



Daily Report

June 6, 2010

The first of four General Synod sessions on human sexuality discernment took place Sunday morning, with a report on the issue's progress over the past few years.

The Primate's Theological Commission reported that the group had examined the subject from a theological standpoint, resulting in the 2007 St. Michael Report. Although commission members came to believe that careful and respectful listening was essential to the inclusion of gay and lesbian Christians, they did not reach consensus.

The commission concluded that the distinctions need to be clarified among blessings, nuptials, marriage, blessings of civil marriages, and blessings of same-sex unions.

Commission chairwoman Linda Nicholls urged members to read the commission's final report, included in the convening circular's blue pages and online, prior to Monday's round of discussions on human sexuality. Reports from the Faith, Worship, and Ministry Committee on human sexuality are also in the circular and online.

Faith, Worship and Ministry Committee chairwoman Janet Marshall noted that dialogue was necessary on several levels, so as "not to cut ourselves or others off."

Bishops' meetings with their counterparts in the African dioceses of the Communion served to open dialogue and counteract stereotypes.

The presentations described focus groups, meetings, and input from a variety of people. Archbishop Hiltz read from his pastoral statement of 2008, advising pastoral generosity and gracious restraint.

Since then, a number of Canadian dioceses have begun moving towards blessings of same-sex marriages/unions in one way or another, the Primate said. The 2008 statement will serve as a starting point for further discussions on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

For the remainder of the morning, Synod broke for six Ports of Call workshops on financial management and development; faith, worship and ministry; partner in mission and eco-justice; Vision 2019; pension committee; and youth initiatives.

Members of General Synod joined the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island Sunday afternoon at Exhibition Park for a special celebration of Holy Eucharist to mark 300 years of continuous worship. The first Anglican service was held in Port Royal (Annapolis) on October 9, 1710.

Synod members had Sunday evening off.

Provincial caucuses will meet Tuesday at 12:30 p.m. to nominate candidates to the Council of General Synod.