

# COGS Highlights



Council of General Synod

Friday, June 1, 2018

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

## **Opening Eucharist**

Dean Peter Wall, co-chair of the Planning Team, provided a homily during the opening Eucharist. Invoking Justin, Martyr at Rome, Dean Wall discussed martyrdom as a form of sacrifice and self-giving, setting aside things that might be important to us personally and taking up things that are important to all. This concept of martyrdom, he said, was also part the “crucible of leadership” to which members of the Council of General Synod (CoGS) were called at the present meeting as they prepared to pray, discern, and decide.

## **Welcome, Opening Formalities, Orders of the Day**

Archbishop Fred Hiltz, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, welcomed everyone to the meeting. He listed regrets and introduced a number of council members, partners, and staff members from General Synod.

Peter Wall read out the Orders of the Day. Council members carried a motion to approve the minutes from the last CoGS meeting in November 2017. The Primate led a prayer before moving into the main agenda items of the day, starting with his own report.

## **Primate's Report**

In his report, Archbishop Hiltz recounted how five months ago, he took the time to read the presidential address from every General Synod since its establishment in 1893. Quoting from different addresses over the years, the Primate charted evolving attitudes towards the institution of General Synod within the Anglican Church of Canada.

At the inaugural session, Archbishop Robert Machray talked about the need for strength and harmony, calling for those attending the first General Synod “to throw themselves into this great venture”. At the third and fourth sessions in 1908 and 1911, Archbishop Samuel Matheson wrote that Anglicans had laid good foundations for a national church. In 1931, Archbishop Clarendon Worrell called for a constitution that would more exactly outline the roles and responsibilities of General Synod.

In 1943, the approach of the 50th anniversary of General Synod saw Archbishop Derwyn Owen argue that the national decision-making body of the church had proved itself to the older units of administration, dioceses and ecclesiastical provinces. Whatever the controversial issues of the day, Owen said, “I view with horror any signs of widening divisiveness among us” at a time when the foundations of faith were crumbling in other areas of society. His later successor, Archbishop Edward Scott, presented an image of the church moving into the complexities of the world and sustaining individuals from all different backgrounds and walks of life in his “I have a vision” speech. By 1992, in anticipation of the centennial anniversary of General Synod, Archbishop Michael Peers could speak of how General Synod had come together to form a structure that would strengthen national unity as well as forming a common mission for dioceses.

With 2018 marking the 125th anniversary of General Synod, Archbishop Hiltz announced that to celebrate this milestone, he was inviting the Anglican Church of Canada to “listen to its heartbeat” through a new initiative encouraging people to hold conversation circles in their homes and churches about their relationship to God,

Jesus, and the church.

The Primate outlined different steps for this Heartbeat of the Church initiative. As designed by Dean Shane Parker to help guide the conversations, these steps would include:

1. Drawing people together and leading off with a memorable prayer;
2. Inviting participants to speak from the heart; to consider when and how we pray; and to describe times when prayer came deeply to our hearts, when we felt God was very close to them, and when we felt very close to Jesus;
3. Reading and reflecting on a conversation from John's gospel that Jesus brings followers into in every generation: "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you..."; linking it to times when the church made our hearts glad, when it made our hearts ache, and when it gave us hope;
4. Asking participants to ponder what our own heartfelt prayer to the church might be.

Trial runs of the Heartbeat program in the Diocese of Ottawa have garnered positive feedback from participants, who said the format allowed for meaningful conversation, enabled people to share stories, and made for some sacred moments. In the context of the present meeting of CoGS, the Primate said council members would have the opportunity to try out the Heartbeat conversational model in marketplace discussions, Bible studies, and hopefully table group discussions. Within the coming month, he hoped to write a letter inviting people to participate in the Heartbeat initiative between September 2018 and May 2019.

