

## THE COUNCIL OF GENERAL SYNOD

**To the Members of the General Synod:**

### **1. THE COUNCIL, ITS MEMBERSHIP AND MEETINGS**

The Council met six times during the triennium and is pleased to submit this report. Members are listed elsewhere in the Convening Circular.

The first organizational meeting was held during the 2007 General Synod in Winnipeg when various elections were held for both Council's internal committees and representatives to other bodies:

- Officers-at-large of General Synod: Archdeacon Larry Beardy; Ms. Lela Zimmer
- Partner to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada: Archbishop Colin Johnson
- Members of the Anglican/Lutheran Joint Commission: Bishop Colin Johnson, Ms. Natasha Klukach, Rev. Dr. Richard Leggett, Dean Peter Wall
- Partner to The Episcopal Church: Archdeacon Dennis Drainville (later replaced by Bishop Michael Ingham and then replaced by Ms. Dorothy Davies-Flindall)
- Audit Committee Members: The Rev. Dr. Michael Thompson
- Healing Response Team: Bishop John Hannen
- Handbook Concerns Committee: The Rev. Dr. Stephen Andrews, Canon Robert Falby, Archdeacon Harry Huskins
- Anglican Award of Merit Committee: Ms. Dorothy Davies-Flindall, Archdeacon Karl McLean, Ms. Margaret Jenniex, Rev. James Robinson, Ms. Lela Zimmer
- Planning and Agenda Team: Archbishop Caleb Lawrence, Bishop Anthony Burton, Ms. Suzanne Lawson
- Nominations Committee: Bishop Percy Coffin, Rev. Dr. Lee Titterington, Mr. Matt Koovisk, Rev. James Robinson
- Resolutions Committee: Archdeacon Harry Huskins, Rev. Canon John Steele, Mr. Ross Whitelaw
- Expenditures Committee: Canon Judy Darling, Canon Paul Rathbone

Additional decisions were made to name representatives at subsequent meetings:

- Canadian Council of Churches: Mr. Peter Townsend
  - Handbook Concerns Committee: Vice-Chancellor, Brian Burrows
  - Anglican Consultative Council: Episcopal alternate: Bishop Colin Johnson; Clergy representative: Rev. Dr. Stephen Andrews; Clergy alternate: Very Rev. Peter G. Elliott; Lay representative: Ms. Suzanne Lawson; Lay alternate: Ms. Susan Winn
  - General Synod Planning Committee: Mr. Ross Whitelaw
  - Governing Body of the Canadian Council of Churches: Rev. Helena-Rose Houldcroft
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## FOR INFORMATION

- a. All meetings were held in Mississauga or Toronto. One meeting which was originally planned to be a teleconference because of budget restrictions became again a residential meeting thanks to gifts of money and air miles to a travel pool from individuals, dioceses and the General Synod.
  - b. At each meeting, days began with the Eucharist and Bible Study, and prayers were said at noonday and evening. These were organized and led by Bishop Tom Morgan, Chaplain to the Council of General Synod, and formed a worshipful and prayerful basis for all the Council's work. Energetic music was provided by Matt Koovisk, and Bishop Jane Alexander.
  - c. At each meeting the Primate reported to the Council on his activities and outlined challenges he saw and opportunities before the Church. His observations were particularly meaningful as this was his first triennium as Primate.
  - d. At many meetings, Council heard updates from Bishop Mark MacDonald, Canada's first National Indigenous Anglican Bishop. These updates were especially important because of the commitment the church has to ongoing healing and reconciliation, and again, because this was the first time we had experienced a bishop in this particular role.
  - e. At each meeting the Council welcomed partners who participated in the discussions and added insights to the meetings and provided the Council with significant learnings:
    - Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada: Judy Kochendorfer (later replaced by Rev. Doug Reble)
    - The Episcopal Church: Rev. Canon Petero Sabune (later replaced by Ms. Martha Gardner)
    - Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples : Rev. Sydney Black, Rev. Gloria Moses
    - Primate's World Relief and Development Fund: Rev. Ed Lewis
  - f. The Council at its last meeting granted the Anglican Award of Merit to:

