

COUNCIL OF GENERAL SYNOD (COGS) – DAILY HIGHLIGHTS



***We envision a church growing
in membership, faith
and service in God's world***

**Saturday, March 13, 2010
Queen of Apostles, Mississauga, Ont.**

On this third day of their four-day meeting, COGS members met for Eucharist at 8:45, then broke out into their Bible study groups. They met for business at 10:30.

Vision 2019

Dean Peter Elliott, chair of the Vision 2019 Task Force, presented the recent revisions that a small group had made to the Vision 2019 report, as per COGS's suggestions. The group included Donna Bomberly, Dr. Lela Zimmer, and Bishop Jane Alexander.

Each member spoke about the direction of the revised report. Bishop Alexander celebrated that the invitation to participate in the Marks of Mission would be something that people could take home to their parishes and dioceses. Ms. Bomberly said she was looking forward to seeing an emphasis on the self-determining ministry of Indigenous Peoples. Dr. Zimmer noted, among other things, that if the church takes the Marks of Mission seriously they must address the issue of non-stipendiary ministry.

Michael Thompson, the primary writer of the report, also spoke enthusiastically about the work of the group.

Several COGS members responded to the group's work. The questions ranged from, "How does Vision 2019 encourage evangelism in the church?" to "What is the relationship of the various mission statements—of Vision 2019, of the Anglican Church of Canada, etc.?"

***Resolution**

After a pause for prayer, COGS resolved by consensus to pass the following motions relating to Vision 2019:

- to adopt the Vision 2019 Report.
- to direct that the detailed wording of this text as indicated in document 037-11-10-03 [the focus group's work] be completed within two weeks.
- to place the revised Vision 2019 report before General Synod for its consideration.
- to recommend that General Synod adopt the Vision 2019 report.

Council celebrated this moment with applause.

Budgeting principles

Suzanne Lawson re-introduced COGS to the budgeting principles that members had articulated on Thursday. The principles were laid out on flip charts and Council members were directed to weigh the principles by placing different coloured stickers next to them. Council participated in this exercise for about 15 minutes.

Voting for ACIP members

The Primate noted that earlier in this meeting the Ven. Larry Beardy had asked that members of the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples (ACIP) be allowed a vote at COGS. (Currently ACIP members attend, but do not vote.) The Primate said he has spoken with the chancellor, Ron Stevenson, about a way for this COGS to address this issue later in the meeting.

12:00 After midday prayers, Council members had their lunch break. They reconvened at 2:00.

Philanthropy

Dr. Holland Hendrix, executive director of philanthropy, spoke further about new plans for a nation-wide fundraising initiative.

Dr. Hendrix explained in more detail how the Department of Philanthropy initially planned to launch an "Anglicans in Mission"-style campaign that would be coordinated by the national office. However, once the department began its research it realized that many dioceses were already launching and planning their own capital campaigns. The department

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then decided to connect with dioceses to discuss how national fundraising components could be incorporated into these campaigns.

Dr. Hendrix explained that the department is already coordinating with multiple dioceses and that 3-5 year capital campaigns with national coordination will be rolling out across Canada up until 2019. He noted with this new strategy the department hopes to raise more money than with their previous strategy.

Dr. Hendrix also acknowledged that there were some risks with this approach, including the need for staff and the possibility of a lack of buy-in from dioceses. He said the department is already working on these challenges.

Council members and the Primate had a variety of questions for Dr. Hendrix. They asked many questions about the relationship between diocesan and national feasibility studies, and about the role of COGS in approving and monitoring this work.

COGS began to craft a resolution that would clarify its endorsement of the Department of Philanthropy's new strategy as well as its reporting relationship with COGS. Council decided this resolution would be refined for presentation later in the meeting.

COGS members took a coffee break from 3:00 to 3:15.

Resolutions

COGS turned to review a number of resolutions that will be recommended to the meeting of General Synod this June in Halifax. COGS first examined a resolution stemming from an earlier discussion about voting privileges for ACIP members. Council members discussed the implications of extending voting privileges to other members as well, but eventually decided to only pass the proposed motion:

***Resolution**

By unanimous consensus, COGS recommended to General Synod that the constitution be amended to include in the membership of COGS two members appointed by Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples (ACIP).

