



## THE SYNOD OF THE DIOCESE OF NIAGARA

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF NIAGARA RESPONDS TO SUPREME COURT DECISION

**Hamilton, Ontario, June 17, 2011 –**

Yesterday, the Supreme Court of Canada released a decision that it will not hear an appeal from four parishes of the Anglican Network in Canada who claimed ownership in the buildings and lands of four parishes of the Anglican Diocese of New Westminster. In November, 2010, the British Columbia Court of Appeal had determined that these parish properties are owned by the Diocese of New Westminster, which is part of the Anglican Church of Canada. This decision brings to an end legal claims by Anglican Network in Canada parishes in the Vancouver area who had withdrawn from their Diocese and disputed ownership of the parishes.

Reflecting upon yesterday's Supreme Court of Canada's decision, Bishop Michael Bird, states: "The decision clears the way for us to proceed to a trial involving the disputed ownership of three parishes in the Diocese of Niagara. This matter has been deliberated upon at every level of our Canadian legal system and this most recent decision must surely remove any question as to our ownership of these properties. Like our counterparts in British Columbia, the issue of same-sex relationships is well behind us and we are fully engaged in the work of mission and re-visioning our church as it engages with and serves the people of this generation. The diocese has been very patient over these years but now we hope that this property dispute can be resolved quickly."

The Diocese of Niagara has instructed its legal counsel to move forward expeditiously to bring this matter to trial.

The Diocese of Niagara is made up of approximately 95 parishes surrounding the Golden Horseshoe in Southern Ontario and is led by its Bishop, the Right Rev. Michael Bird. For further information please contact the Executive Officer, Archdeacon Michael Patterson at 905 527-1316 x257 or [michael.patterson@niagara.anglican.ca](mailto:michael.patterson@niagara.anglican.ca)