Mr. Robert T. Dickson	Diocese of New Westminster
Canon Alice Jean Finlay	Diocese of Toronto
Mr. David Jones, Q.C.	Diocese of Edmonton
Ms. Mary Elizabeth Loweth	Diocese of Toronto
Ms. Monica Patten	Diocese of Ottawa
  - g. At their second meeting, Council of General Synod members experienced an in-depth orientation to their roles and responsibilities, determined a code of conduct under which they wished to work, and decided to test both a "consensus decision-making process for matters requiring considerable reflection and discernment" and the use of a no-debate list, following rules that are used at General Synod.
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- h. At each meeting the Pension Committee reported on its work and proposed amendments to the Regulations of the Pension Fund and the Continuing Education Fund which the Council approved, and amendments to the Canons relating to the pension funds which the Council agreed to forward to General Synod for action.
- i. Early in its life, Council took considerable time working with external facilitators to determine areas of priority. With limited budget and limited time, it was necessary to decide what issues were to gain priority in the agendas of the Council. In order to meet the leadership tasks set by General Synod for the Council, Council chose to focus on ways to provide: Active and Focused Ministry, Effective Stewardship, Sound Leadership and Governance, Quality Communication and Education, and Faithful Community Life. Under each category, objectives were then set and actions required were distributed over the number of meetings in the triennium. In large part, those expectations were met.
- j. Annually, the Council approved the financial statements of the Anglican Church of Canada Consolidated Trust Fund, and the Anglican Church of Canada Resolution Corporation after there had been audited and thoroughly explained and questioned.
- k. There was cause for much celebration: initially, because the Council and new Primate were getting to know each other; to say farewell with both delight about their new lives and sadness in their leaving of some key staff members who had made an immense contribution to the work of our church over many years: Ellie Johnson and Alyson Barnett-Cowan. We also bade farewell to long-time Council member, Archbishop Caleb Lawrence. We welcomed Henriette Thompson, Director of Partnerships; Dr. Holland Hendrix, Executive Director of Philanthropy; Michele George, Treasurer, and Eileen Scully as the Interim Director of Faith, Worship and Ministry to the Management Team and to the Council's work. And we had a celebratory dinner to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund.
- l. The Council also noted with deep regret and sadness the deaths of Gini, wife of the General Secretary, Michael Pollesel; Geoff Jackson, Coordinator of Diocesan Services; and Margaret, wife of Isaac Kawuki-Mukasa. Michael Pollesel is on an extended leave recovering from injuries received in the same accident that took the life of his wife. Council also noted with sadness the death of Gladys Cook, an elder who had played a remarkable role in the residential schools response.
- m. We received news of the retirement in 2009 of Peter Blachford, Treasurer of General Synod.
- n. Daily highlights were posted on the web each day so Anglicans across Canada could keep connected with the work of the Council of General Synod.

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## **COUNCIL OF GENERAL SYNOD ADDITIONAL ROLES**

The Council of General Synod functions as **the Member of the Anglican Journal Board**. In that role, it received and approved financial statements for each fiscal year and elected a Board of Directors. Bishop George Elliott, chair of the Anglican Journal Board, reported on issues facing the Journal relating to the Heritage Canada subsidy, and a budgetary method of providing subscription costs was later accepted to deal with these requirements for the fiscal year of 2010. He also reported that the Journal Board was struggling with governance issues as a separately incorporated entity.

Council members also form the **Board of Management of The Missionary Society of the Anglican Church of Canada**. In that capacity, they accepted annual financial statements and appointed auditors. They also asked the Officers to review the MSCC and report with suggestions for its future. At its March 2010 meeting the Council agreed to recommend to General Synod that a revised Canon VII, as prepared by the Handbook Concerns Committee, be enacted.

