

COGS Highlights



Council of General Synod

Saturday, June 2, 2018

Council members gathered at 8:45 a.m. at the Queen of Apostles Renewal Centre in Mississauga, Ont.

Morning Eucharist, Orders of the Day

Deputy Prolocutor and Executive Archdeacon Lynne McNaughton presided over the morning Eucharist service, with Ms. Melissa Green providing the homily.

Dean Peter Wall read out the Orders of the Day.

CoGS Progress Report

Prolocutor Cynthia Haines-Turner and the Deputy Prolocutor gave a brief presentation on the progress of the Council of General Synod (CoGS) thus far over the course of the 2016-2019 triennium, relating them to the responsibilities of CoGS as outlined in the Constitution of the General Synod. In terms of providing overall strategic vision and planning within the mandate of the General Synod, they highlighted the decision of CoGS to extend Vision 2019 to 2022, while the Heartbeat of the Church initiative will help inform a new plan going forward.

In terms of coordinating the work of all committees, councils, boards, commissions and divisions of the General Synod, CoGS had received regular reports from standing and co-ordinating committees and enhanced coordination through the presence of the Prolocutor and Deputy Prolocutor. Haines-Turner and McNaughton also spoke about CoGS carrying on the work of the General Synod between sessions, through actions such as moving forward with the Anglican-United Church Dialogue and the establishment of the Responsible Investment Task Force. CoGS has also created a process for discussion of the marriage canon, continued work around reconciliation and motions around Canon XXII related to National Indigenous Ministry, and facilitated preparations

for General Synod 2019 in Vancouver.

Following their presentation, a motion was put forward in support of the Heartbeat of the Church initiative outlined in the Primate's report. The motion was carried by consensus.

Resolution

Be it resolved that this Council of General Synod fully support the Primate's call to the church to engage with the project entitled "The Heartbeat of the Church" beginning in the Fall of 2018.

Members broke for coffee from 10:15 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.

Audited Financial Statements / Budget Scenarios

Mr. Robert Saffrey, chair of the Financial Management Committee, introduced the committee's report on the church's audited financial statements, while Archbishop Colin Johnson presented much of the report. Overall revenue for the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada was \$11.9 million, a decrease of \$400,000 over the previous year, while overall expenses were \$11.4 million, or \$1.2 million lower than last year. The resulting surplus of core revenues over expenses was \$521,214.

After presenting the Financial Management Committee's report, five motions were put forward and carried by consensus.

Resolution

That the Council of General Synod approve the audited financial statements of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of

Canada for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2017.

Resolution

That the Council of General Synod approve the audited financial statements of the Anglican Church of Canada Consolidated Trust Fund for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2017.

Resolution

That the Council of General Synod approve the audited financial statements of the Anglican Church of Canada Resolution Corporation for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2017.

Resolution

That the Council of General Synod approve the changes to the Statement of Investment Policy as recommended by the Investment Committee and Financial Management Committee.

Resolution

That the Council of General Synod approve the appointment of Grant Thornton LLP as auditor for General Synod for fiscal year 2018, at a fee determined by the Audit Committee.

After the resolutions were passed, General Secretary Michael Thompson spoke briefly on the previous day's discussion following the report from the Primate's Commission on Discovery, Reconciliation, and Justice.

Thompson said it was increasingly clear that the mind of the council, as a representational group reflecting the mind of the church, believes that justice, reconciliation, and self-determination are emerging priorities for the life of the whole church, and therefore for CoGS in its use of resources. As a result, the council must take seriously questions it had heard about the planned Jubilee Commission: How it can account not just for past practices, but

for current resources and future decisions in a way that pays more than lip service to those priorities?

The General Secretary said he was "delighted" the previous day to see the ways that council could commission the church's attentiveness to its use of resources. He expressed hope as the church moves forward to act with more conviction in its journey toward reconciliation and self-determination. He looked forward to the planned video documentary on the Doctrine of Discovery becoming a resource in the hands of those who wish to create change in this country. Finally, Thompson expressed his gratitude to National Indigenous Anglican Bishop Mark MacDonald and others in the church who have reminded us that there is a moral content in the investments of the Anglican Church of Canada — a moral content that Thompson believed was the work of the Holy Spirit acting to sustain the church in its service to God's mission.

