

# COGS Highlights



Council of General Synod

Thursday, March 14, 2019

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

## **Opening Eucharist**

The Very Rev. Peter Elliott presided over the morning Eucharist. The Ven. Michael Thompson, General Secretary of the General Synod, served as preacher.

## **Welcome and Opening Formalities**

Archbishop Fred Hiltz, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, welcomed members and guests of the Council of General Synod (CoGS) to their last meeting of the triennium. Motions to approve the minutes from the November 2018 meeting, as well as the agenda for the current meeting, were adopted by consensus.

## **Primate's Report**

The Primate began his report by expressing his great respect for the Society of St. John the Evangelist. During meetings of CoGS and the House of Bishops, Archbishop Hiltz said he has often referenced teachings or councils of the society which he feels are relevant to the wider church. In this case, the Primate chose to read from the monastic reflection [Pilgrimage](#), written by Br. Geoffrey Tristram.

"As Christians, we are a pilgrim people," Tristram wrote, noting that Abraham, Moses, and Jesus could all be considered pilgrims in the journeys they undertook. He continued: "As pilgrims, we are not simply wanderers ... We have a specific destination: our heavenly home. Our pilgrimage journey is toward God!"

Reflecting on this text, the Primate found the language of mapping and pilgrimage to be very helpful in discussing the journey of the Anglican Church of Canada. Quoting his predecessors Archbishop Derwyn Owen and Archbishop Michael Peers on the developing sense of common mission in the church, the Primate drew connections with the role of discipleship, as outlined recently in [The Arusha Call to Discipleship](#) that underscored what it means to be a community of disciples.

Last month, Archbishop Hiltz attended a meeting in the Diocese of Moosonee that included a gospel reading using the Heartbeat of the Church model. Participants in the meeting prayed that there would be a "mighty revival" of the church. The Primate underscored the need for such a revival as he pointed to challenges such as dropping attendance at Sunday worship. He expressed hope that as CoGS members participated in the Heartbeat of the Church at their present meeting, they would view the questions related to the gospel text from a national rather than a local perspective.

Noting that the May edition of the *Anglican Journal* would focus on the colonialism and imperialism of the Church and its commitment to right relations with Indigenous Peoples, the Primate described some of the Anglican Church of Canada's recent efforts to move toward post-colonial models of what it means to be church. He pointed to the release of the new documentary [Doctrine of Discovery: Stolen Lands, Strong Hearts](#), produced by Anglican

Video. At the March 8 premiere of the film in Toronto, Bob Watts, chief of staff to National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations Perry Bellegarde, praised the documentary and suggested that it would impact the entire country.

In 2017, General Synod created the full-time staff position of reconciliation animator for the Anglican Church of Canada to respond to the 93 Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In 2018, CoGS appointed a Jubilee Commission tasked with investigating historical and present funding for Indigenous ministries and commitment for Indigenous oversight of these. At its forthcoming meeting, General Synod would be invited to consider the establishment of a national committee to guide the ongoing work of truth, justice, and reconciliation.

With 2019 marking the 25th anniversary of the 1994 covenant, the Primate recounted steps of the church's journey of spiritual renewal towards reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, including the appointment of a National Indigenous Anglican Bishop and the fact that the church now has 10 Indigenous bishops. Archbishop Hiltz said that these national commitments are reflected by many positive developments in parishes, theological colleges, and dioceses. "In this journey, in this pilgrimage, our church is changing," the Primate said. The Anglican Church of Canada is striving to leave behind the vestiges of the colonial church and to rid itself of any taint of "spiritual arrogance", instead pressing on to be a "church of jubilee" that embodies the gospel.

The image of journey and pilgrimage, the Primate added, could also be applied to ongoing conversations within the church regarding sexual orientation, same-sex relationships, and proposed amendments to the marriage canon. Describing such discussions as

a long journey of 50 years, the Primate said discussion over same-sex marriage also constituted a pilgrimage. Evoking the words of Br. Tristram, he reiterated: "The destination is God. The destination is our life together in Christ, and how we find a way to live with our differences, and to do that with grace and respect."

Archbishop Hiltz acknowledged that in the course of this journey, Anglicans had experienced moments in which they had deeply offended and hurt one another; moments in which they have been angry with each other and lashed out; and moments for which they must express "deep lament, words of contrition, apology, and prayers for forgiveness." Yet the church had also experienced moments in which Anglicans prayed for the grace to listen with more patience and respect, and to understand where others were coming from.

In the current council, the Primate said, members had "journeyed in a good way thanks to the work of the Marriage Canon Working Group," making strides towards being able to engage in this conversation more effectively. He thanked the Marriage Canon Working Group for guiding CoGS in the matter throughout the triennium. Significant time had been set aside at the present meeting to consider further amendments to the marriage canon. The Primate believed that conversations at the upcoming General Synod would be marked by principles of good disagreement and passion to continue the church's unity in Christ.

