

COGS Highlights



Council of General Synod

Saturday, November 9, 2019

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

Morning Eucharist

Members of the Council of General Synod (CoGS) gathered for the morning Eucharist. Pat Lovell, partner to CoGS from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, delivered the homily.

Orders of the Day

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

Signs of Vitality

Bishop Lynne McNaughton facilitated a discussion on signs of vitality in the Anglican Church of Canada. This conversation flowed out of an exercise led by Archbishop and Primate Linda Nicholls after the House of Bishops first received the church statistics collected by the Rev. Canon Neil Elliot. As the church changes, the primate said, Anglicans must take a closer look at themselves in the mirror. "What are the 'green shoots' that we need to nurture?" Nicholls had asked.

Adaptive change requires experiments, McNaughton said, and a willingness to try new things and adjust if they don't work. She recounted a story from earlier in her time as bishop of Kootenay. In May she had heard of a congregation in Fruitvale that had requested her to visit them in the fall to deconsecrate their building. Members of the congregation told McNaughton that they had begun a house

church, comprised of seven faithful people who were meeting and could no longer sustain putting all their energy into the church building. When McNaughton met them in the fall for the deconsecration ceremony, she learned they had left the church building and were meeting in four different homes once a month, with a retired priest in the parish providing the Eucharist for them. The ceremony itself was "moving" and "bittersweet," as the congregation said goodbye to the building and told stories about it.

An older church member noted that the building itself dated back to the 1960s, after the previous one burned down. Thus, McNaughton said, "the congregation had moved once already." Anglicans at the Fruitvale church had stripped everything from the altar and continued holding services in houses. Since they have begun holding services at homes, they have attracted one new member. McNaughton described the story as an example of finding new ways of being a worshipping community, which could serve as a model for smaller communities.

Bishop David Edwards then spoke about outreach ministry in the diocese of Fredericton. The bishop has encouraged clergy to go into their communities and ask, "How can I help?" One priest, the Rev. Michael Caines, went to a school in his parish with this question, and was asked if the church offered catering services. Since then, his parish has hosted banquets for middle school and elementary school students twice per year. Edwards also described the use

of a church building which had some spare space. With the help of a local fundraising campaign, the church has been able to develop the space to include an indoor play park, clothing depot and coffee shop, providing a place for members of the community to meet.

McNaughton asked CoGS members to tell stories from their own contexts. She asked members to stand up and find one person with whom they had not had a lengthy conversation over the two days of the meeting so far. Moving into pairs, members told stories of a “green shoot” being nurtured in their context. After five minutes, McNaughton asked each pair to find another pair, discuss commonalities in their stories of green shoots and determine what works well.

At the end of the exercise, she expressed hope that members would continue to share stories, look for green shoots and learn how the church can nurture them.

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

2020 Budget

Hanna Goschy, treasurer and CFO, presented the church budget for 2020 on behalf of the Financial Management Committee. She first outlined the process for creating the budget. Ministries of General Synod sketched out work plans and the committee wrote multiple drafts of the budget starting in June 2019. The committee then reviewed its proposed budget on Oct. 21.

Goschy reported that the Financial Management Committee was forecasting a \$2,000 surplus for 2019, with a total revenue of approximately \$11.2 million. The 2020 budget is aiming for a surplus of almost \$35,000. General Synod was able to balance its budget this year due to careful budgeting, Goschy said. The

Financial Management Committee is mandated to present a balanced budget and not allowed to run a deficit.

Since 1995, proportional gifts from dioceses have decreased by \$1.8 million or almost 20%, from \$9.4 million to \$7.6 million. Thus far, the decline in proportional gifting has not resulted in any program or staff cuts. However, as some staff members leave, they have not been replaced. The decline in proportional gifts from dioceses, and expectations for a continued trend downwards, will add pressure on expenditures to maintain a balanced budget in future years. A related consideration is the possibility that some gifts that have been budgeted for may not come in.

The Financial Management Committee has discussed the need to allow funding of up to \$250,000 from the Ministry Investment Fund in the 2021 budget to offset a potential operating deficit in that year—a recommendation that needed the approval of CoGS. A motion for approval was among the four motions Goschy put before the council at the present meeting. Goschy reported that there will be a joint meeting of finance officers and executive officers in Edmonton in mid-November to discuss proportional giving in the Anglican Church of Canada and hopefully plans towards a strategy for improvements.

She put forward the four motions to council, each of which carried.

Resolution

Be it resolved that this Council of General Synod approve the 2020 Budget as recommended by the Financial Management Committee amended to reflect a surplus of \$34,934 due to an increase in reconciliation expenses to \$96,000.