Members broke for lunch from noon until 1:30 p.m.

Bible Study

The afternoon session began with a Bible study in which council members studied and reflected on John 15:12-17, the same reading from the previous day's study and a major thematic component of the Heartbeat of the Church initiative.

Indigenous Ministries

Before the report from Indigenous Ministries, General Secretary Thompson led council members in a prayer. Members sang the hymn "Many and Great O God Are Your Works" led by Indigenous Ministries Coordinator Ginny Doctor playing the drum. The Rev. Vincent Solomon read out a gospel passage, Mark 11:27-33, in which the authority of Jesus is questioned by chief priests, scribes, and elders after his triumphal entry into Jerusalem and cleansing of the temple.

Because of events over the previous year, Doctor said, Indigenous Ministries had decided that its presentation at CoGS must be prefaced with a history providing context to where the church has been in its journey towards reconciliation and Indigenous self-determination. In contrast to Canadian textbooks that reinforce negative stereotypes of Indigenous people, she said, it was

time for Indigenous people to reclaim their history, to be proud of it, and to share it with the whole church. The video, an update of the 2008 Anglican Video production *Pitching Our Tent*, would serve as a start.

Narrated by Canon Laverne Jacobs, the video begins in 1969, the year that the Anglican Church of Canada ended its relationship with the residential schools. The decision followed the publication of sociologist Charles Hendry's influential book *Beyond Traplines: Does the Church Really Care? Towards an Assessment of the Work of the Anglican Church of Canada with Canada's Native Peoples*, which called for a new relationship between the church and Indigenous people based on solidarity, equality, and mutual respect.

Since that turning point, the Anglican Church of Canada has slowly grown into a solidarity role by supporting Indigenous goals towards self-determination, treaty and land rights, and protecting the earth. In the ensuing decades, the presence of Indigenous leaders and clergy have steadily increased in the church. Since 1989, 12 Indigenous bishops have been elected, of which eight were First Nations, three Inuk, and one Métis. Of those 12 bishops, six are now retired.

The 1990s saw the emergence of national convocations in which Indigenous Anglicans reclaimed their identity and began to share and heal their pain from residential schools, followed by their acceptance of the apology from Primate Michael Peers in 1993. The adoption of the 1994 Covenant by General Synod coincided with the first Sacred Circle gatherings, focused on healing, self-determination, finding Indigenous voices, and establishing a true partnership with the wider church.

In 2003, Anglican leaders across Canada ratified an agreement detailing the payment of compensation to victims who endured abuse at Anglican-run residential schools. In 2005, the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples (ACIP) began its search for a National Indigenous Anglican Bishop, ultimately selecting Bishop Mark MacDonald, who started his ministry in spring 2007 and was officially installed at General Synod

2007 in Winnipeg.

Later developments included additional Indigenous bishops; the adoption of Canon XXII at General Synod 2010 in Halifax, establishing a National Indigenous Ministry; the creation of the Indigenous Spiritual Ministry of Mishamikoweesh; the adoption by the Indigenous House of Bishops of the statement *Where We Are Today: Twenty Years after the Covenant*; the decision at the eighth Sacred Circle in 2016 to move forward with self-determination by endorsing a fifth province or equivalent within the church; and the *Road to Warm Springs* gathering the following year in Pinawa, Man.

After the video, the National Indigenous Anglican Bishop expressed his thanks to Anglican Video for the work they have done with Indigenous Ministries from the beginning, "helping us to tell our story."

Bishop Sidney Black spoke about his experience at the Council of Native Ministries, a 1988 gathering that took place during his first year studying for ordained ministry at the College of Emmanuel and St. Chad in Saskatoon. The experience of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit coming together was a profound one for the young Sidney Black: "We came to a place where it was safe for us to begin to speak from the heart," he recalled. "And out of that was the beginning of that litany of telling our stories of our experiences in the schools." The experience would help influence his path towards taking on a leadership role within the Anglican Church of Canada in relation to Indigenous ministries.

