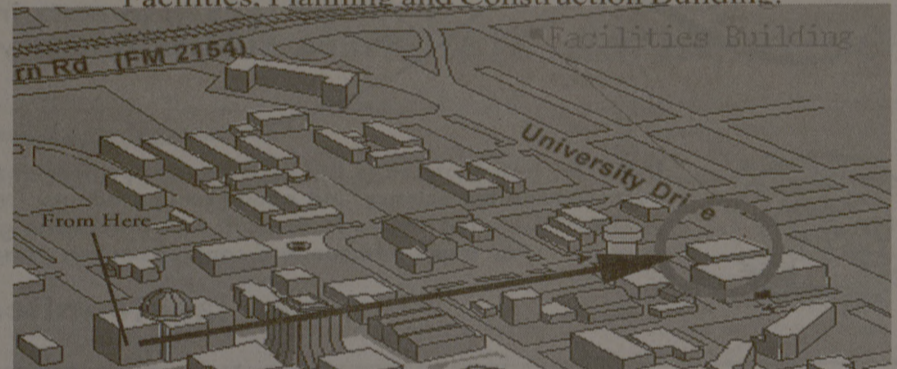
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