

COGS Highlights



Council of General Synod

Saturday, November 11, 2017

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

Orders of the Day

The Rev. Dr. Karen Egan reads out the Orders of the Day.

Opening Hymn and Prayer

Members opened the morning session by praying and singing the hymn "Let There Be Light".

You Are My Witnesses: Moment 5

Ms. Siobhan Bennett, a youth member of the Council of General Synod (CoGS), prefaced the morning agenda with a reflection on her experience at *The Road to Warm Springs*. Aside from the chance to hear Dr. Martin Brokenleg speak about Indigenous spirituality, Bennett said that a highlight of the gathering for her was having everyone in one room and listening to each other. As a planning team member, she thought it was "amazing to see everyone come together to present their thoughts and ideas".

2018 Budget Presentation

Bishop Fraser Lawton, CoGS representative for the Financial Management Committee (FMC), introduced the next presentation on the General Synod budget for 2018. Briefly recapping the annual fall meeting of the committee in Toronto, Lawton said that trends looking forward to the coming years suggest the church must be mindful of what appears to be the probability of declining income. At the moment, he said, more than 90 per cent of General Synod income comes from dioceses, and it might be wise to think now about critical things we must do to stave off or adjust to the decrease in revenue.

Treasurer and CFO Hanna Goschy presented the 2018 budget. The 2017 budget forecast project a

surplus of approximately \$27,000, while the 2018 budget featured a surplus of \$29,853. Guiding members through the budget document, Goschy pointed to the major sources of revenue and expenses in various departments and ministries, with 93 per cent of net revenues coming from diocesan proportional gifts. She summed up the budget as oriented towards participating in God's mission, with a "conservative but realistic outlook on revenues.

The FMC believes it is time to review the budget process, and said the coming year would be used to examine the current budget structure and to discern principles to guide future funding decisions, in part to prepare for the expected drop in revenues in the coming years. It was critical for the ministries of General Synod, Goschy said, that dioceses maintain proportional gifts commitments to the national church. "Achieving a balanced budget requires us to be prudent in projecting revenues, vigilant in pursuing revenues, and judicious in managing expenses."

Council members voted by consensus to adopt the 2018 budget as presented.

Missionary Society

CoGS members voted to temporarily adjourn and reconvene as the Missionary Society of the Anglican Church of Canada (MSCC) in order to discuss the budget for the latter. Goschy presented figures for MSCC assets, liabilities, and net assets as of Dec. 31, 2016.

Members voted by consensus to approve the MSCC budget statement and a pair of related resolutions, before voting to adjourn and reconvene as CoGS.

Resolution

Be it resolved that the Board of Management approves the Financial Statements of the Missionary Society of the Anglican Church of Canada for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2016 and that any two Officers are authorized the sign the statements on the Board's behalf.

Resolution

Be it resolved that the Board of Management of the Missionary Society of the Anglican Church of Canada approve the following changes to the Car Loan Application:

- Change reference to "clergyman" to "cleric";
- Increase the maximum loans to \$16,000;
- Increase the period of repayment to 48 months; and
- Remove the requirements for a borrower's lien note.

Resolution

Be it resolved that the meeting of the Board of Management of the Missionary Society of the Anglican Church of Canada be terminated.

Pension Committee Resolutions

Prolocutor Cynthia Haines-Turner and Chancellor David Jones presented resolutions from the Budget Committee. Council members voted by consensus to adopt all three resolutions.

Resolution

Be it resolved that The Council of General Synod approves the recommendation of the Pension Committee to make the following amendments to Regulations 1, 5 and 20 of the General Synod Pension Plan Regulations (Canon VIII) effective January 1, 2017.

Resolution

Be it resolved that The Council of General Synod approves the recommendation of the Pension Committee to make the following amendments to Regulations 1 and 3 of the Lay Retirement Plan (Canon IX) effective January 1, 2017.

Resolution

Be it resolved that the Council of General Synod approves the recommendation of the Pension Committee to make the following amendments to Regulations C.3.2A and D.3 of LTD Regulations effective September 18, 2017.

Interfaith Relationships

Bishop Bruce Myers gave a brief presentation recalling that General Synod in 2016 had considered a resolution that would have removed a prayer for the conversion of the Jews from the *Book of Common Prayer*.

That resolution ultimately did not pass, but Bishop Myers suggested that there could have been many reasons why this did not pass. One reason could have been a lack of context for voting members and that CoGS should lay the groundwork for General Synod to consider a similar resolution again in 2019. He highlighted, in his own context, how removing such prayers affect interfaith relationships, particularly with people of the Jewish faith. During a discussion period, one CoGS member noted that she was sometimes unable to worship in places with the *Book of Common Prayer* merely because of the inclusion of this single prayer.

