COGS Highlights

Council of General Synod Friday, November 23, 2018

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

Opening Eucharist
National Indigenous Anglican Bishop Mark MacDonald was the homilist at the opening worship service.

Welcome, Opening Formalities, Orders of the Day
Archbishop Fred Hiltz, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, welcomed members of the Council of General Synod (CoGS) to the meeting. Peter Wall, co-chair of the Planning and Agenda Team, read out the Orders of the Day.

The Primate's Report
The Primate began his report to CoGS by noting his busy schedule in recent months visiting many dioceses, attending Sacred Circle and the Canadian Lutheran Anglican Youth (CLAY) gathering, and celebrating the 60th anniversary of the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund. He highlighted the launch in September of the Heartbeat of the Church initiative, an opportunity for conversation and reflection on the life and witness of the church. Response thus far has been generally positive. The Primate hoped that the church would see more surges in conversations and submitted prayers during Advent and in the new year as it looks ahead to present the results at General Synod 2019 in Vancouver.

The bulk of the Primate's report was inspired by remarks from Archbishop Suheil Dawani, Bishop of the Diocese of Jerusalem, that Archbishop Hiltz heard during a recent visit to the diocese with Global Relations Director Andrea Mann. In the midst of visits to the Penman Clinic, the Al Ahli Arab Hospital, St. George's College, and St. George's Cathedral, the Primate brought official greetings from the Anglican Church of Canada and attended the 2018 diocesan synod, or *majma*. The theme of the majma was the ministry of reconciliation.

In an address, Archbishop Dawani posed the question: What does reconciliation mean? Though it can mean many things to different people, he said, the most challenging form of reconciliation is internal reconciliation, or "those times when we experience conflict within ourselves." In his Epistle to the Romans, St. Paul mentioned similar feelings of internal conflict: "I do not understand my own actions. […] I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good that I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do." (Romans 7:15-20) Bishop Dawani said that people must first be reconciled with themselves before they can be reconciled with others. Jesus shared our human nature, being both divine and human. He experienced pain and sorrow in order to teach us the divine concept of our true humanity. "It is a picture," Archbishop Hiltz said to CoGS, "far removed from all hatred and envy. It is humanity that is loving and sacrificial towards others. It is a humble humanity."

That notion of "a humble humanity" grabbed the Primate's attention, as a way of living together more respectful of our dignity as children of God. From his point of view, it represented real hope for advancement in achieving the sustainable development goals set by world leaders: a world without hunger or poverty; a world with healthy living conditions, gender equality, decent work, and responsible consumption.

He urged CoGS members to take away that image of "a humble humanity" from the present meeting: a more humble humanity for the sake of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples around the

world; a more humble humanity for ridding the world of racism, "spiritual arrogance", and cultural genocide; for addressing violence against women, human trafficking, missing and murdered Indigenous women in Canada, the meth and opioid crises, and waves of teen suicide in Indigenous communities; and for making ourselves better stewards of creation and having higher regard for free, prior, and informed consent of Indigenous people in connection to resource extraction.

The words of Archbishop Dawani also came to mind for the Primate in relation to the 70th anniversary of the founding of the World Council of Churches (WCC), which takes place in 2018. This year also marks the 35th anniversary of the sixth assembly of the WCC, which took place in Vancouver and saw then-Primate Ted Scott serve as moderator. At that assembly in 1983, members of Christian churches joined together against social ills including racism, sexism, militarism, and violation of human rights.

"We confess these threats are as great today as they were more than three decades ago," Archbishop Hiltz said. In March 2018, the WCC held its Conference on World Mission and Evangelism in Arusha, Tanzania, out of which had come a "powerful statement" to Christ's church throughout the world, *The Arusha Call to Discipleship*, which also drew inspiration from African spiritual traditions.

The Primate noted that recent history had been marked by continuing harm caused by "death-dealing forces" that had seen the accumulation of wealth among the few and impoverishment of the many, a root cause of war around the world. "This global imperial system has made the financial market one of the idols of our time," the Primate said, with people on the margins of society bearing the heaviest burdens.

While these phenomena were not new for 2018, he said, the Holy Spirit calls us to respond with personal and communal conversion and transforming discipleship. As described in the Arusha statement: "Discipleship is both a gift and a calling to be active collaborators with God for the transforming of the world."

Taking a moment to commend the book *Toward a Symphony of Instruments* as a "good conversation starter" on the instruments of the Anglican Communion, Archbishop Hiltz noted that in the week after CoGS, he would be hosting a meeting in Toronto of Primates from the Americas and Caribbean.