## **CONTEXT OF THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL OF GENERAL SYNOD 2007-2010**

### **Financial Matters:**

As the triennium went on, it became increasingly obvious that funds were decreasing at an alarming rate. Revenue coming to dioceses from parishes was decreasing; revenue coming from dioceses to General Synod through their apportionment also then had to decrease in many dioceses. Investments had been depleted during the early phases of the response to the residential schools, leaving no “cushion” to protect against these reductions.

The Council of General Synod grappled with the best way to deal with repeated budget deficits, and corrections required for a sustainable financial future. Council was deeply aware of the impact on staff and on programs, and saddened by the necessity of proposing such difficult actions. Nonetheless, there was a decision to have no deficit budgets after the year 2012, and a designated (and considerable) reduction in deficits in the years preceding this.

Decisions were made not to budget for bequests, and a recommendation was made on undesignated bequests were to be shared between current need and investment for the future.

The Council in its final meeting outlined principles to guide staff in the development of the budget for 2011 which will need to be prepared prior to the first meeting in the next triennium.

### **Ongoing Changes/Crisis in the Anglican Communion:**

As the dissension within the Anglican Communion continued, several situations involved the Council of General Synod. The Anglican Communion Covenant was being drafted (over and over again), and the Council responded to each draft as requested. The presence of Eileen Scully as part of the drafting group (and the analyses offered by the Anglican Communion Working Group) gave Council able assistance in interpreting some phrases, and in determining where our concerns really were.

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Tension increased in Canada when Bishop Donald Harvey announced that he was voluntarily relinquishing his ordained ministry in the Anglican Church of Canada, his reception into the Province of the Southern Cone, and his intention to officiate at an ordination of deacons in the Diocese of New Westminster. Council faced the difficult task of writing and distributing a Statement to the Church on this topic. Two other retired bishops, Malcolm Harding and Ronald Ferris, later joined him. Eventually an organization called the Anglican Church of North America was formed, which included some parishes, and individuals who no longer felt they could participate in the Anglican Church of Canada.

## **COUNCIL WORKING GROUPS**

- a. After a presentation on current initiatives involving youth, the Council established a **Youth Initiatives Task Force** chaired by the Very Rev. Peter Wall that reviewed present work in youth initiatives and drafted a policy base, strategic objectives and budget proposal for work in youth ministries. This report, Tending the Flame, was presented to Council. In response, there was agreement that, in principle, and subject to funding availability, the group would be renamed as the Youth Initiatives Working Group and continued through 2009 and beyond.
  - b. **The Anglican Communion Working Group**, chaired by Bishop George Bruce, provided draft responses to the Anglican Communion Covenant for Council to consider.
  - c. A **Role of the Primacy Task Force** was established to respond to General Synod Resolution A240 to conduct a detailed study of the role, duties and functions of the Primate, recommend changes, if any, to Canon III, and report to General Synod in 2010 with recommendations if appropriate. Chaired by Bishop Michael Ingham, this Task Force Report is #018 in the Convening Circular.
  - d. **Strategic Planning**  
Since "The Framework" adopted in 2001 expired in 2010, Council initiated work in strategic planning. A Task Force was formed, later called Vision 2019, chaired by the Very Rev. Peter Elliott (see comments below and the Report in the Convening Circular Report #019).
  - e. **Governance Working Group**  
A continuation of the need for assessment and improvement in governance of the General Synod called for a continuation of a Governance Working Group as ordered by General Synod. This group was established with Mr. David Jones as Chair. (Convening Circular Reports #011).
  - f. **General Synod Planning Committee**  
The Council heard reports on the planning as it began to take shape, and affirmed the theme, Feeling the Winds of God - Charting a New Course. Guidance was given on several ideas and on proposed processes. Council welcomed its Chair, Canon Barbara Burrows, to meetings and to meetings of its Planning and Agenda Team.
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#### **g. Planning and Agenda Team**

This small team made up of Council members and a few others with skills in process development assisted the Council in developing its agenda and keeping its focus on planning, both for the triennium and for the future through strategic planning. The Team's Chair was Suzanne Lawson.