Images of pilgrimage, the Primate said, are also applicable to much of the church's work in communion-wide dialogue. He offered the annual meetings of the Anglican Bishops in Dialogue as an example. For 10 years, bishops primarily from Africa and Canada—but also other provinces—have met to discuss issues including those which threaten to divide the

communion. The testimonies published after each meeting are all available online and well worth reading, the Primate said, bearing witness to the importance of dialogue and the fact that there is more that unites Anglicans in common mission than could ever divide us.

Last November, Archbishop Hiltz was privileged to host a meeting of the primates of the Americas, which took place in Toronto. The gathering was one of five regional meetings across the Anglican Communion in advance of the next Primates' Meeting. Coming together to discuss the nature of communion, the Primates used the text [\*Towards a Symphony of the Instruments of Communion\*](#) as a guide.

In the course of their discussion, the primates of the Americas had frank discussions about the divisions within the communion, including their own region of North and South America. Yet the primates also experienced "profound grace-filled moments" with regard to gestures of reconciliation in that region. The 2020 Lambeth conference was a major point of discussion. The primates also elected a new member to the Primates' Standing Committee, and discussed the initiative Come and See, in which a primate invites one of their counterparts to visit their province and see the missional context in which others are trying to be faithful ministers of Christ. Archbishop Hiltz said that these regional meetings if primates will go some distance to creating more of a sense of community among all the primates when they next gather. "We grow together in our life in Christ," he said.

Finally, the Primate reflected on the journey of the Anglican Church of Canada with the Episcopal Church of Cuba over the last 60 years. Though that relationship may be different in the future, due to the 2018 readmission of the Cuban church into The Episcopal Church of the United States, Canadian Anglicans have signalled to their Cuban counterparts that their

relationship together will continue.

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

### **Orders of the Day**

Dr. Karen Egan and the Very Rev. Peter Wall, co-chairs of the planning and agenda team, read out the Orders of the Day.

### **Deputy Prolocutor Nominations**

Bishop-elect Lynne McNaughton explained the process for nominating a new deputy prolocutor. Having held the position since 2016, McNaughton is now stepping down as deputy prolocutor following her election as the new bishop of Kootenay as she will no longer be a member of the order of clergy. This is a requirement of the Deputy Prolocutor, as the current Prolocutor, Ms. Cynthia Haynes Turner, is a member of the order of laity. Both roles must be filled by a member of one of these orders. Nominations are open until noon, tomorrow, March 15.

### **Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples**

National Indigenous Anglican Bishop Mark MacDonald introduced the report of the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples (ACIP). In its plan for ministry going forward, the strategy of ACIP is centred on the concept of prophetic pastoral care.

Four ACIP members —Canon Norman Wesley, Canon Murray Still, Ms. Donna Bomberry, and Ms. Sheba McKay—took the podium to identify four critical areas of this ministry. These areas included:

1. *The development and formation of disciples* by practicing gospel-based discipleship, working with existing resources and institutions to provide leadership training that will support God's work, and working to "make the

- gospel living and real in Indigenous life.”
2. *Governance and pastoral leadership of the emerging Indigenous churches.* The ACIP focus group formed in 2016, which is tasked with working out the details of self-determination, continues to inform ACIP, the National Indigenous Anglican Bishop, and the Indigenous Leadership Circle. Preparation and planning of a Constitutional Gathering will lay the foundation of work at the next Sacred Circle. The aforementioned governing bodies will identify a group to develop the final form of “Becoming What God Intends Us To Be”, and to establish goals and norms for Indigenous ministry across Canada.
  3. *Living in the faithful abundance of God: stewardship and resources.* The Jubilee Commission, tasked with finding the financial resources for a self-determining Indigenous church, will work on the issue of a just proportion of the Anglican Church of Canada’s wealth for a “prophetic pastoral presence across the land.” The commission plans to engage with communities, partner with the Anglican Church of Canada in providing resources for ministry, identify a group to develop a strategy for sustainable support of ministries, and continue to provide urgently needed support for existing ministries such as those in Northern Manitoba, Northern Saskatchewan, and the Indigenous Spiritual Ministry of Mishamikoweesh.
  4. *Encouragement and support of an emerging youth movement among the people of the land.* Presenting photographs of activities by young Indigenous Anglicans, such as their participation in the last Sacred Circle, McKay highlighted “young people on the move” as “our present and our future”.

During a subsequent discussion period, Bishop MacDonald answered questions from council members. Wesley then presented two resolutions before the council. Both resolutions were carried.

