

COGS Highlights



Council of General Synod

Friday, March 15, 2019

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

Morning Eucharist

Archbishop Fred Hiltz, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, walked to the altar holding a candle before morning worship began. The Primate asked members of the Council of General Synod (CoGS) to remember their Muslim brothers and sisters around the world in the wake of the shootings earlier that day at mosques in Christchurch, Aotearoa-New Zealand. He asked them to also remember those in Quebec City, who had experienced a similar atrocity at a mosque shooting in 2017. The council prayed for those in Christchurch and Aotearoa-New Zealand, for those who had lost their lives, for those who mourned the loss of friends and family. Members prayed for peace and for understanding between those of different faiths.

The Rev. Dr. Karen Egan and the Very Rev. Peter Elliot presided at the opening service. Ms. Susan Little served as preacher. One of the readings was Isaiah 44:1-8, which included the line "You are my witnesses", theme of General Synod 2016 and the 2016-2019 triennium.

Orders of the Day

Planning and Agenda Team co-chairs Egan and Wall read out the Orders of the Day.

Anglican Journal and CIRC Joint Working Group

Karen Egan presented the report from the joint

working group for the *Anglican Journal* Coordinating Committee and the Communication and Information Resources (CIRC) Coordinating Committee.

The report outlined the work of the committees over the past year and their plans to introduce two motions at the present meeting: one to combine the two committees and set out new terms of reference, and the other to provide a new mandate for the *Anglican Journal*. Egan, Prolocutor Cynthia Haines Turner and Communications Director Meghan Kilty answered questions from the council during a discussion period.

GWG: Communications Coordinating Committee

Chancellor David Jones presented the two motions of the *Anglican Journal* and CIRC Joint Working Group. A proposed amendment to deal with one section of a motion separately failed to achieve consensus from the council. After further discussion, members adopted both resolutions by consensus.

Resolution

That Council of General Synod:

1. Amalgamate the Communications and Information Resources Coordinating Committee and the *Anglican Journal* Coordinating Committee into the Communications Coordinating Committee;
2. Restate the list of Coordinating

- Committees in section 39B a) of the Constitution;
3. Restate the membership of Coordinating Committees in section 39B of the Constitution to read as follows [...] and re-letter existing 39B d) through i) to be 39B e) through j).
 4. Adopt the following terms of reference for the Communications Coordinating Committee, which are to be printed as Item 1 under the heading "II Coordinating Committees" in Appendix B of the Handbook [...] and delete the existing terms of reference for the *Anglican Journal* Coordinating Committee and the Communications and Information Resources Coordinating Committee, and renumber the terms of reference of the Coordinating Committees in Appendix B as follows [...];
 5. Adopt the following mandate, governance, editorial policy and editorial provisions for the *Anglican Journal*, which are to be printed as Appendix C in the Handbook [...].

Resolution

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

Be it resolved that this General Synod confirm:

1. The amalgamation by the Council of General Synod of the existing Communications and Information Resources Coordinating Committee and the existing *Anglican Journal* Coordinating Committee to form the new Communications Coordinating Committee,

2. The terms of reference for the new Communications Coordinating Committee adopted by the Council of General Synod, and
3. The provisions adopted by Council of General Synod with respect to the mandate, governance, editorial policy and editorial board for the *Anglican Journal*.

Pension Committee

Mr. Bob Boeckner, trustee for the Pension Committee, presented the committee's report. He noted that the House of Bishops in 2016 had given its support to proceed with a possible amalgamation of pension plans for all employees in the interests of greater equity. Pending solvency funding relief had slowed progress on this effort. With the intensifying decline in active membership, the prospect of opening up the plan had been raised.

As a result, trustees had established an Expansion Committee to explore how best to provide pensions equitably to all Anglican Church of Canada employees, to ensure the long-term sustainability of the pension plan, to identify what documentation must be amended to facilitate solutions, and to develop a communications strategy. Proposed solutions include winding up the Lay Retirement Plan and enrolling all members in the General Synod Pension Plan; expanding the General Synod Pension Plan employer base by offering the plan to other not-for-profit employers; and enabling amendments to Canon VIII and IX to carry out these plans.

Boeckner put forward two motions which were both adopted by consensus.

Resolution

Be it resolved that The Council of General Synod approves the

recommendation of the Pension Committee to make the following amendments to Sections 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 11 of Canon VIII, effective August 1, 2019 [proposed amendments follow].

Resolution

Be it resolved that The Council of General Synod approves the recommendation of the Pension Committee to make the following amendments to Section 4 of Canon IX, effective August 1, 2019.

A new Section 4 is inserted as follows:

1. The Lay Retirement Plan may be terminated by the Pension Committee if provision has been made for active members to commence participation in a successor pension plan.

Members broke for coffee from 10:20 a.m. to 10:50 a.m.

Marriage Canon Working Group/Canon XXI

Bishop-elect Lynne McNaughton, chair of the Marriage Canon Working Group, led a discussion on the revised summary statement for work on the proposed changes to the marriage canon. Council members read the statement, discussed it among table groups, and summarized their discussions to CoGS. Reception of council to the revised statement was largely positive.

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

After lunch, the Primate gave his official statement on the massacre in Christchurch, Aotearoa-New Zealand from the altar and led the council in prayer. The Very Rev. Peter Wall

then led members in singing the *Kyrie*.

The Primate's statement was posted to the church website immediately thereafter.

Governance Working Group: General Synod 2019 Housekeeping

Chancellor Jones presented two motions before the council asking it to approve housekeeping matters related to General Synod 2019.

