



ANGLICAN ORDINARIATE FOR THE CANADIAN FORCES

Bulletin/Volume 7, No 2

Season of Pentecost 2010

BISHOP ORDINARY TO THE FORCES
The Right Reverend Peter Coffin STB, MA, DD

CANADIAN FORCES ARCHDEACON NAMED AS NEXT CHAPLAIN GENERAL

On 8 April, 2010 the Honourable Peter MacKay, Minister of National Defence announced the selection of our own Anglican Archdeacon, Padre Karl McLean, as the next Canadian Forces Chaplain General. Colonel the Venerable McLean will be promoted to the rank of Brigadier-General and assume command of the Chaplain Branch early this autumn, succeeding Brigadier-General David C. Kettle, who will retire.

“Chaplains provide the men and women of our Canadian Forces with the moral and spiritual support that they require in their service to the nation,” said Defence Minister MacKay. “Padre McLean brings with him a wealth of knowledge and experience that will give him unique insight in this crucial leadership role.”

Padre McLean’s experience in the Canadian Forces chaplaincy includes serving as a Unit, Wing and Base Chaplain in several locations; as the Chief Instructor at the Canadian Forces Chaplain School and Centre; and as the Command Chaplain for both the Army and the Air Force. His operational deployments include his

assignment as a Brigade Chaplain in Bosnia-Herzegovina and serving as the Senior NATO Chaplain with the Stabilization Force in the capital of Sarajevo.

Padre McLean has previously served in the Office of the Chaplain General as the Director Chaplain Administration Education and Training; the Director of Chaplain Operations; and, most recently, as Chaplain General’s Chief of Staff.

Our Archdeacon was elected at the 2007 Anglican National General Synod to serve a three year term on the Council of General Synod, the council which administers the affairs of the Anglican Church of Canada between General Synods. Padre McLean was also the primary research writer and force behind the Army Chaplain Manual approved by the Chief of the Land Staff in 2006 and the Chaplain Branch’s Strategic Plan which was published and approved by the Chief of Defence Staff in 2008.



*Colonel the Venerable Karl McLean
Archdeacon of the Canadian Forces*

ARCHDEACON

Col the Ven K.R. Mclean, CD

CANONS

Col the Rev’d J. Fletcher, CD

CANON PASTOR

Cdr the Rev’d B.D. Park, CD

CANON RECRUITER

LCol the Rev’d N. Shaw, CD

CANON TREASURER

LCol the Rev’d G. Thorne, MMM, CD

CANON RESERVIST

Cdr the Rev’d J. Wilcox, CD

CANON SECRETARY

This Bulletin, for the Anglican Ordinariate of the Canadian Forces, is an informal document for the members of the Clericus. Its purpose is to provide the membership a means of communication and an expression of our fellowship. It is issued under the jurisdiction of the Bishop Ordinary for the Canadian Forces (Anglican). To submit an article please email text to: dmgcag1@msn.com.

LAY LEADERSHIP IN THE ORDINARIATE

by Padre Andrew Cooke, Warden of Lay Readers

As Warden of Lay Readers, I have been asked to put an article together about what is going on in the Canadian Forces with regard to Lay Readers. Rather than list what is going on, I thought it better to hear from some of our Lay Readers about what it means to them.

Kathy Cormier, a Lay Reader in Greenwood writes, "I truly feel that this is my way of serving God and it compels me to serve others as well" and further writes. "I feel a sense of closeness in helping to deliver God's message." Wade Seymour, also at Greenwood points out that it is more than liturgy, and that it enters into pastoral care, Christian education, social action and parish administration. Being a Lay Reader for Wade is "to love and serve the Lord with all your heart, mind, soul and strength."

Christina Barrett in Newfoundland and Labrador, having served many years in uniform, enjoys the connection Lay Ministry can bring between life in the Anglican Church and ministry in the greater military community.

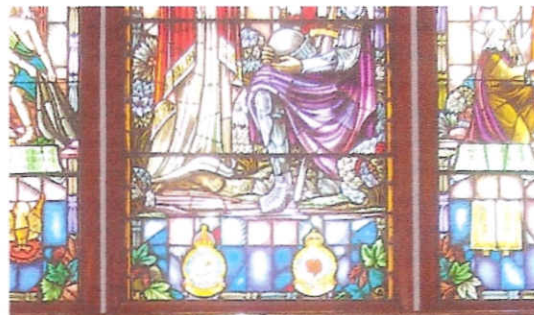


Barb Yule, Lay Reader at the Chapel of St. Luke and St. John in Edmonton was licensed as Lay Reader by our Bishop Ordinary, Peter Coffin, during his pastoral visit on Sunday, 16 May 2010.