With the general support from CoGS, Archbishop and Primate Fred Hiltz suggested that CoGS should take a lead in inviting General Synod 2019 to revisit this matter in a way that would be much more thorough in terms of background, contemporary context, and the solemn obligation of the church to be sensitive to dialogue with people of other faiths. A motion to do so was carried by consensus.

Members took a coffee break from 10:15 a.m. to 10:50 a.m.

Remembrance Day Service

To commemorate Remembrance Day, council members held a special worship service in the chapel. LCdr. the Rev. Beverley Kean-Newhook offered a meditation in which she recounted her experience providing pastoral care to a wounded Canadian soldier in Afghanistan.

Council members concluded the service by singing "God Save the Queen" and placed poppies before a cross in front of the altar.

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

Bible Study

The afternoon session began with a Bible study. Table groups read and reflected upon Matthew 25:1-13 before discussing the passage among themselves.

Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples

Members of the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples (ACIP), including National Indigenous Anglican Bishop Mark MacDonald, Indigenous Ministries Coordinator Ginny Doctor, Bishop Lydia Mamakwa, the Rev. Vincent Solomon, Mrs. Grace Delaney, Ms. Caroline Chum, and Ms. Donna Bomberry continued the afternoon session with a presentation on the work of ACIP since *The Road to Warm Springs*.

Since the Pinawa gathering, Bishop MacDonald said, ACIP had met to shape both its response to Randall Fairey's report on the event as well as to prepare its presentation for CoGS. In relation to the latter, ACIP recommended that Bishop MacDonald explain to the council details of his position as National Indigenous Anglican Bishop, and to discuss preparations for the coming ACIP meeting in February 2018 as well as the next meeting of Sacred Circle in August.

The idea of a National Indigenous Anglican Bishop had been spoken of at all Sacred Circles until 2005, when Sacred Circle called on then-Primate Andrew Hutchinson to give jurisdictional authority to 15 Indigenous bishops. In response, Archbishop

Hutchinson suggested one bishop to serve in a kind of transition role. After a lengthy process, Bishop MacDonald was selected to be the first National Indigenous Anglican Bishop.

Immediately after the announcement MacDonald became very ill for several months, and used the time to watch Anglican Video presentations of every Sacred Circle going back to 1988. Through this process, he gathered from these meetings that the job of a National Indigenous Anglican Bishop as imagined by the elders had five basic components. The National Indigenous Anglican Bishop would:

- 1) represent Indigenous people in the larger church and represent their ideas, their interests, and ideals;
- 2) act as an interpreter of the larger church back to Indigenous people;
- 3) act as bishop for Mother Earth, reflecting the unique and primary relationship of Indigenous people with the land;
- 4) serve in a transitional way to act as a "midwife", facilitating the birth of a self-determining Indigenous Anglican church within the larger Anglican Church of Canada;
- 5) represent Indigenous identity, both inside and outside the church.

Those five components have guided Bishop MacDonald's work ever since as National Indigenous Anglican Bishop. To give council members a better idea of what his position involves, the bishop described in detail his activities over the previous month.

During that period, some of his work included travelling to Manitoba to perform services at St. James Church in Thomson; visiting Kingston, Ont. to participate in a Queen's University panel discussion on the relationship between reconciliation ending corporal punishment of children; meeting with the House of Bishops; travelling to Winnipeg to plan an Urban Indigenous Ministry consultation in spring; speaking on moral formation and the character of knowledge during a Toronto consultation on synthetic biology; and flying to central

Newfoundland to speak with thousands of people, including hundreds of Anglicans, who are now officially status under the Indian Act and are waking up to their Indigenous identity. Bringing the month to a close, he met with the Sacred Gathering of the Indigenous Spiritual Ministry of Mishamikoweesh—their equivalent of a diocesan synod—and assisted Bishop Mamawka, both as National Indigenous Anglican Bishop and in his role as her helper in northern Manitoba.

Ginny Doctor discussed some of the work that ACIP had done since the last Sacred Circle. She noted that several members had experienced health issues which had had an impact on their work. A major focus of ACIP is raising up new leaders, and it recently established the Young Ministers Program to bring young adults into ministry. “Most people say youth are our future,” Doctor said. “But I believe the youth are our present ... We have to teach them.”

At their last meeting, which took place weeks before the present meeting of CoGS, ACIP members worked on a draft document related to a self-determining Indigenous church. Doctor stressed that the draft was purely a working document. No plan is ever cast in stone, she said, since no one ever knows exactly what will happen and we must leave ourselves open to be guided by the Holy Spirit.

The ACIP members present then read aloud the draft document, *The Spiritual Movement Towards an Indigenous Self-Determined Church: A Coalition, Confederacy, Council within the Anglican Church of Canada*. The document contained five goals representing Indigenized forms of the Marks of Mission, objectives related to those goals, and immediate steps for achieving those objectives.