The first motion sought approval of parts A through F, and the second parts G through L. Both motions were approved by consensus.

Resolution

That Council of General Synod approves the following for use at General Synod 2019:

- A. Nomination Form for Members of CoGS
- B. Procedure for Nominations for Prolocutor and Deputy Prolocutor
- C. Nomination Form for Standing or Coordinating Committees
- D. Guidelines for the Resolutions Committee
- E. Guidelines for Writing Resolutions
- F. Procedure for No-Debate List

Resolution

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

- G. Motion to amend the Rules of Order and Procedure to permit the No-Debate List procedure
- H. Motion to suspend the Rules of Order and Procedure to permit Abstentions at General Synod
- I. Motion for Second Reading of GS

2016 Resolution A030-R1a

- J. Motion for Second Reading of GS 2016 Resolution A052
- K. Motion to amend the Rules of Order and Procedure
- L. Motion to give first reading to an amendment to the Declaration of Principles

Safe Church

The Rev. Dr. Eileen Scully, director of Faith, Worship and Ministry, presented a report on the [Anglican Communion Safe Church Charter](#) and the [Protocol for the Disclosure of Ministry Suitability Information between the Churches of the Anglican Communion](#).

In October 2012, the Anglican Consultative Council adopted the Anglican Communion Charter for the Safety of People, the result of several years' work by the Anglican Communion Safe Church Network. The Anglican Communion Safe Church Commission was established in 2016 to build on the work of the *Charter*, and to establish "International Guidelines to enhance the safety of all persons—especially children, young people and vulnerable adults—within the provinces of the Anglican Communion." In 2016, the Anglican Consultative Council adopted the *Protocol*, which sought to facilitate disclosure of ministry suitability information between the churches of the Anglican Communion, as set out in the [Report of the Anglican Communion Safe Church Network](#).

In her report to CoGS, Scully discussed the background of the Anglican Communion Safe Church Commission, highlighting the role of the Canadian church which had a strong impact from early on. The history of the residential school system gave Canadian Anglicans a unique perspective, allowing them to bring in voices who could provide a systemic view of what a culture of safety looks like, and what a culture of abuse looks like.

One of the lessons from these experiences was that Anglicans could not settle for a "risk management" approach to ensuring a safe church, as was the case with many large institutions. Instead, a victim-centred approach was put forward as the best way to prioritize those experiences and thereby create a safer church environment for all.

Scully highlighted the prominent role of Ms. Mary Wells, the Canadian representative to the Safe Church Commission, who undertook exhaustive research looking at the existing policies towards sexual misconduct in Canadian Anglican dioceses, as well as in the corporation of General Synod. Wells worked with the Commission to produce a draft *Guidelines for the Safety of People*, which will be presented for approval to the Anglican Consultative Council in Hong Kong in April and May 2019 with an eye to later being presented at the 2020 Lambeth Conference.

With the Anglican Communion having commended the *Safe Church Charter* back to the provinces, Scully planned to present a motion for commendation of the Charter to General Synod the next day during the Faith, Worship, and Ministry report.

Following her presentation, she played a short video for the council, [Introducing the Anglican Communion's Safe Church Commission](#).

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

Heartbeat of the Church

The council broke into small groups and took part in the [Heartbeat of the Church](#) exercise. Reading and reflecting upon the gospel passage [John 15:12-17](#), they each proceeded to describe a time when our church made their hearts glad, when it made their hearts ache, and

when it gave them hope. Each group concluded by composing a heartfelt prayer for the church, praying together, and exchanging the Peace.

Following the exercise, Planning and Agenda Team co-chair Karen Egan collected the prayers, with the plan of presenting them to council the following day.

Deputy Prolocutor Election

At the end of the afternoon session, Lynne McNaughton presented the names of the two nominees for the position of deputy prolocutor:

- The Ven. Canon Terry Leer from the Diocese of Athabasca; and
- The Very Rev. Peter Wall from the Diocese of Niagara.

The election for deputy prolocutor took place and ballots were collected.

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

Upon the return of council from dinner, Communications Director Meghan Kilty introduced members to Mr. Matthew Townsend, who was recently hired as the new Supervisor, Editorial with the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada. Originally from Florida, Townsend has a long history with church-related journalism, having worked in positions with the *Living Church* publication as well as dioceses of The Episcopal Church. He currently resides in Halifax, Nova Scotia and is a member of St. Paul's, Anglican Church.

In his new role, Townsend will provide day-to-day leadership at the *Anglican Journal* until Dec. 31, 2019.

Election Results

McNaughton announced the winner of the election, confirming Peter Wall as the new deputy prolocutor of the CoGS. Wall will hold

the position until General Synod 2019.

Doctrine of Discovery: Stolen Lands, Strong Hearts

For the evening session, council members watched a screening of the documentary [*Doctrine of Discovery: Stolen Lands, Strong Hearts*](#), produced by Anglican Video. The film is one of the main legacies of the Primate's Commission on Discovery, Reconciliation, and Justice as it concludes its original mandate in 2019. Archbishop Hiltz noted that the work of the commission would continue going forward in different forms, such as the Vision Keepers Council.

After the film, council members briefly sat in silent contemplation. Peter Elliott then led members to the chapel in continued silence. The last in line was Primate Fred Hiltz, carrying the candle that had burned on the altar all day in remembrance of those who had lost their lives that day in Aotearoa-New Zealand.

Holden Evening Prayer

Council ended Friday's session with Holden Evening Prayer in the chapel.

Members attended an evening social from 9 p.m. until 11 p.m.