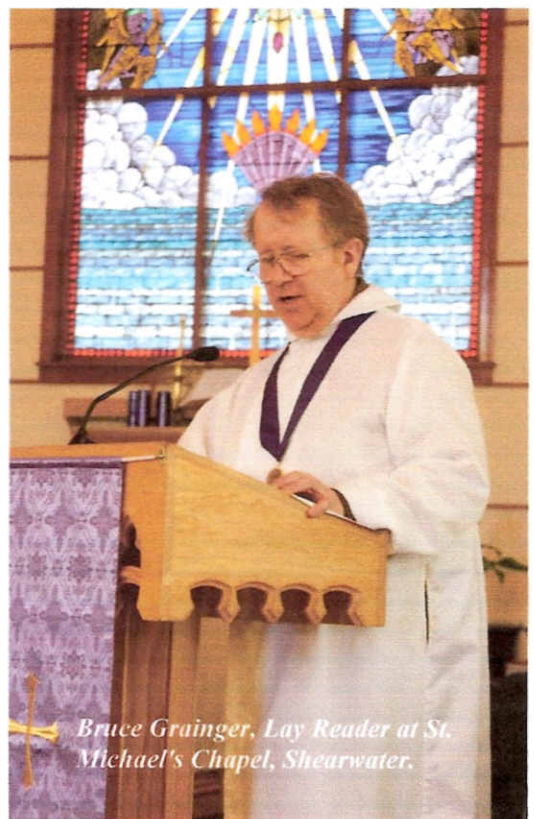
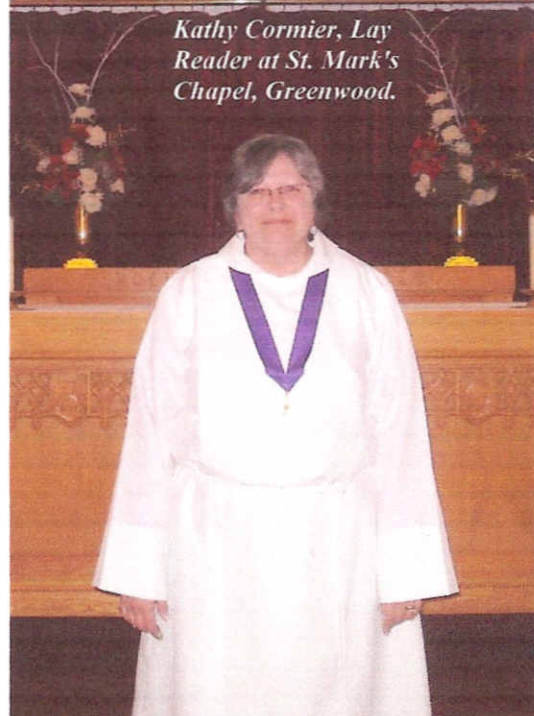
There are always new opportunities for you if upon prayerful reflection God is calling you into this form of ministry. Barb Yule, who was licensed in Edmonton as our newest Lay Reader on Sunday, 16 May 2010 has been active in Chapel life for 20 years in many capacities. Barb always wanted to do more in her Christian walk of faith, fellowship and service. She now will be able to follow her call to this ministry "to help support and help build up the body of Christ in our military community."

For myself, I have been ordained in the Priesthood since 1991, but the journey for me really started much earlier when I was licensed as a Lay Reader by Bishop Peters in the Diocese of NS & PEI. Becoming a Lay Reader was a prayerful and conscious decision to deepen my walk with God and become a greater participant in the life of the Church. The Anglican Church became more of a spiritual home for me, and a place where I could, as a Lay Reader, exercise a deeper sense of purpose.

Anglicans who feel this sense of call are warmly encouraged to speak to an Anglican chaplain on base, or myself, as the Warden of Lay Readers.



Kathy Cormier, Lay Reader at St. Mark's Chapel, Greenwood.



Bruce Grainger, Lay Reader at St. Michael's Chapel, Shearwater.

