

Gold Bar Statement

April 1989

The Council of the Associated Parishes for Liturgy and Mission met on April 26 through May 1, 1989, at the conference center of the Diocese of Olympia in Gold Bar, Washington, a place where the majesty of God's creation is revealed in the splendor of the Cascade Mountains. We have worshipped in this beauty and reflected on it. Anglican tradition has long encouraged worship in the beauty of holiness. The 1979 Book of Common Prayer and the Canadian Book of Alternative Services offer worshippers the opportunity to continue in this tradition.

Appropriate art and architecture are powerful factors in the creating and nurturing of the community of faith. In planning new churches and remodeling old ones, every effort should be made to create spaces which invite the assembly to focus on and become open to the principal symbols of the faith—bread and wine, water, the Word, and most important, the gathered people. In doing so, such spaces convey both the immanence and the transcendence of God.

Spaces for worship should be open and uncluttered. The symbols which inform the lives of the people should be experienced in their fullness. Specifically, we urge that bread should smell, look, and taste like bread, and that water for baptism be copious.

The furnishings, objects, and vestments used in worship should be appropriate to their use, of good quality, and of honest materials. Specifically, we urge that altars look like tables and be completely free-standing, and that fonts provide for immersion or total affusion.

As we renew the spaces in which we worship, we renew the church and its mission and service in the world. This is especially important as the Anglican Communion prepares for a Decade of Evangelism.

Gold Bar, Washington