Alongside the 125th anniversary of General Synod that Heartbeat of the Church aims to commemorate, the Primate pointed to an array of other anniversaries the church will be celebrating in 2018:

- The 55th anniversary of first Anglican Congress in Toronto, which Archbishop

Hiltz called a "watershed moment for the Anglican Communion". Archbishop Howard Clark hosted the 1963 conference, declaring at the outset: "If there is to be a rebirth of the Anglican Communion, it must be a rebirth of loving service to the world."

- The 45th anniversary of the church appointing the Primate's Council on the North, which later became the Council of the North. The Primate highlighted the support of Anglican Church Women (ACW) across the country for the Council of the North, noting that ACW in Huron earlier that week had donated \$50,000 to help support the council.
- The 25th anniversary of the Anglican Healing Fund, which saw a large influx of donations last year reflecting concerted fundraising efforts. The Primate thanked Healing Fund coordinator Esther Wesley for her "incredible work" over many years.
- The 25th anniversary of the apology of then-Primate Michael Peers for the church's role in the Indian residential school system. Archbishop Hiltz noted that the anniversary on Aug. 6 coincides with the upcoming meeting of Sacred Circle in Prince George, B.C., and said that he would be working with National Indigenous Anglican Bishop Mark MacDonald to find the best ways to commemorate the anniversary.

In addition, the church would be marking two more significant anniversaries in 2019:

- The 25th anniversary of the 1994 covenant in which Indigenous Anglicans embarked on a journey of spiritual renewal and extended a hand to the rest of church to join them. In the years since, the church has witnessed the installation of the National Indigenous Anglican Bishop, establishment of the Indigenous Spiritual Ministry of Mishamikoweesh, and the creation of numerous Indigenous bishop positions including two more in Manitoba and Ontario;
- The 25th anniversary of the consecration of

the church's first female bishop. Today, Archbishop Hiltz said, 10 out of the 42 bishops in the Anglican Church of Canada are women, including eight diocesan bishops. "What a blessing it has been to have women in episcopal ministry in our beloved church," the Primate added, and highlighted the recent election of Melissa Skelton as the church's first female archbishop and metropolitan.

- The 10th anniversary of efforts to deepen the church's relationship with the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, with General Synod staff members making multiple visits to Israel-Palestine and repeatedly welcoming Archbishop Suheil Dawani to Canada. The Primate thanked Canadian Anglicans for supporting the Diocese of Jerusalem in its ministries such as the Al Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza—support that was particularly important in the wake of recent protests on the Gaza Strip that saw more than 100 Palestinians killed by Israeli forces and thousands of others wounded.

2019 will also likely mark the end of the Anglican Church of Canada's 50-year relationship with the Episcopal Church of Cuba, as the latter seeks reintegration with The Episcopal Church in the United States. That history together saw the Canadian church spearhead numerous projects in conjunction the development office supported by the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF). "Cubans never, ever forget that in some of the hardest times of the last 50 years, the Anglican Church of Canada, as they put it, was there for them," the Primate said, praising the Cuban church for its exemplary living out of the Marks of Mission.

Two other entities related to the work of the church national are also marking anniversaries within a short timeframe. In 2017, the Anglican Foundation commemorated its 60th anniversary, while PWRDF is set to celebrate its own 60th anniversary in the fall of 2018.

All of the aforementioned anniversaries have, for the Primate, created what he called "a time of

great gratitude" for all these accomplishments through the ministries of the church, and gratitude for those who have helped in these ministries. He expressed his hope that this anniversary period would also be a time of prayer for the kind of rebirth that Archbishop Clark described.

*Members broke for coffee from 10:30 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.*

### **Anglican Journal & Communication and Information Resources Committee Working Group**

After the break, Canon Ian Alexander gave a presentation on the work of the *Anglican Journal* and Communications and Information Resources Committee Working Group. He recounted the background that prompted the church to explore current and future trends in diocesan newspaper distribution, and their potential impact on distribution of the *Anglican Journal*.