A WORD FROM OUR BISHOP

"It has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us..."
(Acts 15:28a)

SOME THOUGHTS ON TAKING COUNSEL TOGETHER

Dear Friends:

In the early days of June six members of the Anglican Military Ordinariate will have the privilege of being in Halifax for General Synod - 2010. It just so happens that this is the 300th anniversary of celebrations of Anglican Worship (Port Royal in the Annapolis Valley, October 10th, 1710) in what later became the Diocese of Nova Scotia and PEI. It is also the centenary of the Royal Canadian Navy. There is much to celebrate! The General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada first met in 1893 to bring together the dioceses of British North America for the purpose of taking counsel together for the faithful and effective witness of the Gospel in this vast land and overseas. Before the end of that century we were asked to share in the mission of the Church in Chile, Palestine and Japan and being solidly united we were positioned to do so at home and abroad.

When I think of this gathering, however, I also think of other meetings of the church, like congregational and parish councils and gatherings of people sharing common ministry in, for example, chaplaincies. Such meetings have much in common whether they are large gatherings or small. They are opportunities to listen to each other, to speak with grace, to wrestle with issues, to enjoy the company of 'the saints', to learn from the experiences of others and to weep or rejoice with them, and to discern the mind of God and what God would have us do in our neighbourhoods and beyond.

In the early decades of the Church there was, in Jerusalem, the very first recorded council of the Church (Acts 15). There was an issue to be dealt with. Who could be included in the Church? Saint Luke, the author of the account said that those present sometimes debated, listened to the stories of Saints Paul and Barnabas and, at the end of the day reached a decision and could say, "It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us." The result was the inclusion of Gentile converts and the sending of a Pastoral Letter of welcome and an admonition to be sensitive to others. After all, not everyone is easily onside with any decision. One phrase stays in my mind: "All the assembly kept silent and they listened to Barnabas and Paul." (Acts 15:12a)

When we gather together to take counsel as a church we are engaged in what Gil Rendle and Alice Mann of the Alban Institute refer to as Holy Conversations in which we ask such questions as: "Who are we? What has God called us to do? Who is our neighbour - the ones to whom and with whom we minister?"* These are conversations because we are called into dialogue to explore our differences, what we have in common, our perceptions, our stories and memories and hopes. We are silent and we listen. These are Holy because these conversations are about our identity as a faith community, our sense of purpose and our relationship with God and with each

other. And we hope that at the end of the day we may say, as was said at the Council of Jerusalem: "It seems good to the Holy Spirit and to us!"

Recently I was in Winnipeg at 17 Wing for a meeting of the chaplains of the Air Division. It was all good. The part that I liked best, however, was the day when people shared their stories of ministry. It was a time of encouragement and of learning and Holy Conversation. Just being together is such a blessing. By God's grace it will be so at General Synod 2010 as it will be whenever we take counsel together and pray: "May your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." And may we say: "Here I am Lord. Send me" or "Ready. Aye Ready."