### **MAJOR PRIORITIES**

**Strategic planning** The strategic planning was an iterative process, with suggestions, ideas and proposals developed over time and through considerable consultation with individual Anglicans, with groups within the church. At each point, Council considered what was being heard and what the Task Force recommended, commented on it, suggested ways forward, and then responded to the results of their decisions. Vision 2019, as the process came to be called, was responding to a "Fresh wind of spirit blowing through our church" according to Dean Peter Elliott in an early report to Council.

Many polls and recent research about church attendance and contributions to mission were tallied for the Council. And, the Council approved a new methodology to retrieve qualitative comments from Anglicans across Canada through the internet. More people were reached through this methodology than in any previous consultation of General Synod. Initial recommendations for strategic directions were developed based on these comments (which came in the form of emails, videos, etc.), and the Council digested these and suggested more work and sharper bolder recommendations, ones which specifically addressed what the national level of the church should be doing in the future. The final report of Vision 2019 is elsewhere in the Convening Circular, Report #019.

Council noted with appreciation the significant role played by staff from the Communications and Information Resources department in both the data gathering and the writing of the Vision 2019 report.

Council also approved a national symposium in the next triennium recommended by the Task Force called Does Faith Matter? A Dialogue about Religious Relevance in Tomorrow's Canada, subject to external funding.

#### **Relationship within the Anglican Communion**

The Council of General Synod was deeply involved in the matters relating to the Anglican Communion in this triennium. Council welcomed reports about the Lambeth Conference, the Primates' Meeting, the Anglican Consultative Council meeting, and the Conference of Anglican Churches in the Americas on Mutual Responsibility and Mission.

Council ratified the proposed incorporation of the Anglican Consultative Council, sending it forward with a suggested amendment (which was not widely accepted across the Communion) and rejected the proposal to include the five members of the Primates' Standing Committee in

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the membership of both the Anglican Consultative Council and its Standing Committee. (This inclusion, however, was accepted by the required number of Provinces and therefore the Joint Standing Committee is now the Standing Committee and includes the five Primates.)

Responses were then forwarded to the Communion Office on each of the Nassau, St. Andrew's and Ridley-Cambridge drafts of the Anglican Communion Covenant as well as on a revised Section 4 sent out after the Anglican Consultative Council meeting in Jamaica in May of 2009.

Council also asked that a process and related materials be developed to enable the consideration of the Anglican Communion Covenant by the Anglican Church of Canada.

### **Financial Stewardship**

In a time of decreasing resources, it is not surprising that the Council of General Synod spent much time addressing how financial stewardship could be increased across the church, not just nationally, to enable ministry and mission. A new Department of Philanthropy was approved, encompassing the Anglican Appeal, the Diocesan Services (formerly Letting Down the Nets Initiative), Planned Giving, plus the coordination of fundraising with other efforts at raising funds by Anglican partners (Anglican Foundation, PWRDF, Journal). When the new Executive Director of Philanthropy was hired (Dr. Holland Hendrix), Council endorsed in principle the plan from that department entitled Achieving Financial Equilibrium: A Development Plan Forward for the Anglican Church of Canada.

Council later authorized the use of unrestricted funds to invest in a Gift Catalogue, a Bequest Identification process, and a feasibility study for a nationwide fundraising initiative (which would encompass parishes, dioceses, provinces and General Synod). In their last meeting, Council accepted the principles behind a change to the provision of national church support to diocesan fundraising campaigns where a national focus was included in the case for support.

### **Governance**

Much Council time was spent hearing about the work of the Governance Task Force and giving it feedback. The final report was discussed fully and Council has conveyed the resolutions to General Synod. Convening Circular Report #011

### **Indigenous Ministry**

Early on in the triennium, a major budget decision was made to include considerably more money to the Sacred Circle, which met in 2007 and 2009. This decision was based on a need to demonstrate the continuing journey together of Indigenous Anglicans with the rest of the Church. A report from that Sacred Circle was heard with enthusiasm and a sense of hope for the future. The presence of Bishop Mark MacDonald and the partners from Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples brought Council nearer to the spirit of the New Agapé and the Covenant. (See details in the report of the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples, Report #001)

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## Human Sexuality

Two resolutions from General Synod determined the direction of the major work on human sexuality. One was to develop a process to engage dioceses, parishes and individuals to study human sexuality through the lens of scripture. The other was to consider a revision of Canon XXI on marriage, including a theological rationale to allow marriage of all legally qualified persons.