The Council then reviewed resolutions from standing committees that are going directly to General Synod. The committees and topics were:

From Faith, Worship, and Ministry

1. Anglican Communion Covenant
2. Theological Education for Presbyteral Ministry
3. National Aboriginal Day of Prayer
4. Sexuality Dialogues
5. Principles for Liturgical Revision
6. Solemnization of Marriage (Here members of FWMC explained that their committee is proposing a study re-examining the solemnization of marriage.)
7. Four Hundredth Anniversary of the Authorized Version of the Bible
8. Fortieth anniversary of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission
9. Dialogue with the United Church.

From Partners in Mission & Ecojustice (PMEJ)

10. Revised mandate: PMEJ
11. Youth secretariat
12. Participation in Truth and Reconciliation
13. UN Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples
14. Nuclear Weapons
15. Partnership with the Diocese of Jerusalem
16. Justice in Palestine and Israel
17. Strategies: Poverty and Homelessness
18. Climate Change

Judy Darling reminded the Council that one of the reasons that General Synod has had continuing problems with deficit budgeting is because new work is approved at General Synod without adequate research into costs. Ms. Darling has served on several expenditure committees as well as the Financial Management and Development Committee.

Council members discussed various ways to incorporate serious consideration of motions' expenditures into the process of the General Synod meeting.

COGS then examined preliminary theological work by Faith, Worship, and Ministry, which had been distributed earlier in the meeting.

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Members considered how much of this draft document should be shared, and if so, where.

***Resolution**

Council resolved by consensus to receive with thanks the “Report of the Joint Primate’s Theological Commission / Faith, Worship, and Ministry Blessings Task Group” and request that more work be done on this matter.

Gloria Moses, ACIP co-chair, noted that ACIP is forwarding a resolution to General Synod on the Doctrine of Discovery. This is one of several other motions not discussed by COGS that will be forwarded to General Synod.

Anglican Award of Merit

Acting General Secretary Sam Carriere reported on a recent meeting of the Anglican Award of Merit Committee.

***Resolution**

COGS voted that the following people receive the Anglican Award of Merit in 2010: Mr. Robert T. Dickson (Diocese of New Westminster); Canon Alice Jean Finlay (Diocese of Toronto); David Jones (Diocese of Edmonton); Mary Elizabeth Loweth (Diocese of Toronto); and Monica Patten (Diocese of Ottawa).

At 5:00 Council adjourned for social hour and dinner, then reconvened at 7:00.

COGS’s report to General Synod

Suzanne Lawson reviewed the elements of COGS’s report to General Synod. These elements included highlighting a new consensus model of decision-making, and priorities of strategic planning and relationships within the Anglican Communion. COGS members suggested other points to add to this list, including changes in leadership positions and an emphasis on worship and Bible study.

Conversation with COGS partners

Instead of the usual partners’ reports Archbishop Colin Johnson led a panel interview with partners: Bishop Tom Morgan, Primate’s World Relief and Development Fund; Martha Gardner, the Episcopal Church (TEC); Dorothy Davies-Flindall, COGS’s representative to TEC; and Gloria Moses, ACIP co-chair. Archbishop Johnson is

Anglican representative to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC).

Archbishop Johnson’s questions included, “How is this gathering different from your community?” and the blunt “Would we miss you if you weren’t here?”

Partners offered a variety of reflections. Bishop Johnson commended the ELCIC’s use of email polls. Bishop Morgan celebrated the Vision 2019 emphasis on the church’s mission. Ms. Gardner challenged COGS to examine whether their composition reflected the demographic diversity of the broader church.

A Letter to the Next COGS

COGS members brainstormed messages to convey to the next COGS. These included

- We valued unity in the midst of diversity
- We were grounded in Bible study and worship every day.
- We encourage the next COGS to continue with anti-racism training.
- We encourage the next COGS to continue the commitment to no-deficit budgeting.
- We encourage future COGS members to learn how to do consensus decision-making well.
- Future COGS members should mentor and respect youth members and new Council members.
- If the Governance Working Group proposal for a smaller COGS is passed by General Synod, then COGS members will need to be more intentional in sharing their learnings with their communities back home.

8:30 After evening prayer, members of COGS adjourned for a farewell party to mark the end of their work this triennium.