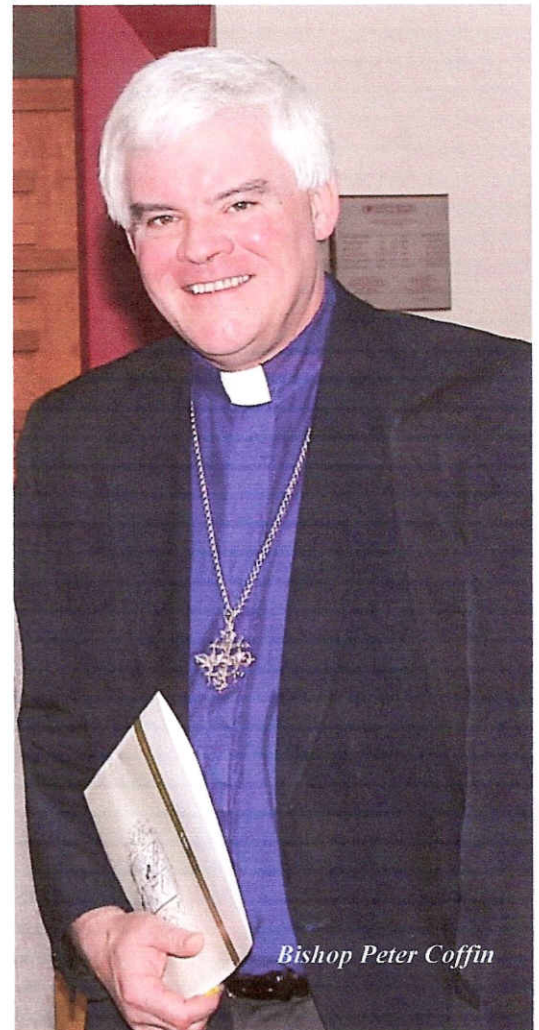
Peace and Grace

+Peter

Anglican Bishop Ordinary

(The Right Reverend Peter Coffin was appointed by the Primate to the position of Bishop Ordinary (Anglican) to the Canadian Forces in November 2004.)

* *Holy Conversations - Strategic Planning as a Spiritual Practice for Congregations*, Gil Rendle and Alice Mann, Alban Institute, 2003, page xiv



Bishop Peter Coffin

A VERY FULL WEEK – BISHOP COFFIN'S VISIT TO 17 WING WINNIPEG *by Padre Gordon Mintz*

The Chapel of the Good Shepherd, the military chapel at 17 Wing Winnipeg was very pleased to welcome Bishop Coffin to preside at a service of Confirmation for three of its young members on 18 April 2010. The service may have been unique in that it was a combined confirmation of a candidate from the Presbyterian tradition and two young Anglicans. Padre Bonnie Mason, the Wing Chaplain and a Presbyterian minister co-presided at the Confirmation part of the liturgy with prayers from the official rites of both denominations interwoven to insure the integrity of each tradition while maintaining a cohesive flow. Bishop Coffin described it this way, "The vows were the same for both denominations and we used the Anglican Rite with the Presbyterian prayers as extra. I did not confirm the Presbyterian candidate, nor did Padre Mason confirm the two Anglicans. It was a great sign of ecumenism as we stood side by side and confirmed our respective faithful candidates." It was a special day for the confirmands, their families and the worshipping community of 17 Wing. Interestingly, following the worship of the Protestant community an Episcopal meeting occurred as Bishop Coffin met with Bishop Donald Thériault who was also at 17 Wing in order to lead the Wing's Roman Catholic community in worship when they celebrated the confirmation of their young people at the mass which followed our service in the 17 Wing shared chapel facility.

Bishop Coffin remained in Winnipeg for the Air Force Chaplain's Conference for the next few days where he and Bishop Thériault made a presentation on some of the current issues before the Interfaith Committee on Canadian Military chaplaincy (ICCMC). This afforded the chance for our Bishop to share some pastoral visits with Padre Will Hubbard and myself as Anglicans and the entire 17 Wing Chaplaincy Team which we very much appreciated.

The week in Winnipeg concluded with a visit with the Anglican clergy of the local deanery which was arranged with the aid of the Regional Dean, Maj. (ret'd) the Rev. Gordon Sheilds who once served as the Wing Chaplain at 17 Wing. The Rt. Rev. Donald Phillips (Bishop of Rupert's Land) also joined us as we toured the Wing and were briefed on the operational role that schools and squadron's located here play within the Canadian Forces and also the contributions that the base makes to the city. Of particular interest for the local clergy was the chance to gain a fuller understanding of the pressures faced by the service personnel in the pews of the churches they serve and how this informs the spiritual care they offer as pastors and as congregations. It also provided a fantastic opportunity for both our Bishop and the CO's of 402 and 435



Chapel of the Good Shepherd Confirmation 18 April 2010 - From left to right: Margaret MacLennan (Lay Reader), Padre Bonnie Mason, Matthew MacRae, Joel Mintz, Nathan Mintz, Bishop Peter Coffin, Padre Gordon Mintz.



Bishop Peter Coffin with 17 Wing chaplains and local city of Winnipeg clergy on a tour of the operational aspects the Air Force at 17 Wing.

squadrons to speak about the role that chaplains play within their units and the Canadian Forces and what that ministry looks like. The tour concluded with lunch in the officer's mess and briefings from the PAFO and MFRC followed by the current chaplain recruiting video. The local clergy and Bishop Phillips were very grateful for the experience and expressed their thanks.

I am sure our Bishop was glad to, at last, be taken to the airport for the trip home after such a non-stop week in Winnipeg. I know as well as being busy it seemed to me like a very full week in the best sense of the word.

