

**General Synod 2025
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REPORT OF THE ANGLICAN FOUNDATION OF CANADA TO GENERAL SYNOD 2025

FOR INFORMATION

For over 65 years, the **Anglican Foundation of Canada (AFC)** has served as a trusted steward of generous Anglican legacies across Canada. Thanks to careful financial management, AFC has disbursed over **\$40 million** in grants and loans to ministries from coast to coast to coast.

Strategic Plan (2023–27): Progress & Priorities

In 2023, AFC launched a new **Strategic Plan for 2023–27**, reaffirming its Mission, Vision, and Values, and introducing a new **Case for Support**. The plan focused on two major objectives:

- 1. Enhancing AFC’s Granting Program**
 - Redefined grant impact zones and categories for clarity.
 - Increased diocesan annual granting quota.
 - Launched a centralized application portal.
 - Developed user-friendly resources: a model application, video tutorial, and instructional blog.
- 2. Strengthening AFC’s Financial Resources**
 - Established the **Community Ministries Fund**, with a **\$2 million investment** from AFC’s General Fund.
 - Reallocated resources to meet growing demand for community-based outreach grants.

Emerging Priorities (2025 & Beyond)

With most objectives met by early 2025, two key priorities have emerged for the next planning cycle:

- 1. Aligning grant and loan funding with diocesan strategic goals.**
- 2. Expanding AFC’s leadership in planned giving** to support future generations of Anglicans.

Additionally, AFC is exploring ways to **support the Church beyond financial grants**, leveraging its subject matter expertise to assist in non-financial ways.

Looking ahead, AFC will conduct **stakeholder consultations throughout 2025** to inform the development of its next **Strategic Plan (2026–29)**.

Financial Highlights (2023–24)

2023: A Record-Breaking Year

- **Largest annual grant disbursement:** \$1.15 million awarded to **144 recipients** across **28 dioceses**.
- **Introduction of Category C grants**, resulting in the **three largest grants in AFC history**.
- **Third consecutive year** of disbursements exceeding **\$1 million**.
- **Highest-ever membership donations:** \$182,000 (+5% increase from 2022).
- **Established the David Philip Jones Preaching Fund**, honoring the former Chancellor of General Synod.

2024: Continued Strong Performance (*Audited results pending*)

- **Fourth consecutive year** of disbursements exceeding **\$1 million**, with **\$1.076 million** awarded to **189 recipients** across **all 30 dioceses**.
- **Second-highest membership donations:** \$180,000 (despite the Canada Post strike).
- **Established the Archbishop Linda Nicholls Theological Education Fund** to support women in theological studies.

Say Yes! to Kids (SYTK) Campaign

Launched in 2021, ***Say Yes! to Kids (SYTK)*** has become the most successful **peer-to-peer fundraising campaign** in the Anglican Church of Canada. Since its inception, SYTK has raised over **\$755,000** for more than **150 church-led initiatives** supporting children, youth, and young adults.

Program Impact

Grants have supported initiatives focused on:

- ✓ Faith formation
- ✓ Educational enrichment
- ✓ Health & well-being
- ✓ Community connections

Fundraising Success

- Two-thirds of teams tend to meet or exceed their goals
- The remaining third typically achieve 50–80%.
- Matching donors have provided over **\$100,000** in support.
- **National contributions:**
 - **2022:** \$25,000 grant to CLAY for Indigenous student participation.
 - **2023:** \$15,000 grant to Sacred Beginnings, the national Indigenous youth gathering.
 - **2024:** grant beneficiary announcement pending.

2025 SYTK Campaign

- Open to **30 fundraising teams**.
- Donations can be made to **local teams** or the **National Team**.
- **For every \$20 donated to a local team, \$4 will support AFC's national youth ministry grants.**
- AFC encourages churches to celebrate **Say Yes! to Kids Sunday**, with a **flexible liturgy** available for worship planning.

REPORT OF THE CHANCELLOR TO GENERAL SYNOD 2025

Elected

2023 April 29	William Grant Cliff	Diocesan Bishop, Ontario, Ontario
2023 September 16	Clara Elizabeth Plamondon	Diocesan Bishop, Territory of the People, British Columbia and Yukon
2023 November 25	Rachael Louise Parker	Diocesan Bishop, Brandon, Northern Lights
2024 January 18	John Robert Stephens	Metropolitan, British Columbia and Yukon
2024 May 11	Richard M. Reed	Diocesan Bishop, Saskatchewan, Northern Lights
2025 March 8	Chad McCharles	Diocesan Bishop, Saskatoon, Northern Lights
2025 March 26	Rod BrantFrancis	Diocesan Bishop, Moosonee, Ontario
2025 May 3	Victor-David Mbuyi Bipingu	Coadjutor Bishop, Montreal, Canada

Consecrated

2023 March 11	Desmond Morris Fiddler	Indigenous Suffragan Bishop, Mishamikoweesh, Northern Lights
2024 January 25	Clara Elizabeth Plamondon	Diocesan Bishop, Territory of the People, British Columbia and Yukon
2024 March 18	Rachael Louise Parker	Diocesan Bishop, Brandon, Northern Lights
2024 September 6	Richard M. Reed	Diocesan Bishop, Saskatchewan, Northern Lights

Installed

2023 May 29	Christopher Anthony Harper	National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop, Anglican Indigenous Ministries, Anglican Church of Canada
2023 October 21	William Grant Cliff	Diocesan Bishop, Ontario, Ontario
2024 March 18	Rachael Louise Parker	Diocesan Bishop, Brandon, Northern Lights
2024 September 6	Richard M. Reed	Diocesan Bishop, Saskatchewan, Northern Lights
2025 April 15	John Stephens	Metropolitan, British Columbia and Yukon

Resigned

2023 January 31	Christopher Anthony Harper	Diocesan Bishop, Saskatoon, Northern Lights
2023 April 30	Michael William Hawkins	Diocesan Bishop, Saskatchewan, Northern Lights
2024 September 15	Linda Carol Nicholls	Primate, Anglican Church of Canada
2024 October 20	Joseph Robert Royal	Suffragan Bishop, Arctic, Northern Lights
2024 November 22	Lynne Elizabeth McNaughton	Metropolitan, British Columbia and Yukon
2024 December 31	David Parsons	Diocesan Bishop, Arctic, Northern Lights
2024 December 31	Lucy Netser	Suffragan Bishop, Arctic, Northern Lights

Submitted by,
Canon Clare Burns, Chancellor

REPORT OF THE COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATING COMMITTEE TO GENERAL SYNOD 2025

FOR INFORMATION

At the General Synod of 2019, the Communications and Information Resources Coordinating Committee and the Anglican Journal Coordinating Committee were combined to form the Communications Coordinating Committee. The new committee had an expansive mandate, covering all communications products of the Anglican Church of Canada as well as oversight of the Communications Department to “ensure that the communications department facilitates effective communication between General Synod and dioceses, and among and within dioceses.” 2025 concludes the second term under this new arrangement.

This report includes the work and deliberations of the Communications Coordinating Committee along with a report of the activities of the Communications Department.

There were two directors of Communications over the term from 2023-2025, Joe Vesci and Henrieta Paukov. Henrieta joined the Communications Department in November of 2023. The Committee was grateful for the work of both Joe and Henrieta and for their support of the work of the Communications Committee.

DELIBERATIONS OF THE COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE, 2023-2025

The Communications Committee met six times over the two years. We received regular reports from the Director of Communications as part of the mandate to provide general oversight of the work of Communications. We discussed in depth two particular areas related to the Anglican Journal and made recommendations to the Council of General Synod with respect to those discussions. We also proposed to the Council, a thorough review of communications for the next triennium.

EDITORIAL BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS: JOURNALISTIC POLICIES AND PRACTICES

The Communications Committee recommended the document, EDITORIAL BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS: JOURNALISTIC POLICIES AND PRACTICES for adoption by the Council of General Synod. Accompanying the motion in 2019 to combine the Communications and Information Resources Coordinating Committee and the Anglican Journal Coordinating Committee was a motion to create an editorial board for the Anglican Journal. Subsequently, a process was initiated to develop policies and practices for the Editorial Board. The process was coordinated by the Rev. Dr. Karen Egan (Prolocutor) and Canon (Lay) Ian Alexander (member of the Communications Coordinating Committee). The document was proposed by the editor and the Editorial Board. It was used as guiding principles for some months, was reviewed by various groups and constituencies, including the Management Team and the Communications Committee and edited accordingly before being approved by the Council of General Synod in November of 2023. It is anticipated that the proposal will be a living document, capturing the current state of understanding and agreement among the parties (Editorial Board, senior management, and journalistic leadership). As such, it is likely to be updated from time to time, by mutual agreement. The document is found in Appendix 1.

RECOMMENDATIONS RE: ANGLICAN JOURNAL PRINT PUBLICATIONS AND JOURNALISTIC STANCE

The Anglican Journal is arguably the most recognizable and most visible of all the various means of communications with Canadian Anglicans. It is also the one which can, and does, raise the most debate. That debate has often centred around the editorial stance of the Journal. In recent years, with the advances in electronic communications, it has expanded to include the print vs. digital conversation. Hypothesis #7 of the interim report of the Primate's Commission: Proclaiming the Gospel in the 21st Century, posited with respect to the Anglican Journal "It is time to end independent editorial journalism funded by General Synod." However, the term 'independent editorial journalism' does not actually apply to the current editorial policy. The current editorial policy of the Anglican Journal was adopted in 2019 and is found on pp. 151-152 in Appendix C of the ACC Handbook. It says in part: "The Anglican Journal (whether in print and/or digital formats) is a journalistic enterprise, and as such is expected to adhere to the highest standards of journalistic responsibility, accuracy, fairness, accountability and transparency. Its journalism is fact-based, fact-checked and in-depth, tackling important issues, asking and answering difficult questions. The Anglican Journal is committed to representing the widest possible diversity of information and opinion across the Anglican Church of Canada. It promotes informed engagement by Anglicans in the life of their church, and nurtures healthy self-reflection, respectful dialogue and constructive debate." Nevertheless, whatever the description, the journalistic stance is still a matter of debate.

In response, the Communications Committee led the Council of General Synod in an engagement that included the question of print vs digital and that of the journalistic stance of the Anglican Journal. Subsequent to that engagement, the Committee asked Henrieta to gather data on the net cost of printing the Journal. Along with the financial data, in her report, Henrieta also outlined some of the related issues accompanying the cessation of a print publication. The Committee made the following observations:

- ❖ The cost savings of discontinuing print are relatively small.
- ❖ There would likely be a negative impact on fundraising efforts such as Giving With Grace and the Anglican Journal Appeal.
- ❖ Discontinuing print would mean that those diocesan papers which are currently publishing would be forced to go online.
- ❖ Those diocesan papers which are on the digital platform, Anglican News Canada, would be well prepared for going digital, however not all papers are on the platform. Some of those that are not on the platform may well not have the staff and capacity to make that transition.
- ❖ There are those dioceses which have no paper which means the only publication they receive is the Anglican Journal.
- ❖ While there are options for delivery of papers in digital form for places without high-speed internet access, they are far from ideal.
- ❖ Much of what we have heard is anecdotal.

Given that there still exists differing opinions on both these issues, the Communications Committee recommended to the Council of General Synod that there be a comprehensive review of the communications needs of Canadian Anglicans during the next triennium and that part of that review would be to consider the journalistic stance of the Anglican Journal along with the question of print vs digital, or some hybrid version. Further, the Committee recommends that there be no changes to either of these pending that review. As any of the suggested changes represent a major departure from the

current status, these decisions need to be made in light of input from the various stakeholders involved and with the major decision making bodies - the General Synod and the Council of General Synod.

WORK OF THE COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT, 2023-2025

The Communications & Information Resources department (“Communications”) in the Office of General Synod is instrumental in carrying out one of the three core areas of work foundational to the ministry of the General Synod - communicating. The three core/foundational areas of work were identified by the Primate’s Commission on Proclaiming the Gospel in the 21st Century as communicating, connecting and convening.

This report outlines the work of Communications and some of its major accomplishments since General Synod 2023. Each item is framed in terms of the transformational commitments that it helps support.

SIGNIFICANT PROJECTS OF THE LAST BIENNIUM

Anglican Video: supporting General Synod, digitization project and more

Anglican Video helps General Synod carry out not only its responsibility to communicate but also, through its support of the General Synod and Sacred Circle meetings, its responsibility to convene. (See Appendix A for definitions.) It helps General Synod live into all five of its transformational commitments, but perhaps most especially that of embracing mutual interdependence with the Indigenous church.

Since General Synod 2023, Anglican Video has delivered the video footage from that meeting, as well as Sacred Circle 2023 and Sacred Beginnings 2023 and 2024. It has also continued to support all ministries of General Synod, producing joint Anglican/Lutheran Christmas and Easter video greetings, a video about the young adult pilgrimage for the Companions of Jerusalem and a farewell video from Primate Linda Nicholls.

For General Synod 2025, Anglican Video has been instrumental in making arrangements for AV, electronic voting and live-streaming. They have also created videos to help inform and educate General Synod members and all Anglicans about the role of the Primate and about the Primatial election process. Anglican Video assists many of those presenting at General Synod with the production of their presentations, both on video and in PowerPoint. They also work with others on the primatial election and the presentation of resolutions and nominations.

With the assistance of freelancers funded through a MIF grant, Anglican Video is undertaking a multi-year project that aims to digitize, name and index all footage from General Synod starting in 1989 and all footage from Sacred Circles dating back to the first one in 1988. The purpose of digitization is to preserve the footage from physical deterioration (video tape degrades over time) and the purpose of naming and indexing is to ensure it can easily be retrieved from General Synod archives in the future. The footage has now all been digitized. All Sacred Circle videos have been named and indexed; the naming and indexing of General Synod videos is ongoing. (See online archives.) By the end of 2024, staff/freelancers had completed naming and indexing eight of the twelve General Synod meetings held between 1989 and 2023. Work continues in 2025.

Anglican News Canada: helping diocesan papers get online

Anglican News Canada is a project by the Communications Department to bring diocesan newspapers together on one online hub. This allows the newspapers to have an online presence in a professional, uniform and cost-effective way while being supported by the expertise of General Synod staff. It gives Anglicans across the country access to news from other dioceses, allowing them to learn and be inspired by one another and helping them live into the transformational commitment to nurture right relationships among people of faith. Anglican News Canada and the diocesan papers online cumulatively received more than 185,000 page views between March 2024 and March 2025.

As of mid-March 2025, 15 dioceses (out of 30) publish their diocesan paper on Anglican News Canada—a total of 11 diocesan papers (because some dioceses share a paper). Three diocesan papers have been added since General Synod 2023. Editors have received training from General Synod staff to be able to prepare and post their own content.

Of the remaining 15 dioceses, 8 print and mail a paper version of their newspaper along with the *Anglican Journal* and are not on Anglican News Canada. While training and other assistance are available from General Synod staff, many of these dioceses lack the staff to carry out this work. The remaining 7 dioceses do not have a newspaper.

Find a Church online: renewing a key tool

Findachurch.ca is a tool that allows users to find Anglican and Evangelical Lutheran churches by location, by name or by diocese/synod. This tool helps the church live into its central transformational commitment of inviting and deepening life in Christ by connecting people across Canada with local worshipping communities.

Findachurch.ca was at the end of its usefulness and in need of redevelopment for the purposes of modernization, standardization, simplification, cost savings and efficiency. In 2024, Communications staff worked with partners in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) to complete this work. Visitors can now search not only for Anglican churches across the country, but also joint congregations with ELCIC, United Church of Canada and Presbyterian Church in Canada. Between March 2024 and March 2025, Find a Church received more than 52,000 page views.

Publishing/digitizing liturgical and educational texts and eStore

Communications works with Faith, Worship and Ministry and other ministry partners to make available liturgical and educational resources for Anglicans. Typically, the ministry partner provides the content, subject matter expertise and editorial review, while Communications provides, manages or contributes design, page layout, editorial consultation, print production, inventory, branding and marketing.

Communications also oversees the operations of the eStore, where Anglicans can purchase worship books, hymnals, calendars and other resources. The eStore stands out with free shipping on qualifying purchases, ensuring Anglicans who live in remote areas - often excluded from other retailers' free shipping offers - have equitable access to resources. These activities are another example of the team's contribution to living out the central transformational commitment of inviting and deepening life in Christ.

In the fall of 2023, Communications worked with Faith, Worship and Ministry to make available electronically the resource *Faith Seeking Understanding: Medical Assistance in Dying*. This is a collection of essays and reflections compiled to assist theologically focused discussions and to increase understanding of the realities of MAiD. In 2024, the resource was also made available as a printed book sold in the eStore. To date, nearly 200 copies have been sold, with 15% in eBook format.

Also in 2024, Communications worked with Faith, Worship and Ministry to publish, in print, *Pray Without Ceasing: Morning and Evening Prayer for the Seasons of the Church Year and Ordinary Time*, a resource that transforms the Daily Office from the BAS by incorporating Anglican, Lutheran and additional ecumenical sources into a more comprehensive format. The book features the *Inclusive Language Liturgical Psalter* commended by the Council of General Synod in 2019. *Pray Without Ceasing* was also converted to eBook formats so it could be made available for eReader devices. More than 1,000 copies have been sold to date, with over 10% sold in eBook format.

Every year, Communications also works with Faith, Worship and Ministry to publish an array of calendar publications, including a pocket diary, a desk diary and a wall calendar. Faith, Worship and Ministry also provides editorial review of the annual publication McCausland's Order of Divine Service, editorially managed by the Ven. Dr. Edward Simonton in the Diocese of Quebec. Together, these resources help Anglicans observe the church year.

Approximately 30,000 wall calendars are sold annually. Many are purchased in bulk by parishes and dioceses at a discounted rate and resold as fundraisers for local ministries. Proceeds from eStore calendar sales also support eStore operations.

PROJECTS IN PROGRESS

Website refresh

General Synod's website, anglican.ca, is one of its primary communication vehicles. It provides a central hub for the resources that General Synod makes available to the church to help it live out all five of its transformational commitments. Between March 2024 and March 2025, the website had more than 251,000 visitors who logged 1.6 million page views.

The website is now 10 years old, and its content, templates and overall look and feel are due for a refresh. In 2024, Communications and Information Resources staff conducted consultations with key stakeholders and a review of content with General Synod ministry partners. That process is almost complete and work is now underway on determining site structure and design. It is anticipated that a refreshed site will be launched by the end of 2025.

New online lectionary

The lectionary on anglican.ca is by far the most popular tool on the General Synod website, helping clergy and lay leaders put together weekly worship services. Through the lectionary, Communications helps the church live into its central transformational commitment of inviting and deepening life in Christ.

A project is underway to renew the lectionary. Once completed, the tool will provide the lectionary plus liturgical texts, which means parishes will be able to use it to put together a document with the entire

worship service. It will supplement and expand on the print version of McCausland's. It is anticipated that the new lectionary will be ready by mid 2026.

DAY-TO-DAY COMMUNICATIONS WORK

E-mail and social media

Communications uses email and social media to keep Anglicans across Canada and beyond informed about the work of General Synod, church life and key events. These updates, along with liturgical, prayer, and other resources, all help to support Anglicans in living out the church's five transformational commitments.

Every week, Communications compiles and sends the *General Synod eNewsletter* to more than 5,400 recipients. The e-newsletter has an open rate of around 50%—above the 43.97% average for religious groups (according to MailChimp). It features updates from General Synod, as well as news stories, events, and resources from across the Canadian church and the wider Anglican Communion.

Through social media, the Communications Department reaches Anglicans and church partners where they spend time online. We have 14,000 followers on Facebook, 10,700 on X (formerly Twitter), 3,800 on Instagram, and 1,000 on LinkedIn. Our content includes news from General Synod, select updates from the wider Anglican Communion, resources from ministry partners, interfaith and ecumenical greetings, and other popular posts such as select collect prayers.

Anglican Journal

Communications is responsible for publishing the *Anglican Journal* newspaper, both in print and online. The print edition of the *Journal*, which comes out 10 times a year, has a circulation of 35,631. Between March 2024 and March 2025, the *Anglican Journal* website, anglicanjournal.com, received more than 100,000 visitors who logged more than 200,000 page views.

The *Anglican Journal* helps General Synod live into all five of its transformational commitments by covering relevant stories and enabling Anglicans to learn what others across the country are doing.

Membership

The membership of the Communications Coordinating Committee for 2023-2025 was as follows:

The Rev. Cynthia Haines Turner (chair)

Geoffrey F. McLarney

Ryan Ramsden

Andrew Stephens Rennie, CoGS crossover member

The Rev. Robert Towler

Karen Webb, Editorial Board crossover member

Charles Wilson

Canon Ian Alexander, ex-officio, Prolocutor

The Ven. Alan T. Perry, ex-officio, General Secretary

Submitted by,

Cynthia Haines Turner, Chair

APPENDIX 1

Journalistic Policies and Practices

The Editorial Board does not believe that a definitive codification of journalistic behaviour governing editorial staff, management and publisher is possible. However, over time, appropriate policies and practices can and should be developed in response to evolving circumstances, gradually accumulating into a journalistic handbook.

The Board proposes the following journalistic guidelines for adoption at the present time.

1. The publisher (General Synod/CoGS) and senior Church management should at all times be aware that the *Journal* and its related publications (in print or digital formats) are journalistic enterprises, and as such are expected to adhere to “the highest standards of journalistic responsibility.”
2. The decision on whether the *Journal* should embark on an investigative story into the Church or any of its structures or officials rests with the editor. It is advisable that the editor should consult with the Editorial Board or, at the very least, inform the Editorial Board of such intentions.
3. It is the responsibility of the editor to inform the Primate, General Secretary and Director of Communications of the decision to publish any article that risks bringing any part of the Church into disrepute or institutional criticism, or exposes it to potential legal action.
4. If there is the slightest reason for the editor to decide to request legal advice regarding the development of a story, the editor should inform both the Editorial Board and the Director of Communications of their decision.
5. If the editor or Editorial Board perceive that work on, or publication of, an article will cause serious tension within the Church, the Board should consult with the Episcopal Visitor, as described under Principle #7 above.
6. At no time should CoGS or senior Church management intervene regarding a *Journal* story without first consulting with the Editorial Board, although the Board’s approval is not required.
7. At no time should CoGS or senior Church management intervene regarding a *Journal* story, or direct that a story be commissioned, de-commissioned, altered, or circulated for consultation in advance of publication, without the approval of the editor, or without making clear that the editor is being directly overruled.
8. In those extremely rare cases where CoGS or senior Church management have overruled the editor on the commissioning, de-commissioning, altering or pre-circulation of a story, this should be made known to readers in the form of an editor’s note printed in the applicable print issue and/or anglicanjournal.com, adjacent to the modified article, or where the absent article would have run.
9. It is the editor’s responsibility to ensure that work on any article “adhere[s] to the highest standards of journalistic responsibility.”

10. It is the editor's responsibility to ensure that staff seek above all to establish what is true and fair through sceptical questioning, researching and being open to different points of view, regardless of a writer's or editor's personal beliefs. Ultimately, truth and accuracy should prevail.
11. *Journal* writers and editors should acknowledge that striving for balance can give lies and misinformation the same treatment as truth, if the sources cited to achieve balance are dishonest or ill-informed. Where the honesty or reliability of sources is suspect, the onus is on journalists to check the facts they provide.
12. *Journal* writers and editors are permitted, where necessary, to designate, cite and quote sources as "confidential." However, they must first evaluate whether that person is in a position to know something, and whether they are trustworthy and their statements should be relied upon. They must also weigh the reasons for preserving confidentiality against the desire for transparency. In such cases, the story should include an explanation of why this decision was made.
13. The editor may decide if a source should be permitted to review an article before publication. In general, this practice is discouraged, because (a) stories change as they pass through the editing process; and (b) sources may press reporters on how a story should be written and what statements should be included or excised. In any event, it should be pointed out to the sources that the story belongs to the *Journal* and not to the sources. In certain circumstances, however – e.g. in the case of sources with a very complex quotation or explanation, or if there is a risk that quotations attributed to a confidential source may expose their identity — the editor may agree to a source having pre-publication access to what has been written for accuracy's sake. Pre-publication access does not constitute a veto over publication.

Other Related Matters

Training

1. Journalistic policies, practices and guidelines, as amended from time to time, should be brought together in a single, accessible form and made available to all journalists, relevant members of senior management, and members of the Editorial Board.
2. A simple, effective process of orientation for current employees and Board members should be undertaken whenever the standards and practices are amended, and for new employees and Board members when they join the organization.

The Editorial Board

1. The Editorial Board exercises no direct authority over the operations of the *Journal* and its related publications. Its role is to advise the editor on what constitutes "the highest standards of journalistic responsibility" and to provide a consultative body to the editor on developing and assessing journalistic ideas.
2. The role of the editorial board is also "to review journalistic performance in the light of its mandate and editorial policy [of the *Journal* and related publications]," and "to consider, in a timely manner, relevant journalistic matters referred to it" by senior Church management, CoGS

and the editor. The Appendix also notes that “editorial policy [of the *Journal*] may be modified from time to time by the Council of General Synod, on the advice of the Editorial Board.

3. It is hoped that the editor will see the Editorial Board as their consultative partner in journalistic endeavours.
4. If a member of the Editorial Board perceives that they may have an actual or potential conflict of interest in discharging their role on the Board, it is incumbent upon them to declare it. Likewise, any member of the Board should bring to the Board’s attention any actual or potential conflict which they believe exists on the part of another member. The Board as a whole will then decide how best to determine (a) whether or not a conflict exists; and (b) if so, what steps need to be taken. They may wish to designate someone to advise them about this. This advisor may or may not be a member of the Board, or could be the Episcopal Visitor, depending on the circumstances.

REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY CONCERNING THE COUNCIL OF THE GENERAL SYNOD TO GENERAL SYNOD 2025

Due to the postponement of the 2022 General Synod meeting and a desire to re-align with our previous three-year cycle, the Council of the General Synod in the previous quadrennium determined that General Synod would meet in 2025, following the 2023 Assembly in Calgary. This has implied that this incarnation of the Council of the General Synod has met for a biennium – a total of four face to face meetings over two years.

The theme for the biennium was “Rooted in the Word; Flourishing in the Spirit” building on the scripture passage “... and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.” (Revelation 22:2)

The biennium began with an ambitious amount of work that had been set for the Council of the General Synod by the previous meeting of the General Synod. Much of this was accomplished or at least begun during the course of the biennium, but as we arrived at the final meeting in March 2025, it was clear that the amount of work was a bit too ambitious for two years. We need to be clear about the mandate of the Council of the General Synod, and the jurisdiction of the General Synod, and realistic about the capacity of volunteers and a small staff to fulfil the hopes of a General Synod gathering. Please see the appendix for a list of items sent to CoGS by resolutions adopted by General Synod in 2023.

Under the Constitution of the General Synod, the Council of the General Synod is responsible for oversight of the finances, governance and programmes of the General Synod between meetings of the General Synod. Details of these areas of ministry will be found in the various reports to the General Synod. Full details of the CoGS meetings are available on-line in the [CoGS Highlights](#), which are published during and shortly after each meeting.

The Council normally meets for three days over a weekend, twice per year (fall and spring) at the Queen of Apostles retreat centre in Mississauga, Ontario. The first meeting of a bi/tri/quadr/ennium is a day longer to allow for orientation of the members. Participation in meetings, the necessary preparation for them, and follow-up is a significant commitment by the members, for which we can all be grateful. Members are joined by the staff of the General Secretary’s office, who arrange the logistics of the meeting, as well as the various department directors from the General Synod office. Staff of the Anglican Journal are present to gather notes for articles about the work of CoGS and to produce daily highlights that are posted on-line to inform the wider church of the activities of the meeting.

CoGS hears regularly from partners from The Episcopal Church (TEC) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC). During this biennium TEC has been represented by Sr Liza Anderson for the first two meetings, and then Mr. Warren Hawk. The ELCIC partner has been the Rev Chris Bishopp. The Anglican Church of Canada also sends partners to the equivalent bodies of TEC and ELCIC and regularly hears back from those partners who report on the work of our partner churches, as well as offering insights about similarities and differences among our churches. During this biennium Dorothy Patterson has been the partner to the ELCIC and the Rev Canon Dr Murray Still has been the partner to TEC.

Another regular feature of CoGS has been to hear updates and insights from the Primate. One of the matters that CoGS monitored throughout the biennium has been the ongoing conflict in Gaza. CoGS regularly heard of calls made by the Primate and Acting Primate, alongside National Bishop Susan Johnson of the ELCIC for an end to conflict, for humanitarian aid and for the release of all captives and hostages.

