

## COUNCIL OF GENERAL SYNOD (COGS) – DAILY HIGHLIGHTS



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

**November 2005, Mississauga, Ont.  
(Queen of Apostles)**

***Friday, Nov. 18***

*Council convened at 9.am. for prayers and Bible study.*

The day was devoted to an anti-racism workshop developed by the **Anti-Racism Working Group**. The Primate introduced Mel Malton, co-chair of the Anti-Racism Working Group who gave a history of the group and explained the day's activities.

This is the second time the module is offered – the first was to the board of the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund.

Council agreed with the working group's suggestion that in order for members of CoGS to participate fully, the day's discussions would not be reported.

Before the evening adjournment, the Primate welcomed and introduced the Rt. Rev. John Paterson, Bishop of Auckland, NZ, and chair of the Anglican Consultative Council, as guest and special visitor.

In the evening, there was a dinner to honor Archdeacon **Jim Boyles** who retired as General Secretary of General Synod last summer.

***Saturday, Nov. 19***

*Council convened at 9 a.m. for prayers and Bible study.*

Ellie Johnson introduced Cheryl Curtis, the new director of the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund.

The first part of the morning was spent in small information sessions discussing the proposed budget for 2006 presented by the Treasurer on Thursday. Members of the council broke up into sub-groups that considered the budget for 1) Partnerships and the General Secretary; 2) Faith Worship and Ministry, Communications and Information Resources and the Anglican Journal and 3) Financial Management and Development, the Anglican Book Center and the Primate's Office.

Members of CoGS rotated to each of the groups so that each member of council got exposure to each of the sub-groups. Questions considered included: 1) How these areas of the budget reflect the *Framework*? 2) Is there new work in the budget? 3) What work is threatened? 4) What will happen to lost work? Who will do it?

*Break*

Council heard a report from the **Anglican Council of Indigenous People**. Archdeacon Sidney Black presented the report. The report included comments and observations on the Sacred Circle, 2005 at Pinawa last summer. He noted that he Primate accepted in principle at the circle the request that a national indigenous bishop be appointed within a year. There are now three groups working on the selection and funding of a bishop and on communications. He said ACIP would continue to report on progress to the church. Archdeacon Black affirmed the Primate's statement to the effect that this gathering had a healthy, forward-looking tone to it.

Donna Bomberry and Archdeacon Black have just returned from a Maori gathering in New Zealand where the Maori people govern themselves as one of three separate but related streams in the church.

Presenters of the report heard comments and answered a few questions, principally around the question of a national indigenous bishop. The question of where the authority to appoint a national bishop lies was referred to the Chancellor.

*Council adjourned for lunch at 12 p.m. and reconvened at 2 p.m*

Most of the afternoon was dedicated to last summer's Nottingham Anglican Consultative Council meeting. (There was a report before CoGS by the members and presenters to the ACC.) Members of the Council and presenters Bob Falby and Peter Elliott, as well as ACC members

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Suzanne Lawson, Allen Box and Sue Moxley spoke to CoGS.

**Allen Box** said there were both good things and bad things out of the gathering. He said he was proud to have been part of the experience. There were many ways in which the Canadians were left outside of the ACC proceedings, even at Eucharist.

He said he also witnessed incidents that point to disturbing trends in the Communion. Some of these things, such as the obvious influence of outsiders, were painful and discouraging to see. There were also “up” points such as the daily Bible studies by Rowan Williams. However we were not allowed to participate in the discussion groups that followed the daily Bible studies. There were lots of things that were positive and encouraging and lots of things that were negative and discouraging.

**Suzanne Lawson** said she was glad the Canadian church was represented at the meeting, but that it was very difficult not to be able to participate. Some of the things that were said about us were very hard to hear and it was hard to be left out during the *in camera* sessions. She said she came home with a strong commitment to the leadership of the Anglican Communion. It was an awkward situation and the leaders of the council made us feel valued.

**Bob Falby** agreed the meeting was a mixture of good and bad experiences. He said he valued the opportunity to meet and talk with some of the people attending the meeting. The motion by Archbishop Akinola the morning after the presentation was made and presented in a way that gave neither North American churches the opportunity to respond and then dealt with *in camera*. “I found that a very bad thing.” The second bad thing was a complete misrepresentation of what the position of this church is on the issue of same-sex blessings. Our message was that we are a church in discussion and that message was deliberately ignored.