BISHOP ORDINARY VISITS 14 WING GREENWOOD

On 21 March, 2010 Bishop Coffin visited the community at St Mark's Protestant Chapel and the people of 14 Wing Greenwood, Nova Scotia. The Bishop preached and took an active part in the worship for the Fourth Sunday of Lent. Pictured at right are two Lay Readers, Kathy Cormier and Wade Seymour (with medals) as well as three chaplains, Padres Michael Peterson (Anglican), Gordon Poley (Baptist), and Frank Staples (United Church of Canada). At the centre, in the purple chasuble, is our bishop.



Pictured at left, on another visit to 14 Wing Greenwood, Nova Scotia, our Bishop Ordinary, Bishop Coffin celebrated Holy Eucharist with the people of St Mark's Protestant Chapel and presented Kathy Cormier and Christina Barrett with their Lay Readers licence certificates. Pictures with the group are two Anglican military chaplains, Padre Michelle Staples and Padre Jack Barrett.

A PENTECOST MILITARY SUMMER PRAYER

Loving and Creator God, send down your Holy Spirit upon us and those we love, especially as many are preparing to relocate to new bases, wings and garrisons. Watch over our friends and family as we pack our belongings into cardboard boxes and our friendships into email files, and stretch our relationships over phone lines and miles of pavement.

Be with us as we retain but break the sense of camaraderie and fellowship and in excitement join with other older friends and new friends in new and exciting places. Be with our young ones as they ponder new schools and new challenges.

One born in a manger, help us to not fret and fuss over our "stuff" as it is

entrusted into the hands of others once again. Help us to focus on your still small voice that gives us strength at the core of our being.

Anointed One, who was called away from Nazareth to walk other roads of discipleship, be with us who are remaining in place. Help us to watch with tear-filled eyes those with whom we have trusted our children, our friendships, our house keys and our lives in combat -- help us as they pack up and move away.

Holy One, we pray for our chapels and our chapel friends. We give thanks for being able

to sing and pray your praises in this place and at this time. Help us to join with others anew to develop your community of faith as it reshuffles again but always stays consistent in You.

One who seeks and shepherds, watch over our troops who are deployed. Protect them and keep them always employed in doing right things. We pray You bring them home safely.

Guide our leaders and those who are looking to us for faith mentoring. Open our eyes to Your presence in each sun filled day and each rain nourished one. Help us to see your fascination with diversity in mosquito, colorful birds, fascinating flowers and plant life. Get us out into your world and help us to re-create and find recreation in all the beauty around us and with each other.

Send the fiery energy that first inspired Your apostles and open our hearts to You and to know whose we are. Amen.

ON A WING AND A PRAYER *by Padre Michelle Staples*

A friend of mine was talking to me about the prayers that she utters when her husband is away on military duty. She said she was searching through some of the US Department of Defense web sites which seem to have so many resources and she found the following prayer:

Give me greatness of heart to see the difference between duty and his love for me. Give me understanding so that I may know, when duty calls him, he must go. Give me a task to do each day, to fill the time when he's away. When he's in a foreign land, keep him safe in your loving hand. And Lord, when duty is in the field, please protect him and be his shield. And Lord, when deployment is so long, please stay with me and keep me strong.

She also wanted to share this prayer because it appeared to her to be so much better than the ones she had been using:

Please God, help me not to panic every time there's a knock on the door, keep me from falling off his side of the bed when I reach for him in my sleep, and remind me that even though I still cook for two, I don't have to eat it all. And also, I know I once thanked you for the pretty snow, but that didn't mean I wanted two feet of it everyday.

Personally, I think both of the prayers are beautiful, and being in a rear party ministry year 'round, I know how stressful it can be. So I offer this prayer for our families as a way to remind them that God listens, God loves, God journeys, and God wants the prayers of our hearts not simply the poetry of great minds or eloquent intercessors to be the conversation that greets his ear day in day out. Pray on, folks!

