

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



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

**Friday, May 23, 2008  
Queen of Apostles, Mississauga, Ont.**

The triennium's second regular meeting of the Council of General Synod (COGS) began with the Eucharist, celebrated by the Right Rev. Tom Morgan, chaplain of COGS.

After the Eucharist, COGS members spent time in Bible study in their home groups.

#### **Preliminaries**

After a short break, the chair, Archbishop Fred Hiltz, welcomed members who were unable to attend last time. He also noted some regrets from members unable to attend this meeting. He also introduced staff, who waved and looked friendly.

Stephen Andrews, prolocutor of General Synod, read the orders of the day. He also presented Leanne Larmondin, outgoing editor of the *Anglican Journal*, with a bouquet of flowers in recognition of her work at General Synod.

#### **Resolutions**

Council then agreed to adopt the minutes from the November 2007 meeting.

Council confirmed the members of the Strategic Planning Process Task Force and the Governance Working Group.

#### **Primate's Reflections**

Archbishop Hiltz began his report by reading Acts 2:41-47, which describes the life of the early church. Citing theologian Raymond Brown, the Primate suggested that this part of Acts showed a *theology* as much as a history

of the church. He said that COGS is part of the ongoing working out of this theology.

The Primate has travelled widely since the last COGS meeting, and said that by the end of 2008, he will have visited 23 of the church's 30 dioceses. Highlights from his recent diocesan visits include travelling with all three Newfoundland bishops during his trip to the Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador. He also enjoyed the ordination of Wilfred Sanderson, a man much loved by his community in James Smith reserve, Saskatchewan.

Moving on to his Church House work, the Primate said he has met with all General Synod staff over the past few months and was impressed by how many of them viewed their work as ministry. He is also serving as president of the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund and is looking forward to their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration next year.

The Primate then highlighted two trips. In February he visited Cuba to serve as the chair of the Metropolitan Council of Cuba. In March he participated in the Remembering the Children tour, which visited four Canadian cities to promote the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on residential schools. He described this as an "enormous event" where churches reiterated their apologies and heard from Aboriginal leaders.

In April, the Primate met with the House of Bishops, which he said is drawing closer through worship and through prayer vigil commitments from various communities. He is also preparing for the Lambeth Conference, the meeting of all bishops in the Anglican Communion, in July. He expects that the Anglican Covenant will be a major topic of discussion.

The Primate then updated COGS on ecumenical dialogues. He said he continues to meet regularly with Bishop Susan Johnson of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC). They have issued several joint letters including one in support of an Anglican-Lutheran initiative to address homelessness.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGS) were the Primate's next topic. He has already spoken to the Canadian Council of Churches

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about how churches can keep the governments accountable to their 2015 goals. “I’m beating the drum on this one,” he said.

*Lunch*

*Council reconvened at 1:00 pm.*

**Priority Exercise**

COGS members spent the afternoon working through a priority exercise, led by Susan Graham Walker and John Whincup of Kemerer Group International (KGI). General Synod management team worked through this same exercise one month ago.

To find their priorities, COGS members began by asking these questions:

1. What does COGS want to be recognized for at General Synod 2010?
2. What do we need to focus on to achieve that recognition?
3. What does COGS expect of Management Team?
4. What does Management Team expect of COGS?
5. What values guide the work of COGS?

Tomorrow Ms. Walker and Mr. Whincup will present the refined results of this exercise.

*Dinner*

*Council reconvened at 7:00 pm.*

**Consensus decision-making**

Stephen Andrews spoke about consensus decision-making, the process that COGS is now using in their regular meetings. He described how it is different from a traditional parliamentary system and reviewed the ground rules. Several COGS members shared their experiences of the consensus model.

COGS members then discussed a surprise (and fictional) resolution from the “Faith, Worship, Ministry, and Entertainment” committee, that famed directors Joel and Ethan Coen write new liturgical material for the Anglican Church of Canada.

Members were then eager to apply the consensus model by asking questions such as, “What are the implications for Anglican-Jewish dialogue?” and “Will directors travel to Palm Springs to meet with the Coens?”

**Resolutions**

Turning again to serious business, the council confirmed the membership of the Primate’s Role Task Force.

Council also adopted the new long-term Disability plan.

Council added Ross Whitelaw as member of General Synod Planning Committee 2010.

Council also welcomed the invitation of the Bishop and the Diocese of Ontario to hold 2013 General Synod in the Diocese of Ontario. They noted that they wished to explore what the ELCIC’s meeting plans were (since there is an opportunity to host a joint meeting), and authorized officers of General Synod to make the final determination.

**General Secretary’s Report**

General Secretary Michael Pollesel gave a brief update on General Synod’s ongoing work surrounding residential schools. He also mentioned several recent staff changes.

*8:00 Council closed with night prayer.*