

COUNCIL OF GENERAL SYNOD (COGS) – DAILY HIGHLIGHTS



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

**Saturday, November 17, 2007
Queen of Apostles, Mississauga, Ont.**

Council convened at 9 a.m. for worship and Bible study.

Members reviewed the agenda for the day, structured around the Eucharist.

Budget

Council continued its work on the **General Synod Budget** for 2008 which began with presentations by the treasurer and members of the Financial Management and Development Committee the previous day. Council now began deliberating on the budget.

The treasurer and members of the FMDC answered questions about funding for the Council of the North, the Sacred Circle and the National Indigenous Bishop.

General Secretary

Archdeacon Michael Pollesel presented the **General Secretary's report**.

- He described a planning study of Church House initiated along the *Letting Down the Nets* model. He said this work is now before Management Team and will be presented to Church House staff before Christmas. The report contains some items that relate to CoGS and expectations of the Council by staff.
- Archdeacon Pollesel also commented on evaluations of the General Synod gathering in Winnipeg.
- He described a meeting of provincial secretaries he attended in Hong Kong.

- He noted that Dr. **Ellie Johnson**, director of Partnerships, is retiring in March.

The report also contained a number of motions.

Council resumed the celebration of the **Eucharist**.

Council adjourned for lunch and reconvened at 2 p.m.

Archbishop Caleb Lawrence announced that Canon **Linda Nicholls**, coordinator for dialogue with the Faith, Worship and Ministry department of General Synod, has been elected Suffragan Bishop in the diocese of Toronto.

The **Eucharist** continued with the *prayers of the people*, shaped by the Mission Statement of the Anglican Church of Canada.

In the context of recent events such as votes on the blessing of same sex unions in different dioceses and the action taken by Bishop Donald Harvey, the Primate asked the council whether it wished time to discuss the **level of anxiety and tension** Anglicans are living through in Canada and the Communion. Members of the Council declined to devote more time to issues already discussed this morning in Bible study.

Youth Initiatives

Judy Steers and Dean Peter Wall made a presentation on youth initiatives. Dean Wall gave a historical summary of the church's recent involvement with youth initiatives. The work with youth presently exists outside of the formal structure of the church. Youth work is an area that was transferred to dioceses when the 1995 strategic plan was adopted. In 2004, however, youth work was identified as a priority in the *Framework*. In response, in 2004, CoGS established a partnership with *Ask and Imagine* to work at the development of youth initiatives. In 2005, the EcoJustice Committee established justice camps for young people. In 2006, the Primate's office funded the development of a web site for young people – generation.ca. A conference for young people is presently planned for 2008, to be held in London, Ont. Questions that emerge are what the commitment of the national church is to youth ministry? How can the momentum in youth ministry be maintained.

Dean Wall and Ms Steers answered questions.

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Council approved a resolution to establish a **youth initiative task force** “to draft a policy base, strategic objectives and a budget proposal for work in youth ministries at the national level.”

The chancellor explained the purpose of a **no-debate list** and described how it works.

Council considered a resolution from the Anglican Journal Board proposing an **open meeting policy** for the Anglican Church of Canada. Members discussed the resolution.

Pension Committee

Council considered the report of the Pension Committee. Results of an actuarial valuation were presented. Council considered a number of resolutions arising from the committee report, including one that eliminates employee contributions to the Continuing Education Plan.

Budget

The treasurer distributed new budget material to reflect some of the concerns previously expressed. An item of \$50,000 has been added to the budget of the proposed Development Office specifically allocated to working on stewardship in aboriginal communities. Further discussions will be held at Management Team to cover shortfalls in funding to the Sacred Circle internally. Changes have also been made to the introduction of the budget to clarify the reception of a \$4 million legacy and the description of how it will be used. This balances the budget. In summary, \$220,000 is allocated to the Development Office. About \$550,000 is required to offset recoveries from 2007, and another \$560,000 is allocated to increases in the costs of programs and salaries.

Council resumed its discussion of the **open meeting policy**. Council approved the policy with some modifications. At the suggestion of the Chancellor, it was agreed that the policy will become a new appendix to the Handbook.

Council heard reflections from Judy Kochendorfer, partner from the **Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada**. She thanked the council for its inclusion of her, and for the role of prayer and the Eucharist in the proceedings. She said she was impressed with how the council reviews and considers financial

matters. She said she was impressed by the gracious and generous tone of the *Letter to the Church* approved by the council yesterday.

Council members heard a brief progress report from Allan Cook of **Augsburg Fortress** on the partnership between Augsburg Fortress and the Anglican Book Centre.

Council adjourned for dinner at 5 p.m. and reconvened at 7 p.m.

Council heard an information session and update on **healing and reconciliation** presented by Ellie Johnson, director of Partnerships. We are not finished with the residential schools issue, she said. We are entering another phase of what will be a very long term journey. The Anglican Church, through the presence of Esther Wesley on a membership selection committee, is involved in the establishment of a truth and reconciliation commission. Ms Johnson described the considerable support that the Anglican Church of Canada archivist has been providing to different parts of this process. She also described the refunds that will be coming to the Anglican church from the federal government as a result of the renegotiated residential schools agreement. She explained how these refunds might be allocated.

The council heard reflections from Sydney Black, co-chair of the **Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples (ACIP)** a partner to CoGS. Archdeacon Black commended members of CoGS for how they have been handling difficult issues with care and compassion for each other under “the gentle leadership” of the Primate. “You are rainbow folk,” he said. “We are truly blessed and blessed to be a blessing to others.”

Council heard reflections from Bishop **Mark MacDonald**, National Indigenous Bishop. He said it “is a great pleasure to be home and where I always knew that I belonged.” He said the team assembled by the Anglican Church to work on indigenous issues and the support that they receive is world class and a real achievement.

Bishop MacDonald said the Sacred Circle looms large in the near future and said it is to indigenous peoples what General Synod is to the rest of the church. There are a number of challenges and opportunities related to this, he said. One of

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these, he said, involves the stresses and needs of overworked clergy, most of them non-stipendiary. “We are looking forward to providing some connections to some of these.” The other area, he said, is ministry to first-nations people in urban areas. Bishop MacDonald said he is in the process of visiting a number of these urban areas.

The appointment of a national indigenous bishop creates a hope and a joy in people, he said. We are making an impact that is difficult to imagine, he said, and we have created hope.

Alyson Barnett-Cowan, director of Faith, Worship and Ministry, introduced a preliminary response to the draft of **An Anglican Covenant**. She gave some of the history behind the concept of an Anglican Covenant, a document, she said, that was created as a result of a recommendation contained in The Windsor Report. The Covenant, she said, has been sent to every diocese for study and response.

She also introduced a *preliminary response* prepared by the *Anglican Communion Working Group*. She invited members to consider the response in table groups and to be prepared to discuss it in greater detail tomorrow.

Council adjourned at 9 p.m. for the completion of the Eucharist.