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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Joint Statement by the Dioceses of Eau Claire and Fond du Lac regarding submission of a resolution to General Convention

Appleton, WI – June 26, 2009 – In January 2008 representatives of the Dioceses of Eau Claire and Fond du Lac met to discuss common mission opportunities because of similar ministry challenges, comparable demographics and shared heritage of the dioceses. The idea of possible juncture came up during this meeting, with an understanding that such a possibility should only be pursued if there were clear mission benefits.

In the fall of 2008, each diocese's convention passed resolutions seeking consent to begin the juncture process from General Convention. Passage of these resolutions was made with an understanding that consent of General Convention was the necessary first step in the process of discernment.

The Chairs of the Constitution and Canons Committees of each diocese were then asked to research the juncture of two dioceses and prepare the appropriate resolution for General Convention. They discovered and reported to each diocese that the legislative record of General Convention 1943 revealed that the consent given to the Dioceses of Minnesota and Duluth to juncture contradicted the understanding of our conventions when they passed their enabling resolutions. The consent of General Convention in this case created the new, although unorganized diocese.

After consulting with the President of the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Eau Claire in May 2009, the Bishop of Fond du Lac participated in a teleconference with the Presiding Bishop's Chancellor, the Chaplain to the Presiding Bishop and others regarding the implications and meaning of the passage of a consent resolution. It was determined that passage of a resolution at this General Convention would create a new diocese. It is clear that presenting a consent resolution to General Convention at this time would be premature.

Both Eau Claire's and Fond du Lac's delegates were working with the understanding that passage would only be a first step in a process, not the formation of the new diocese. At this time neither diocese is prepared to make a final decision regarding juncture, and therefore, the resolutions seeking consent to juncture will not be presented to the 2009 General Convention.

The process of discussion, however, will continue. Fond du Lac is open to discussing juncture with Eau Claire. Eau Claire is currently engaged in a process of discernment to determine their best course of action. If and when both dioceses are ready to pursue substantive discussion about juncture, they will move in that direction. If those discussions yield a decision by both dioceses to become one, new diocese, then consent of the General Convention will be sought at a future time.

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The Episcopal Diocese of Fond du Lac is composed of over 6,000 baptized members in 36 congregations covering the northeast third of the State of Wisconsin.
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