- *Goal A:* To create an Indigenous spiritual mission and ministry in accordance with traditional teachings and the dreams of the elders. *Objectives:* Provide education and information for Indigenous communities to share the Good News, and arrange an ACIP meeting.
- *Goal B:* To prepare leaders for ministry to teach, baptize, and nurture new believers.

Objectives: Increase the knowledge of traditional and Christian teachings and values, and increase stewardship in Indigenous communities.

- *Goal C:* To respond to human needs by loving service. *Objectives:* Continue to provide suicide prevention programs and Indigenous Catechist Training in Indigenous communities.
- *Goal D:* To seek to transform unjust structures in church and society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation. *Objectives:* Increase support to Indigenous non-stipendiary clergy; change the church structure by amending Canon XXII to move further towards an “entity” or fifth province; promote pathways to reconciliation in Indigenous communities; continue to collaborate with others in Church House and with ecumenical partners in unjust issues impacting Indigenous communities; particularly missing and murdered Indigenous women and human trafficking; and explore the possibility of federal/provincial incorporation for Sacred Circle.
- *Goal E:* To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth. *Objectives:* Honour traditional teachings by incorporating them into meetings and resources, and speak on behalf of Mother Earth as determined by the National Indigenous Anglican Bishop from Sacred Circles to address issues such as hydro-fracking, climate change, and mining.

The document also contained six steps for nonviolent violent change, which MacDonald and Doctor read aloud. These steps included information gathering, education, personal commitment, discussion/negotiation, direct action, and reconciliation.

During a discussion period, Bishop MacDonald briefly touched on potential different models for self-determining Indigenous church, noting that consultation will be key and that the draft document is only part of a larger plan. The draft

document itself, he said, had been affected “almost 100 per cent” by *The Road to Warm Springs* and largely emerged as a result of the gathering.

Human Trafficking Report Back

Ryan Weston, lead animator of Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice, followed ACIP’s presentation with an update on the church’s work to combat human trafficking and modern slavery since the last meeting of CoGS.

Following the meeting and its passing of a resolution that called on the church to raise awareness of human trafficking, an Anglican reference group was established. During their first meeting in September, the reference group brought in individuals in to share their expertise on human trafficking, gaining valuable information on the scope and nature of the issue within Canada.

Among other facts, Weston noted that 50 per cent of girls being trafficked in Canada are Indigenous, and the average age that women become involved in south trafficking is 14. Participants in the Temporary Foreign Workers program, who work in all sectors of the economy, are often exploited. The status of these workers in Canada is often tied to their specific employer, leaving many unable to speak up about their working conditions. Members of the reference group also learned about domestic and international projects aiming to protect those vulnerable to exploitation and trafficking.

Recognizing that we as a church cannot tackle every form of human trafficking, the reference group pondered where we are best positioned and engaged currently. They believed the church should focus on the issue of missing and murdered women and girls, as well as men and boys, by continuing to find ways to support Indigenous communities on that issue, particularly as a federal inquiry on the issue moves forward. Directly connected to missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls is the issue of forced sexual exploitation. In addition, the reference group believed the church could take part in constructive work related to participants in the Temporary Foreign Workers program.

The reference group has identified some key partners in moving forward in this work, some of whom the church has existing relationships with. As members continue to work out specific next steps, they have discussed the possibility of regional events across the country, with Bishop Michael Bird of the Diocese of Niagara having already offered to host such an event. They have also been in communication with staff members at the Anglican Communion office.

Importantly, Weston said, Anglicans must continue to bear witness to the crime of human trafficking, which many do not hear about enough in Canada. We must remind everyone about the dignity of all our brothers and sisters, and continue to develop specific advocacy pieces as we identify incomplete policy areas, services for victims, etc. We should engage the church and continue to offer resources or curate resources that already exist, including liturgical resources, since prayer is an important part of taking action.

Responding to the presentation, the Primate affirmed Weston’s description of human trafficking as a “crime against humanity” —one that struck to the very heart of our baptismal vow to respect the dignity of every human being. “Human trafficking is an affront to the dignity of men and women and boys and girls,” the Primate said, having spoken at length about the subject in his address the previous week to the Ottawa diocesan synod. He noted that trafficking is a global issue, and that the Anglican Church of Canada belongs to the worldwide Anglican Communion, recalling Resolution 15.10 from the Anglican Consultative Council in 2012 that called on every province in the communion to confront human trafficking and make sure people are educated about it.

Human trafficking also directly reflects the commitment of the church to Indigenous ministries. “You cannot talk about human trafficking and missing and murdered women and girls as though they’re separate issues,” the Primate said, reiterating a statement from his Ottawa address: “They’re intertwined, and the tragedy is right in front of us.” Former Primate Michael Peers once said that the church’s commitment to Indigenous ministries is “for the

long haul". Likewise, Archbishop Hiltz said, the struggle to end human trafficking is also a call on our church for the long haul. He expressed gratitude to everyone in the Anglican Church of Canada and among its partners who were helping the church move forward in addressing the issue.