### **Resolution**

That Council of General Synod approve and send the following motion to General Synod 2019:

Be it resolved that the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada and its members and organizations live a life that declares, embodies, and promotes the following:

- 1) All creatures have responsibility and duty to live in respect to the dignity and life of all other creatures and that the interdependent and living relationship between all things is to be revered in human beings through a moral, sustainable, and respectful way of life.
- 2) The People of the Land, the Indigenous Peoples of our Land and Nation, stand in a unique place of witness to the living relationship between life and Land. Indigenous Peoples, in their teaching, way of life, and vulnerability to climate disruption and other consequences of a global society enmeshed in the culture of money and consumption, are a special model and concern for the Church and its work.
- 3) The living relationship of Indigenous Peoples to the Land is honoured and protected in, among other things, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In particular, the principle of free, prior, and informed consent is a minimum commitment

of societies and nations to the well-being of the People of the Land and the importance and right of their way of life in global society. The Anglican Church supports and upholds UNDRIP and, in particular, the principle of free, prior, and informed consent in its own dealing with Indigenous Peoples and in its public witness and advocacy.

- 4) The Anglican Church of Canada will seek to stand in solidarity with Indigenous Peoples, such as the Gwich'in, who are threatened by actual and/or threatened violations of their relationship to the Land. The Church will do this by, among other ways, their public witness and advocacy and by the adoption of way of life, individually and together, that honours and respects the interdependent and living relationship of all the elements and Creatures of creation.

### **Resolution**

That Council of General Synod shall commend the following motion to General Synod 2019:

Be it resolved that the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada approve and institute the following the memorialization of both the Apology of August 6, 1993 and the Covenant of April 5, 1994, to be observed on separate days.

*Members broke for lunch from noon until 1:20 p.m.*

Before beginning the afternoon business, CoGS members wearing black clothing posed for a photograph for Thursdays in Black, a campaign

against sexual and gender-based violence. The picture was then shared on the church's official social media accounts.

### **Primate's Commission on Discovery, Reconciliation, and Justice**

The Rt. Rev. Riscylla Shaw, co-chair of the Primate's Commission on Discovery, Reconciliation, and Justice, presented the final report of the commission to the current iteration of CoGS. She outlined the work of the commission in helping the church respond to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the 93 Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, creating a plan for reconciliation, addressing injustices in Indigenous communities, and seeking ways to dismantle the Doctrine of Discovery. The latter inspired the production of the *Doctrine of Discovery: Stolen Lands, Strong Hearts* documentary by Anglican Video.

Though the mandate of the Primate's Commission is set to end at General Synod 2019, Shaw noted that the work of truth-telling, justice-seeking, and reconciliation remains ongoing and must involve the whole church. Accordingly, she presented a resolution to the council to be commended to General Synod, which was adopted by consensus.

### **Resolution**

Be it resolved that the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada establish a committee to strategize and guide the ongoing work of truth, justice and reconciliation, including building and supporting a network of Ambassadors for Reconciliation from dioceses and regions.

### **Vision Keepers**

Members of the Vision Keepers Council, the Rev. Leigh Kern and Mr. Aaron Sault, sang a

song to the accompaniment of a drum before presenting a resolution from the council. Kern described the performance as an example of efforts to decolonize church meetings— "building a network of family" in distinction to the more formal, bureaucratic approach to church organization based on Robert's Rules of Order. The same process of decolonization, Kern said, had informed the decision of members to name themselves as the Vision Keepers Council, rather than the original title of the Council of Youth and Elders.

Since 2017, the Vision Keepers have been working hard on their mandate to monitor the Anglican Church of Canada's commitment to adopt and comply with the principles of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and to live out the Fourth Mark of Mission. At the previous meeting of CoGS, the council had presented on their work to date, including a proposal to create a permanent Vision Keepers group that would report every three years on the church's progress towards achieving systemic and transformational change.

The Vision Keepers put forward a resolution for the creation of such a group. A discussion ensued in which council members asked for clarification on the scope of the group's mandate and authority, and its relationship to church governance structures. The resolution was then adopted by consensus.

#### **Resolution**

That the Vision Keepers be established as a permanent forum to oversee the work of the Church in implementing the spirit of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples through transformed church structures, governance systems, processes and practices including a strengthened

external Anglican advocacy voice on social justice and reconciliation and on active implementation of the Fourth Mark of Mission.

#### **Governance Working Group**

Chancellor David Jones presented two resolutions from the Governance Working Group Members adopted both resolutions by consensus.

#### **Resolution**

Be it resolved that General Synod amend:

1. Canon XXII to read as shown in Appendix 1.
2. Section 33 of the Constitution (Council of General Synod to add the following:  
*33 a) x) the National Indigenous Anglican Bishop*
3. Section 5 of Canon III (The Primate) to add the following:  
*xi) always be an invited guest at Sacred Circle, with voice but not vote.*

#### **Resolution**

Be it resolved that General Synod:

1. Amend section 8 of the Constitution to add paragraph h.1) as follows:  
*h.1) In addition to the persons elected or appointed under subsections c) and d), the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples shall be entitled to elect or appoint two licensed members of the clergy, two communicant lay persons, and one youth who will be at least sixteen years of age upon the opening of General Synod and under the age of twenty-six years upon the prorogation of*

*General Synod who shall be a communicant member of The Anglican Church of Canada.*

2. Upon the adoption of this resolution, the persons who have been elected or appointed by the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples meeting the above requirements shall become members of General Synod 2019.