With the retirement of Archbishop Linda Nicholls as Primate, CoGS had an opportunity to express its appreciation for her ministry in June 2024. CoGS also welcomed Archbishop Anne Germond as Acting Primate at its November 2024 meeting.

CoGS continued to do its part of the work of dismantling racism, receiving training on microaggressions, and setting terms of reference for and populating the National Advisory Council on Dismantling Racism, as called for in General Synod resolution A200-R3 from 2023. As I wrote in my report to General Synod in 2023, “In 2001 General Synod adopted a resolution to ‘seek ways to work toward a more balanced representation reflecting the diversity of our Church at all levels and to encourage members of under-represented and minority groups to be involved in the councils and committees of the Church.’ We have made painfully little progress in this vital work.” Though it was encouraging to see a more visibly diverse CoGS during the biennium than previously, we still have a long way to go.

At its last meeting of the biennium, in March 2025, the Council of the General Synod was asked to reflect on messages it wanted to send to the General Synod. These appear (lightly edited and consolidated) in Appendix B below.

CoGS is supported by a dedicated staff team, whom I must acknowledge in this report. We are grateful for their work in arranging the logistics and travel, assisting in the planning process, setting the agenda disseminating reports, preparing minutes, and supporting the leadership and members to do their work. CoGS is also supported by a Planning and Agenda Team that plans the time spent together at each meeting and oversees the progress of each gathering. We are grateful to the Very Rev Dr Tim Dobbin and the Rev Lucia Lloyd, the co-chairs, and to the Rev Canon Carrie Irwin, who served as chaplain to CoGS for the biennium.

Thank you to the members of the Council of the General Synod, in particular to the Prolocutor, Canon (lay) Ian Alexander, and the Deputy Prolocutor, the Ven Tanya Phibbs, and to the many volunteers who staff our various committees and task forces. And thank you as well to our many faithful and generous donors who support our work.

I am very grateful to our Primate, Archbishop Linda Nicholls, for her wisdom and leadership, and to our Acting Primate, Archbishop Anne Germond, who has stepped in so ably into the role with energy and good humour.

Respectfully submitted,

The Ven. Alan T. Perry
General Secretary

Appendix A

Specific items sent to CoGS for follow-up from resolutions adopted in 2023, and their status:

A101 - Commissioning a Document on History, Structure, and Governance of The Anglican Church of Canada

This work has not been undertaken yet.

A102 – Strategic Planning Working Group

An implementation group was established by CoGS and has begun this work.

A129 – National coordinating committee for unity and mission with United Church

A joint committee has been established and has begun this work.

A200 – National Advisory Council on Dismantling Racism

The Council has been established and has begun its work.

A202 – Call to Action 59

This is ongoing work.

A202A – Dismantling Racism

This is ongoing work.

A203 – Net-zero – travel & carbon offsets

Travel has been reduced this biennium and carbon is being tracked.

A205 – Bottled water

We do not use bottled water

C009 – Consensus decision making

CoGS has used consensus decision making for its meetings and the question of whether this might be adopted by General Synod has been reported on by the Governance Working Group.

Appendix B

Messages to General Synod from the Council of the General Synod

- The Church is not broken. We are on a journey of healing. We need not feel stuck in a place of despair and anxiety about the future of the Church. Our discussions and deliberations at CoGS revealed those pathways of healing out of despair.
- There are bright lights in the church, such as Sacred Circle and Alongside Hope. CoGS creates a space to hear extra-ordinary examples of mission and ministry across Canada. We need to share these exciting stories out into the church.
- Diversity is our strength. The respectful collaboration and community building experienced at CoGS are gifts and practices we must lean into as a Church going forward. We need to continue providing opportunities to hear the voices of both introverts and extroverts in our Church.
- The concerns of General Synod 2023 were heard and addressed at our CoGS meetings.
- The consensus model of discernment and decision making is a helpful way to move forward together as a Church.
- The church is in a time of great change, and we must keep the Gospel in the centre of all that we do, using the Transformational Commitments as a lens for making difficult decisions in the next triennium.
- The Pathways document is a helpful guide to the research, discussions and recommendations that the next Council of General Synod must undertake and make in the next three years concerning structures needed for the growth and ministry of the Anglican Church of Canada in the 21st century. It will be important to continue to ‘touch base’ with the focus of the work, which is on structures. It will be important to explain or argue how goals and recommendations for structure will actually impact ministry; e.g.: It has been suggested that fewer structures will liberate and enhance ministry. How, in concrete terms? What will be gained and what will be lost?
- More work needs to be done on the financial future of the General Synod, including understanding how best to use restricted funds honouring the restrictions and serving the needs of the Church.
- More work needs to be done on the safeguarding policy framework.
- The bishops (House of Bishops) are listening and working on what's best for the Anglican Church
- The General Synod in the next triennium must embrace and develop the analysis and perspective of the Sacred Circle: that we are all in resurgence, all in revival. It is early days, yet something new is emerging, something different is walking on the land. Is our church’s collective understanding of the Covenant and Our Way of Life sufficient to do this with integrity?
- A question to the General Synod: How would you like to learn about the ministries of the General Synod, its various departments and committees, work priorities and achievements? Would this knowledge be interesting and helpful in discussing and recommending structure proposals?

**STATISTICS REPORT
TO GENERAL SYNOD 2025**

Since my last report to General Synod in 2023 we have been able to fill in the picture both on what happened to the Anglican Church of Canada through Covid and what has been happening since the pandemic became simply endemic. I should note here that the data reporting cycle means that the latest data you will read here is from 2023.

National context

The national picture for the Anglican Church of Canada before Covid was widely reported to be an ongoing decline of 2.5% per year on most metrics calculated from a 2001 baseline. This steady decline had been in process for many years before 2000. As a benchmark for comparisons it would mean that from 2017 to 2023 we might have expected a general decline of 15% had we not had Covid.

The two Covid years marked a radical discontinuity in this steady decline. First there was a period with no in person services, or intermittent services, and then there was a gradual return to regular in person services. This return is continuing into 2023. The good news is that some metrics are returning towards pre-Covid levels. However, it is clear that the effects of Covid on the ACC are still being felt and so we are not sure what the long term changes will be. Thus we will not be able to make any long term projections whilst the data pattern continues to settle.

Since Covid we have started to collect the numbers of online services and from 2023 the numbers of informal services. We understand these metrics to be indicative of the church reaching out to those who are not able to be part of the 'normal' Sunday services.

In this report I am giving the national picture, and it should be noted that there is a great variety of correlation between this picture and that in the various dioceses. Some dioceses match very closely, many do not. Some dioceses are even able to show growth in some of the metrics we collect. This year, for the first time we have sent to each diocese for which we have complete data, a report which gives them their metrics over the period from 2017 to 2023.

The national picture

This picture is based on 2023 returns plus the data from 2022 for the few dioceses which have not returned their 2023 data. The data has both good news and bad news for the ACC in the period after Covid.

Our membership numbers are generally good news. Both electoral roll numbers and identifiable givers have remained essentially constant for the last three years. Identifiable givers even climbed by 10% from 2021 to 2023. This is remarkable given both the previous decline and the context of Covid. There is a caveat, which is that the numbers are overall down by an average of 3% per year since 2017.

Attendance numbers have both good news and bad news. The good news is that attendance for Christmas, Easter and Pentecost increased very significantly from 2022 to 2023. Easter attendance went up 41%, Christmas attendance up 51%. This was expected given that the pandemic restrictions had been mostly removed for the relevant periods in 2022, so congregations were predicted to have returned by this point.

The bad news in attendance is that these attendance figures were still significantly down from 2017. Christmas was down by an average of 3% per year, Easter was down by an average of 4% per year. Furthermore, average Sunday attendance continued to decline steadily with no bounce back. In the six years from 2017 to 2023 we lost 1/3rd of our average attendance, or over 6% per year. In other words, it appears people are coming back to festival services, but not to regular Sunday worship.

The occasional office numbers show the expected bounce back after Covid and into 2022, but after that there is a return to decline, with the exception of baptisms (2% increase from 2022 to 2023). Again, the numbers were down significantly from 2017 by a variety of rates. Notably the number of marriages we conduct has decreased to almost half of the number in 2017.

Finally, the numbers for online services show that we now have about one in five parishes continuing to provide such a service. The new figure this year was that of informal services, and about 15% of parishes are running such a service.

Respectfully Submitted,

The Rev. Dr. Neil Elliot
Statistics and Research Officer

Table 1 - Mission data for 2017 to 2023

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total number on parish rolls	359030	351246	333894	293423	294726	294931	294382
Regular identifiable givers	131422	130777	121299	107169	97982	100978	106402
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Average Sunday Attendance	98118	92184	87368			64774.9	58871
Easter Attendance	171806	171484	162180			90369	127011
Christmas Attendance	219862	234804	218877			116473	176254
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Baptisms	5411	5285	4784	1930	2040	3583	3651
Confirmations	1997	1989	1969	630	541	1710	1549
Marriages	2071	2014	1459	707	745	1313	1145
Funerals	9074	9266	8106	5465	5869	8129	7645

National graphs of membership, attendance and pastoral offices

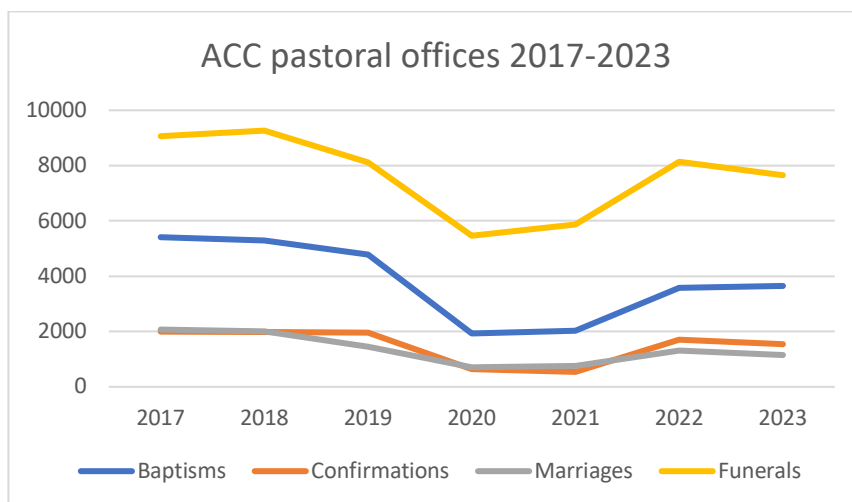
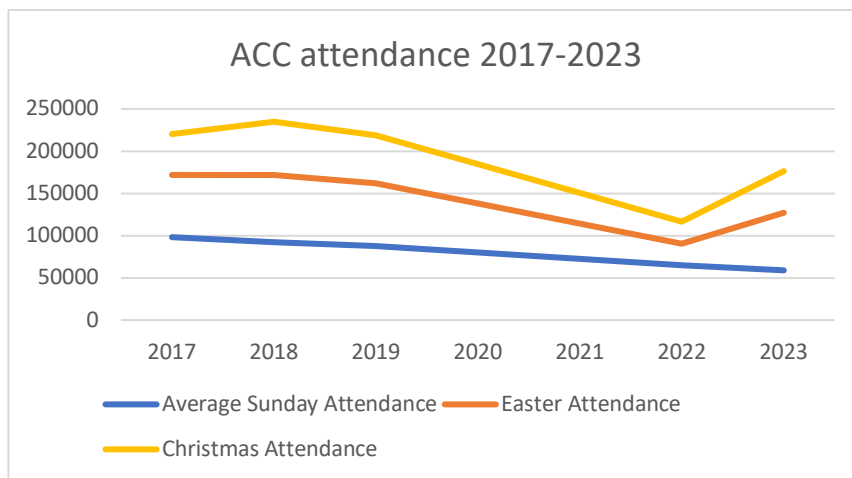
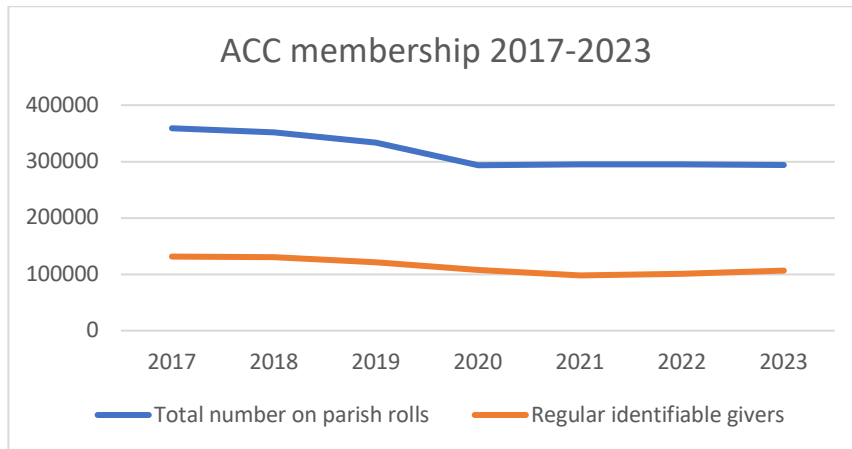


Table 2 - % decline over Covid and between 2017 and 2023

	National % change 2019-2022	National % change 2017-2023
Total number on parish rolls	12%	18%
Average Sunday Attendance	28%	37%
Regular identifiable givers	20%	19%
Easter Attendance	57%	26%
Pentecost Attendance	50%	24%
Christmas Attendance	58%	20%
Baptisms	25%	33%
Confirmations	13%	22%
Marriages	10%	45%
Funerals	0%	16%

Table 3 Online and informal services

	National % of parishes
2020	50%
2021	38%
2022	37%
2023	19%
Informal (2023)	15%

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL OF THE NORTH TO GENERAL SYNOD 2025

FOR INFORMATION

Members of the Council of the North have been deeply moved by the care and concern expressed by Canadian Anglicans this past year. This is the same care and concern expressed by Canadian Anglicans for the ministry in northern and remote communities for over 50 years. The missional efforts of Christ's Church continue throughout this nation.

A brief synopsis of the history of the Council may be found on the national website and is shared here.

The Council of the North is a grouping of financially assisted dioceses, which are supported through grants by the General Synod. There are seven dioceses: the Territory of the People (formerly Anglican Parishes of the Central Interior) and the Indigenous Spiritual Ministry of Mishamikoweesh. The Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador is an affiliate member. (It does not vote nor receive funding.) They are in sparsely populated areas such as the Arctic, Yukon, Northern and Central Interior of British Columbia, Alberta, northern regions of Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, and Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador.

The Council of the North comprises all bishops of the assisted dioceses in the Anglican Church of Canada. The Council administers the General Synod's grants for northern mission and meets twice a year to share information about the unique challenges faced by smaller ministries in the north.

They work together to provide pastoral and sacramental ministry to all who are living in isolated communities in Canada's North. (see <https://www.anglican.ca/cn/>)

Membership of the Council also includes the General Secretary (The Venerable Alan Perry), the Chief Financial Officer (Amal Attia), and the National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop (The Most Reverend Chris Harper).

Meetings of the Council are incredible opportunities for members to share the struggles and joys of ministry they are experiencing. In this mutual collegiality, isolation is reduced, and space is created for visioning and listening to the Spirit's leading.

All grants received by members must be accounted for. There are two types of grants – the Block Grant funding by the General Synod and Special Grants funding by generous donations to the Council. The Grants Allocations Committee (GAC) reviews the Block Grants from the General Synod. The Chief Financial Officer, Amal Attia, is central to this review process. Each member is given feedback from the GAC. The reporting includes both financial and narrative components. Members are invited to share ministry stories that are to be shared with the wider church. The Transformational Commitments are lenses through which these stories may be viewed.

Invites and deepens life in Christ.

In the Diocese of the Arctic - Partnering with On Eagles Wings and the Canadian Bible Society, the "Caring for the Wounded Heart" trauma healing program was offered in 4 communities across the North, and a

Wholeness Through Christ prayer ministry course was offered to a group of clergy and ATTS students. (ATTS is the Arthur Turner Training School.)

In the Diocese of Brandon - The LTh program through Huron University College, partially funded through grants from the Council of the North and Anglican Foundation, remains a bright star for local Christians. Without such a program, we would be lost. This provides an option and answer to the strong desire for further religious education for many people who cannot go away to seminary because of age or situation. The attendance for Council of the North students has been fantastic. We look forward to opening up further opportunities with other institutions which may serve our local communities, as well.

The Diocese of Athabasca - We continue to get energy from our Bible Reading Marathon held on-line during Holy Week, having Morning and Evening Prayer Monday to Friday via our Facebook page, as well as sharing stories and pictures of each other in our Diocesan Weekly Update, emailed across the diocese.

Champions the dignity of every human being; works to dismantle racism and colonialism.

The Primate's Commission put forth the dismantling of colonialism in the Council of the North as part of its seven hypotheses. When this was proposed, there was pushback from members. Part of this stemmed from the fact that nearly half of the membership is Indigenous, and the proposal came from a Primate's Commission that had no Indigenous participation. Additionally, the member's finances are scrutinized by the CFO annually in a way that no other diocese in Canada is required to. This process has a feeling of colonialism attached to it. One principle of the Council is that we do not tell members how they are to spend their funds but hold them accountable for how they said they would. The Council acknowledges the need for high-level accountability for the funds received through the generosity of many. Updating the Council of the North Handbook is part of this response, too. An intentional conversation with ACIP and the Council of General Synod about ministry in remote areas of all of Canada would be appreciated.

The Bishop of Yukon tells a story about flying into a remote community for the funeral of a person who completed suicide. During her visit, she felt called to do a prayer walk around the community. As she walked, members of the community joined her. There are no metrics to account for this powerful ministry. These moments speak to the deep desire of people in remote communities to be prayerful, cared for and supported by the wider church.

Offering dignity and support in death is a crucial part of the ministry in the Council. In Mishamikoweesh, this is particularly important among the small, close-knit communities looking for pastoral care. The bishops there are taxed with responding in these times of crisis and offer compassion with the Word of God.

Embraces mutual interdependence with the Indigenous church (Sacred Circle).

In the Diocese of Saskatchewan - We ordained 7 priests and 1 deacon in 2023. Of those, 7 were Indigenous. Our investments in Indigenous leadership are paying off. In just the last few months two northern Indigenous communities' services have begun regularly again for the first time in years. Hall Lake is considering expanding the size of its building to accommodate its swelling numbers under the leadership of an Indigenous minister educated at our diocesan school and only recently ordained a priest.

In the Territory of the People - This is the one church in Prince George willing to make its space available to Indigenous families who need a place for an extended Wake before a funeral. This started a couple of

years ago. It has led to further engagement with Indigenous leaders and community. St. Michael's has now opened its doors to an Indigenous-led Street Church styled in the format of a Gospel Jamboree that runs every Sunday evening in the parish hall with music, prayer, healing service and a meal.

The Council hears from Archbishop Chris in our meetings and members have been invited to participate in ACIP and Sacred Circle gatherings. There is an overlap in ministry between the Council and Sacred Circle. This overlap is a good thing as the parochial ministries of many parishes are supported by diocesan structures. The emerging Indigenous church offers a national voice and connection to Indigenous peoples both rural and urban.

Nurtures right relationships among people of faith in local, national and global communities and networks.

In the Diocese of Brandon - The ministry done through the camp is second to none. Because of it, we had a full contingent of youth delegates at our 2023 fall synod, we are able to send youth to national synods and other events, which then allows them to share the gospel nationally, and in return, locally. We have youth candidates on the PWRDF Youth Council, who have attended both the Provincial and General Synod, gone on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and been a steward at Lambeth...All because of the ministry and right relationships developed through our Anglican Memorial Camp.

In the Diocese of Caledonia – Online daily offices for the past 5 years have forged connections across the Diocese and around the world. The number of people joining in for a “Holy hug on the way to bed” has decreased slightly since the lifting of restrictions. Yet this time is highly anticipated and valued by many. Anglicans from around the world participate and join in praying for one another. This connecting, convening, and communicating ministry is made possible with generous support.

The Anglican Foundation in December 2024 gave the first grants to support Retired Non-stipendiary Clergy from the Council of the North. This fund was made possible by an initial grant of \$100,000 by the New Westminster Diocesan ACW. Other generous donors added to the fund over the past couple of years. These grants address inequity within the church and show a deep love for those ministering sacrificially in remote communities.

Through Giving with Grace, members have received grants for Training and Ministry events. These funds are given for specific events and are accounted for. Unused or leftover funds are returned. Part of these funds support the University of Huron LTh program, while others enable dioceses to gather for training and ministry events.

Stewards and renews God's creation; protects and sustains the earth; pursues justice for all people.

The Council moved to 1 in-person meeting per year, which is added to the end of the National House of Bishops (HoB) meeting. In terms of stewardship, this requires less air travel, shared financial resources with the HoB, and lower meeting costs. Other Zoom meetings permit the Council to meet and engage in special meetings to address particular needs of members and the Council.

In the Diocese of Moosonee - The Cathedral in Timmins is continuing its outreach ministry through a Friday lunch program providing wholesome meals for 50-60 people many of whom are homeless, struggle with mental health or addiction issues. This ministry is both needed and much appreciated. This ministry has

also enhanced the profile of the Cathedral in the downtown core of the city. It is a program that the diocese will need to continue supporting.

Conclusion

Thanks to generous Anglicans, the Council of the North can support the diocesan-based ministries in northern and remote communities. The change in leadership within the Council is profound. In this past year and a half, three new bishops have been consecrated. Within the next 6 months, an additional eight may be elected. It is exciting to have new leadership within the Council and to forge deeper relationships in this ministry with those in remote areas of this vast nation.

Thank you for your generous support and encouragement. We are deeply moved by your care that sustains a ministry to the vulnerable in remote parishes. God bless!

Council Members (as of March 13, 2025)

Diocese of the Arctic

Suffragan Bishop (Administrator): Rt. Rev. Annie Ittoshat

Diocese of Athabasca

Bishop: Rt. Rev. David Greenwood

Diocese of Brandon

Bishop: Rt. Rev. Rachael Parker

Diocese of Caledonia

Bishop: Rt. Rev. David Lehmann (Chair)

Diocese of Moosonee

Bishop: Most Rev. Anne Germond

Commissary: Most Rev. Fred Hiltz

Diocese of Saskatchewan

Bishop: Rt. Rev. Richard Reed

Bishop of Missinipi: Rt. Rev. Adam Halkett

Diocese of Yukon

Bishop: Rt. Rev. Lesley Wheeler-Dame (Vice-Chair)

Indigenous Spiritual Ministry of Mishamikoweesh

Bishop: Rt. Rev. Lydia Mamakwa

Suffragan Bishop for the Northern Manitoba Area Mission: Rt. Rev. Isaiah Larry Beardy

Suffragan Bishop for the Northern Ontario Area Mission: Rt. Rev. Morris Fiddler

Territory of the People

Bishop: Rt. Rev. Clara Plamondon

Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador*

Bishop: Rt. Rev. Sam Rose

Anglican Council of Indigenous People**
The Most Reverend Chris Harper
National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop

The Venerable Alan Perry**
General Secretary

Amal Attia**
Chief Financial Officer

The Rev Canon Patricia Dorland**
Grants Allocation Committee - Chair

* affiliate member (non-voting / non-funded)
** ex-officio members

Respectfully Submitted by,

The Right Reverend David TJ Lehmann,
Bishop of Caledonia and Chair of the Council of the North

**REPORT OF THE FAITH, WORSHIP, AND MINISTRY COORDINATING COMMITTEE
to General Synod 2025**

Members: Stephanie London (Edmonton, Chair), Susan Bell (Niagara), Benjamin Gillard (Toronto), Dion Lewis (Montréal), Marnie Peterson (New Westminster), Tanya Phibbs (ex officio, Deputy Prolocutor), Alan Perry (ex officio, General Secretary).

Staff: Sheilagh McGlynn, Youth Ministries (3/5 time), Scott Sharman, Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations (3/5 time), Eileen Scully, Worship and Ministry, Director

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2.3. Program Updates, with reflections on Transformational Commitments	
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Appendices: Motions to General Synod, with supporting documents

Appendix #1 Document: Theological Statement on the Diaconate and compendium of Practices for a Restored Diaconate

Appendix #2 Motion: Theological Statement on the Diaconate

Appendix #3 Motion: Compendium of Practices for a Restored Diaconate

Appendix #4 Motion: Feast of the Creator

Appendix #5 Document: Addressing Anti-Judaism in Holy Week and Easter

Appendix #6 Motion: Addressing Anti-Judaism in Holy Week and Easter

Appendix #7 Motion: Thematic RCL Readings

Appendix #8 Motion: 100th Anniversary of the United Church of Canada

Appendix #9 Motion: 150th Anniversary of the Presbyterian Church in Canada

Appendices: Resolutions of the Council of General Synod originating with FWM in this biennium:

Appendix 10 Document: The Ordinal (2025)

Appendix 11 Resolution: The Ordinal (2025)

Appendix 12 Document: Ecclesial Apologies

Appendix 13 Resolution: Ecclesial Apologies

Appendix 14 Document: 500th Anniversary Anabaptist Reformation

Appendix 15 Resolution: 500th Anniversary Anabaptist Reformation

Appendix 16: FWM Organogram

1. Item for Action

Seven (7) motions are appended to this Report, intended for decision by the General Synod. They concern:

- Theological Statement and Practices for a Restored Diaconate: Appendices 1, 2, and 3
- Feast of the Creator: Appendix 4
- Addressing Anti-Judaism in Holy Week and Easter: Appendices 5 and 6
- Thematic RCL Readings: Appendix 7
- 100th Anniversary of the United Church of Canada: Appendix 8
- 150th Anniversary of the Presbyterian Church in Canada: Appendix 9

In all cases, where there is a document relating to the motion, the appropriate documents can be found in an adjacent appendix (i.e. Addressing Anti-Judaism in Holy Week and Easter: Document is Appendix 5, and the Motion is Appendix 6).

2. Items for Information

A number of Resolutions originating with the Faith, Worship, and Ministry committee were decided by the Council of General Synod in this biennium. These, and their supporting documents, are contained within the Appendices to this Report. They concern:

- The Ordinal: Appendices 10 and 11 (Study version available on request)
- Anglican Roman Catholic Dialogue: Ecclesial Apologies: Appendices 12 and 13
- 500th Anniversary of the Anabaptist Reformation: Appendices 14 and 15

2.1. On the Transformational Commitments

Eileen Scully



There are good reasons why the framers of what have become the *Transformational Commitments* placed “inviting and deepening life in Christ” at the centre of the circle. This is the gospel call, the way of life, the way of the cross that leads to abundant life. Each of the additional commitments flows from this Gospel at the centre of our circle, as enhancements to the core lens through which we as disciples of

Jesus are called to look upon the world and upon our lives. They are specifically enfleshed responses to the call of God upon our hearts and minds within the contexts in which we find ourselves and shape our participation in God's mission here and now.

The ministries of Faith, Worship, and Ministry all serve this central *Transformational Commitment* to *invite and deepen life in Christ*. All of the work in youth ministry is about equipping leaders to help young people in their own formation in Christ. The church has entered a new generation in which the core practices of discipleship are the driving animators of ecumenical dialogues and the educational initiatives that flow from these dialogues. FWM's work over several years to build networks of those working in spiritual formation have born fruit in the *You Are Leaven* event and its off-shoots. Anglicans know very well the formative, deepening, power of liturgical prayer. FWM works in such ways that the creation of liturgical resources is shaped within a deep sense of the gravitas of the responsibilities of faithful formation that crafting words for worship entails. That worship is all about gathering in Christ, listening to God, praying in the Spirit, being fed by grace and sent in mission is our common understanding that shapes how we approach this work.

Within this work, the remaining *Transformational Commitments* serve to remind us of how we ought to be working. They draw our attention to how we direct our preferential option attentions and to whom we need to be paying attention. They tell us what relational and justice values need to be shaping and guiding our work. Each of these four encircling Commitments speaks to sets of relationships with others in the church and world, including the cosmos, that need attentive care in order to be right and just relationships. We hold these before us both in terms of what we offer to the church, and in terms of how we order our own working lives together as a committee and in the many bodies that we oversee.

In terms of what we offer to the church, we try to hold these up as a lens on our work. Does the Ordinal do well enough to reflect right relationships within the church – amongst all orders of ministry and the ministry of the baptised, for example? Does the focus work of the Anglican Roman Catholic Dialogue honour our commitments to dismantle racism and colonialism? Does the Canadian Lutheran Anglican Youth gathering steward God's creation well and help young people to seek God's justice? In the partnerships that we establish with external groups, such as Anglican Deacons Canada, are our dealing respecting a right relationship and the principles of partnership that guide the Anglican Communion? In all that we do, do we make and invite the right sort of space and time to listen to the Sacred Circle?

