

Warren offers sanctuary to breakaway Anglicans: "We stand in solidarity"

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Evangelical pastor Rick Warren has offered to open the campus of his California megachurch to conservative Anglicans who have broken with the Episcopal Church.

Warren, a best-selling author and prominent preacher, wrote to 30 Anglican leaders on January 9, two days after California's Supreme Court ruled that Episcopal churches that break with their denomination are not entitled to keep church property.

"We stand in solidarity with them," Warren wrote in an e-mail posted online by *Christianity Today*, "and with all orthodox, evangelical Anglicans. I offer the campus of Saddleback Church to any Anglican congregation who need a place to meet, or if you want to plant a new congregation in south Orange County."

Warren's letter was intended to be private, said spokesperson Kristin Cole. She said she did not know if any Anglicans have taken Warren up on his offer.

Warren has built ties to conservative Anglican leaders, including some archbishops in Africa, over the past several years. In 2005, he spoke at a conference for conservative Anglicans in Pittsburgh.

In 2003, the Episcopal Church consecrated V. Gene Robinson, an openly gay man, as bishop of New Hampshire, precipitating a clash between liberals and conservatives in the Episcopal Church and the global Anglican Communion.

Warren said the Episcopal Church "already considered me an adversary" after he partnered on projects with conservative bishops from Rwanda, Uganda and Kenya. Warren also said that he had been on Robinson and others' "attack list" because of his opposition to gay marriage.

President Obama invited first Warren, then Robinson to deliver prayers during presidential inauguration events in Washington. -*Religion News Service*