Doctor initiated a table group discussion based on the passage from the Gospel of Mark read out by Solomon that prefaced the report. She asked council members, having seen the video and heard the gospel reading, to reflect on what stood out to them. After discussion, Bishop MacDonald read out the passage again and asked council members what they thought God was saying to them in the video and in the gospel reading. Ten more minutes of discussion were followed by a third reading of the passage and plenary discussion.

Reflecting on the gospel reading, table groups highlighted the lack of trust and fear of the unknown; the question “By whose authority are you doing this?” asked of Jesus, which brought to mind the many times when Indigenous people have been asked to justify their own existence, and how “Jesus was able to shut that down”; and the relationship of church members to authority and having credentials.

Picking up his guitar, Bishop MacDonald concluded the segment by leading council members in the singing of the hymn “How Great Thou Art”, accompanied by Doctor on the drum.

Members broke for coffee from 3:30 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Two motions were put forward after the break, one related to Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice, and the other to the Responsible Investment Task Force. Both were carried by consensus.

Resolution

Be it resolved that the Council of General Synod approve the updated Terms of Reference for the Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice Coordinating Committee, as amended by the Coordinating Committee at their meeting of March 12, 2018.

Resolution

Be it resolved that the Council of General Synod:

- Endorse the recommendations in the report of the Responsible Investment Task Force;
- Recommend that the Investment Committee, other bodies and relevant staff of the General Synod collaborate to ensure implementation of these recommendations with respect to funds held by General Synod;
- Forward these recommendations to the Pension Committee and strongly encourage their serious consideration;

- Forward these recommendations to dioceses, ecclesiastical provinces, and other Anglican-affiliated entities and strongly encourage their serious consideration.

Primate’s World Relief and Development Fund

Mr. Will Postma, executive director of the Primate’s World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF), and the Rev. Gillian Hoyer, a member of the PWRDF Board of Directors, opened their report on PWRDF by acknowledging good conversations about emergency response that followed their last presentation at CoGS. Over the last year, PWRDF had raised its budget for emergency response and deepened its involvement in that area.

As PWRDF looks ahead to its 60th anniversary, which it will begin commemorating in the fall of 2018, the church agency finds itself working in more than 25 countries with 45 different partners. Across Canada, there are 30 diocesan representatives for PWRDF, and nine youth council members. To mark its upcoming anniversary, PWRDF has chosen to look back and reflect. Part of that reflection involves a case study from South Africa, which Postma and Hoyer presented to council members as an illustration of PWRDF’s work, alongside references to another case study in El Salvador of teenagers who established an organization to fight HIV/AIDS stigma and gender-based violence.

In the past year, PWRDF conducted an evaluation of two of its partners in South Africa, who are no longer receiving funds from PWRDF but are still in operation: the John Wesley Community Center (JWCC) and Temba Community Development Services, which began work in the 2000s as the number of new HIV infections was increasing across Africa. Both the JWCC and Temba saw the need to reduce the spread of the AIDS epidemic, decrease the high rate of transmission, reduce the number of deaths and orphans left behind, and to facilitate access to basic services by lessening the stigma and discrimination surrounding those with HIV or AIDS. Their initial work focused on helping HIV-positive individuals to die with dignity.