You Are My Witnesses: Moment 6

Weston concluded by offering the sixth personal reflection on *The Road to Warm Springs*. Agreeing with everything said in the prior reflections, he said he felt privileged to be present. The experience that was most new for Weston was hearing so many of the languages of these lands being spoken in one room. Growing up, like most settler peoples, he learning about Indigenous people not as people currently living and thriving, but in a very "historical" way. As a result, the idea that languages maintain themselves and persevere never occurred to him until he was an adult.

For Weston, to be in a room and hear that contemporary linguistic reality so many times and in so many ways was very profound. He saw it as a profound demonstration of resiliency and determination that was quite profound—one that helped him recognize the resiliency and determination of Indigenous Anglicans themselves as they continue to move forward in the journey towards self-determination.

Members took a coffee break from 3:30 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Market Place #2

After the break, CoGS members split into groups for three different marketplace discussions. The discussion topics included *Answering the Call(s)!*, *#EngagingYouth #InYourChurch #ACC*, and *Equipping the Saints*.

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

Marriage Canon Response

Beginning the evening session, the Ven. Dr. Lynne McNaughton, chair of the CoGS working group on the marriage canon, said the working group had become aware that part of what it needed to do was facilitate conversation in dioceses and provinces on the proposed changes to the

marriage canon, as well as preparation for General Synod 2019 to clarify the process of the resolution presented.

Accordingly, she asked council members to tell them what needed clarification, to help prepare a "facts" sheet as a resource. Members split into groups by ecclesiastical province for 20 minutes of discussion, during which they wrote down any questions they might have about the process leading up to or at General Synod 2019 and what needed clarification.

Afterwards, provincial group representatives offered up some of the responses. Hearing their responses, Archbishop Hiltz discerned three basic categories of question:

- What do we need to pay attention to going *into* General Synod?
- What do we need to pay attention to *within* General Synod in terms of the process, and what actually can happen to a resolution once it's on the floor?
- How do we come *out of* that General Synod in terms of being attentive to one another pastorally, remaining together as a church no matter what the outcome of resolution is?

To answer many of these questions, Chancellor David Jones spoke at length on the minutiae of voting rules and procedures for resolutions and amendments at General Synod.

CoGS Planning Team co-chair, the Very Rev. Peter Wall, asked if before the end of the present council meeting, members could give consideration to a resolution that would ask the Primate and Prolocutor to communicate with metropolitan bishops and bring forward concerns about their responsibility around provincial synods to consider this matter and to keep them up-to-date on the actions of CoGS. The Chancellor suggested referring this communication to dioceses as well, and Prolocutor Cynthia Haines-Turner said she would take this suggestion to the resolutions committee.

You Are My Witnesses: Moment 7

The Rev. Vincent Solomon offered the final reflection of the day on *The Road to Warm Springs*. He called the gathering “a very healing time and wonderful place to be”, driven by the knowledge that all participants were of one mind in the determination to get on with the process of Indigenous self-determination within the Anglican Church of Canada.

Such feelings were a stark contrast to what Solomon had experienced one year prior after General Synod. In the immediate aftermath of the vote on Resolution A-051-R2 regarding proposed changes to the marriage canon, an electronic voting error briefly made it appear that the resolution had not passed by the required two-thirds majority vote in all three orders, and emotions were running high.

As an Indigenous priest, Solomon said, many people came up to him and blamed him for the failure of marriage canon resolution—to the extent, he added, where “I didn’t feel particularly safe.” Many Indigenous members of General Synod had given away cloths which were now thrown back in their faces and on their tables because the resolution had failed. In addition, Solomon did not feel that his cultural prerogatives and procedures were followed or that his elders were treated very well.

After that experience, being invited to *The Road to Warm Springs* was difficult for Solomon. He doubted whether he should attend and feared that many of the same things that happened at General Synod would happen again.

Instead, he experienced a pleasant surprise in Pinawa.

“I saw once again the church that I fell in love with ... the church that had guided me and moulded me into the Christian that I am today, a church that has amazing foundations, a church that has a heart and the lordship of Jesus Christ at its very centre,” Solomon said. “I saw people of different colours and backgrounds, theologies, sexualities, come together and be one in their deliberations, in their way of talking to one another, in their holy manners. That’s what I feel was there.”

“My hope for 2019 is that those of us who were there will have learned ... that it is possible to be of one mind and one body and one purpose,” he added. “Hopefully, people like me who have been hurt will once again rise up and take the mantle of Christ into the world once again so that we are seen to be who we are supposed to be.”

Holden Evening Prayer

Council concluded the evening session with Holden Evening Prayer in the chapel.

Members enjoyed a social from 9 p.m. until 11 p.m.