We recognize that we can say a qualified "yes" to each of these questions, but that the qualification is important. Perhaps the best way to frame it would be to say "yes, we're trying, and trust that God will reveal to us new ways to continue to try." Perhaps one of the even better ways to frame it is to recognize that these *Transformational Commitments* – because they reflect the core Gospel call to us here and now – do call us all to pay attention to the transfiguration of grace that confront us in our sin. When this light shines, and if we pay good attention, what is revealed to us is both what ought to be, as well as what is in the present, and in the tension between what ought to be and what is, we can better recognize the ways in which we fall short and wander off course. We embrace this illumination.

The main reason why this FWM report is as long as it is reflects the nature of the work in its many different groups of volunteers. Another reason is because we value transparency and openness. That includes the openness to critique, as well as to offers of assistance and other helpful responses to this report that will help to build the work in the coming triennium. We believe these values to be in line with the ways of working that are emerging as important for the General Synod. We will continue to use

the Transformational Commitments as lens for discernment of both the ‘what’ and the ‘how’ of FWM work in this coming triennium.

2.2. Chair’s Reflections

Stephanie London

This report contains a set of motions for projects that are now ready for their next phase. These are the fruit of many years of hard work and wide consultation. Some of them have travelled through ecumenical circles. Others represent many hours of wrestling prayerfully with theological questions in light of the changing shape of the church.

In my role as chair of FWM, I have had the opportunity to sit in some of these meetings with people from across the country and can confirm (with a hat tip to Mark Twain) that – so far – reports of our ecclesiastical death are exaggerated. As a church, we are rich in people who take their faith in God seriously, who are committed to thoughtful and nuanced theological reflection, and who live with prayerful intention. This is a sign that discipleship formation processes across our church persist even as we – and the wider human family – face great challenges. We are willing to ask hard questions and remain in community with one another as we work them out. We are hauling old and new treasures from the storehouses. We are sifting through this whole wide field we have inherited until we find the pearl: our relationship with God through Jesus, and our call to grow in right relationship with God, one another, and all Creation.

This means that the work of shepherding and nurturing the faith, worship, and ministry of the church is vital and necessary. The motions that follow are not just motions; they will guide our relationships and drive how we follow Jesus. They will provoke conversations. Through them, we gather the living voices of the church today into a call for the church of the future. The revised ordinals, for example, are not just another text to add to our liturgical records. They are the product of many conversations: Who are we? What is important? What is ministry and what shapes it? How can we write poetry for the soul of the church as it rises in prayer? The ecumenical materials are not just fodder for more committees and working groups. They are part of our church’s response to Jesus’ prayer in John 17, and to the longing of the broken Body of Christ for our reality to match our hope of unity. By taking up the statements on the diaconate, we empower the church to release missional energy in renewed ways. There are challenges, as we all know. Yet, the work of refocusing and re-centring ourselves on the Gospel remains essential.

The Faith, Worship, and Ministry committee is pleased to pass these on to you and excited to see how they will contribute to the ongoing life of the church. I am deeply grateful for the many wise and attentive participants in each of these projects, and for the staff overseeing each program area. Their expertise makes much more possible than the available resources would ordinarily allow. I know we have given you a lot to read this time. Thank you once again for your prayerful attention.

2.3. Program Area Reviews

- Ecumenical Relations

**Report of the Animator for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations
Faith, Worship and Ministry**

Submitted by the Rev. Canon Dr. Scott Sharman


Introduction – on the Transformational Commitments

A former Archbishop of Canterbury, Michael Ramsey, once said: “Let it be made clear that ecumenism includes every part of the healing of the wounds of races and nations... Every breaking down of barriers which divide humanity – social, racial, economic, cultural – is part of the ecumenical task... [E]cumenism is no hobby for church-minded people; it is a task of divine and human reconciliation in which every man, woman, and child can have a share.” This has long been a touchstone for my work of ‘animating’ the ecumenical and interfaith commitments of the ACC, and I can think of no better way to begin this report to General Synod 2025.

The nature of such a report, which is but one section of a larger report that must touch on wide number of distinct areas of ecclesiastical work over a period of several years, is that it can tend to be hard ‘see the forest for the trees.’ There are lots of pieces of distinct work going on in each program area, but how do they fit together? What is the relationship of this stuff to everything else? This introductory preface seeks to address precisely those questions. Using the Anglican Church of Canada’s *Transformational Commitments*, it is intended to frame ecumenical and interfaith engagement within a much bigger picture before jumping into the granular details of one subset of work.

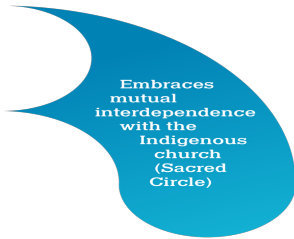


Inviting and deepening life in Christ through intentional discipleship is what we want to animate everything else we do as church. It is no secret that Jesus repeatedly called his first disciples into contact with those who were considered spiritual and religious outsiders and enemies and invited them to love and learn from them. It can be inferred that one way to grow in resemblance to Christ is by fostering genuine interactions with individuals who have different beliefs, prayer practices, and faith community structures. Through such exchanges, we can continually discover the breadth of God’s mercy and grace in unexpected ways. Ecumenical and interfaith relations are thus far from being alternatives to Christian discipleship. Instead, they can be understood as critical elements of how we mature as follows of Christ in this time. In a world that is so hyper-polarized and divided, this is an urgent witness to Good News.



Nurtures
right relationships among
people of faith in local,
national and global
communities and
networks

The Gospel is all about restoring relationships. Each one of us as individuals can be forgiven and transformed in Christ and brought back into friendship with God our Creator. But making right relationships does not just end there. It is always meant to spill over from me and Jesus to me and Jesus and everyone and everything else – **nurturing right relationships in local, national, and global communities and networks**. This often starts ecumenically within the diversity of the one Body of Christ, learning how to live with unity in diversity and diversity in unity with our fellow disciples of Jesus who might not do things in an Anglican way, but nevertheless are our siblings in faith. From there it can radiate outwards in an interfaith way to those of different faiths, striving to appreciate and respect what is good and true and beautiful in the expressions of spiritual and religious seeking and finding among every people and culture and place.



Embraces
mutual
interdependence
with the
Indigenous
church
(Sacred
Circle)

In this land we call Canada, the colonial form of the Anglican tradition often failed profoundly to treat with respect the culture, communal ways, and spiritual ceremonies of the First Peoples in this place, to the cause of great harm. Much of the distorted attitude behind this destruction came from a willful forgetting or outright rejection of Jesus' teaching of respect for other cultures, languages, and ways of life and a sinful insistence on the superiority of one set of ways over others. Whenever this has occurred, the colonizing church fails to live as authentic disciples of Christ. Anglicans in Canada therefore need to recover our models for living together as relatives with our uniqueness and God-given differences honoured and given their rightful space. We can do so by putting the Gospel back in the centre of the circle rather than anything else. Lessons from ecumenical and interfaith relations, therefore, are deeply interconnected with **embracing a path of mutual interdependence for the Indigenous and non-Indigenous church**. Indeed, the concept of churches in full communion may have a lot to offer as an analogy in this regard.



Jesus taught that unity among his disciples and among peoples of faith was never an end unto itself. It was always a means to something else for the life of the world – i.e., “I pray they may be one SO THAT...” (John 17). The social needs in this time and across the globe are great, and creation itself groans in an ecological crisis longing to be set free. When the challenges we are facing are so big, we cannot afford to face them as Anglicans alone. We can be so much stronger when we take common cause together, not only for our own good but for the good of everyone else. In this we see the reminder that working to develop ecumenical and interfaith engagement and partnership, though valuable in their own right, are ultimately steps on the way to more faithfully and effectively **championing human dignity, stewarding creation, and pursuing justice for all.**

With this attempt at a more comprehensive framing in place, we are hopefully now in a much better place to begin to review the distinct pieces of program work which animate these commitments in the ecumenical and interfaith spheres of the General Synod’s convening and supporting work.

For Action: Ecumenical Relations

a. Resolution – United Church of Canada 100th Anniversary (see Appendix 8)

The United Church of Canada was formed in 1925 through the organic union of the Methodist Church, Canada, the Congregational Union of Ontario and Quebec, two-thirds of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, and the Association of Local Union Churches. The Evangelical United Brethren Church also joined some years later. Though not without some difficult points of conflict and tension along the way, for much of the 100 years since, the Anglican Church of Canada has regularly worked alongside of and in common cause with United Church siblings in Christ in numerous areas of mutual concern as an expression of our shared witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In recent decades, ecumenical dialogues and active engagement between Anglican and United disciples have enabled Anglicans to receive many gifts from the distinct witness of the United Church and have allowed our two churches to grow even more closely together as partners in common mission. This has included numerous arrangements in certain local contexts which have seen some Anglican parishes and United Church communities of faith able to share together deeply in their mutual ministry – in some cases everything from outreach programs, to buildings, to clergy, to regular gathered worship. As we anticipate even more opportunities for collaboration in the future, at local, regional, and national levels, the occasion of the 125th anniversary of the United Church of Canada represents an important moment to express our gratitude for one of our closest ecumenical partners, and to rededicate ourselves to ongoing ecumenical friendship and cooperation in the years ahead.

b. Resolution – Presbyterian Church in Canada 150th Anniversary (see Appendix 9)

The Presbyterian Church in Canada was formed in 1875 through the joining of four predecessor Presbyterian church expressions of European origin that had been in Canada for several decades prior. While a portion of Canadian Presbyterians entered the Union that formed the United Church of Canada in 1925, another portion continued as the Presbyterian Church in Canada from that point on. Anglicans and Presbyterians in Canada, as elsewhere, have not always enjoyed peaceful and positive relations. However, with the dawning of the modern ecumenical movement in 1910, and especially with the formation of the World Council of Churches and Canadian Council of Churches in the 1940s, Presbyterians and Anglicans have come to know one another more deeply and to work together more closely in common mission. This has included several arrangements in certain local contexts which have seen some Anglican parishes and Presbyterian congregations able to share together deeply in their mutual ministry – in some cases everything from outreach programs, to buildings, to clergy, to regular gathered worship. As we anticipate even more opportunities for collaboration in the future, at local, regional, and national levels, the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the Presbyterian Church in Canada represents an important moment to express our gratitude for these our valued ecumenical partners, and to rededicate ourselves to ongoing ecumenical friendship and cooperation in the years ahead.

For Information



Ecumenical Relations

a. Lutheran-Anglican-Moravian Full Communion

General Synod 2023 passed a Resolution agreeing to recognize and extend relations of full communion to the Moravian Church in North America (MCNA). This was a joint action undertaken at the same time by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC), effectively creating a trilateral full communion relationship between the three churches.

Pursuant to the commitments of the *One Flock, One Shepherd* document which established this partnership, the period of time between General Synod 2023 and 2025 has seen several developments in the emergence of this expanded full communion initiative. Most significant is the creation of a full communion coordinating commission which is working under the name of the Lutheran-Anglican-Moravian Commission, or LAMC, which effectively replaces the predecessor Joint Anglican-Lutheran Commission, or JALC. This new body is comprised of 13 members appointed by the Council of General

Synod, the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples, and our Lutheran and Moravian partners. It also includes ACC and ELCIC national staff support.

During its first phase, the LAMC has met in person once and several times online. Thus far it has identified four main areas to focus on:

- Ongoing facilitation of networking opportunities and resource sharing for local shared ministries, including existing and emerging “Waterloo Ministries” between ACC and ELCIC, as well as potential trilateral “LAM Ministries” in places where this is particularly possible (Edmonton, Calgary, Toronto, Newfoundland and Labrador).
- Expanded full communion work towards mutual understanding the ministry of diakonia in each church, the opportunities and challenges in mutual recognition of deacons, and the goal of becoming a more “diaconal church.”
- Working in full communion alongside of Indigenous siblings as self-determining Indigenous expressions of Church grow and flourish, including pursuing greater connection and communion relations with the largely Inuit population of the Moravian churches in eastern Labrador.
- Further exploration of the potential for sharing human, spiritual, programmatic, and physical resources and infrastructure in support of common mission at local, regional, and national levels.

With each area, a smaller working group of Commissioners has been struck to begin to move specific pieces of work forward.

Current Anglican members of the LAMC include: Co-Chair Maylanne Maybee (Montreal), Kevin Robertson (Toronto), Brendon Neilson (Islands and Inlets), Travis Enright (ACIP-Edmonton), Blessing Shambare (Athabasca), and Scott Sharman (staff).

b. Churches Beyond Borders

At General Synod 2023, a public recognition of the inauguration of the Churches Beyond Borders Communion (CBB) between the Anglican Church of Canada, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, and The Episcopal Church took place, following the final ratification of the Memorandum of Agreement by TEC. In effect, this initiated a full communion partnership between the ACC and US-based ELCA, including the possibility of clergy exchange and the use of authorized liturgical sources subject to the approval of the local ordinary. More broadly, it expanded the impetus for greater continent-wide and indeed global collaboration as four churches in mission and ministry who share many common commitments and values.

During 2024-25, CBB has had three main areas of collaboration:

The first of these is relationship building and advocacy for the Anglican and Lutheran churches in Jerusalem, specifically the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem (EDJ) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL). Several zoom meetings between the ‘heads of communion’ in North America, bishops Naoum and Azar, and staff for all six churches, have been held, for the purposes of prayer and mutual support during the conflict in Gaza. This has been invaluable for informing joint Anglican-Lutheran messaging to the governments of Canada and the United States, as well as sharing updates with people in the churches. A 2023 Advent cycle of prayer and devotional resource was jointly produced in support of this work. This initiative dovetails with and builds upon work during the previous

triennium in the areas of racial justice, decolonization, and repudiation of the doctrine of discovery in the North American context.

A second area of exploration is in the potential for transatlantic recognition of full communion. The Porvoo Communion of churches is a communion relationship between the English, Irish, and Scottish Anglican churches and a number of their Scandinavian and northern European Lutheran counterparts. Although its nature is quite different, it represents, like CBB, a trans-national expression of Anglican-Lutheran full communion. At the initiative of staff colleagues serving the Porvoo group, two zoom meetings between the ecumenical staff of the CBB churches and the Porvoo Communion Contact Group have been held to identify whether and how a future relationship of mutual recognition between CBB and Porvoo could be established on the basis of the CBB formation model. While this remains work in progress, it has led to the Church of Denmark and the Church of Finland taking steps to recognize the orders of Anglican, Episcopalian, and Evangelical Lutheran churches in Canada and the USA.

Thirdly, the creation of CBB also prompts another iteration of the question “what does my full communion with your church imply for my relationship with other churches with whom we are each in full communion?”. For example, the ELCA and TEC are both independently in full communion with the Moravian Church in North America. In Canada, ACC and ELCIC also enjoy full communion relations with Moravians. What does this imply for the Moravian Church, which is a binational church to begin with, in its involvement with CBB. This is a new question to answer in the world of trans-national full communion, and one which is now on the docket for exploration by CBB church staff. And it is no mere jurisdictional administrivia, but in fact a complex matter of issue of ecclesiology which could have other potential implications for expanding full communion conversations in the future.

It should also be noted that, in the 2024-25 window, the four current CBB churches have all seen transitions at the level of the head of communion with retirements and ends of terms for the respective primatial/presiding/national bishops. With the advent of new leadership, it remains to be seen how CBB will develop and focus its priorities going forward.

Anglicans involved in CBB at this stage primarily include General Synod staff: the Primate, the Animator for Ecumenical Relations, and occasionally other General Synod staff who relate to program areas being engaged collaboratively with the other CBB churches.

c. Anglican-Roman Catholic Relations in Canada

The ACC continues to carry out two formal national dialogues with the Roman Catholic Church in Canada, a theological dialogue (ARC) and a bishops’ dialogue (ARC-B). Each of these bodies meet in person once per year, and several times online. In 2023 and 2024, they were scheduled to overlap with one another by one day, and the meetings were held in Halifax and Edmonton respectively.

Over the last 2 years, the focus of the ARC dialogue has been around questions related to church sin and church apologies. This has been motivated in part by numerous instances in recent years of apologies being expressed by Anglican and Roman Catholic churches in both Canada and elsewhere in connection with things like ideological and religious persecution, antisemitism, sexual abuse, colonialism, and residential schools. While Anglican and Roman Catholic churches and church leaders share responsibility for the perpetuation of these wrongs, often in the name of Christ and/or the Church, differing theologies, spiritual practices, and ecclesial polities have led to differing understandings of why, and when, and what, and how expressions of ecclesial apology are made, as well as what they might lead to. The members of ARC believed that an ecumenical study of these matters from biblical, doctrinal,

historical, and practical angles was called for in order to support the churches in living out more deeply their expressions of guilt and contrition. The content of this resource was completed in late 2024 and is currently awaiting additional work of editorial, translation, graphic design, etc. It is expected to be published in late spring or early summer of 2025, and is intended for engagement in congregational study groups, by local ecumenical organizations, in theological schools, etc.

ARC-B focuses more of its efforts on relationship building between bishops and serving as a forum for reflecting on issues of pastoral concern facing the two churches. In 2025 and 26, ARC-B anticipates placing some greater focus on exploring the question of the contemporary potential for developing national guidelines for the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops on limited sacramental sharing between Roman Catholics and Anglicans, especially in more remote rural contexts where regular access to sacramental ministry is increasingly less common.

Anglicans currently on ARC include: Co-Chair Bruce Myers (Quebec), Iain Luke (Saskatoon), Krista Dowdeswell (Calgary), and Scott Sharman (staff). The Anglican contingent also includes two ELCIC members: Cindy Halmarson (Ottawa) and Paul Sartison (Winnipeg).

Anglicans currently on ARC-B include: Co-Chair Nigel Shaw (Military Ordinariate), Lesley Wheeler Dame (Yukon), Mary Irwin Gibson (Montreal), William Cliff (Ontario), and Scott Sharman (staff).

d. Anglican-United Relations in Canada

The Anglican-United Dialogue of Canada completed its mandate in 2022. This work was centred on two things: 1) seeking new ways forward in the mutual recognition of orders of ministry, and 2) supporting new and developing local Ecumenical Shared Ministries between Anglican and United churches across the country. Since the conclusion of that work, occasional formal and information connections and collaborations between Anglican and United leadership have occurred, including ecumenical advocacy in relation to Indigenous Justice, Israel-Palestine, the war in Ukraine, etc., as well as periodic meetings between the ACC Primate, General Secretary, and Ecumenical Animator, and the UCC Moderator, General Secretary, and other General Council national staff. Of course, continuing fruitful negotiations around a shared office space in Toronto with both the United Church of Canada and the Presbyterian Church in Canada have also been ongoing.

At the renewed request in 2024 of the heads of church in both the ACC and the UCC, and pursuant to resolutions of General Synod in 2016 and 2023, a draft Terms of Reference document for a potential new Anglican-United Coordinating Commission (AUCC) has been developed collaboratively between ecumenical staff officers in both churches and in consultation with General Secretaries. It outlines a rationale, mandate, ways of working, accountability, and various other matters pertinent to the formation of such a body. The FWM Coordinating Committee, at its meeting of January 14, 2025, endorsed these Terms of References, and hopes for action by CoGS soon to create this body. This will be important not only in advance of the office sharing relationship, but also as the two churches continue to see more instances of congregational Ecumenical Shared Ministries in the years ahead. The year 2025, as the 100th anniversary of the creation of the United Church of Canada, represents an important occasion to renew our commitment to ecumenical collaboration with the UCC at local, regional, and national levels, which we will seek to do so through General Synod resolution.

e. Anglican-Mennonite Relations in Canada

A report from the first phase of the Anglican-Mennonite Dialogue in Canada (AMDC), together with recommendations, was presented to General Synod 2023. Among those recommendations, approved by the Council of General Synod, was the formation of a second round of dialogue with Mennonite Church Canada. An appointment process incorporating direct member recruitment and open application was undertaken on the Anglican side, with similar steps taken by the Mennonites, leading to the creation of the new AMDC in 2024. An in-person meeting was held in Winnipeg in June 2024 for the purposes of further articulating the mandate and ways of working. The AMDC reaffirmed two particular areas of work given to it by its predecessor body: 1) Continued exploration and encouragement of tangible national and regional level collaborations by the two churches in social and ecological justice efforts of mutual concern, and especially around Indigenous justice and decolonization, and 2) Focused dialogue on questions of ordination and ministry as they pertain to the potential for local Ecumenical Shared Ministry arrangements involving Anglican and Mennonite churches at congregational levels.

Online meetings of the AMDC have continued throughout late 2024 and early 2025. Topics have included looking at examples of church apologies to Indigenous communities in the two traditions, conversations with leaders and members of the Ecumenical Shared Ministry known as Pinawa Christian Fellowship, hearing about example of Anglican and Mennonite initiatives of church reparations to Indigenous communities, exploration of Anglican and Mennonite ecclesiologies as they relate to theologies of ministry, and research into competencies for ordained ministry within both churches. Another 2-3 online meetings of the dialogue are expected in the first half of 2025, with a view towards an in-person meeting either in the late 2025 or early 2026. This work will result in another final report with a new round of recommendations for ways to continue to grow the ecumenical relationship between Anglicans and Mennonites at local, regional, and national levels.

A joint message from AMDC in commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Anabaptist movement has been produced and is anticipated to be issued in the name of the Dialogue on January 21, 2025, to coincide with various global events connected with this anniversary. This statement has been shared widely using General Synod communications channels. It could also be promoted locally throughout 2025 as a way of drawing attention to the work of formal and informal Anglican-Mennonite relations.

Anglicans currently on the AMDC include: Co-Chair Elin Goulden (Toronto), Charlie Scromeda (Ottawa), Bram Pearce (Ontario), Vince Solomon until December 2024 (ACIP-Rupert's Land), and Scott Sharman (staff). The Anglican contingent also includes one ELCIC member: Chris Bishopp (Winnipeg).

f. The Ecumenical Shared Ministry Task Force

The mandate of this informal working group is to promote greater awareness and understanding of the model of Ecumenical Shared Ministry as a means of congregational vitality and sustainability. After a bit of a hiatus during the Covid years of 2020-22, the Ecumenical Shared Ministry Task Force has reactivated as a semi-regular contact point between especially the Anglican Church of Canada, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, the Presbyterian Church in Canada, and the United Church of Canada. In 2023-24 it has also been able to expand its circle to include Mennonite Church Canada and the Moravian Church in North America and is continuing to work on connections with the Christian Church, Disciples of Christ. Further to this, an increased connection with the Prairie Centre for Ecumenism has been reestablished in 2023-24, which brings with it some increased potential for centralization and digital delivery of ESM information and resources. There is little doubt that the ESM Task Force will continue to play an important role in serving the ACC and our full communion and ecumenical partners in the

coming years, and a continued investment of time and energy in its work is almost certainly going to be increasingly essential.

As an informal and unofficial multi-denominational group, ACC involvement in the work of the ESM Task Force remains at the level of staff, with the Animator for Ecumenical Relations being the primary participant.

g. The Canadian Council of Churches

The Canadian Council of Churches (CCC) continues to be the preeminent multilateral ecumenical forum in Canada. The Anglican Church of Canada was a founding member of the CCC back in 1944, and the fellowship now includes 26 member churches, 12 affiliate churches, and 8 churches who participate as observers. It is without question a critical forum for ecumenical communication, collaboration, and advocacy.

There are currently 10 representatives from the ACC serving on CCC bodies, including the Governing Board, the Commission on Justice and Peace, the Commission on Faith and Witness, the Christian Interfaith Reference Group, the Faith and Life Sciences Reference Group, the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Writing and Animation Team, the Finance Committee, the Personnel Committee, and in the role of Treasurer. This represents a significant investment of time and some major contributions to the CCC's work. Recent topics of dialogue and collaboration have included a) ecumenical efforts in Anti-Racism, b) ecumenical collaboration on Indigenous/non-Indigenous reconciliation, c) the Church and digital ministry, d) the Church and questions of citizenship and nationalism, e) collaboration in opposing sexual exploitation and human trafficking, f) theological and ethical questions around gene editing and bio-enhancement, g) spiritual and theological issues related to Artificial Intelligence, machine learning, robotization, and human technological enhancement. Many of these matters are at the forefront of Christian reflection and engagement, and it is critical that our church engages in dialogue with other Christian churches as we face them and begin responding to them.

Throughout 2024 the CCC celebrated its 80th anniversary, including a liturgy hosted in the chapel at Trinity College in Toronto, and a fundraising campaign among member churches (including a contribution from ACC) which reached the goal of raising \$650,000. This also provided occasion for some evaluation of the recent past as well as planning and preparing for the future. Part of the new vision includes significant investment and effort to try to reconnect the organized ecumenical movement with youth and young adults as it was during its formative years. Likewise, the CCC is seeking to reestablish and develop greater connections with local grassroots ecumenism and ecumenical associations across Canada. Both of these goals are important for the handing on of the ecumenical project to a new generation and receiving fresh perspectives and renewed vitality. As such, the ACC is actively seeking to draw upon youth and younger voices from within our own church to introduce them to the work of CCC and encourage them into positions of leadership.

Anglicans currently serving CCC bodies include: Alan Perry, Peter Wall, Andrea Budgey, Roshni Jayawardena, Scott Sharman, Ryan Weston, William Crosby, and Terry DeForest.

h. The World Council of Churches

The World Council of Churches (WCC) remains the largest and most dynamic ecumenical network in the world, representing churches that are comprised of over half a billion Christians around the globe

(nearly 2 billion if you count the Roman Catholic church who are an actively engaged affiliate if not a full member). After the highly creative and visionary season occasioned by the General Assembly of the) in the fall of 2022, including a large delegation from the ACC, the WCC shifts into a mode of ongoing implementation. Bishop Riscylla Shaw, as a member of the WCC Central Committee, plays a major role in steering the Council in the pursuit of its priorities and bringing the voice of our church to bear.

A significant opportunity for engagement with the WCC in Canada was able to take place in late 2024 with a 6-day visit to Canada by the General Secretary and other members of WCC leadership. The Rev. Dr. Jerry Pillay was able to spend 3 days in the Toronto area and 3 days in Winnipeg, engaging deeply with a diverse range of church leaders and many local ecumenical and social justice issues. In particular, there were two circles with Indigenous leaders from a variety of church traditions, providing an opportunity to inform the General Secretary about movements for Indigenous ecclesial self-determination in the Canadian context, as well as the work of justice, healing, and reparations more broadly. Representatives from the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples, as well as Indigenous Ministries staff, were prominently involved. There were also several meaningful engagement events with the interfaith community, youth and young adults, Ukrainian Christians in the diaspora and recent refugees, and regional political leaders, in which Anglican leaders participated. Together with our ELCIC full communion partners, the ACC hosted a breakfast in Winnipeg with a wide range of Canadian church leaders to talk about how the WCC can better serve the needs of the churches in Canada, as well as to share priorities which the Canadian churches would like to see engaged more broadly in the international ecumenical circles.

A notable WCC initiative taking place in 2025 is the commemoration of the 1700th anniversary of the Ecumenical Council of Nicaea in 325. Led by the Faith and Order Commission of the WCC, a variety of efforts to engage the occasion of the anniversary ecumenically and both celebrate and reflect on the Council and its Creed are being organized. All of this will culminate during the World Conference of Faith and Order in Alexandria Egypt in October 2025, a gathering to which the ACC, as a founding member church of the WCC, has been invited to nominate 1-2 representatives. In an effort to develop connections between these international efforts and our churches in Canada, Faith, Worship and Ministry staff are anticipating development of several ACC programmatic offerings in the fall of 2025.

i. International Ecumenical Dialogues

The Anglican Communion supports a wide range of bilateral ecumenical relationships and dialogue groups at the international level. Canadian Anglicans have had a long history of substantial contribution to the global ecumenical movement, and that continues to be the case. The following are the bodies on which ACC leaders are serving:

The Anglican-Lutheran International Commission for Unity and Mission (The Most. Rev. Chris Harper and the Rev. Canon Dr. Scott Sharman) – Currently working on building Anglican-Lutheran full communion partnerships in more places where the two traditions overlap in significant ways but may not have had a long history of collaboration.

The Anglican-Methodist International Commission for Unity and Mission (The Rt. Rev. Susan Bell) – Currently working on reception of theological convergences through local partnership agreements.


