

# COGS Highlights



Council of General Synod - "Embodying God's call"

Nov 17, 2013

*After a hymn and morning Bible study at 8:45 am, committee members and COGS associates broke off for committee meetings and further training sessions. There was no morning session of COGS.*

*All enjoyed a break, and then gathered in the chapel for a celebration of the Holy Eucharist.*

*COGS members had their last lunch of the meeting, and then convened for their final session at 1 pm, beginning with the hymn "Stand up and bless the Lord."*

## A Spiritual Movement

National Indigenous Anglican Bishop Mark MacDonald introduced "A Spiritual Movement," a video produced by Indigenous Ministries and Anglican Video (part of Communications and Information Resources) to explain the significance of developments at General Synod 2013 for Indigenous Anglicans.

Topics covered in the video were the Inuktitut Bible translation, Canon XXII as a step forward for Indigenous self-determination in the church, and the creation of the new diocese in Northern Ontario, the Indigenous Spiritual Ministry of Mishamikweesh.

## General Resolution 172 on Palestine and Israel

Lynn McNaughton, filling in for Bishop John Chapman (COGS member for Partners in Mission), gave background information on General Synod resolution A172 on Palestine and Israel.

Andrea Mann, General Synod's Global Relations coordinator, continued the presentation with an update on actions prescribed by the motion, including work by the Primate, collaboration with the ELCIC, and conversations with Bishop of Jerusalem Suheil Dawani, with other Canadian church denominations, government and diplomatic contacts, and other interested organizations.

Further actions proposed for this triennium include development and provision of resources for local study about peace with justice in Israel and Palestine, including the A Moment of Truth study guide, and

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examination of issues surrounding anti-Semitism, Christian Zionism, and Islamophobia.

## Together in Mission Report

Monica Patten, chair of the Resources for Mission committee, presented the Together in Mission report on behalf of Sam Carriere, director of Resources for Mission, and the project team. Ms. Patten gave an overview of the history of Together in Mission and its outcomes.

Ms. Patten shared things the TiM team had learned, including the state of stewardship education in the Anglican Church of Canada, the need for more capacity to help dioceses proceed through stages of a campaign, and the critical role of leadership to the success of a feasibility study, let alone a campaign.

Ms. Patten also listed benefits of TiM, such as: feedback from dioceses and parishes on how much they have learned about their own capacities and the importance of stewardship; the discovery of new leaders across the entire church; and the development of many new resources and tools.

Going forward, TiM team members will encourage those dioceses doing campaigns to keep in touch with Resources for Mission and to share their powerful stories.

## Resolution

COGS resolved that, to the greatest extent possible, General Synod materials be sourced in a socially, environmentally, and ethically responsible manner.

## Partners' Reflections

The Primate, Archbishop Fred Hiltz, invited representatives of partner organizations to address the session.

Martha Gardner from The Episcopal Church (TEC) spoke on TEC and its international nature (present in 16-18 countries beyond the US; largest diocese is Haiti), as well as its structure and governance.



Ms. Gardner suggested that—from her experience of what was done for Spanish speakers on TEC executive council—it would be beneficial for COGS to have presentations done in First Nations languages, French, or other languages spoken by Canadian Anglicans, as an act of inclusion and education.

Next to speak was Laura Marie Piotrowicz, on behalf of PWRDF. She thanked COGS for the opportunity to share the Fred Says campaign, and for COGS' response (particularly to the food baskets, and money COGS members donated directly during the course of the meeting).

Ms. Piotrowicz spoke positively about the love and respect present at COGS and the real pleasure of coming to a church meeting. "This is not just a business meeting, but we have gathered together as the body of Christ."

COGS heard finally from Pat Lovell from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC). Ms. Lovell remarked on how impressed she was with the engaging quality of COGS activities and discussions, the warmth and community in worship and Bible study, and the deep commitment to Indigenous people and youth. "This relationship is just wonderful to see, it's inspirational."

### **Key Messages**

Jane Osler, co-chair of the Planning and Agenda Team, asked COGS members to consider the key messages of this meeting. Ms. Osler pointed out that the minutes and reports are freely available and sharable with the church at large.

COGS spent time in table group discussion on the question of what they most wished to share with the church.

There were many examples of high points that moved and encouraged the group, including Saturday's apology commemoration ("very moving... a proud moment for our church and something we need to celebrate"), the opportunity for committees and COGS members to spend time together, and the good news coming out of the Anglican Foundation and PWRDF.

As a capstone to the key messages, the General Secretary thanked General Synod staff Dianne Izzard for her tireless work in support of COGS for the last fourteen years. Ms. Izzard, who will be retiring before the next COGS meeting in May 2014, rose and was met with a rousing standing ovation from all gathered at Queen of the Apostles. There will be a celebration in honour of Ms. Izzard at the May meeting of the Council.

The Primate thanked Ms. Osler for her hard work in making this session of COGS possible.

### **Closing comments and prayer from the Primate**

To close this COGS session the Primate read an excerpt from the World Council of Churches convergence document *Toward a Common Vision* concerning the common faith of Christians that impels them to work for God's mission in the world. The Archbishop then led a final prayer.

*COGS members stood to sing a final hymn, "Hail to the Lord's Anointed," were led in prayer by the Primate, and then adjourned.*