To respond to the first motion, volunteer facilitators were trained; their willingness to help groups was shared across the church; but there was no money in the church's national coffers to pay for travel. Take-up of their skills and offers of help were not large, but the existence of a skilled resource group of people remains. A web tool-kit was also compiled and made available. More details can be found in the report of the Faith, Worship and Ministry Committee, Report #009

Internationally, conversations between several Canadian dioceses and some African dioceses have led to dialogue which would be considered one way Canada is truly engaging in the Listening Process of the Communion.

That Committee also took the lead on the response to the Marriage Canon. The Rothesay Report was a written record of this response, albeit one-sided as was requested by the General Synod resolution. Again, more detail appears in the Report of the Faith, Worship and Ministry Committee. Convening Circular Report #009

The Primate's Theological Commission was requested by General Synod to consult and then report on the theological question of whether the blessing of same-sex unions is a faithful, Spirit-led development of Christian doctrine, and scripture's witness to the integrity of every human person and the sanctity of human relationships. The Galilee Report (Convening Circular Report#015 Appendix A) is the result and its key finding was that there was no common mind on these topics within the group. Council heard this reported from its Chair, Bishop Linda Nicholls. Convening Circular Report #015

After trying to digest both these reports, Council adopted and distributed A Word to the Church on Questions of Human Sexuality from the Council of General Synod Meeting May 2009. The Council reached consensus that this is not the time to ask General Synod to amend the marriage canon to allow for the marriage of same-sex couples; commended The Galilee Report and its accompanying materials to the church for study; encouraged further further conversations and dialogue on sexuality in Canadian dioceses; directed the General Synod Planning Committee to build a listening process into the agenda for General Synod 2010 regarding sexuality; proposed that a resolution be developed for General Synod affirming the House of Bishops 2007 Guidelines on Pastoral Generosity and asked for continued study, discussion and discernment within the church of what God is saying to us about publicly authorized rites for the blessing of unions, the blessing of the civil marriages and marriage in the church, of same same-sex couples. The Word to the Church sent out by Council is attached to this report.

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The Council received with thanks the Report of the Joint Primate's Theological Commission/Faith, Worship and Ministry Blessings Task Group.

Council also spent considerable time considering deeply the ways General Synod could best deal with the topic of human sexuality

### **Anglican/Lutheran Full Communion:**

The Council found several ways to live into the Full Communion. Among these was the adoption of the report of the Joint Anglican-Lutheran Commission's response to the World Council of Churches Faith and Order Paper, The Nature and Mission of the Church, as our own response.

Council also sent a message of our prayers and solidarity to the National Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada as ELCIC underwent significant budget cuts and staff reductions.

At its last meeting, the Council asked the Primate to explore with ELCIC's National Bishop and others the possibility of a combined national office for both our churches.

## **NEW WAYS OF WORKING**

### **Advertising for volunteers**

To staff the strategic planning and governance task forces, an advertisement was placed in The Journal inviting applications from volunteers. Many people submitted their applications and resumes, allowing for the selection of a good group of people not formerly involved at the national level to join others who brought long experience to the table. In fact, enough people applied to enable another task force to include some people who had not formerly been involved.

At each meeting, the Council concluded with gathering **Key Messages** about the meeting that formed the basis on what they could include in their reports to their dioceses.

### **Setting priorities for the triennium-**

As described above, this process gave clear indication of actions that were to be made to meet established priorities. This was essential to giving the Council power to determine its own agenda.