Resolution

Be it resolved that the Council of General Synod approve the 2020 Capital Budget with expenditures of \$55,900.

Resolution

Be it resolved that the Council of General Synod approve a total of \$250,000 in grants from the Ministry Investment Fund for the following projects:

- Indigenous Ministries: \$65,000 for production of a video on reconciliation
- Indigenous Ministries: \$100,000 for episcopal support in N. Ontario and N. Saskatchewan
- Global Relations: \$41,300 to develop study program formation for vocational ministry in the Episcopal Diocese of Cuba
- Faith, Worship and Ministry: \$43,700 for a second gathering of Anglican Health Care Chaplains/Spiritual Care Providers

Resolution

Be it resolved that an additional \$250,000 be available from the Ministry Investment Fund, if required, for 2021 Budget as a contingency to ensure a balanced 2021 Budget.

Pension Resolutions

Bob Boeckner, trustee for the Pension Committee, put four motions before CoGS. The motions concerned amendments to regulations of Canon VIII, expense fund contributions, and approval for recommendations to amend the General Synod Pension Plan (GSPP) Trust

agreement and the Self Insured Death Benefit Plan.

All four motions were carried.

Resolution

Be it resolved that the Council of General Synod approves the following recommendations of the Pension Committee to amend Regulations 2, 3, 6 and 9 effective January 1, 2020. *[list of recommendations follows]*

Resolution

Be it resolved that the Council of General Synod approves the recommendation of the Pension Committee to maintain 0.5% expense fund contribution (General Synod Benefit Plans Administration and Expenses Regulation Made Pursuant to Section 4 of Canon VIII) effective January 1, 2020.

Resolution

Be it resolved that the Council of General Synod approves the following recommendations of the Pension Committee to amend Section 6.1 and 13.1 of the GSPP Trust agreement effective October 18, 2019. *[list of recommendations follows]*

Resolution

Be it resolved that the Council of General Synod approves the following recommendations of the Pension Committee to amend Section 1 of Self Insured Death Benefit Plan with retrospective effect (January 1, 2017). *[list of recommendations follows]*.

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

Bible Study

Cynthia Haines-Turner, co-chair of the planning and agenda team, once again led Bible study. Having read the story of the road to Emmaus over the past two days, council members took a fresh look at the story through different eyes by reading a First Nations version of Luke 24:1-35, entitled *The Road to Warm Springs*. Canon Murray Still, co-chair of ACIP, read the gospel passage.

Marketplace #2—ACC Ministries

CoGS members participated in marketplace discussions related to ministries of the Anglican Church of Canada. Each member could attend two of three workshops. The workshops included:

- Anglicans Against Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery
- The Primate’s World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF), and
- KAIROS.

Members broke for coffee from 3:30 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Group Norms (cont’d) and Respectful Conversations

Prolocutor Karen Egan read out the norms for conduct by CoGS members, guests and the planning and agenda team that had been decided by the council and emailed out. She noted that three additions had been made, following interventions by members.

A motion to accept the norms and additions was carried.

Resolution

Be it resolved that the Council of General Synod accept the group norms

as read out, plus three additions.

Lynne McNaughton then described standards for respectful listening to the council, using the acronym RESPECT: Responsibility, Empathetic Listening, Sensitive, Ponder, Examine, Confidentiality and Trust.

To illustrate these principles, McNaughton and other members of CoGS demonstrated how to conduct a respectful discussion, modelling examples of both disrespectful and respectful conversation.

Elections

Deputy Prolocutor Judith Moses, chair of the Nominating Committee, put forward a motion to confirm committee membership. The list of nominees presented on the first day of CoGS remained largely the same, albeit with Hanna Goschy now included as convenor of the Expenditures Committee. In addition, the following list of nominees was put forward for the Nominating Committee:

- Canon Paulette Bugden (Canada)
- Kim Chadsey (Ontario)
- Dale Drozda (B.C. and Yukon)
- Chris Wood (Rupert’s Land)

Moses noted the absence of nominees for the Audit Committee. Nominated individuals have not all been contacted yet, and an email ballot will follow shortly thereafter.

Council voted in favour of the motion to approve the rest of the nominees.

Resolution

Be it resolved that committee membership be confirmed as follows:
[lists of nominees for each committee]

Members broke for hospitality and dinner from 5

p.m. to 7 p.m.

Holden Evening Prayer

Council members held Holden evening prayer in the chapel.

Trivia Night

An extended game of trivia took place as evening entertainment.

Members enjoyed an evening social until 11 p.m.