During the next break, members sang a song and ate cake to celebrate the election of Lynne McNaughton as bishop of Kootenay.

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

### **Bible Study**

The Very Rev. Peter Elliott led a Bible study session after the break. Table groups read and reflected upon Matthew 7:7-12 for the gospel reading. At the conclusion, Elliott led council members in a prayer.

### **Marriage Canon Working Group**

Joined by fellow members of the Marriage Canon Working Group, chair Lynne McNaughton announced new responses from dioceses and provinces on discussion related to proposed changes to the marriage canon. At the current meeting of CoGS and later General Synod itself, members would begin their work by looking at a summary statement of how the church has studied the marriage canon between the 2016 and 2019 General Synods.

Within their table groups, council members spent 10 minutes reading over the summary statement document. A discussion followed on what each table group affirmed in the document, what needed to be changed, what should be strengthened, what should be deleted, and what should be added.

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

After dinner, representatives from each table group summarized their discussions from the discussion on the marriage canon. This feedback was written down and taken by the Marriage Canon Working Group for study that evening. The working group planned to redraft the summary statement and present it to the council the next day.

### **Joint Anglican Lutheran Commission**

The Very Rev. Peter Wall, Anglican co-chair of the Joint Anglican Lutheran Commission (JALC), presented the report of the commission. He thanked Anglican members who had worked so hard during the six-year mandate of the current commission that began in 2013. The commission's work involves many aspects of work on deepening the full communion relationship between the Anglican Church of Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC).

Wall expressed excitement at the upcoming annual meeting of the four leaders of the Anglican and Lutheran churches in Canada and the United States, which will take place in May in Toronto. The discussion will include theological education, training for ministry, and how the churches seek to plan together to develop the church of the future.

The JALC co-chair presented two resolutions to the council. The first affirmed the work of JALC, while the second commended to General Synod a Memorandum of Mutual Recognition of Full Communion that would deepen the relationship between the Anglican Church of Canada, ELCIC, The Episcopal Church (USA), and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

After friendly amendments to make small changes to the wording of the text, both

resolutions were adopted by consensus.

**Resolution**

Be it resolved that the Council of General Synod commend for consideration to the General Synod:

That the General Synod affirm the ongoing work of the Joint Anglican Lutheran Commission in recognition of our full communion relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.

**Resolution**

That this Council of General Synod commend the 'Memorandum of Mutual Recognition of Full Communion' to General Synod 2019 for approval and adoption.

**Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice**

Dr. Ryan Weston, lead animator of Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice, presented four resolutions to the council. Members adopted all four resolutions by consensus.

**Resolution**

That the Council of General Synod commend the motion on the United Nations Global Goals for Sustainable Development to General Synod 2019 for its consideration.

**Resolution**

That the Council of General Synod commend the motion on the Season of Creation to General Synod 2019 for its consideration.

**Resolution**

That the Council of General Synod commend the motion on single-use plastics to General Synod 2019 for its consideration.

**Resolution**

That the Council of General Synod commend the motion on human trafficking and modern slavery to General Synod 2019 for its 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, PWRDF board member, presented a report on the work of PWRDF.

They spoke about recent projects such as the renewal of program work to some of the 900,000 Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, or working with refugees from Myanmar who have fled to Thailand. Working with partners on the ground, PWRDF has helped provide health care, food, clean water, shelter, and counselling to many of these refugees.

In Haiti, PWRDF has ensured funds for stipends for women who need to travel to court. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, they have worked to address gender-based violence by funding the Maison Dorcas, a transit and safety house for women escaping violence and requiring medical care.

At its board of directors meeting the week after the present meeting of CoGS, PWRDF will receive its new strategic plan that would guide its operations over the next five years. Hoyer expressed hope that the next iteration of CoGS

would be able to receive a more extensive overview of that strategic plan. Nevertheless, she was able to describe key elements of the plan to the current council, noting that PWRDF would continue to work towards achieving stability, strengthening partnerships, and improving outcomes of its work in food security, gender equality, and access to health care.

Reminding the council that 2019 is the 60th anniversary of PWRDF, Postma presented the video [At Home with PWRDF](#), which documents the work of PWRDF volunteers Dorothy and Leah Marshall.

### **Evening Prayer**

Council members closed out the day with a Celtic evening liturgy and prayer.

*Members enjoyed an evening social from 8:45 p.m. until 11 p.m.*