## **IN OTHER ACTIONS, THE COUNCIL**

- approved an open meeting policy for use in the Anglican Church of Canada's national organizations and committees;
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- heard presentations on A Health Care Covenant from the then Rev. Canon Linda Nicholls; the Augsburg-Fortress/ABC partnership from Mr. Andy Seal and the Rev. Allan Cox; healing and reconciliation relating to the residential schools; the role of the Canadian military in Afghanistan from Archdeacon Karl McLean; from Archbishop Michael Peers on his new book, *The Anglican Episcopate in Canada*; and the Rev. Dr. Katherine Grieb from The Episcopal Church with a short history of the Covenant's development.
  - adopted and embraced (unanimously) the Anglican Communion's Marks of Mission, and
  - proposed to the Anglican Consultative Council a Sixth Mark of Mission -that relates to peace, conflict transformation and reconciliation;
  - approved the French text of the Proper of the Church Year for trial use and evaluation;
  - requested each committee, council and board to review its practices in accordance with a "Vision and Principles of Communication" document;
  - adopted a new Long Term Disability Plan, approved amendments to the Plan in preparation for a confirmation of their decision by General Synod;
  - approved and adopted several motions that had been referred to it by General Synod and referred one to the House of Bishops;
  - approved the French text of the Prayers of the People and the Ministry of the Sick for trial use and evaluation.
  - commended the World Council of Churches Faith and Order Document, The Nature and Mission of the Church to dioceses, the Faith Worship and Ministry Committee, and the Primate's Theological Commission;
  - determined that the resolutions for approval of the financial statements of the church not be eligible for placement on the no-debate list at the Council of General Synod and General Synod;
  - approved revised terms of reference for the Communications and Information Resources Committee, the Planning and Agenda Team, and asked that a revision of Canon VI be prepared for General Synod and new terms of reference for a new Financial Management Committee and a new Philanthropy Committee, replacing the existing Financial Management and Development Committee. Council referred suggested revisions to the terms of reference for the Partners in Mission and EcoJustice Committee to the Handbook Concerns Committee so that they could prepare the document for General Synod. This revision would considerably reduce the numbers on the Committee. Council also accepted terms of reference for its key working groups of the triennium: Vision 2019, the Governance Working Group, and the Role of the Primacy Task Force.
  - endorsed, participated in, and enjoyed the cross-Canada delight of the Amazing Grace project and later heard from the Council of the North of its use of the donations for funding an initiative on suicide prevention. Over came in as a result of the \$80,000 project;
  - approved guidelines for telephone and electronic meetings;
  - referred to the General Secretary the concern that funding be found for the Anti-Racism Working Group;
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- authorized the publication on the web of the authorized worship resources of the Anglican Church of Canada for which the General Synod holds the copyright, providing the necessary safeguards are in place to protect the integrity of the texts;
- sent congratulations to The Rev. Canon Stephen Lane, Bishop-elect of the Diocese of Maine, a former partner to the Council of General Synod;
- heard reports on and recommendations from the Operations Review of Church House;
- commended the St. Brigid Report of the Anglican-United Church dialogue to dioceses for review and comment and requested Faith, Worship and Ministry to bring recommendations to General Synod about a renewed mandate for this dialogue;
- recommended to General Synod amendments to the Constitution and Canon III;
- expressed dismay and concern to both the Church of the Province of Uganda and the Government of Canada over the draft proposed Anti-Homosexuality Bill currently before the Parliament of Uganda;
- recommended full voting rights for the partner from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada;
- outlined the elements of a letter to the next CoGS highlighting what work needed to be attended to and advice about what Council members felt had “worked” and should be considered for continuation;
- approved procedural guidelines for elections and nominations at General Synod, some resolutions relating to the Constitution, and several appointments to the Sessional Committees.

#### **SPECIAL THANKS**

The staff in the General Secretary’s Office – Margaret Shawyer and Dianne Izzard - have worked long and hard in relation to the meetings of the Council, the General Synod, Officers, the task forces and many other groups. Their skill cannot go unnoticed in the work accomplished.

**Suzanne Lawson, Chair of the Council’s Planning and Agenda Team, on behalf of the Council of General Synod**

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