ELIZABETH LOWETH RECEIVES THE ANGLICAN AWARD OF MERIT

(Excerpt taken from a news article posted April 12, 2010 on the IAWN website)

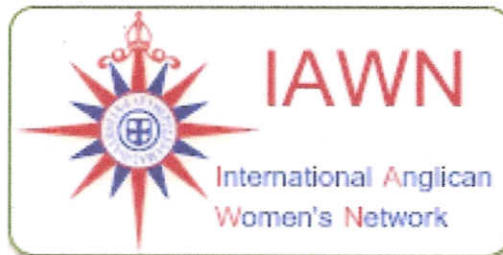
Submitted by Cynthia Greenwood

Elizabeth Loweth, Canadian Provincial Link for the International Anglican Women's Network (IAWN) is one of five laity who have been honoured with the Anglican Award of Merit, the highest award of the Anglican Church of Canada for contributions to the life and work of the church at the national and international level.

Elizabeth has served as a delegate to Diocesan, Provincial and General Synods and on national church committees with the former Women's Desk and the Multicultural Committee whose national conference she chaired. She has been the Human Rights staff for the national United Church of Canada and chaired the Human Rights Committee of the Canadian Council of Churches as well as their national Human Rights conference. As an active participant in women's issues, she was president of the Diocese of Toronto Anglican Church Women as well as board chair of the Yellow Brick House, a women's shelter.

Currently, Elizabeth is serving as the Canadian Provincial Link to the IAWN and as Coordinator of IAWN-Canada. Her passion for social justice has led her to participate in the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women annually since 2002 and to share those learnings with other women.

Cynthia Greenwood is the Military Ordinariate Representative to IAWN Canada and can be reached at dmgcag1@msn.com



*Elizabeth Loweth
Photo credit IAWN*

COMMANDER'S COMMENDATION FOR CANON NIGEL SHAW

In recognition of his outstanding professionalism and dedication as Army Command Chaplain, Padre Nigel Shaw was awarded the Commander's Commendation on 11 March by Lieutenant General Andrew Leslie, Chief of the Land Staff. In making this award to our colleague, General Leslie noted that Padre Shaw has effectively provided spiritual guidance to the Army through his tireless efforts to improve the level and quality of services offered by Army chaplains. Canon Shaw has represented the Army in numerous collaborative initiatives in multidisciplinary settings which have been indispensable in shaping the context in which the next generation of senior chaplains will provide ministry and leadership within both the Army and the Canadian Forces.

ST CLEMENT'S PREACHING COLLEGE, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVENT

by Padre Rick Durrett

Six Anglican chaplains attended St Clement's Preaching College from 2 to 5 November 2009 at Queen of the Apostle's Retreat Centre in Mississauga, Ontario. The course, entitled: "The Use of Personal Narrative and Testimony in Preaching" enabled each participant to present two sermons in the context of small groups and benefit by the feedback of his or her peers.

As I travelled to Toronto for the event, I thought to myself, "How un-Anglican to use personal narrative and testimony" but despite my initial trepidation, I really enjoyed the three days of study and challenge.

The course was led by the Rev. Dr. Lillian Daniel, Senior Minister at First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ in Glen Ellyn, Illinois. She is also co-host for the TV program "30 Good Minutes" which airs on Sundays at 5 pm on Chicago's WTTW/Ch.11. She received her M.Div. from Yale University and her D. Min from Hartford Seminary. A frequent contributor to the Christian Century and other magazines, she has taught preaching at Yale Divinity School and Chicago Theological Seminary, where she serves on the Board of Trustees. Her book, *Tell It Like It Is: Reclaiming the Practice of Testimony* was published by The Alban Institute in 2006.

Dr Daniel demonstrated in her talks and videos (with folks in her congregation using testimony) the strength of getting to know the faith journey of others within our gathered communities. She urged us to reflect theologically on even the most mundane events of our lives in order to see the hand of God at work and to share that with others in the context of our preaching and pastoral ministry. To get a flavour of her work, you should read her latest book, co-authored with Martin Copenhaver entitled, *This Odd and Wondrous Calling*. If you are computer savvy you can see her preaching on YouTube and get a sense for how she uses personal narrative in her own preaching.



Pictured left to right with Dr Daniel in front: Blair Ross (8 Wg Trenton), Rick Durrett (CMS Ottawa), Terry Wiebe (HMCS Unicorn, Saskatoon), Michelle Staples (Petawawa), Ellis Jagoe (CFB Suffield), and Jack Barrett (CFS St John's).