The Anglican-Oriental Orthodox International Commission (The Ven. Dr. Edward Simonton) – Currently working on themes of Migration, Displacement, Witness, and Martyrdom.

The Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (The Most Rev. Linda Nicholls) – Currently working on understanding moral and ethical discernment processes in the two churches.

The International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission (The Rt. Rev. Bruce Myers) – Working in ecumenical pairs of Anglican and Roman Catholic Bishops in particular nations and regions on advancing partnership in mission and witness.

The International Commission for Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue (The Rev. Canon Philip Hobson) – Working on themes of repentance, formation, and discipleship in the contemporary world.

The International Pentecostal-Anglican Commission (The Rev. Canon Dr. Preston Parsons) – Working on the topic of holiness as it is understood in the two traditions.



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Interfaith Relations

a. Christian-Jewish Relations

At Assembly/General Synod 2023, in joint fashion with similar action by ELCIC, ACC passed Resolution A160 On Peace and Justice in Palestine and Israel. While this Resolution was primarily focused on providing a mandate for ACC advocacy and activism on behalf of the rights of Palestinians, including our Christian siblings, both Anglican and otherwise, in the land, it also reiterated or further specified certain commitments to work to oppose antisemitism, supercessionism, and Christian Zionism as inconsistent with the teaching of our church and our contemporary relationship with the Jewish People. Although it is always a delicate and careful balance to try to speak out for justice and peace for Palestine and the accountability of the state and government of Israel to international law and the principles of human rights without leaving such interventions prone to misunderstanding and distortion as being anti-Israel and anti-Jewish, our church has, for the last several decades, consistently felt itself obliged to seek to do so. We believe that, to do so appropriately, we must also make every effort to maintain regular dialogue with the Jewish community in Canada. This continues to be the approach we endeavor to follow.

The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) is one large and active Jewish advocacy organization in Canada with which our church occasionally has contact. Leading up to General Synod 2019, and affirmed in 2023, the Canadian Rabbinic Caucus, as an entity within CIJA, was consulted in connection with the process to replace the Prayer for the Conversion of the Jews in the 1962 Book of Common Prayer. Consultations with CIJA in connection with Resolution A160 were complex, with some frustrations expressed to our church about the continuing lack of Christian understanding and appreciation for the way that Christian statements about Israel so often cause harm and promote antisemitism, even if this is far from the stated intention. Since October 7, 2023, with the Hamas-initiated terrorist action and hostage crisis, and subsequent Israeli military siege that has led to an estimated 60,000 Palestinians killed and over 100,000 wounded, have dramatically complicated interfaith conversations in virtually

every context. As a result, there has not been any sustained ACC contact with CIJA interfaith colleagues since late 2023.

During early 2024 through 2025, small efforts have been ongoing to seek to cultivate more opportunities for contact with a variety of other national Jewish organizations and entities in Canada. This work has been pursued with the intention of trying to hear from a variety of diverse points of view which exist among Jews in Canada on many different topics. Examples of such associations include Ameinu Canada, J-Space Canada, the New Israel Fund, and Canadian Friends of Peace Now.

In late 2024, after a process of consultation and discernment, the Acting Primate, along with 12 ACC bishops, and a number of other Anglicans, signed their names to a Canadian Christian Declaration on Antisemitism. The 5 ELCIC bishop also joined this initiative. The statement was a wide-ranging ecumenical effort to say something together as Christians about the fact that – despite the reality of differing conclusions from different Christian communities as to what constitutes the right kind of Christian response to the Palestine-Israel conflict – churches in Canada must be clear and resolute in their denouncement of twisted versions of Christian doctrine that promote antisemitism and the hatred and abuse of Jewish people and communities closer to home and around the world. This was a strong ACC witness, and God willing could, in time, provide a new building block for seeking to reengage in interfaith relationships and dialogue with the Canadian Jewish community.

b. Christian-Muslim Relations

General Synod 2023 provided an opportunity to update on and feature the Common Word online resource which ACC worked together with ELCIC and Muslim partners to develop. This website remains a valuable collection of curated tools for assisting Anglicans and others in forming local dialogue and engagement groups of Muslims and Christians who want to know more about one another.

In an effort to continue to build upon that momentum and keep building awareness of the Common Word resources, a national webinar hosted by ACC and ELCIC was held in April 2024. This was an attempt to do some teaching about the origins and history of the A Common Word initiative, and to showcase the website and its collection of documents and media designed for local implementation. Over 80 people registered, and it was a well-attended event.

c. The Christian Interfaith Reference Group

The Christian Interfaith Reference Group (CIRG) of the Canadian Council of Churches was formed to provide a space for different Christian traditions to speak together in an ecumenical setting about how they understand and set priorities for interfaith engagement. It continues to be an important connecting point for this. Currently served by ACC co-chair Roshni Jayawardena, CIRG has been focused through to the end of 2024 on Indigenous Spiritualities in Canada, Christian-Muslim relations, and Christian-Jewish dialogue. While much of this focus will continue in 2025-26, new priorities are also being discerned. In this context, interfaith work by Anglicans at the local level – which is typically where it most effectively happens – is often featured for awareness and modelling. We are also able to receive inspiration and guidance from our ecumenical partners in things they are working on. It has been and remains a key conviction of the Anglican Church of Canada that we should engage in interfaith work as much as possible in collaboration with our ecumenical partners. CIRG provides one valuable place to keep us accountable in that regard.

d. The Anglican Inter Faith Commission

Following from the Lambeth Conference of Bishops in 2022 was the Lambeth Interfaith Call. Among the commitments made in this text was the reanimation of a network for interfaith concerns to interfaith work by the Provinces of the Anglican Communion and to encourage the sharing of resources. The ACC is recognized as a place where the church exists within a unique spiritual and religious context and therefore was invited to appoint a representative to work with the Communion Commission and seek to connect its work more deeply within the Canadian Anglican church. In his capacity as national staff in the role of Interfaith Animator, the Primate asked Scott Sharman to take on this appointment.

The Anglican Inter Faith Commission (AIFC) has taken some time to coalesce during 2023 and 24, seeking to ensure a very broad representation from diverse social and ecclesial contexts. As of 2025, there is now a plan for regular online meetings, an in-person gathering in Malasia in late 2025, and a series of webinars on interfaith topics hosted by the Communion and planned by the Commission. As this work continues to unfold, the AIFC will be a valuable interfaith resource to help support local interfaith work across Canada and to learn from the initiatives that are taking place and bearing fruit elsewhere. A critical contribution of the AIFC is that it brings interfaith practitioners working in Christian majority contexts together with those in minority contexts. This is a necessary and helpful dynamic for our church to be more aware of.




a. Spiritual Formation for Discipleship network

The Spiritual Formation for Discipleship Network was formed with the express intention to connect people to strengthen work in inviting and deepening life in Christ. In 2020 a network was developed of practitioners in spiritual formation. Beginning by connecting staff in dioceses who had been at that point fairly recently appointed to positions that involved aspects of Christian formation, this network hosted a number of initiatives in that extended triennium. In this shorted biennial period, the Steering Committee for this network focussed their attentions towards planning and leading a major by-invitation conference on spiritual formation. A Ministry Investment Fund grant of \$60,000 was applied for and granted to support the participation of 66 people in a practice-reflection-action based conference entitled *You are Leaven*. The conference took place in April of 2024 at the Queen of Apostles Retreat and Conference Centre in Mississauga, Ontario.

Participants were invited as teams of 3-4 people from dioceses and from theological colleges. The learning style was hands-on and reflective, interspersed with worship and mystagogy (reflection on the experiences of worship), mutual-learning, in which participants shared their knowledge, skills, and spiritual wisdom with their peers. The intention was that participants would take home both the model of mutual learning as well as particular new insights and practices to be able to share in local gatherings of similar sorts. Several of these events have taken place now in the short time since April of 2024.

FWM is grateful to the Ministry Investment Fund Committee for the award of the grant, without which this conference could not have taken place.



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b. Health Care Chaplains

Health Care spiritual care providers or chaplains are amongst those ministry personnel who serve at the thresholds of life and outside of the usual boundaries of what we consider 'church.' Nurturing good and right relationships amongst peer colleagues in ministry, and of these health care ministry personnel with the church has been an important goal of this work. A brief promotional communication around Spiritual Care Awareness Week was developed and shared online in October in both 2023 and 2024. A

steering committee was named following the in person gathering in October 2022, but there has not been the collective energy needed to sustain the work with leadership from within the network. We are considering this time a temporary hiatus and hope for leadership to emerge in the next triennium to help to steer this network.

c. Theological Colleges & Theological Education

FWM was asked in 2019 by the Heads of Anglican and Lutheran Theological Colleges to host another in person national conference on theological education to involve all of the bishops and other appropriate diocesan personnel, and representatives of the theological colleges. Two of these conferences have been held in the past generation, in 2010 and in 2017. Recommendations from the participants in each of these national in person conferences was that this model continue on a regular basis, perhaps every 3-5 years.


One of the four Ecclesiastical Provinces has a standing body in which representatives of the diocese and of the schools meet on a regular basis. In Ontario, the Provincial Commission on Theological Education meets twice during a calendar year and has been addressing issues in theological education within the Province of Ontario directly. In 2020, they were launching their own self-study as a Province, a multi-year process. It was not feasible to run a national conversation at the same time.

Once the Ontario process was completed and listening again to the annual meeting of Anglican and Lutheran Heads of Colleges, FWM worked with a representative group of that body (Heads of Colleges) in 2023 to develop a formal Proposal which was shared with bishops and diocesan executive officers along with a set of questions. The questions were designed to elicit clear feedback to FWM about whether there was significant enough ‘buy in’ from the dioceses to do what the Heads of Colleges very much want to do. From the feedback received, FWM judged that there is not at present significant enough energy from the dioceses for there to be a national in person conference on this topic, though all agree that matters of theological education require attention.

FWM has reported back to both the Heads of Colleges and to the House of Bishops that we recommend good energies to be given to engaging conversations between dioceses and colleges locally. As mentioned above, this happens in the Province of Ontario through a structured Commission in the Province. In Newfoundland, a different context in theological education exists because of the governance relationships between the three dioceses and the Queen’s Theological College. Regional conversations may be best done Provincially in some contexts, or in other configurations of what ‘regional’ best means in terms of accessing the offerings of colleges. There is currently no standing mandate in FWM for a project in theological education as such.

d. Discipleship & Evangelism (CoGS resolution March 2024)

A resolution of the Council of General Synod in March 2024 picked up and reshaped a C-Class motion that had been brought to the General Synod in 2023. It directed FWM to set up a task force on Evangelism and Discipleship to “create a curriculum” to engage Canadian Anglicans in evangelism and discipleship. FWM created Terms of Reference to direct first, rather than the creation of a curriculum, the collecting up of existing resources and their review towards being able to recommend existing resources to Canadian Anglicans. Additional initiatives are awaiting further conversation and perhaps consultation with the Transformational Commitments Implementation Group.



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e. Medical Assistance in Dying

Since 2016, FWM as a committee has not had an explicit mandate to do any work on medically assisted dying until the resolution of CoGS in March 2024, directing the committee to “do more to educate Canadian Anglicans about issues relating to MAiD.” One of the most difficult theological-ethical-pastoral challenges to us as Christians and particularly for those who are pastors has been how to uphold the dignity of every human being, maintain a duty of pastoral care, and, as we journey pastorally with those who are dying and who are choosing medical assistance, how best to be faithful, loving, strong, and wise in that accompaniment.

The Anglican Church of Canada does not have an agreed position on the ethics of medically assisted dying. In 2014, the Faith, Worship, and Ministry committee created a Task Group on what was at that time being called physician assisted suicide. That group contributed to the creation of the publication *In Sure and Certain Hope*. Though this group included voices which differed on the acceptability of medically assisted dying, they were nevertheless united in stating that the church nevertheless has a duty of pastoral care to all who are dying. This position asserted in that resource has been met with vociferous objection. It has been difficult to discern how to proceed, to know where the church lives on this issue. The FWM Director (E. Scully) takes responsibility for pursuing a course that aims to be responsive to the questions and concerns of those who are wrestling with not the question of whether to be pastorally present with those who have opted for MAiD, but rather with the question of how to be pastorally present with those who have opted for MAiD.

At the time that CoGS passed the resolution directing more work to be done (March 2024), it was not well known to members of the Council of General Synod that despite there not being an official mandate, there had been a primatial directive to staff to create a resource to engage Canadian Anglicans in the different perspectives relating to MAiD. During the course of 2022 and 2023, Staff served as project manager and editor to *Faith Seeking Understanding: Medical Assistance in Dying – Reflections by Canadian Anglicans*. With personal spiritual, theological, ethical, and pastoral reflections on the question and the experience of MAiD, the book is a collection of diverse views and includes questions for reflection, study, or discussion with each of the 30 chapters. The essays were first published online in late 2023 (<https://www.anglican.ca/faith/understanding/maid/>) then turned into a paperback book published in early 2024 and available through the Anglican Church of Canada’s E-Store.

This book includes reflections by those who are close to and support those who have chosen MAiD, and by those who assert that such a choice is less than faithful; it includes reflections by those who wrestle openly with their personal ethics around the question and who are trying to offer good pastoral care whilst caring for their own souls; it includes raw and developing-thinking as well as solid positions. It reflects a diversity of views in our church that are difficult to engage across the difference. May we continue to listen to each other.

In response to the March 2024 Resolution directing FWM to do more to educate the church on issues relating to MAiD, the FWM committee agreed that the main thing that is missing in our church is pastoral guidance for pastoral care at the time of death in the context of MAiD. Eileen consulted with the Network of Anglican Health Care Chaplains and several professors of pastoral care, eventually uncovering pastoral guidance issued by two professional ministry associations: the Parish Nurses' Association and the Canadian Association for Pastoral Care. These and other resources were forwarded to dioceses to assist bishops in forming their own local pastoral guidance.

In addition, over the autumn of 2024 a task group of the Liturgical Advisory Committee began work on prayer resources for contexts where MAiD has been chosen. This work is expected to continue into the next triennium, hopefully to be completed by November 2025.



f. Deacons and Diaconate

Deacons stand at the threshold of the church and world, walking in places of suffering in the world, bringing the light of Christ into those places, and bringing the cares and concerns of the world in to the church. These ministries nurture right relationship, care for creation, and pursue justice for all people, particularly those who are suffering.

The Faith, Worship, and Ministry committee has enjoyed a good relationship with the Board of Anglican Deacons Canada (ADC) over several years and has supported their work to solidify their own organizational structure. In 2022 FWM led the application for a Ministry Investment Fund grant to support the ADC's strategic planning process. Within this ADC Strategic Planning process, a Writing Group was created with the aim of drafting a Theological Statement on the Diaconate to be presented as an agreed theological statement to the General Synod of 2025. A compendium or collection of Practices for the Diaconate was also proposed. At the end of the triennium that found its completion at General Synod 2023, FWM was approached by the Strategic Planning arm of Anglican Deacons Canada (ADC) to request partnership in bringing this work to the General Synod.

A partnership was begun, in which FWM sent a liaison to the ADC's writing team and monitored its progress. FWM ceded its time on the agenda of the Council of General Synod to allow for ADC's writing team to present the proposal for its work, and received reports of progress. In January 2024 they received a penultimate draft that was awaiting consultations with bishops. The FWM committee was at that time happy to forward the Theological Statement for approval to the General Synod, but wished to await the completion of consultations with bishops before considering the status of the Practices for a Restored Diaconate document.

These consultations with bishops took place over January and February of this year and an amended draft of the Practices for a Restored Diaconate was received by the FWM committee in late February.

The work of the Writing Committee of Anglican Deacons Canada is presented here as a unified document but with two motions. This is because there are two parts to the document. The Theological Statement is being brought for adoption by this General Synod. The compendium or collection of Practices for a Restored Diaconate is being presented as a working document for commendation to the dioceses of the Anglican Church of Canada for what we hope and plan to be a robust period of engagement within the church about the diaconate in this coming triennium.

The Director of FWM takes responsibility for proposing that the next triennium's FWM work on the diaconate begin and be undertaken in partnership with the Board of Anglican Deacons Canada, within principles of right relationship partnership. She hopes that soon after the formation of the new FWM committee conversations can begin in that partnership to draft Terms of Reference to create the group and to direct the work that will oversee the organization and leadership and resourcing of the consultations that will be needed to engage dioceses, theological colleges and other groups within this coming triennium to deepen our understanding of the diaconate, and to support the ministries of deacons across the country.



g. ACPO – Advisory Committees for Postulants for Ordination

The church needs good candidates for the priesthood who are well discerned for their call, character, charism. These candidates should be those who continue to respond to God's invitation to life in Christ, and who radiate that invitation to others so that people can be led into deeper life in Christ.

The Advisory Committees on Postulants for Ordination is a national program which aids in the discernment of the church undertaken by bishops and their ministry leadership colleagues within dioceses. ACPO was established by the House of Bishops who maintain authority over the Handbook and any revisions undertaken to it. The principal costs of ACPO Assessment weekends are covered by budget lines in each of the four Ecclesiastical Provinces, met by a roughly equal grant amount from the General Synod through a regular budget. This work is further supported by the General Synod by a portion of the time of the Director of Faith, Worship, and Ministry.

Each of the Provincial ACPO processes is administered by a Provincial Secretary. The Secretaries, along with the four Provincial ACPO bishops, including one bishop named as national ACPO Chair, form the National Coordinating Committee of ACPOs. Normally the ACPO Secretaries meet at least annually, and more frequently for work on issues of common concern. The full committee, including bishops, normally meets once in a triennium. Meetings are normally on Zoom with occasional exceptions if budget permits.

In this biennium, the Provincial Secretaries met three times: in late 2023, late 2024, and in early 2025. Each meeting was by videoconference. They will meet in person in September 2025 to complete an update revision of the ACPO Handbook and additional resources needed for the training of Assessors.

The National ACPO Chair is Bishop Susan Bell (Niagara). The Provincial Secretaries are: Leo Martin (Canada), Matthew Griffin (Ontario), Kevin Kraglund (Northern Lights), Sue House (British Columbia and Yukon, to 2024), Kelly Duncan (British Columbia and Yukon, 2025-)

2.5. Youth Ministries

Sheilagh McGlynn



Youth Secretariat

The Youth Secretariat is made up of Youth Ministry professionals from each Ecclesiastical Province and Alongside Hope (formerly PWRDF), along with the Animator for Youth Ministries. In this past biennium the work has focused on the following areas:

- oversight of Canadian Lutheran Anglican Youth Gathering (CLAY) and support for Youth Ministry leaders. Since the pandemic the annual event bringing Youth Leaders together has shifted from a training event (*Stronger Together*) to a reflective, regenerative event called *Rhythms of Renewal*.
- selection of Anglican Bishops invited to CLAY 2025 and site selection for CLAY 2027
- oversight of the National Youth Project
- resourcing Anglican Youth Leaders through Zoom calls, Advent/Lenten reflection series, online book studies
- Working with the Program Committee for Youth Ministry (ELCIC) in making CLAY a Reconciling in Christ (RiC) Partner
- Visioning for a future program to engage Young Adults in their faith and in the world

Strategic Commitments – The Youth Secretariat approaches all of its work as work that invites youth and young adults to deepen their life in Christ. All of the work is to help young people connect with and express their faith. Some of this work happens directly with young people (CLAY, National Youth Project, Pilgrimage) and sometimes it is in supporting their leaders (Rhythms of Renewal, online youth leader sessions, CLAY).

In this biennium the Youth Secretariat was made up of –

Allie Colp, Diocesan Youth and Family Ministry Coordinator, Diocese of Nova Scotia and PEI

Sarah Bird (interim member), Missional Formation Coordinator, Diocese of Niagara

Rev. Cheryl Kukurudz, Executive Archdeacon, Diocese of Brandon

Jason Wood, Youth and Families Ministry Coordinator, St. Laurence Coquitlam, Diocese of New Westminster

Su McLeod, Youth Engagement Coordinator, Alongside Hope



Canadian Lutheran Anglican Youth Gathering (CLAY)

Rooted in the foundations of Lutheran/Anglican expressions of faith, CLAY amplifies, celebrates and commissions youth to claim their place in the church and the world by facilitating spiritually authentic, hope-filled, youth-centered experiences of God.

CLAY vision statement approved by the Youth Secretariat (ACC) and the Program Committee for Youth Ministry (ELCIC) November 2024

At CLAY, young people find a place where they are loved and accepted within a community of faith, with rich opportunities to celebrate our churches' full-communion relationship, develop leadership skills, and learn about the land on which we gather, including the local indigenous peoples and culture.

Ashes and Embers was held at Laurier University in August 2023. The theme will explored the stages of fire that often get ignored. The spark and the blaze get a lot of attention, so we focused on the phases of ashes and embers. The keynote speakers reflected on their lives and the struggles they have been through (what felt like ashes). Young people heard the message and were empowered, knowing that they weren't alone in feelings of difference or seclusion. One significant moment in the event was having the youth write on paper their feelings of isolation or not feeling good enough. Those papers were burned and were used in the imposition of ashes. When the youth were given the ashes they were told "you are loved by the God who created you, and one day you will return to that God". It was one of the most powerful moments of the event.

National Planning Committee (NPC) for *Ashes and Embers* was made up of –

Pastor Jordan Smith, CLAY Chair (ELCIC)
 Lauren Odile-Pinkney, CLAY Vice-Chair (ACC)
 Zack Ingles, Large Group Gathering Producer (ACC)
 Rev. Matteo Carboni, Worship (ACC)
 Teri Skakum, General Member (ELCIC)
 Pastor Anne Anderson, Local coordinator (ELCIC)
 Pastor Bonnie Schelter-Brown, Local volunteer coordinator (ELCIC)
 Emma Fongbami, Youth member (ELCIC)
 James Suknundun, Youth member (ELCIC)
 Laureen Wray, General Member (ELCIC)
 Rev. Scott McLeod, Indigenous connections (ACC)
 Dawn Maracle, Indigenous Knowledge Carrier (ACC)
 Angela Chorney, Gathering Manager

Deacon Gretchen Peterson, ELCIC Staff
 Sheilagh McGlynn, ACC Staff

CLAY also depends heavily on local volunteers as chaplains, ushers, First Aid support, etc. At *Ashes and Embers* there were 45 volunteers registered at the event. CLAY couldn't pull off these events without the support of many volunteers.

The NPC is in full swing planning for *Rooted and Rising* to be held in Saskatoon in August 2025. The theme summary was written by Darya Saed, one of our youth representatives on the NPC – “From our roots laid down for us, from our past, to rising up and putting our best foot forward, and standing up for what we believe in. Like the rising of the sun in the east, each day starts with a light glow at the break of the day, to the flourishing beams at midday. As the hours pass becoming more powerful.

Each time you rise, your roots will become greater and stronger. Like a community, with just a few people, it would not survive, but the more roots, the more people in the community, the more likely it will thrive. Just like in the parable of the mustard seed, the mustard seed starts as the smallest seed. Growing its roots, to rise into a bright yellow flower. Where will you rise to? How deep will your roots go?”

NPC members* for *Rooted and Rising* are as follows –

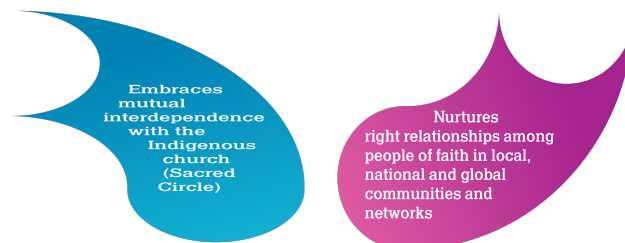
Lauren Odile-Pinkney, CLAY Chair (ACC)
 Pastor Margaret Koizumi, Acting CLAY Vice-Chair (ELCIC)
 Zack Ingles, Large Group Gathering Producer (ACC)
 Rev. Matteo Carboni, Worship (ACC)
 Darya Saéd, Youth member (ELCIC)
 Joey Mathers Scholl, Youth member (ELCIC)
 Dawn Maracle, Indigenous Knowledge Carrier (ACC)
 Angela Chorney, Gathering Manager
 Deacon Gretchen Peterson, ELCIC Staff
 Sheilagh McGlynn, ACC Staff

*The number of NPC members was reduced this CLAY to save on costs

CLAY is facing some financial uncertainty. Prior to the pandemic this event was self-sustaining. Neither the ACC or the ELCIC contributed money to subsidize the event. The registration costs brought in enough income that the budget always balanced (with some money in the reserve fund to kick start the planning for the next event). Since the pandemic, costs have increased and CLAY numbers have decreased. We have had to look to outside sources for funding. We have subsidized the cost per person for *Rooted and Rising* which will probably clear out the reserve fund. With the support of Acting Primate Anne and National Bishop Susan, we are reaching out to the church (Dioceses, Ecclesiastical Provinces, and Synods) to help support the ministry of CLAY.

Site selection for CLAY 2027 is underway and will be announced at our closing session at *Rooted and Rising* in August 2025. The National Planning Committee (NPC) that is made up of Anglican and Lutheran volunteers is currently being selected as well. CLAY planning for 2027 starts with the new NPC joining in at CLAY 2025.

Strategic Commitments – The work of CLAY hits on all of the Strategic Commitments in different ways. It holds up the dignity of every human being. *Rooted and Rising* will hold an anti-racism session at the beginning of the gathering led by Indigenous Ministries Staff. It embraces mutual interdependence of the Indigenous Church (Sacred Circle) with having a Knowledge Carrier on our NPC, which helps inform our program and connections with local Indigenous leaders and educational opportunities. Educational sessions focus on stewarding God’s creation and working for justice for all. The commitment CLAY holds up the most is nurturing right relationships among people of faith in local, national, and global communities and networks. Young people and leaders come to CLAY and experience others that share their love of God through Jesus. This is a point that comes up in evaluations at every CLAY, people appreciate knowing there are others in this country like them, wanting their faith to be central in how they express themselves in the world.



Rhythms of Renewal

Youth Leaders in the Anglican and Evangelical Lutheran Churches meet annually to learn and reflect about issues that affect Youth Ministry and create community together. Every year this gathering looks at different topics:

- 2023 – Theme of Resilience with Retreat leader Rev. Dawna Wall in Tatamagouche, Nova Scotia. This was the first in-person gathering since the pandemic.
- 2024 – Creative Journalling with Retreat Leader Rev. Marnie Peterson in Sorrento, British Columbia. Journalling activities led by Kathie MacDuff, Associate Director of the Sorrento Centre.
- 2025 – Worship, Wonder, and Play with Retreat Leader Pastor Anne Anderson at Canterbury Hills, Ancaster, Ontario. Activities led by AdventureWorks.

Strategic Commitments – Gathering youth leaders together nurtures right relationships among people of faith in local, national, and global communities and networks. Youth leaders often operate in a silo without other youth leaders around. If they are lucky, they might connect with other leaders from their Diocese, but many Dioceses don’t have ways for their youth leaders to meet and support each other in their work. This annual event attracts youth leaders from across the country. They meet colleagues, share their struggles and their victories all while being led in reflective ways that will nourish their faith so that they can nourish the faith of their young people.

Indigenous Ministries Youth Suicide Prevention staff have participated in the Rhythms of Renewal Retreats, so this program also speaks to embracing mutual interdependence with the Indigenous church (Sacred Circle).



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National Youth Project

In between CLAY Gatherings, the National Youth project is a focus for youth groups. The topic of the project is always on a theme of social justice:

- 2021-2025 *More Precious* – educational resources focused on raising awareness and ending Human Trafficking in young people in Canada.
- 2025-2027 *And it was So* – Educational resources, fundraising, and advocacy regarding food, climate change through Alongside Hope and Canadian Lutheran World Relief to increase awareness in our membership in the Canadian Foodgrains Bank.

Strategic Commitments – *More Precious* NYP focused on the dignity of every human being in looking at the issue of Human Trafficking. Young people (mostly young women, and certainly young indigenous women) are at high risk of being trafficked. This NYP looked at educating young people about the risk of trafficking and building up their sense of self, as a beloved child of God, to diminish the risk of them or their friends being trafficked.

And it was So NYP will focus on the strategic commitment of stewarding and renewing God’s creation: protecting and sustaining the earth; pursuing justice for all. It will look at issues of food, food security, and climate change through the work of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. It will focus on education, fundraising, and advocacy.



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Youth Leader Connections

Book Studies: The pandemic taught us that we don’t need to be in person to connect with each other. Youth Leaders have continued the connection of gathering online to do book studies together across time zones. These gatherings are a chance to create community and learn together.


