

PASTOR'S THOUGHTS

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A divided Church

A major rift has opened within the worldwide Anglican Communion after GAFCON (the Global Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans), a global network of conservative, biblically orthodox Anglicans, announced it would no longer recognise the authority of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The movement has also instructed its member provinces to remove references to being in communion with the See of Canterbury and the Church of England.

GAFCON leaders said the Anglican Communion will be “reordered” and have rejected the traditional Instruments of Communion, including the Lambeth Conference, the Anglican Consultative Council, and the Primates’ Meeting. They accuse these bodies of failing “to uphold the doctrine and discipline of the Anglican Communion.”

The statement, issued by Archbishop Laurent Mbanda of Rwanda, criticised the Church of England’s “revisionist agenda” and reaffirmed GAFCON’s commitment to Scripture as the final authority. The announcement follows the appointment of Rt. Rev. Dame Sarah Mullally as Archbishop of Canterbury designate, the first woman to hold the post, which is a move that liberals have welcomed but that conservatives have sharply opposed, particularly over her support for same-sex marriage.

The Church of Nigeria has described her appointment as “devastating”, citing both her gender and her theological stance. GAFCON leaders insist their new structure, the Global Anglican Communion, will restore “the Bible to the heart of the Communion” and unite provinces around shared orthodox beliefs. Membership will require assent to the 2008 Jerusalem Declaration.

Archbishop Mbanda said GAFCON has not left the Anglican Communion but now claims to represent its true continuation. The formal launch of the Global Anglican Communion is set for the G26 Bishops Conference in Abuja, Nigeria, in March 2026.

The split highlights deep divisions over theology, sexuality, and church authority fractures that Mullally will have to navigate as she prepares to assume leadership of a Communion now facing its biggest crisis in decades.

For GAFCON and those may agree with their move, it would be accepted as justified when viewed through the lens 2 Timothy 4:3–4 “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.”

During this period of division, we can only ask that the Lord come and stand in the midst and build a bridge that will enable his house to stand united, even if they are in disagreement on specific points.