July 4 - 7, 2010
Vancouver School of Theology
Vancouver, British Columbia

The National Worship Conference is a biennial conference sponsored by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and the Anglican Church of Canada. The Conference welcomes participation by clergy and laity who seek to build up the life of the Christian community through worship so that we might serve the world God loves. This year's theme, *Taking Care of the Neighbourhood: Worship as Public Work for the Common Good*, will guide us as we explore how worship shapes us to care for our communities and our world. Come join us for four days in Vancouver with dynamic and creative speakers, worship and workshops. This year's speakers include Sallie McFague, Doug Todd, Mark MacDonald, and Karen Ward as well as skilled workshop facilitators. Vancouver School of Theology has made arrangements for participation in the National Worship Conference to be used to earn degree credits in the Master of Arts in Theological Studies, the Master of Divinity, the Master of Theology and the Graduate Diploma in Theological Studies. For more information see: <http://nationalworshipconference.org>

GENERAL SYNOD 2010

Every three years in the Anglican Church of Canada, representatives gather from all across this country to form the highest assembly of our Church – the General Synod. Like the mystery of the Trinity, the General Synod forms one leadership body, but is actually comprised of three unique bodies. Every diocese sends their bishops to form the House of Bishops. Every diocese elects a number of clergy - priests and or deacons to form the House of Clergy. Every diocese elects a number of Lay men and women to form the House of Laity. These three Houses come together to form General Synod. It is General Synod which commissions new hymnbooks for the Anglican Church, it is General Synod that elects the new Primate or Archbishop of Canada, and it is General Synod which establishes the national Canon Laws for our Church – the Anglican Church of Canada. But our church is also part of the Anglican Communion. The Anglican Church is one of almost 40 National and Regional churches that make up the Anglican Communion and each of them has their General Synods and distinctly different and culturally nuanced sets of Canon Law. General Synod is a big deal – and in prayer, conscious of tradition and scripture, and using their skills and knowledge from preparatory readings and study, the members of General Synod will try to discern God’s Will for us in this day.

Our Military Ordinariate has six members of General Synod – Our Bishop Ordinary who votes within the House of Bishops; two chaplains (Padres Todd Meaker and Michelle Staples) who vote within the House of Clergy, and three Lay representatives (one of them being a youth representative) Chief Petty Officer Second Class Mark Nicolle, Mr Nelson Usher, and Miss Colleen-Nora Bateman who have been selected from across the Canadian Forces. In our last two newsletter editions, the chaplain and lay representatives introduced themselves to us.

Now, we are literally at the doorsteps of General Synod. General Synod, over 300 delegates will gather at St Mary’s University, in Halifax, Nova Scotia from 3 to 11 June, 2010. Please pray for our delegates and for this assembly.

In preparation of attending General Synod, our delegates have read, and studied, and read again heaps of material. I wanted them to share with us their feelings as they head off to Nova Scotia, but I didn’t want to make even more work for them... and so...

... I invited them to write only a little bit. Haiku is a short form of poetry – just 17 syllables (or so) in a set format. Each of our delegates was invited to write on their state of mind, in a haiku for us... these are joined with some other religious haiku poems that are appropriate for this occasion... and so we read...

*Incense and Music.
Wine, water and bread
to taste.
Come to my senses.*

*God and the seven stars.
Remember then what you
received and heard.
clad thus in white garments.*
- Padre Todd Meaker

*We are Anglicans.
300 years together.
Faith full legacy.*

*Off to the East Coast.
Fulfilling God's role for me.
Donairs are waiting.*
- CPO2 Mark Nicolle

*North, South, East & West.
So many languages here.
Church in communion.*

*Quarrels are incensed.
We gather for Bread
and wine.
The family still.*

*Delegates gather.
A General Synod convenes.
The Spirit is here.*
- John Fletcher (delegate spouse)

*What was I thinking?
Why did I sign on for
this?
General Synod looms!!*
- Nelson Usher

YOU ARE INVITED TO A RECEPTION *by Padre David Greenwood*

Cards that come with a golden scripted invitation on the cover that reads “You are invited to a Reception” usually bring news of great joy. Someone is getting married, or someone is promoted, or some new art exhibit is opening and they want you to come and see. Even if it is a flyer from some business or agency nearby, a “You are invited to a Reception” advert makes you think... “Something s new” or “Something is happening.”

It also means that you have been singled out as someone special (well perhaps targeted as someone special in the case of business advertisements); but there is a mystique about, “why me” or “Oh my Gosh, someone is thinking about including me.”