- 2024 – Braiding Sweetgrass by Robin Wall Kimmerer
- 2025 – The Serviceberry by Robin Wall Kimmerer (led by the Diocese of Montreal)

Zoom sessions with Youth Leaders: In addition to the book studies, regular Zoom sessions were offered to connect Youth Leaders with each other, share ideas, and support each other in the work.

Strategic Commitments – Gathering youth leaders nurtures right relationships among people of faith in local, national, and global communities and networks.

Canada Summer Student Intern

FWM has taken advantage of the Canadian government's summer student hiring program in recent years. I had the pleasure of supervising an intern in the summer of 2023 that helped with *CLAY Ashes and Embers*. We have applied for another summer student to help with *Rooted and Rising* this August 2025. Part of the Canada Summer Jobs program is mentoring the young person, working with them to meet their goals, and giving them a good work experience. The student that worked in Youth Ministries in 2023 was an excellent worker and did incredible work for us. Her exit interview gave us a glowing review as an employer.




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Youth Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

I continue to connect with the group of pilgrims that participated in the Young Adult Pilgrimage to the Holy Land in May 2023. The group still meets sporadically over Zoom and have an active WhatsApp chat. When the war broke out in Gaza in the fall of 2023, it was only 6 months after we made our pilgrimage. We didn't visit Gaza on our trip, but we did meet with our Palestinian partners and learned about their experiences. It is an understatement to say that we all were all deeply affected by what continues to happen in the land of the Holy One. Our church speaking out for justice for Palestinians is even more crucial today.

Strategic Commitments – The Young Adult Pilgrimage nurtured right relationships among people of faith in local, national, and global communities and networks. It also stewards and renews God's creation: protects and sustains the earth; pursues justice for all.



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Campus Ministry

I am the contact for Anglican Campus Ministers. I respond to inquiries and host Zoom sessions for them to gather.

In 2024, I was called on to help the Student Christian Movement (an Ecumenical Campus Ministry program rooted in Social Justice) vision for their future. They were seeking a new staff person for their National Office. I was part of the visioning process and worked on rebuilding the movement by promoting students to attend their annual Cahoots conference. I presented a workshop at the conference and have been involved with onboarding their new staff person. I will attend Cahoots again in May 2025 and aid in leading two workshops.

Strategic Commitment – Supporting Campus Ministry nurtures right relationships among people of faith in local, national, and global communities and networks.



Champions the
dignity of every
human being; works
to dismantle racism and
colonialism

Trainings

In this biennium I have trained to be able to offer Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction to Teens and the Palestine Land Exercise (an experiential historical session looking at the loss of Palestinian land over the decades). I am willing to offer either of these programs to the church as needed.

Strategic Commitment – These offerings speak to championing the dignity of every human being; working to dismantle racism and colonialism.

General Support of Youth and Young Adult Ministry

I speak or preach at events when asked by parishes, Dioceses, or other organizations. When I travel, I meet with Bishops, Diocesan Youth Ministry Teams, or Individual Youth Leaders. Sometimes a Diocese reaches out to consult with me on events they are planning to hold or ask about resources they could use to engage their young people. When I hear of new youth leaders being hired by Dioceses or Parishes, I will reach out to offer support in any way that is helpful.

Strategic Commitment – The overall work of Youth Ministries is to invite and deepen young people's life in Christ. If they attend CLAY, join a youth group, attend a Pilgrimage... it is all to engage in their faith and live into the life they are called to in this world.



- **Worship**

Eileen Scully



a. Feast of the Creator

See Appendix #4 for Motion to General Synod.

It is important for members of General Synod to know that the awareness of the movement to create this Major Feast for the church has happened due to the involvement of several of our Canadian leaders in international and ecumenical networks and conversations. We belong to a church beyond our borders, to an oikoumene wider than our ecclesial boundaries.

The Orthodox Church has, for over a millenium, held a Feast on September 1 marking God's original acts of creation; by 1989, they had expanded the focus of the Feast to include prayers for creation. Invited by the Ecumenical Patriarch, representatives of major world Communion have been engaging the question of adopting such a Feast in the Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Anglican Churches for several years. 2025, being the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea and thus of the Nicene Creed, leaders from the Roman Catholic creation care group, Laudato Si', along with the Vatican, the World Council of Churches, the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, the Lutheran World Federation, the Anglican Communion, and others gathered in 2024 to begin to explore the ecumenical consensus towards adoption, more globally, of this Feast. The consensus in principle has been a deep success.

The Laudato Si' Research Institute, based at Campion College in Oxford, has been instrumental in drawing together ecumenical conversations to consider moving forward on a Feast of Creation. Along with Pro Civitate Christiana they served as organizers and co-hosts of a major seminar held in Assisi, Italy, in March of 2024. Participants included representatives of the World Council of Churches and major world communions, including the Anglican Communion, the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the Lutheran World Federation, and the World Methodist Council. Consensus was easily expressed, and participants look upon this time as an important *kairos* moment for the Body of Christ globally.

At this same time, the Consultation on Common Texts in North America began in earnest to consider lectionary possibilities for the Feast. That work within the CCT is expected to be completed in the Spring of 2025, and includes the Revised Common Lectionary's three year schema for a selection of readings. The May 2024 conference ended with a strong consensus that Western churches should adopt a Feast in their liturgical calendars.¹ This was followed by a second gathering in Assisi in December 2024, convened

¹ [1. Assisi Story \(Digital\).pdf](#)

by the Roman Catholic Church, to which ecumenical partners were invited.^{2 3} Members of The Anglican Church of Canada have participated in these ecumenical conversations and work at the international and North American levels.

In 2019 The Anglican Church of Canada adopted the Season of Creation, beginning September 1st and continuing through to October 4, the Feast of St. Francis, “as an annual season of prayer, education and action to protect the gift of God’s creation”. The designation of September 1st as a liturgical feast is intended to reinforce and further develop the Season of Creation, not replace it.

The word “Creation” in English is ambiguous, as it refers both to God’s act of creation, and to the created order itself. The proposed focus of the Feast would be on the first of these, giving praise and worship to the Trinity for the divine grace and power shown in the creation of the heavens and earth, and exploring the implications of that doctrine for our attitudes towards the world around us, ourselves, and God. It can be argued that this is a gap in our liturgical calendar, that this first and foundational act of God’s loving generosity, as “creator of heaven and earth” (second line in the Nicene Creed) is currently not sufficiently marked with its own Feast. As 2025 is the 1700th anniversary of the Nicene Creed, it has been suggested that the institution of this feast would be a fitting tribute to that church-shaping event.

A major liturgical principle long held by ecumenical as well as Anglican traditions is that all Sundays of the liturgical year, as well as all Major Feasts, are Christocentric in nature. They are all Feasts of our Lord. The focus of a Feast of God, Creator, reminds us of the Trinitarian nature of God, and that all Persons of the Holy Trinity are involved in the creation of the universe and its active sustenance, as well as in the bringing about of the new creation in our midst.

In this time of global climate crisis the impetus is on us to take seriously the Fifth Mark of Mission “to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth” which was approved by General Synod 2013 as an addition to our Baptismal Covenant. Whilst the Feast Day will focus on the work of God as Creator, the Season of Creation that follows can be used to focus our attention on our continued offering of worshipful gratitude as well as our work, “with God’s help” as stewards of God’s creation.

In summary, the purpose of this resolution is:

- that the Anglican Church of Canada join an emerging ecumenical consensus around a Feast of Creation by adopting this Feast on September 1 as the inauguration of the Season of Creation;
- that we might pay more intentional liturgical attention to this important aspect of God’s being and action which is expressed in the Nicene and Baptismal (Apostles’) Creeds;
- that the Season of Creation might begin with a strong theological reflection on the origin of the created order in God;
- that Canadian Anglican churches might be encouraged in their celebration of God the Creator, and of God’s good creation; and
- that existing liturgical resources will be collected and new liturgical resources be

² [Catholic seminar in Assisi - Feast of Creation - concept note.pdf](#)

³ [December seminar, Assisi - Program \(Detailed\)](#)

developed to support the discipleship and worship of Canadian Anglicans.

In 2024, FWM staff collaborated with PWSEJ staff to host conversations across each of our networks and to recruit the small group that has worked on this Motion and Backgrounder. It is that body that recommended to the FWM committee that the Feast, as adopted by the Anglican Church of Canada, be entitled Feast of the Creator.

The ecumenical work to create the proposed tables of readings is still underway but should be decided upon by May of this year. We await those ecumenical level decisions to guide work on development of Proper Prayers. The Director of FWM takes responsibility for recommending that, should this motion be resolved that, upon its formation, the next FWM committee create a task group to work on Proper Prayers for this Feast.



b. The Ordinal

See Appendices 10 and 11 Motion: The Ordinal (2025).

The Ordinal process was begun in 2019. The Director of FWM gathered several theologians to review the Principles for Liturgical Revision (adopted by the General Synod in 2010) and together they created a Rationale and Proposal for work that might be undertaken in Ordinal Revision in the coming triennium. That Proposal and Rationale was shared in 2020 with the Council of General Synod and the House of Bishops for feedback. Then the Global Pandemic was declared and FWM determined that this project could go to the back burner for a while.

In 2021 the work was picked up again and the Proposal and Rationale shared again for feedback, with the explicit recommendation that the work begin in the near future. Terms of Reference were created for a Task Group on Ordinal Revision by the FWM committee at the time. The intention was to create a group representative of all orders and from each of the four Ecclesiastical Provinces. This was achieved for the most part in the slate of task group members approved by the FWM committee in 2022. The Task Group began its work in 2022.

One of the core concerns from the beginning of this project was about how to have the liturgical texts properly reflect the right relationships amongst the gifts given in baptism and their particular expressions in the Orders of deacon, priest, and bishop. Care was also being taken to ensure a good reflection of right relationships amongst the orders as well.

When the full task group first met, they decided to organize themselves into three internal working groups: one to consider theological foundations; one to begin to think about drafting; and one group who wished to conduct a survey about Ordinal revision.

The survey group created a survey that was sent to Diocesan Liturgical Officers, Cathedral Deans, and Bishops, asking essentially two questions: what do you value about the BAS Ordinal, and what would you like to see revised? The results of those surveys was drawn in to the shaping directions of the task group's work.

The Task Group on Ordinal Revision met in person as a full task group twice – once in 2023 and once in 2024; the drafting group, a smaller body, also met in person once. In each case these meetings were funded by regular General Synod budget and were the only expenditures under the “worship” FWM budget line in those years.

A penultimate draft of The Ordinal (2024) was circulated for feedback to the bishops, diocesan executive officers, cathedral deans, members of the Liturgical Advisory Committee, and members of the FWM committee in July 2024. All feedback is being retained in active file. Of the written feedback, very few people requested particular changes, and those that did presented argument that were on matters that the task force had already argued through and concluded against. The draft from July 2024 was slightly revised and presented to the Council of General Synod for approval for trial use, evaluation, and feedback where permitted by the Ordinary for a period up to the next meeting of the General Synod (likely 2028). The Council of General Synod added by friendly amendment the word “study” to the combination of actions, so the resolutions reads “for approval for study, trial use, evaluation, and feedback...”. This move was understood to make it explicit that feedback given does not need to rely on trial use, but can be based on study alone.

A Study Guide is being developed and should be ready for circulation along with The Ordinal (2025) this summer. This guide will include discussion of the major changes proposed and the potential points of debate and open discussion.

Questions have been raised within the task group and by some bishops about whether this Ordinal is intended to replace or to be an alternative to the BAS Ordinal. This is also a question to be considered during this study, trial use and evaluation period. Our Church has not been in the habit of rescinding authorizations of liturgical texts. Our approach has been cumulative.



c. National Worship Conference 2026 and Companion of the Worship Arts

The Anglican Church of Canada co-leads the National Worship Conferences through Faith, Worship, and Ministry as a commitment that followed upon the declaration of Full Communion in 2001. Since that time, what had been National Worship Conferences of The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada have been planned and hosted by the national leadership of both Churches.

The National Worship Conference 2024 was held in Regina under the theme “*The Stones Cry Out*” and explored questions of inculturation and of deconstructing colonialism liturgically. Deep thanks go out from FWM to Kate Berringer of the Diocese of Qu’Appelle, who served as 2024 Anglican Co-Chair and gathered an excellent team of local Anglicans to help to support the conference.

The planning group for the next National Worship Conference is at this time of writing (March 2025) in the process of being formed. The next conference is tentatively being planned for 2026. The intention at this point is to continue on with the themes that have been developing over several conferences now in relation to addressing Settler colonialism and White supremacy.

The Companions of the Worship Arts is a laureate award given to those who have served the worship life of The Anglican Church of Canada and of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada at the local, diocesan and national levels. In 2024 this Laureate was awarded to the Venerable Richard Leggett, PhD (New Westminster), the first clergy person. Previous laureates include Mr. Thomas Roach (New Westminster), Ms. Blanche Gates (Islands and Inlets), and Mr. Graham Cotter (Toronto). The next Call for Nominations for the award of Anglican Companion of the Worship Arts will be issued in Spring 2025.

d. Authorized Biblical Translations

The background research and some writing has been completed by the group of biblical scholars. The project rests with staff to complete writing and editing, after which it will be shared with the Liturgical Advisory Committee and then the next iteration of FWM. The resource is intended to be advisory to bishops, and may come as an item to the next CoGS to be commended to the church. Anticipated time of completion autumn 2025.



e. Addressing Anti-Judaism in the Revised Common Lectionary

See Appendix 6. Motion: *Addressing Anti-Judaism in Holy Week and Easter*.

This is a Statement of the ecumenical body, The Consultation on Common Texts (CCT), the group are responsible for the Revised Common Lectionary. The Anglican Church of Canada is a founding member of The Consultation on Common Texts and maintains this relationship through regular continuing representation principally through staff. We pay, nationally, a minimal fee to the CCT that permits us to use the table of the Revised Common Lectionary in our publications with no copyright fee, and enjoy the wide multilateral ecumenical roundtable conversation about liturgy that the CCT provides (over 24 denominational members in North America).

The Anglican Church of Canada has, through previous commitments of The General Synod, commitments to address matters of interfaith relations ecumenically. That is: when we can and when the relationships exist, we work with our ecumenical partners as Christians together, ecumenically, when engaging with partners of other faiths. This project of the CCT is a very good example of this sort of good ecumenical engagement.

The Director of FWM works as the representative of The Anglican Church of Canada on the Consultation on Common Texts. In that capacity, I both urged that this work happen and served on the subcommittee of the Consultation on Common Texts that created this advisory document. Please note that the item about adjusting the lectionary readings later in Pentecost are for study only, and not intended to be an adoption of a change to our lectionary at this time.



f. Thematic Stream of the Revised Common Lectionary in Ordinary Time

A motion has been prepared to General Synod to authorize the use of the Thematic Stream of readings in the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL) from First Sunday after Trinity to Reign of Christ. See: <https://www.commontexts.org/rcl/>. When The General Synod adopted the RCL in 1995, it only authorized the semi-continuous stream in Ordinary time. The argument at the time was that it better retained the integrity of the biblical narrative in the Old Testament narratives. Experience has borne out that use of the Thematic stream is both commonly used and is a common choice for reasonable contextual pastoral and homiletic purposes.



g. French Translations

A new task group was formed in winter of 2025 to begin work on revising older French liturgical translations and for beginning work on new translations. This is a non-budgetary item relying entirely on volunteer energy and expertise.



h. Pray Without Ceasing

Daily prayer, including the praying of the Daily Office, is one core spiritual practice that invites us more deeply into life in the Holy Trinity. Repeated patterns of prayer forms, canticles, the psalms, and intercessions and thanksgivings at least twice daily shape us in our common life of prayer.

One of the first bits of feedback received by The Book Of Alternative Services Evaluation Committee was that the Daily Office of the BAS was insufficient and difficult to follow. From roughly 2010 onwards all liturgical subgroups of the FWM committee enjoyed participating in the development of what would become *Pray Without Ceasing*, as The Venerable Dr. Richard Leggett would bring drafts of a daily office compilation to each meeting. It is a compilation work, drawing from already well-received sources from Evangelical Lutheran Worship, Common Worship, Celebrating Common Prayer (the daily prayer book of some Anglican Franciscans) His work was then formally received and encouraged for further development with feed-in from the then-Liturgy Task Force (2011-2016) and tested in those contexts.. Pray Without Ceasing was approved by General Synod 2016 for Trial Use for Evaluation & Feedback to 2019. General Synod 2019 formally authorized Pray Without Ceasing as a Daily Office Book for The Anglican Church of Canada.

Since that time, the only version available was a PDF on www.anglican.ca. Thanks to the very hard work of General Synod Communications and FWM Staff, it was created into an ebook publication and a hard copy book publication available on the General Synod's E-Store. <https://anglican.gilmore.ca/en/product/2232ca10-42fc-4916-9160-c5578c141f57>. These books were produced at minimal expense: the contents were produced entirely by volunteer energies, and the layout, copyright permissions and other work done by General Synod staff.



i. Liturgical Advisory Committee

This is a new body created in the summer of 2023 to serve as a specialist think-tank and in an advisory capacity on matters liturgical within the FWM committee. It consists of 13 members who will oversee

and guide liturgical priorities, making recommendations to the FWM committee, and serving as the first hands-on with work reviewing next texts etc..

The LAC is currently studying the results of the Surveys of Bishops (23 responses), Diocesan Executive Officers (11 responses), Cathedral Deans (17 responses), and Parish Leaders (370 responses).

The LAC established several new working groups in early summer of 2024. Each of these is continuing their work this autumn under volunteer leadership, and drawing in other volunteers (not just relying on the membership of the LAC).

- *Ministry with the Sick and Dying* is picking up work that was begun in 2019-2021, beginning with prayers for contexts where MAiD has been chosen. Expect completion by November 2025



- *Calendar*: A new task group has begun work, building on work that had begun in the 2019-2023 quadrennium, and launched into a study and feedback process in 2021. That feedback process revealed a lack of consultation in the previous process, which is aimed to be rectified. Revision is proposed of both the temporal and sanctoral calendars, with a particular view in the sanctoral ("Holy Persons") to retirements and additions based on a critical review of Settler colonial and White supremacist power patterns. The Liturgical Advisory Committee is grateful for the partnership with Black Anglicans Canada in this work, and looks forward to conversations with the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples in the course of the work. *This will be a major item of work in the coming triennium.*
- *Baptism*: A series of online consultations is taking place, gathering people from FWM networks to reflect together on recent pastoral experiences of those presenting for baptism. Eventually the task group may consider additional resources to augment the BAS Baptismal rite for particular pastoral contexts.
- *Liturgical Principles*: A working group is exploring foundational principles for worship within the Anglican tradition in the Canadian context and hopes to produce a resource to engage Canadian Anglicans.
- *Good Friday Liturgy*: A working group is looking at the Episcopal Church's trial use Good Friday liturgy along with other rites from other sources (Tenebrae, etc.) and is considering the creation of a revised rite for Good Friday. Additional resources for Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday in Holy Week may also be considered.
- *Catechism*: Work begun by FWM in the 2019-2023 triennium has been picked up again by a small working group. A draft contemporary language Catechism is being developed.

j. Annual Publications – diary, calendar, McCauslands

The Director of Faith, Worship, and Ministry works principally at the level of proofreading and editing to support the work of General Synod Communications towards the publications of:

- McCauslands
- The Canadian Church Desk Diary (and pocket diary)
- The Canadian Church Wall Calendar

- k. *Sing a New Creation*, the hymn book supplement to Common Praise (1998) was published in late 2022, and launched in 2023. This project was led by a volunteer task group who created the collection under the leadership of Dr. Ken Hull (Huron). It is being well received across the church as a resource for congregational singing, containing hymns that are easily to teach and to learn, and many of which are beautiful with only minimal accompaniment or in voice alone. There is an expanded section of hymns of lament that speak particularly well in our contemporary context.

Publication was delayed due to the challenges in finding an external publisher for a hymn collection. The General Synod ceased its major Anglican Book Centre Publications operations well over a decade ago and does not have the capacity for this sort of publication nor many of the others that have come to be expected with respect to liturgical publication. The Episcopal Church (USA) has a publishing wing through the Church Pension Fund, Church Publishing Incorporated, and offered their expertise, layout and design and other operations, and provided all publishing services with the exception of copyright permissions. In the end, this hymn book project did not incur any major costs to the General Synod. The downside of this publishing arrangement, though, are those inherent in having an external publisher, as the General Synod is not able to control what versions of the publication are made available (large print, words only, etc.).



Faith, Worship, and Ministry

Volunteers involved in the ministries of FWM 2023-2025:

FWM Committee:

Susan Bell (Niagara)
Benjamin Gillard (Toronto)
Stephanie London (Chair, Edmonton)
Dion Lewis (Montréal)
Marnie Peterson (New Westminster)
Tanya Phibbs (Deputy Prolocutor, Ex Officio)

Lutheran-Anglican-Moravian Commission

Maylanne Maybee (Montréal)
Kevin Robertson (Toronto)
Brendon Neilson (Islands and Inlets)
Travis Enright (ACIP-Edmonton)
Blessing Shambare (Athabasca)

Anglican Roman Catholic Dialogue of Canada

Bruce Myers (Quebec)
Iain Luke (Saskatoon)
Krista Dowdeswell (Calgary)
The Anglican contingent also includes two ELCIC members under our Anglican membership:
Cindy Halmarson (Ottawa) and Paul Sartison (Winnipeg)

Anglican Mennonite Dialogue of Canada

Elin Goulden (Toronto)
Charlie Scromeda (Ottawa)
Bram Pearce (Ontario)
Vince Solomon until December 2024 (ACIP-Rupert's Land)
The Anglican contingent also includes one ELCIC member under our Anglican membership:
Chris Bishopp (Winnipeg).

Anglicans involved in the work of the Canadian Council of Churches

Alan Perry (General Secretary)
 Scott Sharman (Animator for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations)
 Ryan Weston (Animator for Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice)
 Amal Attia (General Synod Treasurer)
 Donald Shields (Toronto)
 Andrea Budgey (Toronto)
 William Crosby (Saskatoon)
 Roshni Jayawardena (Toronto)
 Terry DeForest (Niagara)
 Peter Wall (Niagara)

Youth Secretariat

Allie Colp (Nova Scotia and PEI)
 Sarah Bird (Niagara)
 Rev. Cheryl Kukurudz (Brandon)
 Jason Wood (New Westminster)
 Su McLeod (Alongside Hope)

National Planning Committee (NPC) for CLAY: *Ashes and Embers*

Jordan Smith, CLAY Chair (ELCIC)
 Lauren Odile-Pinkney, CLAY Vice-Chair (ACC)
 Zack Ingles, Large Group Gathering Producer (ACC)
 Matteo Carboni, Worship (ACC)
 Teri Skakum, General Member (ELCIC)
 Anne Anderson, Local coordinator (ELCIC)
 Bonnie Schelter-Brown, Local volunteer coordinator (ELCIC)
 Emma Fongbami, Youth member (ELCIC)
 James Suknundun, Youth member (ELCIC)
 Laureen Wray, General Member (ELCIC)
 Scott McLeod, Indigenous connections (ACC)
 Dawn Maracle, Indigenous Knowledge Carrier (ACC)
 Angela Chorney, Gathering Manager
 Gretchen Peterson, ELCIC Staff
 Sheilagh McGlynn, ACC Staff

National Planning Committee (NPC) for CLAY: *Rooted and Rising*

Lauren Odile-Pinkney, CLAY Chair (ACC)
 Margaret Koizumi, Acting CLAY Vice-Chair (ELCIC)
 Zack Ingles, Large Group Gathering Producer (ACC)
 Matteo Carboni, Worship (ACC)
 Darya Saéd, Youth member (ELCIC)
 Joey Mathers Scholl, Youth member (ELCIC)
 Dawn Maracle, Indigenous Knowledge Carrier (ACC)
 Angela Chorney, Gathering Manager
 Gretchen Peterson, ELCIC Staff
 Sheilagh McGlynn, ACC Staff

Liturgical Advisory Committee

Alvaro Adderley (Toronto)
 Andrea Budgey (Toronto)
 Ann Cope (Toronto)
 Amy Hamilton (Montréal)
 Paul Jennings (Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island)
 Walter Kagura (Yukon)
 Jeffrey Petten (Western Newfoundland)
 Andrew Rampton (Niagara)
 Jordan Sandrock (Huron)
 Riscylla Shaw (Toronto)
 David Taylor (New Westminster)
 Alexa Wallace (Saskatoon)
 Jordan Ware (Edmonton)
 Joshua Zentner-Barrett (Ottawa)
 With additions of the following for specific projects:
 Mark Kinghan (Huron)
 Robin Ruder Celiz (New Westminster)
 Maggie Helwig (Toronto)
 Grace Burson (Montréal)
 Kay Schmitt (New Westminster)
 Douglas Fenton (New Westminster)

(The Liturgical Advisory Committee has internal working groups on the following projects: Good Friday liturgy, The Catechism, The Calendar, Feast of the Creator, Ministry with the Sick and Dying – MAiD, Baptism, and Liturgical Principles)

French Translations

Marie-Alice Bell (Ottawa)
 Kevin Flynn (Ottawa)
 Michel Gagnon (Montréal)
 Christina Guest (Ottawa)
 Victor-David Mbuyi Bipungo (Montréal)
 Bertrand Olivier (Montréal)
 Pierre Voyer (Québec)
 Joshua Zentner Barrett (Ottawa)

Task Group on Ordinal Revision

Lisa Chisholm-Smith (Ontario)
 Ann Cope (Toronto)
 William Cliff (Ontario)
 Douglas Fenton (New Westminster, Chair)
 Kevin Flynn (Ottawa)
 Gregory Kerr-Wilson (Calgary)
 Richard Leggett (New Westminster)
 Dion Lewis (Montréal)
 Stephanie London (Edmonton)
 Maylanne Maybee (Montréal)
 Lynne McNaughton (Kootenay)
 Eileen Nurse (New Westminster)

Rosie Jane Tailfeathers (Calgary, ACIP)
 Todd Townshend (Huron)
 Kathryn Smith (ELCIC)
 Erik Parker (ELCIC)

Feast of the Creator

Steve Black (New Westminster)
 Jonathan Crane (Edmonton)
 Paul Jennings (Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island)
 Marian Lucas-Jeffries (Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island)
 Paige Soultter (Toronto)
 Clare Stewart (Edmonton)

Authorized Bible Translations

Mary Ann Amor (Athabasca)
 Stephen Andrews (Toronto)
 Steve Black (New Westminster)
 Justin Comber (Huron)
 Walter Deller (Toronto)
 Kayko Driedger-Hesslein (ELCIC Alberta Synod)
 Rob James (New Westminster)
 Iain Luke (Saskatoon)
 Robbie Walker (Toronto)

Anglican members, National Worship Conference 2024

Stephanie London (Edmonton)
 Kate Berringer (Qu'Appelle)

Anglican members, National Worship Conference 2026

Joshua Zentner-Barrett (Ottawa)
 Ben Stuchbery (Montréal)

ACPO Secretaries

Susan Bell (Ontario, Chair)
 Kelly Duncan (BC-Yukon)
 Matthew Griffin (Ontario)
 Kevin Kraglund (Northern Lights)
 Leo Martin (Canada)

Spiritual Formation for Discipleship – You Are Leaven Planning Team

Tim Dobbin (Niagara)
 Jay Koyle (Algoma)
 Neil Mancor (Montréal)
 Jessica Schaap (New Westminster)
 Rhonda Waters (Ottawa)

Statement on the Diaconate and Practices for a Restored Diaconate

The following material comprises both a statement on the theology and ministry of deacons, and a series of practices to assist the Anglican Church of Canada in our continued restoration of a thriving diaconate. They have been prepared by a working group established by Anglican Deacons Canada (ADC), and monitored by the Faith, Worship and Ministry Coordinating Committee of General Synod. Both have been subject to wide consultation with deacons, directors of deacons, bishops, Indigenous leaders, theological educators, and ecumenical partners. Feedback received from these groups has been incorporated into the document.

Why does this matter at this time? The recovery of a robust diaconate promises renewed relevance for the Church in a fractured world. As the Church reclaims its outward-facing missional identity, deacons will ignite and mobilize the People of God to fulfill their baptismal ministry not only in the praise of God, but in service of the world.

Regarding the Statement

In 2022, ADC sponsored a national survey of Anglican deacons, which revealed significant diversity between and within dioceses respecting both the function and understanding of the diaconate. Many expressed a desire for greater consistency. This statement is presented for *adoption* by General Synod as a shared theological basis for local decisions concerning such matters as discernment, formation, placement, ministry descriptions, accountability and compensation.