Thus far, the working group has made initial presentations to CoGS laying out its work plan and seeking initial input. It has undertaken quantitative opinion surveys as well as a qualitative study, and compared media strategies of other churches both inside and outside Canada.

One of the clear conclusions emerging from surveys is that Canadian Anglicans value their church publications very highly. More than three-quarters of respondents said it was "somewhat" or "very" important that "a national publication of interest to the members of the Anglican Church of Canada continues to exist in some form", as well as for a "diocesan publication of interest". One representative sample quote called the *Anglican Journal* "a unifying factor in the life of Canadian Anglicans."

According to the survey results, most Canadian Anglicans currently read their church publications in print, but a significant amount are open to alternative forms of distribution. General expectations are that Canadian Anglicans will see a "long, slow transition from print to digital distribution." On the subject of editorial independence, Alexander said that the most important issue for many respondents was that the

church offer diverse voices in its publications.

During a short discussion period, table groups talked about how the conclusions reached by the working group might influence two key issues: the future of print distribution, and the mandate and governance of the *Anglican Journal*. Alexander said that following discussions at the present meeting, the advisory committee would be meeting again in October, and would hopefully return to the November meeting of CoGS with a more concrete set of recommendations in mind.

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

### **Bible Study**

After lunch, council members engaged in Bible study based around the passage highlighted in Heartbeat of the Church from the Gospel According to John.

### **Responsible Investing Task Force**

Mr. Ryan Weston, General Synod staff to the Responsible Investing Task Force (RITF), began a presentation about the recent work of the task force. Since its establishment by CoGS in November 2016, the RITF has held two in-person meetings, in January 2017 and March 2018, and surveyed Anglican and Anglican-affiliated funds related to responsible investment practices. Its 17 respondents thus far include dioceses, theological schools, and foundations. Currently, its three main areas of work are theological reflection; examining current investment practices and the context of Anglican investment; and crafting a communications strategy.

Fellow RITF member Bob Boeckner outlined the four primary approaches to investing explored by the group: 1) integration of environmental, social, and governance factors; 2) active ownership, i.e. trying to influence change from within companies as shareholders; 3) impact investing, or making specific investments with social goals in mind; and 4) investment exclusions, or divestment. These approaches, Boeckner said, are more likely to be used in combination rather than taking only one approach. In each case, the goal is for earnings to be used in the mission of the body making the investment.

RITF members are currently prepared to complete a resource for use by the wider church, with members also willing to engage key stakeholders such as bishops and diocesan financial officers to raise awareness of the resource. An RITF report provided to CoGS included a discussion of theological foundations, highlights of current investing practices, and recommendations for increased engagement and updated practices by the General Synod Consolidated Trust Fund, General Synod Pension Plan, and the Anglican Church of Canada.

Two motions were put forward. Members adopted the first by consensus.

#### **Resolution**

Be it resolved that the Council of General Synod receive with gratitude and appreciation this report of the Responsible Investing Task Force.

Debate over the wording of a second motion related to recommendations in the report led to the motion being returned to the Resolutions Committee. The committee intended to review the motion and bring it back before council members later at the present meeting.

### **Pension Committee**

Presenting again for the Pension Committee, Boeckner put forward three motions related to General Synod benefit plans administration and expenses regulation, regulation of Canon XII for the Continuing Education Plan (CEP), and long-term disability plan regulations.

Council members passed each motion 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 Regulations 1 and 2 of General Synod Benefit Plans Administration and Expenses Regulation

made pursuant to Section 4 of Canon VIII effective January 1, 2018.

### **Resolution**

Be it resolved that the Council of General Synod approves the recommendation of the Pension Committee to a three-year plan to double the CEP contribution to \$900 per year beginning at:

- \$600 (effective January 2, 2019)
- \$750 (effective January 1, 2020)
- \$900 (effective January 1, 2010)

and also make the following amendment to Regulation 1 of the Regulations of Canon XII effective January 1, 2019, January 1, 2020, and January 1, 2021 respectively.