The gathering is one of several through the world responding to a call by Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby for meetings of Primates from different regions in advance of the 2020 Lambeth conference. The primary purpose of these meetings is to have conversations about the instruments of communion and how they complement one another in bolstering the life and witness of communion as a whole, as well as inviting input into discussions at Lambeth 2020.

"I take the Canadian contribution to that very seriously," the Primate said. He noted that the upcoming Lambeth conference, built around the theme "God's Church for God's World", is a meeting for all bishops, and not for only Primates to shape the agenda. The Primate recalled the last meeting of the House of Bishops in Prince Edward Island, where Canadian Anglican bishops had their own conversation about what they would like to see as major topics of discussion at Lambeth. Topics suggested by bishops included:

- intentional discipleship;
- becoming a post-colonial church;
- honouring the emergence of Indigenous churches;
- imagining the church God is calling us to be;
- learnings from the Consultation of Anglican Bishops in Dialogue;
- supporting the witness of the church in Holy Land;
- sustainable development goals;
- migration and human trafficking;
- gender-based violence;
- state-sponsored or sanctioned violence; and
- interfaith dialogue and collaboration

Along with conversation about a humble humanity across the Anglican Communion and with other denominations, the Primate pointed to the importance of similar conversations within the Anglican Church of Canada—learning about the context of each other's work, building companion diocese relationships, and engaging in dialogue about different perspectives on theological issues.

The latter provided a segue in the Primate's report into ongoing conversations over changes to the marriage canon. With regards to discussions across the church, the Primate said, "I simply want to observe that I see huge efforts being made to listen more attentively to one another. […] I think people are a little less harsh. I think we're just a little less strident. I think we're less quick to label, less quick to belittle, less quick to judge and dismiss. I think people in our church are looking for a way ahead that honours a variety of perspectives on this matter, that enables us … to stay together as one family."

How the church emerges from General Synod 2019, he added, will depend in large matter on how it prepares for General Synod, how it conducts itself as a church in General Synod, and what kind of spirit Anglicans carry to the gathering. Archbishop Hiltz expressed his gratitude for the Marriage Canon Working Group at CoGS, for the General Synod Planning Committee, and for every diocese and province that had engaged in conversation and provided feedback.

At the recent meeting of the House of Bishops, the biggest question that the bishops had wrestled with became: What is needed for Anglicans to continue as a church together after General Synod?

Since the time of the New Testament, the Christian church has had to face disagreements. Within the Anglican Church of Canada, the Primate said, there is both the commitment and capacity to disagree in a way that does not demean each other, but honours our calling in Christ.

"In truth, in good Christian disagreement, no one is made to feel that their position is of no value … No one feels walked over … No one feels pushed out. There is in truth a continuing place for everyone in this church. May it be so." He expressed his hope that in the coming days of Advent, when the thoughts of the church turned to the reign of Christ and the celebration of the Incarnation, that its members would have the opportunity to reflect more deeply on how Christ lifts up our humanity so that it is more reflective of the divine will for it, both for its own sake and for the sake of the world.

CoGS members followed the Primate's report by singing the hymn *The Love of Jesus Calls Us*.

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

Anglican Journal **and Communication and Information Resources Committee (CIRC) Working Group**

The Rev. Dr. Karen Egan and the Rt. Rev. William Cliff, co-chairs of the Anglican Church of Canada Joint Working Group on national Print Publications, presented a report offering an update on the group's progress. After detailing background information on the events that triggered the examination of the *Anglican Journal* and its relationship to other communication tactics and publications of General Synod—which began with a request from the Diocese of Rupert's Land—Egan noted the larger context of changing financial realities and the church's need for an integrated national communications strategy.

Working from a "fact-based, consultative approach", the working group had conducted five surveys of stakeholder groups including bishops, editors, CoGS, General Synod, and Anglicans at large. It carried out detailed financial analysis and business modelling, which indicated that the steady decline in advertising meant it was no longer a major source of revenue for the newspaper.

A content analysis of the *Anglican Journal* concluded that editorial independence made little difference to the articles inside. Comparisons with other churches, such as the Roman Catholic Church, made it clear that the Anglican Church of Canada was an outlier, in that no other churches are generating monthly papers and distributing

them across the church for free.

Following its research, the working group had put forward recommendations in three key areas. The first area concerned a *print transition strategy*, which would see the Anglican church of Canada make a gradual exit strategy from print along with simultaneous strengthening of digital and social media. Continued distribution of the *Anglican Journal* print edition would continue for the next triennium, with a flexible approach to its evolving relationship with diocesan newspapers and a search for any possible improvements to its subscriber list that might save money.