Regarding the Practices

Throughout its work, the writing group has been acutely aware of the importance of context in the practice of ministry. What may be possible or desirable in one diocese may be impossible or undesirable in another. We have taken the position that what matters is that we proceed from a common understanding of what the diaconate is: in other words, we may choose to do things differently, but we do so for the same reasons.

Early on, we adopted the language of “best practices” to describe this work. This is language which has fallen into disfavour in some other sectors, since it can convey a certainty which is not warranted in times of plurality, change and transition (such as our own). At the same time, no matter how well we are doing, or constrained we may be, the Church is always being called to look beyond its grasp. Therefore, we have opted to aim high, with the proviso that every diocese will adopt or adapt these practices as is feasible or advisable in their own circumstances. For the most part, the practices are framed as aspirational statements, and every effort has been made to eliminate “should” language.

This is a living document subject to ongoing testing, implementation, review and advisable change. General Synod will be asked to *commend* it to the Church.

Members of the Writing Group

The Most Reverend Dr Lynne McNaughton, bishop (BC & Yukon)
The Very Reverend M. Ansley Tucker, convener & priest (BC & Yukon)
The Reverend Jeffrey Preiss, deacon (BC & Yukon)
The Reverend Krista Dowdeswell, deacon (Northern Lights)
The Reverend Canon Dr Maylanne Maybee, deacon (Canada)
The Reverend Paul H. Jennings, priest (Canada)

Statement on the Diaconate

Deacons, with bishops and presbyters, belong to the threefold order of ministry which characterizes the Anglican Communion and much of the wider Church. The diaconate emerged alongside the episcopate and presbyterate as one of three distinct modes of ministry, each rooted in its own biblical imperatives for faithfulness to the will and nature of God.

The breadth of the Church's ministry and mission has been well captured by the "Five Marks of Mission," adopted and widely used within the Anglican Communion.¹ These range from (1) proclaiming the Good News of the kingdom, and (2) teaching, baptising and nurturing new believers; to the particularly diaconal roles of (3) responding to human need by loving service; (4) transforming unjust structures of society, challenging violence of every kind, and pursuing peace and reconciliation, and (5) safeguarding the integrity of creation, and sustaining and renewing the life of the earth.

This work is rooted in the *missio Dei*: God's merciful sending of the eternal Word into the world to bring redemption, and in the charge shared by Christ with his followers: "As the Father has sent me, so I send you" (John 20.21). The accomplishment of this mission includes *episcopé* (leadership and oversight), *koinonia* (the building up of the community of faith), and *diakonia* – the ministry to which deacons give particular leadership.

This ministry of *diakonia* is entrusted to the whole Church, and is rooted in the very nature of God and the example of Jesus Christ. The covenant between God and the people based in the Law of Moses reveals a God of mercy, who shows and demands special care for the poor, the marginalized, the weak, the bereaved, and the foreigner. This concern continues to find expression in the psalms and in the preaching of the prophets, who repeatedly call the people back to this vision of a society where the weakest are honoured and protected (Isaiah 42.1-4). Similarly, Jesus befriended those on the edges of society, preaching good news to the poor, recovery of sight to the blind, freedom to the oppressed, and the year of the Lord's favour (Isaiah 61.1-4, Luke 4.16-21). The Church's diaconal calling is thus a direct expression of the fundamental mission of God to our world.

All Christians are baptized into Christ's *diakonia*. Some are called, equipped, and ordained as deacons to serve as living symbols of Christ's own *diakonia*. They are to show what it is to be the light of Christ where there is darkness, to recognize and respond to injustice and need, to organize and distribute resources for their remedy, to bring the brokenness and hunger of the world to the attention of the faithful for prayer and healing, and to invite the whole People of God into the service of the gospel for the sake of the world.² This is the consecrated, ancient and proper work of deacons.

Over the centuries, however, as the boundaries of the western Church overlapped increasingly with those of mainstream society, the focus of diaconal ministry began to shift inward toward the Church's internal needs and life. The diaconate was eventually reduced to an explicitly inferior and temporary status, oriented

¹ <https://www.anglicancommunion.org/mission/marks-of-mission.aspx>

² The General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada. *The Iona Report: The Diaconate in the Anglican Church of Canada*. (Adopted by the General Synod 2016 at Toronto: 2016), pp. 17-18.

to the perfecting of skills for presbyteral ministry.³ This is evident in the ordinal of the Book of Common Prayer (1962), which presents deacons in an assisting role in worship, with limited authority to preach, and a ministry directed primarily to the care of children, and those who are poor or indigent.

This began to change in the late 1960s, when the Lambeth Conference of Bishops called for a renewal of the diaconate within the Anglican Communion. This included the removal of references to the inferiority of the diaconate in our prayer books and, in the case of the Anglican Church of Canada, a recognition of the formidable work of deaconesses in ministering to northern and remote or other marginalized communities. Since that time, the Church's understanding of the diaconate has evolved through various "waves"⁴ as it continues to adapt to our changing world and Church.

In recent years, we have experienced global shifts towards secularity, changes in societal values, and diversity in religious belief and practice, along with a growing distrust in institutional religion, and a resultant reduction in the Church's reach and influence. Together these factors underscore both the opportunity and the urgent need for the Church to seek to understand and renew its active participation in God's mission in the world outside its doors. An ecumenical renewal of our ecclesiology has highlighted the responsibility of all the baptized to strengthen the Church's capacity to witness and serve on the edge of the dominant culture. Many Christian denominations, including our full communion partners, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC), are rediscovering the diaconate as an order particularly suited to help the Church meet this sacred challenge.

So far from being an inferior order of apprenticeship for the presbyterate, the diaconate is recovering its origins as a full, equal, and distinct order of ministry: full, because deacons are in their own right "ministers of Jesus Christ;" equal, because what they do is of equal importance to presbyteral and episcopal ministry; and distinct, because of the marked difference in the focus of their ministry.

More than any other order of ministry, deacons inhabit the uncomfortable intersection between the worshipping Church, and the world it is called to serve:

To the world, deacons represent the Church. They are emissaries, giving witness to gospel hope, embodying Christ's compassion, solidarity, and protest. Deacons are particularly oriented to the needs of those who are most vulnerable or at greatest risk, especially the poor, the sick, the disempowered, and those at the mercy of systemic inequities.

To the Church, deacons interpret the needs, concerns and hopes of the world and its creatures. They are emissaries, who call and assist the Church to minister faithfully to those who hunger and thirst for

³ Various formulations of the Anglican ordinal are based on the English BCP (1662), which includes a prayer that the new deacons "may so well behave themselves in this inferior office, that they may be found worthy to be called unto the higher ministries in thy Church." Our own BCP (1962) retains a rubric that deacons should prove themselves "sufficiently experienced in the things belonging to the Ministry" that they may be admitted to the Priesthood. The Lambeth Conference of 1968 called for the removal of any reference to the diaconate as an "inferior" office.

⁴ Cf Susanne Watson Epting, *Unexpected Consequences: The Diaconate Reviewed* (New York: Morehouse Publishing, 2015). Epting coined the term "waves of the diaconate" to describe our evolving experience of the renewal of diaconal ministry and diaconate. She also served as a reviewer of this material.

righteousness, and bring to the Church words of encouragement, practical wisdom and rebuke. Deacons participate in the councils of the Church in order to advance its diaconal ministry.

Deacons exercise their ministry directly under the authority of their bishop, who may commission them to assist or represent the bishop in matters of wider concern to the Church and world. The bishop may also assign deacons to a parish or parishes, in whose life and worship they participate while mobilizing the gathered community's diaconal ministry. Within the parish, deacons function under the authority delegated by the bishop to the local incumbent.

The roles assigned to deacons within the liturgy reflect their ministry in the world as heralds and servants. These typically include proclaiming the gospel, preaching, leading the prayers of the people, attending the altar (setting and clearing the holy table), administering the wine or, if necessary, the bread, and sending the gathered community back into the world.

This renewed theology of the diaconate is reflected in changing ordination rites, which situate all ordained ministry within the context of baptism and the ministry of the whole people of God. Deacons are to equip the saints for this ministry. They are selected for their compelling manifestation of the distinctive gifts needed to inspire and mobilize the faithful to fulfil the fundamental mission of God to the world. They remind us who and whose we are.

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Practices for a Restored Diaconate: Guidelines for Consideration and Implementation

The importance of context in the practice of ministry cannot be overstated. Culture, ethnicity, language, size, affluence, past history, and geography all factor into what is possible and desirable in a given context. The following “best practices” describe ideals for which the Church may strive, but which will necessarily be subject to adaptation in different situations. We have taken the position that what matters most is that we proceed from a common understanding of what the diaconate is: in other words, we may choose to do things differently, but we do so for the same reasons. We also expect that experience will be our best teacher, calling us in due course to revisit and revise these practices as necessary.

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Practices for a Restored Diaconate: Discernment

Contextual Note

The discernment of vocation can take many forms, and is almost always culturally conditioned. What follows is meant to be spacious enough to accommodate many starting points. The Anglican Church is especially cognizant of Indigenous ways of knowing, and commends the excellent material concerning selection for ordination found in “The Covenant and Our Way of Life,” Appendix 2.⁵

1. The discernment of an individual’s vocation to ordained diaconal ministry begins in the context of protecting and celebrating the calling of all baptized Christians to exemplify Christ’s *diakonia*. Enquirers and discernment teams are assured that it is not necessary to be selected for ordination in order to provide God-given, essential and meaningful ministry in the Church or God’s world.
2. The Church is intentional in its efforts to recruit promising candidates for the diaconate.

Comment

The work of discernment seeks to verify a sense of divine call shared by the candidate and Church alike, to assess the character of the candidate, and to identify their charisms or gifts (as seen in light of the needs of the Church and God’s world). It requires wisdom, sensitivity, good judgment, and willingness to wait upon the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It isn’t a job interview.

3. Until parishes and dioceses have wide experience and a clear understanding of the theology and ministry of a restored diaconate, education and counsel about the distinctiveness of the diaconate should be made available to the Church as a whole, and especially to those involved in the work of discernment.

Comment

The restoration of the diaconate as a full, equal and distinct order of ministry is a work in progress. For many Anglicans, priesthood is the only model of ordained ministry they have experienced, and this can easily colour and misdirect their expectations of a prospective deacon.

4. Worshipping communities are encouraged to identify persons in their midst who exemplify *diakonia*, and to invite them to enter a process of mutual discernment concerning the possibility of ordination as deacons.

Comment

*Vocation is the work of the Holy Spirit in and through the Church. In so far as deacons are called to represent to the Church a credible and persuasive example of *diakonia*, the Church is in a good position to identify those individuals capable of such representation. The work of discernment is carried out on behalf of the whole Church: deacons who are called by their local congregation may in due course be asked to serve in a different parish.*

⁵ Indigenous Ministries, Anglican Church of Canada. *chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcgiclfindmkaj/https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/SC-covenant-owoL_single.pdf*. February 2022.

5. The process of discernment may also be initiated in response to an individual's sense of call.
6. Discernment focuses upon the character and personal maturity of the enquirer, their passion for *diakonia*, including an existing and exemplary diaconal ministry, and the desire and capacity to mobilize the Church to be diaconal.

Comment

Personal maturity can be exhibited by persons of any age. The addition of younger deacons to our complement of clergy is desirable, and may require the Church to make accommodations in its demands and expectations appropriate to the season in a person's life.

7. Discernment for diaconal vocation reflects the distinctiveness of the order.

Comment

Some aspects of the process and content of discernment may be the same for deacons and presbyters, but the discernment of diaconal vocation will focus upon particular skills, knowledge and passions that are oriented to engagement with the world.

8. Discernment groups make use of The Iona Report (2016) – or its subsequent revisions – as a framework for determining suitability and readiness for postulancy and ordination.

Comment

The Iona Report outlines competencies expected of inquirers, ordinands and seasoned deacons. It was commended to the Anglican Church of Canada by General Synod in 2016.

9. An experienced deacon or, at the very least, someone thoroughly acquainted with the restored diaconate, should be included in parish discernment groups as a mentor.
10. The work of discernment belongs to the whole Church, including the enquirer, their worshipping community and the diocese. This work continues and widens as the enquirer progresses in gaining the competencies required for ordination, and may involve fieldwork supervisors, diocesan vocation officers, and others.

Comment

Even though some deacons will minister in the parish which first identified their diaconal vocation, deacons are ordained for the whole Church of God, and their vocation needs to be ratified by persons beyond the local congregation.

11. More than one person can be called to ordained diaconal ministry in a single worshipping community.

Comment

Apart from the fact that there is plenty of work to be done, the engagement of more than one deacon ensures that the community is exposed to a diversity of diaconal practice.

12. Prospective deacons are not normally sent to ACPO. Formal opportunities for the wider Church to assess diaconal vocation are created by dioceses or provinces.

Comment

ACPO is not currently equipped to distinguish between presbyteral and diaconal vocation. The Church needs to develop tools and processes focused on the specific calling of deacons, if it is to take the distinctive nature of the diaconate seriously.

13. It is desirable that dioceses arrange for a psychological assessment of candidates.
14. Parishes or communities planning to engage a deacon enter into a collective process of discernment in order to articulate their own aspirations concerning diaconal ministry and how they believe a deacon could assist them. This work is a prerequisite for entering into a ministry covenant with a deacon.

Comment

It is important that deacons are anchored in a worshiping community that welcomes their leadership and understands its implications for their common life.

Practices for a Restored Diaconate Education, Formation and Training

General Principles

1. Preparation for ministry as a deacon is intentional and is comparable in scope and depth to that for presbyters.

Comment

Deacons will normally have achieved the same level of education or qualification in their field of competence as other providers in their field. As clergy representing the Church to the world, deacons must be theologically competent, historically informed, and biblically literate. If deacons are truly to serve and be seen as a full, equal and distinct order of ministry, they must be credible and competent ambassadors of Christ's compassion.

2. The Church aspires to the highest level of diaconal competence possible, while recognizing that the scope and depth of formation will be shaped by the size and character of the diocese in which the deacon is to serve.

Comment

Many dioceses are rural and under-resourced, and all are unique in their needs and expectations. Already the Church has learned to adapt its models of formation for presbyters to take account of this reality. The same will be true for deacons. Our goal is to aspire to the best and most appropriate preparation possible for deacons in their local context.

3. Preparation includes training, education, and formation: *education* equips the enquirer with necessary knowledge; *training* is oriented to the honing of practical skills, such as liturgical leadership or change management; *formation* refers to the transformation of the enquirer, and the shaping of a strong diaconal identity. This triad is sometimes referred to as “head, hands, and heart.”
4. Formation and training are oriented to the development of practical competencies in diaconal ministry.

Comment

Much professional education focuses on the achievement of standards – a defined level of education attested by a diploma, indicating what a person should know and be able to do. By contrast, a competency describes knowledge, skills, and abilities by which a person can show that they are qualified for a function or profession. This is the approach taken by the Iona Report (2016), and has the advantage of allowing for wide application across different cultural, ecclesial and social contexts. In this regard, the Iona Report is a living document, subject to constant review and revision by the Church.

5. The training and formation of deacons takes account of the distinctiveness of their vocation, and the particular skills and perspectives that belong to *diakonia*, wherever it is exercised.

Comment

With respect to preparing enquirers for leadership in the Church, many seminaries or theological colleges focus primarily on the training and formation appropriate to presbyters, not deacons. Diaconal enquirers may need to be directed to other models of preparation for their ministry.

6. Diaconal aspirants have opportunities to study and learn in the company of other deacons, in addition to learning alongside presbyteral aspirants.

Comment

Deacons often feel isolated, particularly when their ministry is not well understood. Regular meetings with other deacons, both before and after ordination, affords support, collegiality, and ongoing diaconal formation. At the same time, shared coursework, retreats, and mentorship opportunities with presbyteral candidates can create a richer learning environment, allowing students to better understand the commonalities and distinctiveness of their ministries. By exposing both deacons and presbyters to each other's areas of focus early on, we can bridge potential divides and leverage the unique strengths of each order to cultivate effective team ministry.

7. Deacons and the Church are best served when training and formation engage people and places outside the enquirer's own parish or diocese.

Comment

Learners' experience is greatly enhanced by engaging with views, perspectives and cultural assumptions other than their own.

8. Deacons are expected to be life-long learners.

Comment

All Christians are called to lifelong learning. The world and the Church are constantly evolving, and deacons need to remain knowledgeable, relevant, and adaptable throughout their ministry. This allows them to continue to grow in their faith, address emerging issues, and remain effective servants (Proverbs 18.15).

9. The Church invests financially in the training and formation of deacons in the same way it supports the training and formation of priests. Deacons have access to continuing education funds.

The Focus of Training and Formation

The following are components of a comprehensive program of education, training and formation.

1. **Knowledge**

Deacons acquire a solid theological foundation, encompassing Scripture, theology, church history, Anglican studies, liturgy, and exposure to other faith traditions.

Comment

A strong theological grounding equips deacons to articulate faith, understand tradition, and navigate ministry challenges. Deacons are servants of the Word (Acts 6.4) and stewards of the Church's heritage

Practices for a Restored Diaconate - Education, training and formation

alongside presbyters and bishops. Deepening theological knowledge allows them to faithfully interpret scripture (2 Timothy 2.15), explain complex doctrines, and address contemporary issues from a well-informed perspective.

2. Social Justice and Equipping the Church for Diakonia

Deacons acquire a deep understanding of social justice issues, and demonstrate a passion and capacity for serving marginalized communities. They gain skills for equipping the Church to identify and respond to such issues.

Comment

Deacons, along with all Christians, are called to advocate for the vulnerable and to champion social justice, reflecting the Church's mission to the world. Preparation for this work may include education in systems analysis, change theory, government relations, community development, conflict management and resolution, reconciliation, and more. In Canada, every deacon needs to be thoroughly versed in the history of colonialism, and the work of truth-telling, healing, and reconciliation between Indigenous peoples and settlers. Deacons use their knowledge and experience to marshall the Church's commitment to diakonia.

3. Ecumenical & Inter-religious Exposure and Appreciation

Prospective deacons acquaint themselves with other Christian denominations, particularly with regard to their theology and practice of *diakonia*. They also seek exposure to other faith traditions, especially those which are represented in their local context.

Comment

In today's diverse society, understanding and appreciating other religious traditions is essential for effective ministry. Engaging with other traditions fosters dialogue, dismantles stereotypes, and allows for collaboration on common ground, such as social justice issues. This exposure can enrich deacons' own faith and equip them to better serve increasingly in ecumenical and interfaith contexts. It is also important for deacons to appreciate the various means by which other traditions engage diakonia.

4. Liturgical Expertise

Prospective deacons develop proficiency in leading and participating in Anglican worship, including proclaiming the Gospel, preaching and hermeneutics, writing and leading the prayers of the people, assisting at the eucharist, and dismissing the assembly to its work in the world. They gain a deep understanding of the essentially missional structure of the liturgy, and use this understanding to mobilize the people of God for *diakonia*.

Comment

Skillful engagement with liturgy allows deacons to enrich worship experiences and faithfully fulfill their liturgical roles. By mastering the forms and language of worship, they ensure its beauty and order, contributing to a deeper encounter with the holy, and equipping the congregation for diakonia (Malachi 1.10-11).

5. Ministry immersion and skills development

Where possible, and with due consideration of previous experience, aspiring deacons participate for an extended period in an appropriate field placement outside of their home Church.

Comment

This placement could be in a relevant social agency, or in another parish. New settings offer diverse ministry experiences, fostering adaptability and allowing the candidate to hone practical skills. Stepping outside one's comfort zone allows aspiring deacons to develop a broader understanding of ministry contexts, and refine their ability to serve effectively in various settings. This aligns with the call to be adaptable and ready to serve wherever needed, as exemplified by the immediate relocation of the deacon Philip to Azotus (Acts 8.40).

6. Mentorship

Enquirers are mentored by experienced deacons or a community of deacons, who provide practical guidance, share experiences, and offer support.

Comment

Diaconal mentors relate differently to deacons in formation than learning facilitators or field work supervisors, who have an evaluative role. Mentorship allows aspiring deacons to learn collegially and without judgment from seasoned practitioners and gain valuable insights into diaconal life. Finding role models who exemplify the qualities of a faithful deacon offers invaluable support and helps bridge the gap between theory and real-world ministry. This echoes the importance of learning from those who have gone before us, as seen in the mentorship relationship between Timothy and Paul (1 Timothy 4.12-16). The ministry of mentorship invariably enriches the mentor, as well.

7. Attentiveness to Personal Prayer and Worship

Candidates learn to integrate their daily life into the rhythm of the Church year by praying the daily offices and participating alongside the people of God in the weekly Sunday liturgy.

Comment

Integrating daily prayer with the weekly eucharist (where possible) offers a biblically grounded and theologically rich rhythm for the Christian life. Following Jesus' model of constant prayer (Mark 1.35), the daily offices structure prayer around the natural order of day and night (Genesis 1), inviting us into consistent conversation with God. The eucharist is the wellspring from which the People of God are nourished for diakonia (John 6.53-54), and strengthens the bonds of fellowship (1 Corinthians 10.16-17).

8. Spiritual Direction

Candidates meet early in their formation, and regularly, with a qualified spiritual director for guidance and reflection on their call to ordained leadership and in conforming their life and prayer to the diaconal example of Jesus and the prophets.

Comment

Spiritual direction fosters self-awareness, discernment of God's will, and personal growth essential for diaconal service. A trusted spiritual director provides a safe space for aspiring deacons to explore their motivations, navigate challenges, and cultivate a deeper relationship with God. In seeking such wisdom and guidance, the candidate enters into a long and esteemed spiritual practice, as evidenced in the lives of the saints and prophets, and the witness of scripture (Proverbs 11.14).

9. Continuing Discernment

Throughout the process of training and formation, both the candidate and the Church remain open to the wisdom and vocational discernment of additional members of the Church, at the parish, regional, diocesan and provincial levels.

Comment

Multi-level discernment ensures a holistic evaluation of the candidate's calling, gifts, and suitability for diaconal ministry in a variety of contexts. This comprehensive process allows for diverse perspectives and insights from clergy, laity, and leadership across the Church. It reflects the importance of the wider community's role in identifying and affirming those called to ordained ministry (1 Corinthians 12:28-30).

The Delivery of Education, Training and Formation

Several models for diaconal training and formation have emerged. These include:

- Diocesan schools for deacons which prepare candidates for the diaconate only. Some schools may serve a cluster of dioceses.
- Diocesan schools for ministry – including lay faith formation, and formation for lay readers, candidates for the diaconate, and locally called presbyters.
- Institutional centres – such as the Centre for Christian Studies (Winnipeg), the Vancouver School of Theology, or theological schools that include a stream for the diaconate.

In addition, several “established” Anglican theological colleges have expressed interest and willingness to adapt their programs to the needs of the Church for diaconal training and education.

Best Practices

1. While upholding high standards, models for formation are appropriately flexible, and may include in-person and online delivery, and variable content depending upon the skill and previous education of the candidate.

Comment

Flexibility ensures that formation programs are accessible to a wider range of candidates, regardless of their geographic location or personal constraints. It also allows for tailoring the program to the specific needs and learning styles of individual candidates.

2. Candidates do not necessarily need to complete a diploma or degree program at a single institution, but may select desirable learning opportunities from a variety of providers.

Comment

A modular approach, where an academic credential is not necessarily required, can provide candidates with greater flexibility and choice, allowing them to work with diocesan authorities to tailor their formation to their specific interests and goals, and ensuring that they align with the needs and requirements of the Church. It can also help to ensure that candidates are receiving high-quality instruction from experts in their field that may not be available locally.

3. Dioceses provide opportunities for practical and community-based formation, particularly with respect to such matters as social context, Canadian liturgical practices, and diocesan governance.

Comment

Practical and community-based experiences are essential for preparing deacons for effective ministry. By providing candidates opportunities to serve in their local settings, dioceses can help them to develop the skills and knowledge they need to serve their communities effectively.

4. Diocesan programs for the diaconate are competency-based and reflect the components of a comprehensive program for education, training and formation as outlined above (“The Focus of Training and Formation”).
5. Dioceses that design their own diaconal formation program commit to provide the leadership, time and money necessary to ensure the highest quality of preparation possible.

Comment

Dioceses may wish to make use of the many established programs, both in Canada and the US, now delivering online courses and discussion groups. Such programs expand access to knowledgeable teachers and competent mentors. They also provide a community of diaconal learners with whom the aspirant may interact.

6. Deacons are involved in the development and delivery of formation programs for the diaconate.

Comment

Deacon involvement can help to ensure that formation programs are relevant and responsive to the needs of current deacons. It can also help to foster a sense of community and shared responsibility among deacons.

7. Assessing readiness for ordination, and monitoring a candidate’s progress in achieving the necessary competencies, is the responsibility of the diocesan authority delegated this task by the bishop.

Comment

Ordination may be conferred when a candidate demonstrates readiness for ordination as described in the Iona Report. In making this determination, diocesan authorities may seek input from teachers or others who have worked with the candidate closely. The establishment of a group to assist with this work, and to make policy and program recommendations concerning diaconal formation is advisable. Wherever possible, deacons should be involved in this work.

8. Deacons are ordained for the whole Church, even when the expectation is that they will function locally.

Comment

Deacons in good standing should be able to relocate to another diocese in the same way that presbyters do. To this end, local formation programs need at the very least to ensure that deacons meet the core expectations for diaconal ministry throughout the Church. Deacons who transfer to another diocese may be required to complete additional training or orientation to prepare them for ministry in a new context.

9. The diocese and deacons themselves seek and create opportunities for continuing diaconal education.

Comment

These may include conferences, field placements, internships, webinars, peer groups and more. The gathering and curation of a widely available list of offerings would be a helpful contribution.

Practices for a Restored Diaconate Licensing, deployment, the Deacon in the world, compensation, councils of the Church, and transitions

Licensing and Letters of Permission

1. Deacons are authorized for public ministry by a bishop's licence or letter of permission, allowing them to function liturgically and to model and equip others for *diakonia* on behalf of the Church.
2. A licence is appropriate for deacons who are actively exercising their ordained ministry in a diocese, parish, or other placement. A letter of permission is appropriate for deacons who have resigned from active ministry, or who are serving temporarily in another diocese.
3. Deacons are licensed according to the terms of Canon XVII of The Anglican Church of Canada. A licence specifies the conditions of appointment, including: position, location, supervision, compensation, length of term, and timing of review.
4. Deacons are licensed by their bishop to a parish or parishes or to a special ministry as "deacon" (not as "curate," "associate," or "honorary assistant.") Deacons who are appointed by the bishop to a parish or parishes or special ministry, function as the bishop's emissary, normally under the delegated leadership and authority of the incumbent.

Comment

The status of deacons differs from that of associates or honorary assistants who serve as part-time, assisting, or honorary priests alongside a priest-incumbent.

5. Two or more deacons may be assigned to the same parish, provided their duties are clearly delineated.

Comment

With respect to liturgical leadership, deacons may alternate in their liturgical roles, or divide their roles between being the Deacon of the Gospel and the Deacon of the Eucharist. (See Practices - Liturgy)

6. Deacons who wish to serve in a diocese where they are not canonically resident require a letter of permission from the hosting bishop.
7. A deacon's licence will be revoked when they cease to function in a parish or diocese, for example, upon leaving their current diocese or parish, upon resigning from active ministry, or if inhibited or deprived as set out in Canon XVII.
8. A deacon's licence should be reviewed at regular intervals (e.g. every two or three years) and at times of transition, e.g. the appointment of a new rector or bishop.
9. The time of retirement for a deacon will normally be determined in consultation with the bishop, or upon submission of a letter by the deacon to the bishop asking to resign from active ministry.

10. A deacon who has resigned from active ministry may ask to remain active under certain conditions to be reviewed annually, or to function from time to time with a letter of permission from the bishop.
11. In discerning the terms of resignation from active ministry, consideration should be given to:
 - ongoing activities – in liturgy, preaching, teaching, committees, community service
 - continuing involvement in diaconal community and diocesan clergy activities
 - where to worship
 - when and how often to revisit the agreement.

Deployment

1. Deacons exercise their diaconal ministry both within and outside the church. Their work in the world often represents the greatest call on their time, and may be their chief or only source of compensation. At the same time, some deacons' principal paid employment may be in service to a parish, diocese, or synod, for example as administrators, educators, chaplains, social workers, agency directors, etc.

Comment

It is the nature of their principal ministry that gives deacons credibility as exemplars of diakonia within the Church itself, and the capacity to make effective connections between the Church and the world. It also follows that deacons employed outside the Church will be available for ministry to and with the Church on a part-time basis.