### **Resolution**

Be it resolved that the Council of General Synod approves the recommendation of the Pension Committee to make the following amendments to Regulations A.5, C.3 and the Benefit Schedule of LTD Regulations effective January 1, 2019.

*Members broke for coffee from 2:55 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.*

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

Ms. Ginny Doctor, Indigenous Ministries coordinator, introduced the presentation by the Primate's Commission on Discovery, Reconciliation, and Justice. Having served as staff liaison to the Primate's Commission since its inception, Doctor said she would soon be retiring and relinquishing that role to Ms. Melanie Delva, national reconciliation animator.

In working with the commission, Doctor said, the idea of producing a video documentary on the Doctrine of Discovery had come to the fore. The documentary would be for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous audiences as a way to understand the impact of the Doctrine of Discovery on Indigenous and settler peoples alike.

Ms. Lisa Barry, senior producer for Anglican Video, offered additional context on the process leading up to the production of the documentary. Since her first involvement 25 years ago in a video sharing the story of a residential school survivor, Barry had come to recognize the Doctrine of Discovery as the source of the intergenerational trauma and destruction that followed the first contact between European settlers and Indigenous peoples. She presented a short promo video for council members to give an idea of their work and what the documentary would look like.

Council members watched the short video, which began with footage of the ocean and captions discussing the 1492 voyage of Christopher Columbus to the New World. Prior to contact with Europeans, the Indigenous population of the Americas was estimated at more than 100 million people across 800 different nations. Food was shared, disease was minimal, and there were extensive and well-established trade networks. The Spanish fleet was initially well-received by Indigenous peoples.

Within 25 years, the settlers had exterminated the entire population of Hispaniola, the island where Columbus had landed. Within 100 years, ravaged by violence, disease, and slavery, the entire Indigenous population in the New World had declined to 10 million. The video explicitly linked this demographic displacement with the Doctrine of Discovery. Interviews featured figures such as Murray Sinclair, Dr. Martin Brokenleg, and Ginny Doctor discussing the loss of land, culture, and self-esteem rooted in the doctrine.

After the video, Mr. Andrew Wesley, co-chair of the Primate's Commission, described their last meeting on Walpole Island First Nation in Ontario. The gathering saw a presentation from a local chief on their journey to self-determination, as well as discussion on the various working relationships between the commission and the Vision Keepers Council, the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples (ACIP), and reconciliation animator Melanie Delva. They also touched on plans for Sacred Circle in August.

Bishop Riscylla Shaw, co-chair, expressed excitement from the commission about the potential for the Doctrine of Discovery video as an educational tool, supplemented with study guides for Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. She noted that the meeting in Walpole included lengthy, focused discussion on the commission's priorities and assigning responsibility to wrap up its work by the next General Synod.

Part of that discussion involved how to keep the work of the commission going after General Synod. In addition to a proposed Indigenous Justice and Reconciliation Coordinating Committee of the General Synod, which would serve as a permanent working group with links to ACIP and the Vision Keepers Council, the commission was looking to form a Jubilee Commission, tasked with auditing how money had been invested by the church in Indigenous Ministries in the past and present, and how it might be invested in the future.

A motion was put forward laying out the framework for the Jubilee Commission. During a vote on the motion, two CoGS members indicated the need for further discussion. Members who supported the motion explained their belief that it would better help the church move forward towards funding a self-determining Indigenous church. In response to concerns over the speed of the process, Doctor also noted that Anglicans in Indigenous ministry had been referring to self-determination back in 1969. Other members from the floor pointed to the high number of young people in Indigenous communities, underscoring that the concerns of the Jubilee Committee would relate not just to the past of the church, but to its future.

Reassured by the responses of fellow council members, the two previously hesitant members of CoGS expressed their support for the motion, which was carried by consensus.

#### **Resolution**

That the Council of General Synod appoint a Jubilee Commission to propose a just, sustainable and equitable funding base for

the self-determining Indigenous Anglican church.