You might be thinking now that this article is turning towards either “Evangelism” with a message about inviting and including others or that this is an article about making sure that, over the summer, there is a special campaign for the chapel to reach out to new people posted-in or on their House Hunting Trips. Though both ideas are good ones for other articles, this is not the case for this one.

This article is about the word “Reception.” “Reception” is the new buzz-word within church circles dealing with the enactment and putting into practice the decisions reached by authoritative ecclesiastical bodies.

We all know of wonderful retreats that we have been on, national gatherings of guilds, or think tank sessions of chaplains, where for three days our men have epiphany visions of grandeur and our women dream dreams and we end the meeting with a set of minutes that get agreed upon with enthusiasm, typed up and readily circulated, and then efficiently placed into a folder and filed on a shelf. Reports, books, whole commissions have had this happen to them. For three diocesan Synods in a row, we sincerely approved a motion that our parish churches would address the issue of green energy, we would have an energy audit, replace all incandescent light bulbs with energy efficient ones, and so on. And three Synods later, which would be several years later, only two churches in my home diocese, had done any such thing. This is a good example of a blockage to the “Reception” of an idea or decision.

“Reception” is now used frequently within the parts of the church that are dealing with ecumenical relations and those Inter-Denominational Dialogues. Here is an example. You may recall that a fellow named Martin Luther had a disagreement with his bosses over the subject of salvation... was it earned on merit... or freely given as God’s graciousness. There was a bit of a dust raised over it in the early 1500’s... it was a while ago, so I won’t blame you if you don’t remember. Today those followers of Luther (that would be your Lutherans... try and keep up here) who are in full communion with us Anglicans... probably still think that “Justification” is a major dividing factor betwixt them/us and our Roman Catholic brothers and sisters. But is it? Hands up now students, how many of you know that in 1999 the Lutheran World Federation and the Roman Catholic Church reached an historic agreement called the ‘Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification’ which states “the understanding of the doctrine of justification set forth in this Declaration shows that a consensus in basic truths of the doctrine of justification exists between Lutherans and Catholics.” Further, the declaration was signed on Reformation Day, 31 October 1999 and the ceremony took place in Augsburg, Germany, the same place where Luther raised the issue in the first place. And even further, on 18 July 2006, members of the World Methodist Council (this would include the United Church of Canada) meeting in Seoul, South Korea, completely accepted the Catholic-Lutheran declaration on Justification and stated it is fully in accord with Methodist teachings. So here you have the United Church of Canada and all other Methodists around the world, as well as all Lutherans, and all Roman Catholics agreeing on the major issue of the reformation... and all done in the last decade (and they say there is little going on with ecumenical relations). But there is one little problem.

The problem is that no one has heard of this. Though the statements and healings and breeches in doctrine have been resolved, peaceably and through dialogue... if you ask any Catholic faithful person, or Lutheran or Methodist if they are in agreement on salvation/justification... you would either be met with stony silence or a historically fuelled and passionate “No!” Why is this? It is because of the lack of “Reception.”

There is no effective way, in the church, to issue the military command of “Carry it on down!” and align up everyone so that we are all conversant on the current trends and actions of our own churches. Good ideas... great decisions... get lost in the busy-ness of parish or religious life of tending to the broken, binding up wounds, working for justice, celebrating the sacraments and bringing about God’s realm and all.

And there is another problem... it is called “Re-Reception.” This is when, after a long study and discussion, we re-discover that there are issues that we have in common... had in common with our Ecumenical partners, but have forgotten them. The centrality and importance of the Lord’s Supper; the noteworthiness of the presence of Mary from the Annunciation to the foot of the cross and the emergence of the fledgling church; the incredible strength and gift of the presence of people in religious orders; the voices of the past heroes of the church who suffered, fought, struggled and championed over wild beasts, indifference and government bureaucracy – who we may call saints or simply heroes; and the decisions of the Councils and Synods of the Church that, in passion and faithfulness, wrestled with the issues of the day including eco-friendly light bulbs, and who made decisions which we could, we should, re-receive when our friendly ecumenical neighbours remind us of them.

SEASON OF PENTECOST
COLOURING PAGE



When the day of Pentecost had come, the followers of Jesus were all together in one place. Suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided flames, as of fire, appeared among them and a tongue of flame rested on head of each of them. They were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. This was the birthday of the church.