

# COGS Highlights



Council of General Synod

Sunday, March 13, 2022

*Members of the Council of General Synod (CoGS) gathered together at 10 a.m. ET, either in person at Queen of Apostles Renewal Centre in Mississauga, Ont. or online via Zoom.*

## **Orders of the Day**

The Rev. Monique Stone, co-chair of the planning and agenda team, read out the Orders of the Day.

## **Worship-Eucharist**

The opening worship and Eucharist included a sermon by National Indigenous Archbishop Mark MacDonald.

## **In-Camera Session**

Council members closed out the morning with an in-camera session.

*Members broke for lunch until 1 p.m.*

## **All Parties Agreement**

Dawn Maracle, the Anglican Church of Canada's interim Indigenous justice animator, updated the council on progress by the parties involved in the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement toward the drafting of a Covenant of Reconciliation. The development and signing of the covenant together comprise one of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action. Maracle shared a draft of the covenant with members of the council and discussed what the covenant might mean for the Anglican Church of Canada. CoGS members applauded the draft and discussed it. Approving the covenant, when its wording is finalized, Maracle said, would be one way for the church

to renew its commitment to reconciliation. Archbishop Linda Nicholls, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, said part of the church's work over the next year would be to bring the covenant to General Synod when it meets next summer.

## **Partner Reflection**

Pat Lovell, representative of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) to CoGS, offered a partner reflection. Lovell said she was very impressed with the way the council's in-camera sessions had been handled, and with the strategic plan development process. Articulating aspirations and directions for the church rather than goal-setting, she said, led to more realistic strategic planning, and ELCIC has used this approach in its strategic planning also. She praised the church's work toward dismantling racism, and said churches need to continue this work. She said she had seen a great deal of creativity in how churches were conducting their work. She said she also enjoyed the animated conversations she had had with other CoGS members during Bible study. Lovell noted that this would be her last time with CoGS as ELCIC representative. "It has been a great pleasure to be with you and I thank you for this incredible opportunity," she said.

## **Second Session: Identifying Future Work for CoGS**

Archdeacon Alan Perry, general secretary of General Synod, asked directors of General Synod departments to provide very brief

updates on their work. CoGS heard from Andrea Mann, director, Global Relations; the Rev. Eileen Scully, director of Faith, Worship and Ministry; Ryan Weston, lead animator, Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice; Joe Vecsi, director, Communications and Information Resources; and Deborah Barretto, director, Resources for Mission.

### **General Secretary's Report**

Perry began his report with a description of maps as on the one hand useful and informative and on the other hand as distorting reality to some extent. The church's strategic planning process, he said, "has a bit of a map in it." Yet though it is a work in progress, he said, the church's strategic plan is likely also to help the church move forward, and he added he was grateful for the work that has been done on it.

Who the church will be in the years to come, he said, depends on it and on the Spirit.

### **Closing Prayer and Commissioning**

Nicholls and the Rev. Louise Peters, chaplain to CoGS, led the closing prayer and commissioning.

### **Adjournment**

*Council adjourned shortly before 3 p.m.*