The second key area of recommendation involved revising the mandate of the *Anglican Journal*, putting forward clear and comprehensive journalistic guidelines for the *Journal* and other church publications. These guidelines would include journalistic accountability; the widest possible diversity of voices and views; a fact-based, in-depth, self-reflective and self-critical approach; independence in editorials with the right of reply; and an overarching "prophetic voice". Current structural, management, and governance arrangements would be revised and clarified.

The third area involved the mandate and structure of coordinating committees. The report recommended re-combining the *Anglican Journal* and Communication and Information Resources coordinating committees into a single Communications Advisory Committee, with a revised mandate clarifying that General Synod is the publisher of the *Anglican Journal* and all other communication products of the Anglican Church of Canada. An Editorial Review Board would have a mandate to assess the *Journal* and other church publications against their respective editorial mandates and journalistic guidelines.

At the end of the presentation, working group member Canon (lay) Ian Alexander offered a "preview" of questions for discussion by table groups. The questions asked CoGS members for their thoughts on the proposed changes, the pros and cons, and what they believed would be necessary for success.

2019 Budget Overview

Ms. Hanna Goschy, Treasurer and CFO for General Synod, followed with a presentation on the church's 2019 budget. The 2018 forecast expressed a small deficit of approximately $14,000 due to an expected shortfall in proportional gifts, while the 2019 budget included a $3,000 surplus.

Several dioceses had indicated during the year that they would not be able to meet the commitment to 2018 that they had indicated. Goschy noted that the deficit would have been larger had it not been for expense savings in a number of ministry areas. The lion's share (90 per cent) of revenue for the year, not including the *Anglican Journal*, came from diocesan contributions.

Nominations

The Rev. Clara Plamondon spoke on behalf of the nominations committee regarding the need to nominate a replacement for the Rev. Grace Delaney, who had had to step down from CoGS as a lay representative after being ordained as a deacon. A motion was put forward to nominate Ms. Susan Little, and Plamondon invited other nominations from members of CoGS over the course of the meeting.

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

Bible Study

Council began the afternoon with Bible study. Members read a passage from Luke 6:37-45 regarding the spirit of a disciple, and discussed it in table groups.

***Anglican Journal* and CIRC Working Group (cont'd)**

Working group member Canon (lay) Ian Alexander put forward the discussion questions on the report of the Joint Working Group on Print Publications and asked council members to respond within their table groups. Discussion lasted 15-20 minutes.

In keeping with the communications theme, their responses were written on a notepad divided into two categories: "Headlines" and "Loose Ends". Among the concerns listed under Headlines:

- Perceived disconnect between national and diocesan planning
- Readers read print differently than digital
- Transition needs to be gradual
- How do we ensure a full range of voices? How do we assess this?
- Need to communicate this change to the church
- What is the impact on fundraising/donors?
- How will we reach those who do not have digital access?
- Diversity of voices is *very* important
- Transitional withdrawal may not be possible
- Draft mandate: better reflects what is desired.

Among the perceived Loose Ends:

- Risk: need to align diocesan and national strategies
- Who is the publisher?
- Journalistic guidelines: negative reports/stories need to be told even if unpopular, embarrassing, etc.
- "Purpose", "guidelines", and "standards" need to be clarified
- Include an "official publication"?

Five motions were put forward regarding the recommendations of the Joint Working Group on Print Publications. All five were adopted by consensus.

Resolution
That this Council of General Synod recommend to General Synod the adoption of the transition strategy for national and diocesan print publications during the coming triennium, as proposed in the report of the Joint Working Group on Print Publications.

Resolution
That this Council of General Synod recommend to General Synod the adoption of the policy and recommendations with regard to distribution of the *Anglican Journal*.

Resolution
That this Council of General Synod recommend that General Synod endorse the investment in an enhanced digital presence at the national and diocesan levels.

Resolution
That this Council of General Synod instruct the Joint Working Group to complete work on an editorial mandate and journalistic guidelines, along the lines proposed in the present report, and taking into consideration feedback from this meeting, and that this be done before the March meeting of the council.

Resolution
That this Council of General Synod ask the Governance Working Group to prepare an amendment to Appendix B of the Canons to be brought to General Synod to give effect to the recommendations of the Joint Working Group on Print Publications with regard to the governance of the communications function of the church.

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

Communications
Ms. Meghan Kilty, director of Communications and Information Resources, began her presentation on a new strategic communications strategy for the Anglican Church of Canada by highlighting the central role that communications has always played in Christianity. "Jesus has called on every member of our church to share the most important Good News of all time," Kilty said. "Communication is at the heart of our identity."