From 2004 to 2015, PWRDF provided funding to the JWCC and Temba as part of its Partnership for Life campaign. Three years after the end of funding, both partners were happy to serve as the focus of an evaluation by PWRDF to highlight lessons learned for future projects. Among those lessons:

1. Small investments, combined with long-term commitment and relevant supports, yield lasting results. Go slow with the timeframe, support administrative costs, and ask how we can part of the partner's agenda.
2. Invest in learning. "Without training there would not be any advance. No one can take learning away." Take the time to do a proper needs assessment and baseline.
3. Partnership is important. It can be messy, but it works and is impactful. Flexibility helps, as does the capacity to connect on a personal level.
4. Do what we can to tell the partner's story from their perspective. Advocate for the partner, use our social media, and tell the story to national governments and other donors, since success stories often lead to more support.
5. Volunteers, including youth, want a meaningful experience. Volunteers with lived experience (e.g. those with HIV/AIDS who volunteered at the JWCC and Temba) can offer great help.
6. Gender is important in program work, but also how we partner. For example, attention to gender has important implications in HIV/AIDS, as women are especially vulnerable to being infected by their husbands or other men, and can spread HIV to their children when pregnant. In the El Salvador case study, workshops run in communities help men work against culture of machismo that has caused violence against women and the gay community.
7. Faith-based organizations are important entry points to civil society engagement, for being proactive on issues of rights and dignity, and for working with government and other organizations for referrals,

exchange, etc.

Postma and Hoyer posed questions to council members for a small group discussion, asking them to consider events or activities where PWRDF's 60th anniversary might be shared, and any insights or suggestions they might offer going forward into Year 61 based on the South African case study. CoGS members offered few responses and suggested that they trusted in the skill and insight of the PWRDF leadership.

The session concluded with a two-minute video in which the executive director of Temba House and others thanked PWRDF and the Anglican Church of Canada for making such a difference in South Africa, and especially in Temba.

The council prayed together before adjourning for dinner.

Members broke for hospitality and dinner from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Marriage Canon

Beginning the evening session, Deputy Prolocutor Lynne McNaughton introduced the members of the CoGS Working Group on the Marriage Canon—one for each ecclesiastical province, as well as a member representing the Anglican Military Ordinariate.

McNaughton reminded CoGS that its members have three more meetings to continue working on how General Synod will have its conversation on proposed changes to the marriage canon. The job of CoGS is to investigate issues arising from council members' own conversations, rather than to resolve them. The resolution from General Synod 2016 must go forward as is to General Synod 2019, and cannot be amended before that by CoGS. A draft resolution to mitigate consequences or clarify diversity could be prepared in advance of General Synod 2019, but cannot be presented and voted on until after the vote on the second reading occurs.

The goal for General Synod, McNaughton stressed, is conviviality and not homogeneity, living well together as a church after the meeting. Taking

such an approach, members of the Working Group on the Marriage Canon have asked themselves how the church will mitigate the consequences and emotions of the vote, how to deal with the “power mind set” of winners and losers, and how to move to a mindset of “discerning the best way forward for the whole church”.

Introducing the first section of discussion, the Working Group put forward three questions for council members, which they were to answer individually on paper:

1. What is my relationship to the outcome to the marriage canon resolution? In other words, what do I have invested in the outcome of the vote?
2. What is my hope regarding the resolution?
3. What are my fears?

After five minutes to write out their responses, members spent 10 minutes in pairs discussing their answers with each other. Responses were then brought before the whole council in a plenary discussion, with the major points written down. Among the stated concerns of council members:

- “No one wants to relive General Synod 2016”
- Hope: After the debate and vote, everyone feels heard and supported
- Hope: Synod will set tone for behaviour. Fear: That chair will have to “referee”.
- Investment: If canon passes as is, I may be out of sync with doctrine of the church (fear).
- We have to have a vote; fear that it will not be fair. Can we make it simple? Suspend the rules of order? (answer: no)
- Hope: Invest in outcome where there is viable unity for mission.
- Hope: That there will be pastoral care for everyone at General Synod and care before, during, after, and that it be felt.
- Fear: That if the resolution is defeated, I cannot stay in the church.
- That the church remains together and moves forward together.
- Hope: An amendment to accommodate

self-determination.

- Investment/fear: Parish will split over the decision.
- Hope: At the end of the day, we remember we are part of one family. Fear: That we won’t.