2. The Church has no supervisory role with respect to the deacon's employment/ministry in the world.
3. With respect to their ecclesial leadership, deacons are appointed and licensed by the bishop to a parish or parishes, or to a particular ministry. It is assumed that deacons are anchored in a worshiping community, where they participate in parish life, as members of a parish family, as deacons in parish liturgies, and as interpreters of the needs, concerns and hopes of the world.
4. Newly ordained deacons may be appointed to their home parish, or to another parish, at the bishop's discretion. The bishop may change this appointment every few years or when a change in rector or other circumstances makes reassignment advisable.
5. Deacons do not serve as the cleric in charge of a parish with no priest.

Comment

Deacons exercise their leadership in community with others, rather than in a solo presiding role. In the absence of a priest to take charge of a parish, the bishop is responsible for appointing a priest or qualified layperson as interim pastor. For the short term, if a priest is prevented from presiding, for example due to illness or travel, a deacon may be asked to provide temporary oversight, but never to the detriment of their primary ministry—to exemplify and mobilize the people of God into loving service of neighbour.

6. Deacons are subject to the same canonical obligations and privileges which apply to all clergy of the Anglican Church of Canada.

7. The relationship between deacons and their diocese is governed by a letter of appointment or similar formal agreement as to the office of deacon, which could include such matters as compensation, hours, vacation, sick leave, expectations and compensation for continuing education, benefits, pension, term of office, performance review, and provisions for termination of the relationship.

Comment

Even when self-supporting, a formal agreement is desirable for any deacon who is licensed and appointed to a particular ministry. In addition to ensuring mutual clarity of expectations, such an agreement protects the interests of both the deacon and the diocese in the event of subsequent disagreements.

8. The relationship between deacons and the parish to which they are appointed is governed by a covenant in ministry. This covenant is focused on the diaconal identity and aspirations of the parish. It touches on the specific roles and commitments of the parish community, of the deacon's immediate supervisor, and of the deacon. Some provisions of the covenant may overlap with the diocesan letter of appointment or similar formal agreement as to the office of deacon. Covenants are reviewed and amended regularly, and are counter-signed by the bishop or other diocesan authority.

Comment

It is important to note that the covenant in ministry starts with the objectives of the parish. The covenant is a declaration of partnership in diaconal ministry, and is meant to ensure both that the parish is ready for a deacon, and that the deacon is attuned to the parish's potential for diakonia.

9. Deacons who move to another community or diocese require the permission or licence of the bishop to minister and function liturgically.

The Deacon in the World Nomenclature, Vesture, and Representation

1. It is appropriate to use the honorific "the Reverend" for deacons, and to address them as "Deacon [Last Name]," though some may prefer "Deacon [First Name]."

Comment

As members of the clergy, presbyters and deacons are entitled to use the same honorific and street dress (clergy collars). Addressing deacons by their order (much as we address our bishops as Bishop So-and-So) is a helpful way of distinguishing between the two.

2. Deacons wear clerical street dress (i.e. a clerical collar) when it is useful or necessary, for example to gain admission to hospitals, jails or other institutions.

Comment

The use of clerical garb (and titles) are indicators that the deacon is specifically representing the Church in a particular ministry, and may cause confusion if worn on other occasions when the deacon is functioning in a different context or professional capacity.

3. In their public speaking and writing deacons are mindful (a) of whose interests they are representing; (b) for whom they are speaking, including for whom they have authority to speak; and (c) whom others may *perceive* them to be representing.

Comment

Because deacons inhabit the uncomfortable intersection between the Church and the world, they must often answer to several supervisors, and entities, both within and outside the Church. Many workplaces, including dioceses, have clear guidelines about public representations.

Compensation

Contextual Note

Financial conditions within the Anglican Church of Canada vary considerably across parishes, provinces and dioceses. Priority should be given to address the significant inequities that already exist between the compensation of Indigenous and non-Indigenous clergy. Nevertheless, where circumstances permit, these core principles apply:

1. Compensation for deacons is one way of recognizing their training, education and skills, and the ministry and leadership they provide to the Church. The form of compensation ranges from reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses, access to certain clergy benefits, and fee-for-services, to an honorarium, stipend or salary. At a minimum, deacons have the same access to continuing education and employee assistance programs as presbyters.

Comment

Fair compensation is a recognition by the Church that deacons have invested time and money in their formation, which enhances the value of their work for the Church; and by the deacon that they are “in orders,” and are under obligation to fulfil their ministry both in and out of season.

Historically, the general practice in the Anglican Church of Canada has been that deacons remain employed at their secular jobs and do not receive a stipend for the ordained ministry they exercise within the Church. Increasingly, the practice for deacons who are employed in part-time or full-time positions in the Church is that they receive a salary and benefits in the same manner as lay employees. If a deacon is eligible for pension and benefits, it should be according to the same terms as presbyters.

There are fewer deacons in the ELCIC than in the Anglican Church of Canada. Almost all rostered deacons are employed by the Church to serve in special ministries at the Synod level. All rostered deacons are paid.

2. The cost of the training, education, and formation of deacons is equitably shared among those who benefit: the individual, the diocese, and the sponsoring community of faith.
3. Deacons are reimbursed for mileage and meals (beyond the normal hours of commuting to church) according to the guidelines of their diocese.

4. Deacons are compensated in accordance with diocesan or parish practice at the same rate as presbyters when they officiate and/or preach at occasional services (e.g. Sunday, midweek, or special services).

Comment

In situations where deacons are already receiving a salary or stipend, such work may already be considered part of their covenanted role. Where this is not the case, deacons should receive the same financial consideration as any presbyter not on the payroll of the parish.

5. Where it is necessary to assign a deacon to take interim charge of a parish, they are compensated according to the same guidelines as presbyters.

Councils of the Church

1. Licensed deacons in active ministry are normally members of the Parish Council or equivalent body.
2. Deacons are intentionally included amongst the members of diocesan, provincial and General Synod.

Comment

It is important to hold space for the voice of deacons in the deliberations and councils of the Church. Not only does exposure to deacons deepen the Church's understanding of their distinctive ministry: it also calls the Church to deepen its appreciation of its own obligation to embody Christ's diakonia. Synods may need to review their canons on membership to ensure representation from the diaconal order.

Transitions

Contextual Note

Particular attention should be paid to the ministry of deacons whenever a transition is to take place: a change in parish incumbent, the election of a new bishop, even the appointment of new wardens or a new coordinator of deacons. Because the Church is still achieving a much needed consensus about the role and identity of deacons, and because their work takes a wide variety of forms with multiple levels of accountability (to diocesan bishop, parish priest, and when applicable, to their employer), deacons are susceptible to upheaval, misunderstandings, and conflict whenever there is a change in office.

1. A deacon arriving in a new diocese will schedule a meeting with the bishop to inform the bishop of their presence in the diocese and, if desired, to discuss opportunities for appointment and licensing.
2. A deacon may not minister or function liturgically in a parish without the consent of the incumbent and wardens, nor until an appointment is made by the bishop, and a licence or letter of permission issued.
3. The appointment and licensing of deacons to a new parish or ecclesial ministry follows on a period of relationship-building and renewed mutual discernment concerning the diaconal objectives and readiness of the receiving parish for diaconal leadership, alongside the gifts and interests of the deacon.

Comment

For deacons to serve as effective models of diaconal ministry, their ministry must be welcomed by the receiving parish, and their exemplary diakonia known and observable. In this sense, the receiving parish is once again (or for the first time) being asked to discern who in its midst exemplifies the diakonia of Jesus Christ.

4. The deacon is introduced to the diocesan college or community of deacons in order to build connections of support.
5. If the deacon is married to a presbyter who has moved to a new diocese, every effort is made to ensure that the terms of their respective appointments are compatible regarding location and workload. It is not assumed that the deacon and presbyter will serve in the same parish, although this is not precluded.
6. Candidates for bishop are expected to demonstrate an understanding of and support for the distinctive ministry of deacons, including their role in liturgies and public worship, their relationship with the bishop as well as with presbyters, lay readers, and laity. They will be able to articulate their vision for the diaconate within the overall life of the diocese and the wider Church.
7. The Anglican Church of Canada's theological statement on the diaconate and recommended best practices⁶ are included as part of the orientation curriculum for new bishops. Anglican Deacons Canada is also a source of information and guidelines for deacons.
8. Parish search committees include a description of the deacon's ministry in the parish profile; when interviewing candidates they ask about their experience of working with deacons and how they intend to work with the deacon(s) in the new parish.
9. When new churchwardens are chosen they are briefed on the deacon's role and ministry, along with the terms of their appointment, covenant and compensation.
10. The deacon's licence and covenant are used to re-define expectations, and should be reviewed regularly or upon request.

⁶ *Once adopted by the Church.*

Practices for a Restored Diaconate The Deacon's Role in Liturgy

General Principles

- a. Deacons actively participate in the liturgy and share in its leadership.
- b. Within the context of liturgy, deacons are a living symbol of Christ's own *diakonia*; a life given in service for the healing and life of the beautiful and broken world beloved by God.
- c. The liturgical functions of a deacon are visible expressions (or icons) of this fundamental diaconal posture of service; a service which "points to" and is always directed toward Christ.
- d. Deacons are visible, and actively participate in the liturgical leadership of the community. They are equally concerned with empowering and equipping lay people for liturgical ministry. Both are essential.
- e. Deacons embrace their liturgical duties with reverence, passion, and preparation, and seek ongoing training to develop their abilities.
- f. Deacons understand their liturgical roles as intrinsically related to their diaconal calling by their meaning and logic.
- g. It is the responsibility of all who plan and lead liturgy to support deacons in their full participation in liturgy. Deacons are not assistants to the priest: they have their own distinct ministry.
- h. Dioceses should ensure that deacons are visible in diocesan liturgies.
- i. It is desirable that each parish have a deacon to give visible expression to the church's diaconal identity. Where a community does not have the benefit of a deacon, diaconal roles may appropriately be taken on by lay leaders or the priest.

Part 1

Roles Intrinsically Related to the Diaconal Calling by their Meaning and Logic

Vesture

1. In parishes where a chasuble is worn by the priest, it is desirable that a deacon wear a dalmatic along with their diaconal stole.
2. In the absence of a deacon, presbyters who perform diaconal roles in the liturgy vest according to the order of priest.

Entrance Rites

3. In contexts where there is a formal liturgical entrance, a deacon precedes the presider.
4. A deacon carries the gospel book in the entrance procession.
5. Where practical, the deacon sits or stands at the right of the priest.

Reading the Gospel

6. A deacon is the ordinary minister of the Gospel.

Comment

The reading of the gospel has for centuries been a role of the deacon. In accordance with their vocation as heralds of good news, deacons proclaim the gospel effectively, with authority, clarity, passion, and joy.

Preaching

7. While remaining open to the unpredictable leading of the Spirit during sermon preparation, nevertheless deacons have a particular responsibility to be attentive in their preaching to poverty and need in the world.

Comment

Diaconal ministry has a prophetic dimension and takes seriously the gospel imperative to shine light into the dark places of our world and on unjust social and economic structures. As such, preaching provides an important context in which to “interpret to the Church the needs, concerns, and hopes of the world” and is an essential part of the ministry of a deacon.

Prayers of the People

8. Through both example and mentorship, a deacon embraces the ministry of intercession and ignites in the hearts of the assembly attentiveness to the poor, the sick, the marginalized, and the vulnerable.

Comment

The Prayers of the People invite the Church to look beyond itself to the needs of others. The work of public intercession is one important way deacons can fulfill their prophetic calling to interpret to the church the needs and concerns of the world. It is thus desirable that the deacon be given regular opportunity to lead the Prayers. Diaconal leadership in this ministry of intercession may also include the training and support of lay intercessors, and/or when the prayers are spoken by a layperson, introducing the prayers with a short bidding.

Preparation of the Gifts

9. A deacon prepares the table and elements for the eucharist.

Comment

From the beginning (Acts 6.1-6), serving at table has been a central image of the diaconal vocation. This physical act is a symbolic reminder of characteristic features of the diaconal vocation (i.e. concern that the hungry be fed, and attentiveness to the organization and distribution of resources). Deacons set the table for the eucharist as their service is to the whole assembly. As appropriate, this task may be shared with lay servers. The training and support of lay servers is an appropriate expression of diaconal leadership.

10. A deacon receives the gifts of bread, wine and money.
11. A deacon leads the Prayer over the Gifts.

Comment

As the person who has received the offering, which will be returned to the community as nourishment and resources for ministry, it is appropriate for the deacon to lead this prayer.

At the Eucharistic Table

12. A deacon stands at the presider's right.
13. A deacon prepares the consecrated elements for distribution.
14. A deacon clears the table following communion and is responsible for the ablutions, wherever they take place.

Dismissal

15. A deacon speaks the dismissal to mobilize the gathered community and send it out in shared mission.

Comment

The dismissal calls the assembly to shift its attention from the communal table and shared "inner room" experience to its outward-facing missional identity – that shared ministry of diakonia which has been entrusted to the Church and for which it has been nourished and equipped in the liturgy.

Diaconal roles in Special Services

16. A deacon normally leads the bidding portions of the Solemn Intercession on Good Friday.

Comment

This solemn moment is a natural extension of a deacon's ministry as a model of intercessory prayer and is a profound example of the iconic nature of the diaconal function. For as Christ intercedes at the right hand of the Father for all, the deacon likewise, standing to the right of the presider, acts as friend of the lost, the outcast, and the sinner and calls for mercy for all.

17. A deacon carries the Paschal Candle and sings the Exsultet at the Easter Vigil.

Comment

This liturgical function is a visible expression of the light who is Christ being carried into and banishing the dark places in the world. In circumstances where the deacon truly cannot sing, and the Exsultet must be assigned to someone else, it is still appropriate that the deacon carry and install the Paschal Candle.

Part 2

Roles which may be appropriately assigned to a deacon, although not explicitly diaconal

Communion

18. A deacon may share in the administration of the elements.

Introducing the Creed and the Confession

19. A deacon may invite the community to affirm its faith and to make a confession of sin.

Funerals

20. A deacon may officiate at funerals.

Comment

It is fitting for a deacon to officiate or assist at a funeral where the pastoral relationship to the deceased or the family merits it.

Home or Hospital Visits with the Reserved Sacrament

21. A deacon fittingly brings the reserved sacrament to those sick and shut-in, as an expression of a ministry of caring for those in need.⁷

Comment

Deacons share this ministry with priests or authorized lay ministers as is the custom of their community. The provision of training and support for this ministry is an appropriate expression of diaconal leadership.

Anointing of the Sick & Confession

22. In accordance with diocesan practice, a deacon may be asked to administer anointing for healing.

Comment

Deacons undertake this ministry in consultation with the parish priest or other person responsible for pastoral care.

23. Deacons do not hear formal confessions.

Comment

On occasion, deacons may be privy to an expression of penitence and may offer a prayer for forgiveness (not a formal absolution). In such cases, deacons bear the same burden of confidentiality as priests.

Baptism

24. The bishop or a priest is the normal minister of baptism. However, in an emergency, a deacon or lay person may be called upon to baptize.
25. A deacon takes a visible role in the baptismal liturgy.

Comment

Equipping and empowering lay persons to fully live out their own baptismal calling is at the heart of diaconal vocation. Diaconal leadership in the context of a baptism may include presenting candidates whom they have prepared for baptism, leading the Prayers of the People, asking some or all of the questions in the Baptismal Covenant, and taking the lead in the Giving of Light.

Special Services

26. A deacon fittingly functions in a visible role on occasions which reflect the charism of *diakonia*, including:
- assisting with the imposition of ashes on Ash Wednesday
 - assisting with the Liturgy of the Palms on Palm Sunday

⁷An authorized order for “Public Distribution of Holy Communion by Deacons and Lay People” may be found on the Anglican Church of Canada website.

- assisting with the foot-washing on Maundy Thursday
- assisting with lighting candles for the departed on All Souls Day
- assisting with the preparation and distribution of oils at the Chrism liturgy
- assisting at diocesan services, such as confirmations, ordinations, inductions, and synod services, regardless of where they take place

Part 3 Liturgical Roles to be Avoided

The following are liturgical roles which, by their nature, threaten to confuse the distinctive ministry of deacons, and so should be avoided.

Presiding at Communion from the Reserved Sacrament

27. A deacon does not officiate at regular parish services of Communion using the Reserved Sacrament.

Comment

To uphold the ministry of deacons as full, equal, and distinct from the presbyteral role, adopting this practice as a norm should be avoided. Especially when this becomes commonplace within a worshipping community, it cannot help but blur the lines between diaconal and priestly ministry. If a reserved sacrament communion service is deemed necessary due to the unavailability of a priest, a lay person authorized by the bishop would more appropriately lead the service.

28. In cases of special outreach services of Communion from the Reserved Sacrament (for example, in care homes or prisons) a deacon might appropriately preside.

Comment

In such contexts, the deacon is an emissary and representative of the Church in the world, a witness to gospel hope, and an embodiment of Christ's compassion for the suffering world.

Part 4 The Difficult Question of Weddings

Weddings

29. A priest (or bishop) normally officiates at weddings, including those which are non-eucharistic.

Comment

This is assumed by the rubrics of both the BCP and the BAS. The BAS states (p. 527) that "the incumbent shall be responsible for the conduct of the marriage liturgy." However, the rubric does add a final provision that "when the form of service on p. 541 is celebrated by a deacon, the nuptial blessing and the blessing of the ring(s) shall be appropriately changed." This has led to a variety of practices throughout the Church. In some dioceses deacons are permitted to officiate at marriages. In others, they are not. In yet others, deacons may officiate in exceptional circumstances. All call upon the rubrics on p. 527 in defence of their chosen practice. This is a matter which needs further discussion, and its resolution will need to be more clearly reflected in our

authorized liturgies. In the meantime, we offer the following considerations for determining diocesan practice.

- Deacons who officiate at marriages must comply with civil authority (i.e. be authorized to conduct marriages by their province or territory, and do so in accordance with the provisions of that authorization.) They must also have the approval of their diocesan bishop, whether by general policy, or singular permission to conduct a specific wedding.
- In some Anglican circles (possibly following longstanding Roman Catholic practice), deacons may bless any inanimate object not reserved to a bishop (i.e. altars, fonts, patens, chalices and bells). Where this is the practice, it follows that the deacon would be permitted to bless the rings at a wedding.
- Canon XXI (On Marriage in the Church) recognizes that the marriage union is established by the covenant made by the couple, expressed in the Declaration of Intent, and their mutual vows. In other words, a marriage without the benefit of a nuptial blessing is in every way a valid marriage.
- The nuptial blessing, pronounced by a priest, is what distinguishes a church wedding from a civil wedding. (This accounts for the European practice of the blessing of civil marriages – couples seek and receive an additional grace upon their union.) This is the principal reason for reserving the celebration of a wedding to a priest or bishop.
- Deacons in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, our full communion partner are permitted in some cases to perform weddings, but note that they do not consider marriage to be a sacrament of the Church.
- Deacons and bishops must give thought as to whether officiating at weddings is truly an expression of the unique calling of a deacon, or is in danger of obscuring this. Some would claim that marriage and family life fall more closely into the purview of a priest's pastoral ministry, in so far as they relate to the life of the Christian community. This is not to preclude the participation of the parish deacon in the marriage liturgy. Where the deacon has a well-established relationship with the couple, it may be entirely appropriate for the deacon to read the exhortation or witness their vows.
- Similarly, through their diaconal work outside the church, deacons may develop important relationships with people who neither have nor even wish a connection with the institutional Church, but who may wish to entrust the deacon with their wedding. Again, those involved may want to explore the couple's reasons for seeking a Christian wedding.

GENERAL SYNOD 2025
RESOLUTION

Resolution Number XXXX

Subject: Theological Statement on the Diaconate

Moved By: Lynne McNaughton (Kootenay)
Seconded By: Claudette Taylor (Toronto)

Be it resolved that this General Synod:

1. Adopt *Theological Statement on the Diaconate (2025)* as an agreed theological statement.
2. Commend the *Theological Statement on the Diaconate (2025)* to the theological colleges and ministerial training centres associated with The Anglican Church of Canada for study and feedback by October 2027.
3. Commend the *Theological Statement on the Diaconate (2025)* to our ecumenical and full communion partners and official dialogues for study and feedback by October 2027.
4. Request that the House of Bishops include in their agenda significant time for discussion of their understandings of their theology and practices with respect to the diaconate.

Source: Faith, Worship, and Ministry committee of General Synod

Submitted By: Faith, Worship, and Ministry

Does this motion contain within it any financial implications? Yes **No**

If yes, has the General Synod Expenditures Committee considered the implications? Yes No

Does this motion contain within it any staffing implications? Yes **No**

EXPLANATORY NOTE/BACKGROUND

PROCEDURE FOR ADOPTION

**GENERAL SYNOD 2025
RESOLUTION**

Resolution Number XXXX

Subject: Practices for a Restored Diaconate**Moved By: Lynne McNaughton (Kootenay)****Seconded By: Claudette Taylor (Toronto)****Be it resolved that this General Synod:**

1. Commend the compendium of *Practices for a Restored Diaconate* (2025) to the church as a working document.
2. Request that the dioceses of the Anglican Church of Canada engage actively with the compendium of *Practices for a Restored Diaconate* within their own contexts of ministry, studying and experimenting with the principles and practices recommended, and reporting back to the Faith, Worship, and Ministry committee by October of 2027.
3. Commend the compendium of *Practices for a Restored Diaconate* for the Diaconate to the theological colleges and ministerial training centres associated with The Anglican Church of Canada for study and feedback.
4. Commend the compendium of *Practices for a Restored Diaconate* to our ecumenical and full communion partners and official dialogues for study and feedback to the Faith, Worship, and Ministry committee by October of 2027.

Source: Faith, Worship, and Ministry committee of General Synod**Submitted By:** Faith, Worship, and MinistryDoes this motion contain within it any financial implications? Yes **No**

If yes, has the General Synod Expenditures Committee considered the implications? Yes No

Does this motion contain within it any staffing implications? **Yes** No**EXPLANATORY NOTE/BACKGROUND**

Along with the creation of the Theological Statement on the Diaconate, Anglican Deacons Canada (ADC) commissioned the writing of a compendium of Best Practices. The Writing group studied the existing policies and practices of dioceses and worked out additional recommended practices drawing from the principles inherent in the theology of the diaconate, and based on experiences in ministry of Canadian deacons.

The motion is aimed towards giving General Synod's authority to a process of study and engagement with the document over the coming triennium. We are a church that has been living in to the renewed diaconate since the 1980s. Continuing to grow this order is important to the future ministry of the church in service of God's mission in the world. The document at present is intended to be open, a working document painting a picture of what diaconal ministry can look like.

It is hoped that feedback from serious engagement by dioceses over the coming triennium may shape a next stage of work. The aim will be to provide guidance to help to order some common expectations around the discernment, formation, education, deployment, licensing, and support for deacons across the church, expressed locally.

The staffing implication is that there is need for there to be staff dedicated to supporting this work in the coming triennium. Normally this is done through the management of regular FWM staff workloads, but requires that other things to fall to lesser priority attention or to inaction.

PROCEDURE FOR ADOPTION

**GENERAL SYNOD 2025
RESOLUTION**

Resolution Number XXXX

Subject:

Moved By: Steve Black (New Westminster)

Seconded By: Tim Dobbin (Niagara)

Be it resolved that this General Synod:

Be it resolved that this General Synod

1. Adopt the Feast of the Creator as a Major Feast within the liturgical calendar of the Anglican Church of Canada, to be celebrated on September 1, transferrable to a Sunday within the Season of Creation.
2. Direct the Faith, Worship, and Ministry committee to continue to monitor developments in the Consultation on Common Text's ecumenical work to establish common Proper Readings for the Feast in a three year lectionary cycle, and to present for authorization a table of readings for the Feast.
3. Direct the Faith, Worship, and Ministry Coordinating Committee to oversee the development of Proper Prayers for the Feast as well as a collection of Prefaces, Intercessions, Eucharistic Prayers and other liturgical resources to be brought for authorization.
4. Direct the Faith, Worship, and Ministry Coordinating Committee and the Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice Coordinating Committee to compile and develop additional resources to support participation in the Feast of the Creator and in the Season of Creation across the church.

Source: Faith, Worship, and Ministry committee of General Synod

Submitted By: Faith, Worship, and Ministry

Does this motion contain within it any financial implications? Yes **No**

If yes, has the General Synod Expenditures Committee considered the implications? Yes No

Does this motion contain within it any staffing implications? **Yes** No

EXPLANATORY NOTE/BACKGROUND

The Orthodox Church has, for over a millenium, held a Feast on September 1 marking God's original acts of creation; by 1989, they had expanded the focus of the Feast to include prayers for creation. Invited by the Ecumenical Patriarch, representatives of major world Communions have been engaging the question of adopting such a Feast in the Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Anglican Churches for several years. 2025, being the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea and thus of the Nicene Creed, leaders from

the Roman Catholic creation care group, Laudato Sí, along with the Vatican, the World Council of Churches, the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, the Lutheran World Federation, the Anglican Communion, and others gathered in 2024 to begin to explore the ecumenical consensus towards adoption, more globally, of this Feast. The consensus in principle has been a deep success.

The Laudato Si' Research Institute, based at Campion College in Oxford, has been instrumental in drawing together ecumenical conversations to consider moving forward on a Feast of Creation. Along with Pro Civitate Christiana they served as organizers and co-hosts of a major seminar held in Assisi, Italy, in March of 2024. Participants included representatives of the World Council of Churches and major world communions, including the Anglican Communion, the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the Lutheran World Federation, and the World Methodist Council. Consensus was easily expressed, and participants look upon this time as an important *kairos* moment for the Body of Christ globally.

At this same time, the Consultation on Common Texts in North America began in earnest to consider lectionary possibilities for the Feast. That work within the CCT is expected to be completed in the Spring of 2025, and includes the Revised Common Lectionary's three year schema for a selection of readings. The May 2024 conference ended with a strong consensus that Western churches should adopt a Feast in their liturgical calendars.¹ This was followed by a second gathering in Assisi in December 2024, convened by the Roman Catholic Church, to which ecumenical partners were invited.^{2 3} Members of The Anglican Church of Canada have participated in these ecumenical conversations and work at the international and North American levels.

In 2019 The Anglican Church of Canada adopted the Season of Creation, beginning September 1st and continuing through to October 4, the Feast of St. Francis, "as an annual season of prayer, education and action to protect the gift of God's creation". The designation of September 1st as a liturgical feast is intended to reinforce and further develop the Season of Creation, not replace it.

The word "Creation" in English is ambiguous, as it refers both to God's act of creation, and to the created order itself. The proposed focus of the Feast would be on the first of these, giving praise and worship to the Trinity for the divine grace and power shown in the creation of the heavens and earth, and exploring the implications of that doctrine for our attitudes towards the world around us, ourselves, and God. It can be argued that this is a gap in our liturgical calendar, that this first and foundational act of God's loving generosity, as "creator of heaven and earth" (second line in the Nicene Creed) is currently not sufficiently marked with its own Feast. As 2025 is the 1700th anniversary of the Nicene Creed, it has been suggested that the institution of this feast would be a fitting tribute to that church-shaping event.

A major liturgical principle long held by ecumenical as well as Anglican traditions is that all Sundays of the liturgical year, as well as all Major Feasts, are Christocentric in nature. They are all Feasts of our Lord. The focus of a Feast of God, Creator, reminds us of the Trinitarian nature of God, and that all Persons of the Holy Trinity are involved in the creation of the universe and its active sustenance, as well as in the bringing about of the new creation in our midst.

¹ [1. Assisi Story \(Digital\).pdf](#)

² [Catholic seminar in Assisi - Feast of Creation - concept note.pdf](#)

³ [December seminar, Assisi - Program \(Detailed\)](#)

In this time of global climate crisis the impetus is on us to take seriously the Fifth Mark of Mission “to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth” which was approved by General Synod 2013 as an addition to our Baptismal Covenant. Whilst the Feast Day will focus on the work of God as Creator, the Season of Creation that follows can be used to focus our attention on our continued offering of worshipful gratitude as well as our work, “with God’s help” as stewards of God’s creation.

In summary, the purpose of this resolution is:

- that the Anglican Church of Canada join an emerging ecumenical consensus around a Feast of Creation by adopting this Feast on September 1 as the inauguration of the Season of Creation;
- that we might pay more intentional liturgical attention to this important aspect of God’s being and action which is expressed in the Nicene and Baptismal (Apostles’) Creeds;
- that the Season of Creation might begin with a strong theological reflection on the origin of the created order in God;
- that Canadian Anglican churches might be encouraged in their celebration of God the Creator, and of God’s good creation; and
- that existing liturgical resources will be collected and new liturgical resources be developed to support the discipleship and worship of Canadian Anglicans.