The Commission would:

- have a three-year term, potentially renewable
- consist of 6 members
- report to the Council of General Synod
- include significant representation from the current Primate's Commission on the Doctrine of Discovery, Reconciliation, and Justice.

The Commission would be charged with examining historic and current funds made available for Indigenous ministry at various levels of the Church's structure, assessing current funds designated to Indigenous programming, and assessing broader property questions. Topics for consideration might include current salary levels of Indigenous clergy and strategies to move towards parity, possible redistribution of portions of property sales on a principled basis, and increasing alignment between funds for Indigenous ministry and Indigenous oversight of these funds.

The passing of the resolution by consensus prompted Archbishop Hiltz to describe the decision as "a very important moment in the life of this council. It's a really important moment in the life of our church"—one that evoked the spirit of the 1994 covenant and served as a practical follow-up to discussions at the *Road to Warm Springs* gathering.

#### **Missionary Society of the Anglican Church of Canada**

Reflecting a constitutional requirement in Canon VII, members of CoGS voted to adjourn and reconstituted themselves as the Missionary Society of the Anglican Church of Canada to discuss and approve the financial statements of the latter.

Two motions were carried by consensus, after which members officially terminated their meeting

as the Board of Management of the Missionary Society, and resumed their meeting 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, 2017 and that any two Officers are authorized to sign the statements on the Board's behalf.

**Resolution**

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

**Human Trafficking**

Mr. Ryan Weston, General Synod lead staff (along with Global Relations Director Andrea Mann) for regional consultations on the fight to eradicate human trafficking, gave a presentation detailing the background to the consultations.

Weston described human trafficking as a global crime, human rights violation, and an ongoing issue related to missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. In 2015, Anglican Consultative Council *Resolution 15.10—The trafficking of persons* requested that provinces of the Anglican Communion commit themselves to the fight to eradicate human trafficking and modern slavery. A CoGS resolution in June 2017 established a reference group, which first gathered in September to begin hearing details on the scope of trafficking worldwide and in Canada.

Regional consultations were planned to further educate members of the Anglican Church of Canada on human trafficking and strategies to fight it, with one consultation for each ecclesiastical province. A consultation for the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario took place from April 10-13 in Pickering, Ont., followed by a consultation for the Ecclesiastical Province of Canada from April 15-18 in St. John's, Nfld. Bishops in each province were invited to suggest people to

attend the consultations, which were funded by parish and diocesan apportionment to General Synod as well as grants from the Anglican Foundation and the Diocese of Niagara.

At each consultation, participants heard stories from survivors of trafficking and exploitation. Weston said that work against human trafficking needed to be guided by the experience of survivors who understand these situations best and recognize needs for the work. The consultations also featured speakers from church organizations such as the Anglican Alliance and KAIROS Canada—the latter of which focused on the exploitation of migrant workers—non-profits such as the Canadian Centre to End Human Trafficking; and community groups such as the Coalition Against the Sexual Exploitation of Youth, based in St. John's. A member of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation in Ontario also provided an Indigenous perspective at the Pickering event.

Following Weston's presentation, council members took part in a table group activity. Each table group received a story of someone caught up in trafficking-like conditions. At three key junctures in the story, they were asked to reflect on the needs of the person at the centre of the story, how their local church might respond to those needs, and what opportunities might exist for collaboration.

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

**Market Place**

Council members broke into two groups after dinner for a pair of marketplace discussions.

Archbishop Fred Hiltz and Dean Shane Parker facilitated one discussion on the *Heartbeat of the Church* initiative. Meanwhile, the Rev. Dr. Eileen Scully and LCdr the Rev. Beverly Kean-Newhook facilitated a separate discussion on the subject of *Safe Church and Sanctuary*.

**Evening Prayer**

Members closed out the Friday agenda with night prayer in the chapel.

*An evening social took place from 9 p.m. until 11 p.m.*