In the second section, council members were asked to respond to a new set of questions individually on paper:

1. If the vote *agrees* with your perspective, how do you express empathy for those who are disappointed by the outcome of the vote? How do you express empathy with those who have a sense of well-being with the outcome of the vote?
2. If the vote *does not agree* with your perspective, how do you have empathy for those who are disappointed by the outcome of the vote? How do you have empathy with those who have a sense of well-being with the outcome of the vote?

As before, members then joined into pairs and discussed their responses with each other for 10 minutes before reporting back in plenary. Suggestions for creating empathy included:

- Listening with love and a promise to walk together, encouraging one another, and remembering that the vote is one day in the life of the church.
- The job of staff members is to put personal feelings aside. The hope is for the reaction of General Synod members to be the same, with no celebration. Everyone stays in the room and expresses feelings together.
- No applause. Join together to eat and pray. Build coalitions with those we disagree with on other issues.
- Avoid the words “win” and “lose”. There is a need to minister to the broken. We don’t have to agree to be part of the same family. Pray, pray, and pray some more.
- Very good questions have been put forward in the present exercise. Could we invite or require members of General Synod to engage with them before synod? We need a process at General Synod to

ensure that members are speaking to the resolution itself and not other issues.

Responding to the second section of discussion, Archbishop and Primate Fred Hiltz expressed his agreement that members of General Synod needed to engage with these questions in some kind of forum before they arrive. He thought it would be very helpful if—between what members do in committee and their dealing with the resolution itself—the same questions and discussion CoGS was currently grappling with were placed before the General Synod.

In this way, all members would experience the same struggle before the actual debate and will have seriously thought about these questions as members of the synod. “We could get some really good mileage, I think, out of these questions, in the hopes of a good conversation at synod and a good way to live with the outcome,” the Primate said.

In the third and final section of the discussion, the working group put forward two more questions to the council in plenary:

1. Considering the responses, you have heard about people’s fears, how could the process be shaped to mitigate those fears?
2. What changes do you think would be helpful to meet *your* concerns?

The subsequent plenary discussion yielded the following suggestions for mitigating fears:

- Have mentors work with the same questions/process.
- We need to be visible in including the both/and, such as an amendment to uphold “tradition”. Without breaking from the doctrine of the church, such efforts would be a way to include both views and show that all are welcome.
- Process has “boxed us in”. We need to figure out a way to use the process to make it more “appropriate” and make a resolution that leaves everyone’s integrity and theology intact.
- Concern that the wording of the resolution

ties the church definition of marriage to the legal one, i.e. concern over setting the definition of marriage to that of the “law of the land”.

- Concern for new clergy, Indigenous peoples, and the remainder of the church. Invite a bishop to counsel people individually at General Synod.

To wrap up the discussion, council members sang the hymn “Guide My Feet”, a song about discernment that many felt appropriate to the occasion. For the final verse, members changed the lyrics to “guide our feet”, reflecting the sense of community and solidarity they hoped would endure through the coming General Synod.

Chancellor David Jones closed the marriage canon session by walking members through the process of the vote at General Synod. He highly recommended that they read and re-read the preface to Canon XXI, which talks in great detail about the history and the traditional view of marriage, as well as changes or variations. Jones described the preface as “a very thoughtful document that I think frames a great deal of what we’re talking about.”

He detailed the background running up to the marriage canon vote, beginning with Resolution C003 at General Synod 2013; carefully parsed the language of Canon XXI itself; and went through each aspect of amending a canon. The Chancellor reiterated that any amendment to canon dealing with doctrine must be passed by a two-thirds majority of each order in voting, at two successive General Synods. In a subsequent discussion, he answered questions from members on different aspects of procedure.

The Primate thanked Chancellor Jones for providing clarification on details of the General Synod Handbook, Declaration of Principles, and constitutional matters. He also thanked the working group on the marriage canon, and said that conversations at CoGS would be very helpful in how the General Synod Planning Committee makes plans for carrying out the conversation at General Synod in 2019.

Holden Evening Prayer

Council closed out the Saturday agenda with night prayer in the chapel.

Members adjourned for the evening at 9 p.m.