**Peter Elliott** noted that a discussion of the Canadian and U.S. presentations scheduled for the evening was cancelled. He described the presentations that were made by six Canadians. He described an evening reception held the evening after the presentations so that there could be informal exchanges with the Canadians. The reception was well attended and valuable. He said he believes the Canadian church is called by God “for a significant period of discernment within the Communion.”

**Sue Moxley** said that CoGS decision to send members but not allow them to participate was improperly understood by some. We need to be really clear about what we are saying. We should not have left the room during the closed sessions. There are new voices finding themselves at the ACC. We need to listen to those voices and en-

courage them when they speak. It was important for us to be there. To have walked away would have been to walk away from what Christ calls us to. We should never again allow ourselves to be bullied into not being present. We tried to be conciliatory. We need to listen carefully but we should not again allow ourselves to be bullied.

Members of the Council asked questions and made comments.

Council heard from staff about steps that have been taken and events that have occurred since the ACC meeting.

### *Break*

The Primate introduced the Rt. Rev. **John Paterson**, former Primate of New Zealand, Bishop of Auckland and chair of the Anglican Consultative Council.

Bishop Paterson apologized for the treatment that Canadians received at the ACC. He said he did not enjoy the last meeting or the way Canada and the United States were treated. Members of the Anglican Church of Canada behaved with grace and dignity. “You were very very well represented and that goes as well for the quality of the presentation that was made.”

He commented on the ‘covenant’ mentioned in the Windsor report.

He said that while he is not a conspiracy theorist some very good minds in the United States feel that that is what is going on. Some church leaders have made up their minds where they stand and are now telling us that we must move to where they are. The covenant needs to be taken seriously. It may be the last hope of finding something that allows us to continue to stand together, if indeed what we want to do is to continue to stand together. “It may be that unity as opposed to Communion is now something that is in our past.”

He hopes that member churches will give the Windsor report due consideration. Alyson Barnett-Cowan, he said, represented this church magnificently on the Lambeth Commission.

He hopes the ‘listening process’ will allow churches throughout the communion to appreciate their differences.

***“The Anglican Church of Canada remains an important part of the Anglican Communion. The Communion needs Canada and I believe Canada needs the Communion.”***

Both ECUSA and the Anglican Church of Canada have been exemplary in the attention they have given the Windsor Report and have met all the requests that the report contains.

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He said he does not think that the ACC motion to have all the Primates sit on the Council will be approved.

*Bishop Paterson invited questions from the Council and engaged members in conversation.*

Bishop Paterson said he would like more of the conversation about the Communion to be carried out at the regional level. Those of us who have friendships in the Communion as Canada and New Zealand do must continue to work at those relationships. There are those in the Communion who are getting extremely well organized and there are those who are not.

If the “listening process” is going to happen, it must happen at several levels.

We need to revisit links like partners in mission and companion dioceses that allowed us to talk to each other.

Council heard a report from the **Partners in Mission Committee**. The report contains several items for the information of the Council. Committee member Bill Mous also brought to the attention of members several new resources that have been recently produced.

Council heard a report from the Board of Directors of the **Anglican Journal**. Rev. Robert Towler acknowledged that the current board includes 12 new members. The report contained several items for information. Mr. Towler described several sub-groups that have been formed to address certain specific issues. Circulation Manager Bev Murphy reviewed cuts in Heritage Canada subsidies and postal rate increases. Council approved a motion appointing Ernst and Young as auditors of the Journal.

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

Council received a report from the **Council of the North** presented by Archbishop Caleb Lawrence. The Council of the North requested a significant block of time on the Spring 2006 agenda to acquaint members with the circumstances surrounding Council of the North dioceses.

Council received a report from the **Healing Fund**. The report contained several items for information.

Council heard a reflection from Sonja Freed, a partner from the **Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada**. She shared with CoGS a statement issued

by the church in the aftermath of last summer’s rejection at the Lutheran Convention of the local option in the blessing of same-sex unions. She noted that there are many similarities between issues faced by the Lutheran and Anglican denominations.

Council heard a report from the **Governance Working Group**. The group has just begun its work.

Council heard an update on the **Letting Down the Nets** process from Geoff Jackson.

Council received information on diocesan proportional giving. Members were invited to reflect on how their dioceses are doing in meeting their commitments.

Council considered resolutions.

*Council adjourned at 9 p.m.*