In 2013, a report was released by a joint working group tasked by Primate Hiltz with reviewing all communications. Some of the recommendations, Kilty said, had not been fully lived into, and the church had not developed a full communications

strategy. Recalling the famous observation of Marshall McLuhan, she noted that "the medium is [still] the message." *How* we communicate, in terms of technology, impacts who we are as much as *what* we communicate, and an effective communications strategy has the potential to influence these outcomes.

Kilty put forward three main objectives for a communications strategy:

- To increase Anglican visibility, and strengthen Anglican identity and reputation across the country;
- To build and strengthen communications capacity across the Anglican Church of Canada; and
- To establish, strengthen, and leverage an integrated communications presence for the Anglican Church of Canada.

At the moment, the church does not have a traditional strategic document in this regard. Vision 2019 is an aspirational, visionary document for the church, but its areas of attention do not necessarily set up particular communications outcomes. There is a need to communicate who we are as General Synod not only to Anglicans, but to the world.

Kilty put forward our baptismal vows and the Marks of Missions as examples of a communications message. But in terms of a plan for the coming triennium and distilling communications into a strategic document, the process begins with a review of church communications as they currently exist.

Such a review has already taken place, with proposals sent back to the Communications and Information Resources Committee for further consideration. Among the proposed objectives are a focus on increasing Anglican visibility.

Kilty suggested the example of a three-year campaign built around the hashtag #WeAreAnglican, which would encourage parishes, bishops, and all members of the church to say who we are in God's mission and who we are serving, amplifying the voices of the oppressed, and describing how we worship in an increasingly individualistic, fragmented world.

Another method might be creating a fully integrated approach to communications, extending the work of the Joint Working Group on Print Publications, with all communications—be they social media, diocesan news sites and publications, sermons posted online, shared pictures, or any other input—feeding into one particular hub. Such an integrated and curated presence could reflect the diversity of the church and maximize resources at General Synod.

Though the Anglican Church of Canada has made an initial foray in the direction of a more curated approach to storytelling on Anglican.ca, Kilty highlighted the considerable investment of the church in the *Anglican Journal* and its brand, which forms part of the church's identity. But why fragment the church's message and duplicate stories, when the church could adopt a more integrated approach—recognizing many platforms, but directing them into one particular Anglican Church of Canada news site?

A major focus for the next three years will be building capacity with existing audiences: senior leaders, donors, dioceses, parishes, church members, media, youth, and Anglican Communion partners. Kilty described strategic communications as a combination of public relations, communications, and advocacy at the highest possible level, at the soonest possible time. This is in contrast to press agentry, journalism/reporting, "corporate communication", and marketing. It required an *outcome-oriented* approach, defining what the church is doing and why, with clear outcomes and goals. All decisions must be realistic, informed, and consistent, taken in the context of the progress they are likely to bring about.

In the absence of such a strategy, Kilty warned, the church risked its reputation, credibility, potential for growth, and capacity for crisis preparedness and responsiveness. If the church is not looking to outcomes it wants to create, it will lose the opportunity to create prophetic voice and to strengthen the body of Christ through communication. Charting the ever more rapid

development of technology in recent decades and the growing pervasiveness of the Internet, she challenged the church to create a communication strategy that would put it in a strong position heading into the future.

A discussion period followed for approximately 15 minutes, in which Kilty asked CoGS members to reflect on what they found concerning and encouraging, what was missing, and to put forward any other questions they might have. In response, table groups noted the continuing appeal of the church's non-digital presence for older audiences; expressed a desire to safeguard the ability to speak truth to power in balancing out increased centralization; and pondered how a campaign such as #WeAreAnglican might attain the same degree of enthusiasm as initiatives such as Heartbeat of the Church.

Resources for Mission and FWM Motions
The Rt. Rev. John Chapman introduced a motion changing the language of the Terms of Reference for the Resources for Mission Committee. The motion was adopted by consensus.

> **Resolution**
> That this Council of General Synod instruct the Joint Working Group to complete work on an editorial mandate and journalistic guidelines, along the lines proposed in the present report, and taking into consideration feedback from this meeting, and that this be done before the March meeting of the council.

An additional motion was put forward by Faith, Worship, and Ministry requesting that CoGS approve prayers as part of a process of trial use and evaluation. The motion was adopted by consensus.

> **Resolution**
> That this Council of General Synod approve the liturgical texts, *Gathering Rites for the Paschal Cycle*, for Trial Use and Evaluation where permitted by the Ordinary.

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

Marriage Canon Report Back
Prolocutor Cynthia Haines-Turner led members of the Marriage Canon Working Group in presenting results of discussions on proposed changes to the marriage canon. Before the presentation, she put forward two discussion questions to CoGS:

1. Where have we experienced conflict so that it does not divide us?
2. Where do we experience conflict not being discussed in a robust way?

Members of the working group shared some of the points raised in discussions across the Anglican Church of Canada at different levels, from dioceses to ecclesiastical provinces.

Over and over, the responses of Anglican dioceses and ecclesiastical provinces who submitted reports or memorandums indicated a commitment to staying together as a church no matter what the result, and continuing to strengthen their commitment to the gospel, to "living and loving as Christ", and to each other. A major concern was finding ways to minimize the sense of feeling marginalized to those who would disagree with the final result. Respondents suggested offering pastoral support and resources in the aftermath of the vote, continued dialogue and healing, and stressed the importance of listening to Indigenous voices in the church.

In a subsequent discussion, CoGS members discussed what they saw in common from the results. Among the perceived commonalities:

- No one wants to walk away
- Staying together
- Commitment to standing together
- Dioceses have not changed positions, but have said they will stay – hope
- Sense of some fear about the process and where it will take us
- Apprehension/fatigue?

They also discussed what the work of CoGS must be in preparation for General Synod 2019.

Members outlined their concerns, attitudes, and responsibilities in regard to that coming work:

- What has worked well in CoGS discussions apply to General Synod
- Develop norms that are discussed and "owned" by General Synod
- Process for healing
- Time for silent listening
- Concern re: dioceses we have not heard from
- Set the tone of discussion
- How do we do this so all feel good about outcome?
- Continue to receive reports
- Good and sensitive planning
- Process is important
- Context is important – modes of communication and process are different for some
- Only 1 in 4 of dioceses have responded

Canadian Companions of Jerusalem Advisory Committee

Dr. Andrea Mann, director of Global Relations, gave a presentation on the Canadian Companions of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem (CCEJD) Advisory Committee and an update on its work. She recounted the history of the CCEJD stretching back to the 2009 visit to Jerusalem by Archbishop Hiltz. The visit inspired a CoGS resolution in 2010 to establish the CCEJD as "a voluntary body of members of the Anglican Church of Canada gathered together in common concern and support for the well-being of the church in the land of Christ's birth, death, and resurrection."

In the years since its creation, the CCEJD has gradually expanded its membership, activities, and role in supporting ministries of the Jerusalem diocese through advocacy, communications, and fundraising. The annual celebration of Jerusalem Sunday has become a major occasion for Anglican parishes in Canada, helping further donations totalling $96,000 that have provided funding for vital ministries including the Penman Medical Clinic, Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre for Disabled Children, and Al Ahli Arab Hospital. Challenges for the CCEJD from 2012 to 2018 primarily concerned raising awareness about the Companions' ministry, finding new Companions, improving communication with and among Companions, and increasing parish participation in Jerusalem Sunday.

Looking ahead to the next 10 years, the CCEJD Advisory Council aims to discern and plan out its next steps for continued growth in interest and involvement among Canadian Anglicans for supporting their counterparts in Jerusalem. Sinking deeper roots into local dioceses, parishes, and institutions such as cathedrals, colleges, youth programs, and pilgrimages are a major part of this goal.

Expanding the membership of the Advisory Council is another part. Mann introduced a motion that would appoint the Rev. Dr. Martin Brokenleg as a new member of the CCEJD Advisory Council. For the benefit of CoGS, the National Indigenous Anglican Bishop recounted the accomplishments of Dr. Brokenleg as a leading voice for Indigenous self-determination and a long-time personal friend, with a close relationship to many Indigenous Anglicans.

Prior to the vote, a discussion took place among council members regarding views on how political views and attitudes towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict might affect the work of an advisory council member. There were concerns expressed about how some views concerning Israel and Palestine will impact the relationships within the church in Canada. There was an acknowledgement by Dr. Mann and Bishop John Chapman that the CCEJD Advisory Council does not represent a political position, but exists to be in solidarity with Christians in the land of Christ's birth.

The motion was subsequently adopted by consensus.

Resolution

That the Council of General Synod in accordance with the Terms of Reference for the Canadian Companions of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, in the appointment of new Advisory Council Members, approve the appointment of The

Rev. Dr. Martin Brokenleg.

Evening Prayer
Council concluded the day's session with evening prayer.

Members gathered for an evening social from 9 p.m. until 11 p.m.