The staffing implication is that there is need for there to be staff dedicated to supporting this work in the coming triennium. Normally this is done through the management of regular FWM staff workloads.

PROCEDURE FOR ADOPTION

In 2012 the Consultation on Common Texts (CCT) received a petition expressing concern over the potential for anti-Jewish interpretations of the lectionary readings for Holy Week. As the ecumenical body responsible for the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL), the CCT has carefully considered this matter, engaging with biblical experts, church historians, and liturgical leaders, including a forum with consultation and participation of Jewish scholars. The CCT now proposes alternate readings for Palm/Passion Sunday and Good Friday, along with revisions to the lectionary for the season of Easter and the time after Pentecost. This provisional update to the RCL is now commended to the churches for a three-year trial period, beginning in Advent of 2025. For more information, visit the CCT website: <https://www.commontexts.org/2025-update/>. Feedback on the proposed update may be offered here: <https://forms.gle/JsZmqogKe1EHrTz89>.

Addressing Anti-Judaism during Lent and Eastertide

Report of The Consultation on Common Texts (CCT)

References to “the Jews” (Ἰουδαῖοι) in the New Testament and in the subsequent history of the church are often problematic for Christian and Jewish people alike.

During the early ministry of Jesus, his followers constituted one among multiple competing groups within the larger family of Judaism. Groups referred to in the New Testament included Pharisees, Sadducees, the followers of John the Baptist, and Zealots.¹ Jesus shared a concern with the Pharisees for the interpretation of the Law in daily life and an expectation of the near approach of the Kingdom of God with the followers of John the Baptist. The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke preserve some of the complexity of Judaism in the time of Jesus. In Mark, for example, Jesus directed criticism against specific groups, especially the Sadducees and Pharisees. He did use strong language in his criticism, but it was not significantly different from the hard language that he used with his own disciples (Mark 8:33, Cf: Matthew 8:26, Luke 12:28). In Mark’s Gospel, the term “Jew” is not applied collectively to non-Christian Jewish groups. It appears infrequently, in comments addressed to outsiders—once in a parenthetical remark for the reader about the washing of hands (Mark 7:3), and five times in statements by Romans in the passion narrative. It is never used to suggest a religious group of which Jesus and his followers were not a part. Matthew and Luke largely follow this approach by Mark.

The relationship of Christians to other Jewish groups is less clear in John’s Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles. While there are passages in these two books that acknowledge the early Christian placement within Judaism (See John 4:22, John 8:31, John 11:49-51, Acts 23:6, and Acts 26:5), the close connections of Christians to other Jewish groups is generally ignored. John’s Gospel was written in the context of the beginnings of the parting of ways between church and synagogue a half century after the lifetime of Jesus and often uses the word “Jew” to refer to those Jews who opposed Jesus’ teaching. The Acts of the Apostles tells the story of the growth of

¹ Some Jews were also identified by the functions they exercised, such as priests and high priests, scribes, members of the Council, money changers, tax collectors, etc. After the destruction of the temple in A.D. 70, the tradition of the Pharisees became the dominant tradition within Judaism to this day.

the church after the resurrection and also uses “Jew” to mean those Jews who objected to the teaching of Paul or other early disciples.

This use of the word “Jew” in John and Acts has contributed to a common misreading of the Gospel story—that Jesus died because of the behavior of non-Christian Jewish people, rather than because of the decisions by Roman officials or the sinfulness of all humanity. This misreading has in turn been used to support discrimination and violence against Jews. It still inspires anti-Jewish actions to this day. This is something for which Christians need to repent. We must acknowledge how we and members of the church before us have discriminated against and mistreated Jews. We need to seek ways to amend our personal and communal understanding of Scripture that shapes our attitudes and behavior toward the Jewish people.

The readings of Lent and Holy Week should be handled with care to avoid this harmful reading. The Consultation of Common Texts, the developer and curator of the Revised Common Lectionary, recommends possible actions:

First, acknowledge with confession and lament the centuries of history of reading the Holy Week texts in ways that have caused or fostered discrimination and violence against Jewish people. Preaching and teaching involving these texts are appropriate occasions for making this acknowledgment, especially during Lent and Holy Week, as well as whenever these texts are mentioned in preaching and programs of Christian formation.

Second, exercise care about translations of the texts used, especially for the passion narrative. Some translations such as the *NET Bible*, the *NIV Bible*, and *The New Testament for Everyone* have chosen a variety of different ways to translate the term “the Jews” to fit the particular context rather than, as does the *New Revised Standard Version*, simply repeat “the Jews” at every instance. The *NET Bible*, for example, uses “Jewish leaders” at some points and “Judeans” at others. *The New Testament for Everyone* uses “Judeans” for most references. Some denominational resources have done the same thing with translations of particular passages used in the liturgy.² While this approach may hide the degree to which John’s gospel is easily read as anti-Jewish, a more nuanced translation at least mitigates some harms. A rotation of different translations for key passages may be a helpful course.

Third, where congregations make use of dramatic readings of the Gospel with multiple readers, consider assigning passages that suggest responsibility for the death of Jesus to the Jewish people, such as Matthew 27:25 (The Sixth Sunday in Lent, Year A), to the entire congregation. This may help the congregation realize more deeply that Jesus Christ “is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world” (1 John 2:2).

² See the translation of John 18:1—10:42 in the Tenebrae Service in the *United Methodist Book of Worship* (1992), 355-61; <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/book-of-worship/a-service-of-tenebrae>. See also “The Jews in John’s Passion” from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; <https://resources.elca.org/worship/the-jews-in-johns-passion/>.

Fourth, recognize that our concerns do not end with Holy Week. The RCL lectionary for Easter Season has perpetuated what we also find to be a potentially harmful practice of replacing the first reading from the Old Testament with a reading from Acts during Easter Season. For Christians not to read from texts shared with Jews during any season of the year is inherently problematic. God has exercised mercy and has worked deliverance and salvation throughout the biblical story apart from the specific events and dynamics of the passion. Indeed, the early followers of Jesus and the gospel writers, in particular, learned how to interpret Jesus' life and death as redemptive precisely by looking at what God had been habituated to do with Israel. Those stories were the paradigms of salvation that the gospel writers used to tell their story of Jesus. Therefore, the Consultation recommends alternative readings from the Hebrew Scriptures during Eastertide, drawing on work from the Church of Scotland as promoted by the English Language Liturgical Consultation.

Fifth, consider delaying the use of readings from Acts until after Pentecost as a substitute for the Epistle readings. The Consultation proposes a new set of readings from Acts for this purpose.³ The Consultation also suggests using John 19:1-42 or Mark 14:1—15:47 for the Gospel on Good Friday. When this option is used in Year B, the Consultation suggests using Mark 14:1-15:47 or John [18:1-40] 19:1-42 on Palm/Passion Sunday.

Finally, worship planners and leaders should provide brief commentaries or explanations of problematic lectionary readings in printed worship materials, particularly as regards the issues addressed here. An example is provided below.

A Statement on the Lectionary Readings

This statement on the lectionary readings for Holy Week and Easter may be spoken in worship and/or printed/projected in service materials.

Throughout Christian history, references to “the Jews” in scripture—particularly in John and Acts—have been used to perpetuate negative stereotypes and falsely assign blame for the death of Jesus. These references gloss over significant distinctions among religious leaders, such as Pharisees, scribes, and Sadducees, and obscure the fact that Jesus and his disciples were themselves Jews. As Christians, we confess and lament the history of anti-Judaism associated with these texts. We renounce the evils of violence and discrimination against Jewish people. We strive for mutual understanding, respect, and partnership with Jewish neighbors and commit ourselves to the work of reconciliation among people of all faiths.

³ The General Synod of The Anglican Church of Canada is not at this time considering approving these proposed uses of Acts in Pentecost season at this time. Faith, Worship, and Ministry encourages leaders to study and experiment with the tables and to provide feedback to them in the coming triennium. Any implementation of these readings must be done with the express permission of the Ordinary.

Alternative Gospel Reading for Good Friday⁴

John 19:1-42 or Mark 14:1—15:47

If Mark is to be used on Good Friday in Year B, the alternative Gospel Reading for Palm/Passion Sunday B may be John [18:1-40] 19:1-42 or Mark 14:1—15:47.

Alternative Readings from the Hebrew Scriptures in Easter (*Authorized for use in the Anglican Church of Canada where permitted by the Ordinary, by General Synod 2023)

For use in the place of the first reading from Acts and the accompanying Psalm during the season of Easter. The Epistle and Gospel readings remain the same.

	Year A	Year B	Year C
Easter Day	Jeremiah 31:1-6 Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24	Isaiah 25:6-9 Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24	Isaiah 65:17-25 Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24
Easter 2	Exodus 15:1-11 Psalm 111	Isaiah 65:17-25 Psalm 3	2 Kings 7:1-16 Psalm 2
Easter 3	Isaiah 51:1-6 Psalm 34:1-10	Isaiah 6:1-9a Psalm 40:1-5	Isaiah 61:1-3 Psalm 90:13-17
Easter 4	Ezekiel 34:7-15 Psalm 100	Zechariah 10:1-12 Psalm 80:1-7	Isaiah 53:1-6 Psalm 114
Easter 5	Proverbs 4:10-18 Psalm 119:9-32	Exodus 19:1-6 Psalm 118:19-25	Leviticus 19:9-18 Psalm 24:1-6
Easter 6	Ezekiel 34:1-7a Psalm 115	Genesis 35:9-15 Psalm 101	Deuteronomy 34:1-12 Psalm 109:21-31
Ascension	Daniel 7:9-14 Psalm 24:7-10	Daniel 7:9-14 Psalm 68:15-20, 32-35	Daniel 7:9-14 Psalm 113
Easter 7	Isaiah 45:1-7 Psalm 21:1-7	Jeremiah 10:1-10a Psalm 108	2 Kings 2:1-15 Psalm 2
Pentecost	Numbers 11:24-30 Psalm 104:24-34, 35b	Ezekiel 37:1-14 Psalm 104:24-34, 35b	Genesis 11:1-9 Psalm 104:24-34, 35b

⁴ Similarly, the proposed alternative Gospel readings for Good Friday are intended for study and only for implementation where permitted by the Ordinary. Feedback on use is encouraged to be sent to Faith, Worship, and Ministry.

Proposed Acts Readings for the Time after Pentecost

For use as alternatives to the Epistle readings during the Season after Pentecost, beginning on Proper 20 in Year A and beginning on Proper 10 in Years B and C.

Year A (Peter)

	<i>Sunday between, inclusive</i>		
Proper 20 [25]	<i>Sept. 18 and 24</i>	Acts 1:14-21, 33-35	<i>Peter's address on Pentecost</i>
Proper 21 [26]	<i>Sept. 25 and Oct. 1</i>	Acts 3:1-19	<i>Peter heals a crippled beggar and preaches in Solomon's portico</i>
Proper 22 [27]	<i>Oct. 2 and 8</i>	Acts 4:5-12	<i>Peter and John before the Council</i>
Proper 23 [28]	<i>Oct. 9 and 15</i>	Acts 8:14-25	<i>Peter and John preach in Samaria</i>
Proper 24 [29]	<i>Oct. 16 and 22</i>	Acts 10:34-43	<i>Peter's address to Cornelius</i>
Proper 25 [30]	<i>Oct. 23 and 29</i>	Acts 10:44-48	<i>The Spirit is poured out on the Gentiles</i>
Proper 26 [31]	<i>Oct. 30 and Nov. 5</i>	Acts 11:1-18	<i>Peter's report to the church at Jerusalem</i>

Year B (Early Disciples)

	<i>Sunday between, inclusive</i>		
Proper 10 [15]	<i>July 10 and 16</i>	Acts 2:37-47	<i>The first converts</i>
Proper 11 [16]	<i>July 17 and 23</i>	Acts 4:32-37	<i>The example of Barnabas</i>
Proper 12 [17]	<i>July 24 and 30</i>	Acts 6:1-7	<i>Seven are chosen to serve</i>
Proper 13 [18]	<i>July 31 and Aug. 6</i>	Acts 8:26-40	<i>Philip teaches and baptizes an Ethiopian</i>
Proper 14 [19]	<i>Aug. 7 and 13</i>	Acts 11:16-30	<i>The church in Antioch</i>
Proper 15 [20]	<i>Aug. 14 and 20</i>	Acts 16:6-15	<i>The conversion of Lydia</i>
Proper 16 [21]	<i>Aug. 21 and 27</i>	Acts 18:1-3, 18-21, 24-28	<i>Priscilla and Aquila instruct Apollos</i>

Year C (Paul)

	<i>Sunday between, inclusive</i>		
Proper 10 [15]	<i>July 10 and 16</i>	Acts 8:1-3; 9:1-6 [7-20]	<i>Paul's conversion, baptism, and preaching</i>
Proper 11 [16]	<i>July 17 and 23</i>	Acts 13:1-12	<i>Paul and Barnabas preach in Cyprus</i>
Proper 12 [17]	<i>July 24 and 30</i>	Acts 17:1-12	<i>Paul and Silas in Thessalonica and Beroea</i>
Proper 13 [18]	<i>July 31 and Aug. 6</i>	Acts 17:16-34	<i>Paul in Athens</i>
Proper 14 [19]	<i>Aug. 7 and 13</i>	Acts 21:17-26	<i>Paul in Jerusalem</i>
Proper 15 [20]	<i>Aug. 14 and 20</i>	Acts 25:6-12; 26:24-32	<i>Paul appeals to the Emperor for judgment</i>
Proper 16 [21]	<i>Aug. 21 and 27</i>	Acts 28:14-30	<i>Paul in Rome</i>

The Consultation on Common Texts
April 8, 2025

**GENERAL SYNOD 2025
RESOLUTION**

Resolution Number XXXX

Subject:

Moved By: Steven Black (New Westminster)

Seconded By: Susan Bell (Niagara)

Be it resolved that this General Synod:

Be it resolved that this General Synod receive and commend to Dioceses the Statement of the Consultation on Common Texts, *Addressing Anti-Judaism in Holy Week and Easter*.

Source: Faith, Worship, and Ministry committee of General Synod

Submitted By: Faith, Worship, and Ministry

Does this motion contain within it any financial implications? Yes **No**

If yes, has the General Synod Expenditures Committee considered the implications? Yes No

Does this motion contain within it any staffing implications? Yes **No**

EXPLANATORY NOTE/BACKGROUND

The Anglican Church of Canada is a founding member of the Consultation on Common Texts (CCT), an ecumenical liturgical roundtable that gathers representatives of nearly 30 denominations in North America. Along with their work to steward and to augment the Revised Common Lectionary, such as the creation of Revised Common Lectionary Daily Readings, the CCT has been looking carefully at the critiques of the selections of readings offered in Holy Week and Easter Season. As the CCT, and its international partner, the English Language Liturgical Consultation, look to possible revision of the Revised Common Lectionary over the coming years, and the conversations leading in to those revision questions always start with questions about Holy Week and Easter.

This short essay was drafted by a Task Force within the Consultation on Common Texts and adopted at their April 2025 meeting. It offers a few suggestions for careful approaches to counter anti-Judaism that may creep in during Holy Week. It is not comprehensive, but is a good place to start.

Regarding the table of Easter readings cited in this document: In 2023 the General Synod adopted the Alternative Hebrew Scripture/Old Testament Readings for Eastertide as a way of countering a bias in the original RCL. The General Synod has already taken this action. The readings provided as alternatives for Pentecost are to be considered as suggestions, and feedback on the recommendations is welcomed.

PROCEDURE FOR ADOPTION

**GENERAL SYNOD 2025
RESOLUTION**

Resolution Number XXXX

Subject:

Moved By: Dion Lewis (Montréal)

Seconded By: Steven Black (New Westminster)

Be it resolved that this General Synod:

Be it resolved that this General Synod adopt the Thematic stream of lectionary readings presented in the Revised Common Lectionary (1992) for Pentecost/Ordinary time for use where permitted by the Ordinary.

Source: Faith, Worship, and Ministry committee of General Synod

Submitted By: Faith, Worship, and Ministry

Does this motion contain within it any financial implications? Yes **No**

If yes, has the General Synod Expenditures Committee considered the implications? Yes No

Does this motion contain within it any staffing implications? **Yes** No

EXPLANATORY NOTE/BACKGROUND

The Anglican Church of Canada is a founding member of the Consultation on Common Texts (CCT), an ecumenical liturgical roundtable that gathers representatives of nearly 30 denominations in North America. This ongoing group was the author of the Revised Common Lectionary (1992).

The Revised Common Lectionary (RCL) offers two streams of tables of readings for the Season after Pentecost up to Reign of Christ: one with a somewhat continuous stream in the Old Testament narrative, which is linked to the Psalm, (this is called the semi-continuous stream), and the other which continues the pattern of the other seasonal tables by a thematic connection between the gospel and the first reading (this is called the thematic stream). The full text – including the Thematic (or “Complementary”) readings can be found here: <https://www.commontexts.org/rcl/>

When the Anglican Church of Canada adopted the Revised Common Lectionary in 1995, it approved only the semi-continuous stream of readings. The argument at the time was that the semi-continuous reading of the Hebrew Scripture narrative texts in Pentecost/Ordinary time allowed more of the integrity of those Old Testament narratives to be held. Over the decades, other considerations have provided cause to wonder why continue to not permit the use of the thematic stream. Are Anglican parishioners in church Sunday by Sunday always to hear the longer narrative unfold? In those situations where it does not make sense to the liturgical life of the community, why not permit the use of the thematic stream?

Though no study has been done on practice, anecdotally there is evidence that there are a good number of Canadian Anglican clergy who do not know that the thematic stream of readings is not officially permitted. This in itself is no argument towards permission. Raising the question within the Liturgical Advisory Committee and Faith, Worship, and Ministry drew affirmations that the use of the thematic readings is somewhat normalized. This also is not a reason to argue for permission. It is as we heard that the thematic readings are being chosen intentionally by some, with reports of appreciating the flexibility for good pastoral, homiletic, and liturgical reasons, that suggests that a change in legislation would do well to follow practice, and open up to Canadian Anglicans, officially, the use of the thematic stream of RCL readings in Ordinary Time. This is to be enacted where permitted by the Ordinary (Diocesan Bishop).

The staffing implications are that, if adopted, eventually these changes will need to be incorporated in to the Canadian Church Desk Diary and Wall Calendar, the Online Lectionary, and The Book of Alternative Services (print and online). This is work normally undertaken by staff in Communications and Faith, Worship, and Ministry together, and will need to be worked into work plans as a new item.

PROCEDURE FOR ADOPTION

**GENERAL SYNOD 2025
RESOLUTION**

Resolution Number XXXX

Subject: United Church of Canada 100th Anniversary

Moved By: Susan Bell (Niagara)

Seconded By: Dion Lewis (Montréal)

Be it resolved that this General Synod:

1. Extend warm greetings and friendly congratulations to the United Church of Canada on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of their formative Union, June 1925
2. Encourage the dioceses of the Anglican Church of Canada to extend similar salutations to the United Church Regional Councils with which their jurisdictions overlap
3. Give thanks for the decades of fruitful ecumenical dialogue and deepening partnership between the two churches, including especially the unique witness of the growing number of both long established and newly forming Anglican-United Ecumenical Shared Ministries which exist across the country
4. Encourage the Council of General Synod to act on the creation of a National Coordinating Committee for Unity and Mission between The Anglican Church of Canada and the United Church of Canada, as originally called for by General Synod 2016 Resolution A-141.

Source: Faith, Worship, and Ministry committee of General Synod

Submitted By: Faith, Worship, and Ministry

Does this motion contain within it any financial implications? Yes **No**

If yes, has the General Synod Expenditures Committee considered the implications? Yes No

Does this motion contain within it any staffing implications? Yes **No**

EXPLANATORY NOTE/BACKGROUND

The United Church of Canada was formed in 1925 through the organic union of the Methodist Church, Canada, the Congregational Union of Ontario and Quebec, two-thirds of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, and the Association of Local Union Churches. The Evangelical United Brethren Church also joined some years later. Though not without some difficult points of conflict and tension along the way, for much of the 100 years since, the Anglican Church of Canada has regularly worked alongside of and in common cause with United Church siblings in Christ in numerous areas of mutual concern as an expression of our shared witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In recent decades, ecumenical dialogues and active engagement between Anglican and United disciples have enabled Anglicans to receive many gifts from the distinct witness of the United Church and have allowed our two churches to grow even more closely together as partners in common mission. This has included numerous arrangements in certain local contexts which have seen some Anglican parishes and United Church communities of faith able to share together deeply in their mutual ministry – in some cases everything from outreach programs, to buildings, to clergy, to regular gathered worship. As we anticipate even more

opportunities for collaboration in the future, at local, regional, and national levels, the occasion of the 125th anniversary of the United Church of Canada represents an important moment to express our gratitude for one of our closest ecumenical partners, and to rededicate ourselves to ongoing ecumenical friendship and cooperation in the years ahead.

**GENERAL SYNOD 2025
RESOLUTION**

Resolution Number XXXX

Subject: Presbyterian Church in Canada 150th Anniversary

Moved By: Susan Bell (Niagara)

Seconded By: Dion Lewis (Montréal)

Be it resolved that this General Synod:

1. Extend warm greetings and friendly congratulations to the Presbyterian Church in Canada on the occasion of their 150th anniversary
2. Encourage the dioceses of the Anglican Church of Canada to extend similar salutations to the PCC Presbyteries with which their jurisdictions overlap
3. Give thanks for the ongoing ecumenical relationship between the Presbyterian Church in Canada and the Anglican Church of Canada, including especially the unique witness of Anglican-Presbyterian Ecumenical Shared Ministries which exist across the country
4. Encourage the Council of General Synod to initiate renewed exploration of the potential for greater ecumenical collaboration and sharing of resources between the Anglican Church of Canada and the Presbyterian Church in Canada at local, regional, and national levels

Source: Faith, Worship, and Ministry committee of General Synod

Submitted By: Faith, Worship, and Ministry

Does this motion contain within it any financial implications? Yes **No**

If yes, has the General Synod Expenditures Committee considered the implications? Yes No

Does this motion contain within it any staffing implications? Yes **No**

EXPLANATORY NOTE/BACKGROUND

The Presbyterian Church in Canada was formed in 1875 through the joining of four predecessor Presbyterian church expressions of European origin that had been in Canada for several decades prior. While a portion of Canadian Presbyterians entered the Union that formed the United Church of Canada in 1925, another portion continued as the Presbyterian Church in Canada from that point on. Anglicans and Presbyterians in Canada, as elsewhere, have not always enjoyed peaceful and positive relations. However, with the dawning of the modern ecumenical movement in 1910, and especially with the formation of the World Council of Churches and Canadian Council of Churches in the 1940s, Presbyterians and Anglicans have come to know one another more deeply and to work together more closely in common mission. This has included several arrangements in certain local contexts which have seen some Anglican parishes and Presbyterian congregations able to share together deeply in their mutual ministry – in some cases everything from outreach programs, to buildings, to clergy, to regular gathered worship. As we anticipate even more opportunities for collaboration in the future, at local, regional, and national levels, the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the Presbyterian Church in Canada

represents an important moment to express our gratitude for these our valued ecumenical partners, and to rededicate ourselves to ongoing ecumenical friendship and cooperation in the years ahead.



The Ordinal (2025)

Proposed to the Council of General Synod for approval for trial use, evaluation, and feedback where permitted by the Ordinary, for a period of three years or up to the next meeting of the General Synod after 2025

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Note: This Ordinal is available in a three-column layout for ease of study, by request from escully@national.anglican.ca

Faith, Worship, and Ministry Committee of General Synod

A Rationale for the Revision of the Ordinal¹

July 2024

1. Why are we proposing a revision of the Ordinal of The Book of Alternative Services 1985?

By 1982 all the liturgical texts to be compiled into what would become *The Book of Alternative Services* (BAS 1985) were completed. Between 1982 and 1983 the task of the Doctrine and Worship Committee and of its editorial subcommittee was to make final changes to the texts in preparation for General Synod 1983. Diocesan readers, designated readers and the House of Bishops submitted their editorial suggestions to the Doctrine and Worship Committee for assessment and revision during the autumn of 1982 and the winter of 1983. *The Alternative Ordinal* was published in 1982. It was a conflation of the ordination liturgies from the Church of England's *Alternative Services Book* 1980 (ASB 1980) and the Episcopal Church's *Book of Common Prayer* 1979 (BCP 1979). The prayers of consecration were taken directly from the ASB 1980, while the rest of the Ordinal 1982 was largely adopted or adapted from the Ordinal of BCP 1979. Before General Synod 1983, the Doctrine and Worship Committee made an important change in the pronouns of the Ordinal 1982 to reflect the fact that both women and men were eligible to be ordained to the diaconate and to the presbyterate.² Revision of the pronouns in the ordination rite for the episcopate would occur some years later. It was this revised Ordinal that was included in BAS 1985.

The Ordinal of BAS 1985 has served the Anglican Church of Canada well for almost forty years. However, in the decades following its authorization, a growing number of bilateral and ecumenical statements began to influence how the Church reflected on ordained ministry. There was a shift towards an ecclesiology that emphasizes baptism as full initiation into the Body of Christ and the foundation of all Christian ministry:

(Understanding) baptism as the foundation of the life and ministry of the church . . . leads us to see ordained ministers as integral members of the body of Christ, called by God and discerned by the body of Christ to be signs and animators of Christ's self-giving life and ministry to which all people are called by God and for which we are empowered by the Spirit.³

¹ This Rationale makes extensive use of 'Ordinal Review and Revision: Proposal, Principles, Rationale' prepared by the Rev'd Dr John Gibaut and the Rev'd Dr J. Eileen Scully and presented to the Faith, Worship & Ministry committee, to the House of Bishops, and to the Council of General Synod in early 2021.

² Throughout this Rationale the terms 'presbyter' and 'presbyterate' are used to denote the order of ministry that Anglicans more frequently call 'priest' or 'priesthood'. This term is widely used both in ecumenical documents because it has New Testament origins and in the writings and liturgies of the early Christian communities. In these writings it is understood that Christ is our high priest and that, through baptism, we become members of a priestly people. In the Anglican tradition, presbyters are called to be 'pastors, priests and teachers' with 'priest' denoting the liturgical and sacramental dimensions of presbyteral ministry.

³ *Anglican Ordination Rites: The Berkeley Statement: To Equip the Saints*
<https://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/120992/berkeley.pdf>

The Ordinal (March 2025) for trial use, evaluation, and feedback where permitted by the Ordinary; and for study and feedback publicly.

Another development was the emergence and wide reception of a growing focus on the concept of communion or *koinōnia*:

Each local church contains within it the fullness of what it is to be the Church. It is wholly Church, but not the whole Church. Thus, the local church should not be seen in isolation from but in dynamic relation with other local churches.⁴

Here is a chronology of some of the more significant developments.

1981: The Final Report of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Conversation (ARCIC) focuses on the theology of ministry, especially the priestly understanding of the ministries of bishops and presbyters.⁵ The response of the Anglican Church of Canada to the Final Report would contribute to the wider reception of this theology of ministry by the Lambeth Conference 1988.

1982: *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (BEM), an ecumenical convergence statement, contributes to changes in how Anglicans understand the place of ministry in the life of the Church.⁶ Its strong accent on baptismal ecclesiology, most clearly expressed in the 'Ministry' section of BEM, focuses on how the Church's ministries of *episkopē* (apostolic oversight), *koinōnia* (communion) and *diakonia* (service and agency) are exercised personally, collegially and communally within the baptized community.

1987: Participants in the Anglican-Lutheran Consultation on Episcopate meet in Niagara Falls, Ontario and issue *The Niagara Report*.⁷ Among the purposes of the Consultation is 'to shed some fresh light on the relationship between the topics of apostolic succession, the ministry of the whole people of God, episcopacy and the historic episcopate'.

1989: Act 87 of the General Synod commends 'A Plan to Restore the Diaconate in the Anglican Church of Canada'. The Plan raises the question of the relationship of the diaconate to the other orders of the church.

1992: The Baltic, British, Irish and Scandinavian Anglican and Lutheran Churches issue *The Porvoo Common Statement*.⁸ This statement provides the road map for full communion between these churches and will later influence *Called to Full Communion: The Waterloo Declaration* in Canada.

⁴ Paragraph 31 of *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* found at https://www.oikoumene.org/sites/default/files/Document/The_Church_Towards_a_common_vision.pdf.

⁵ https://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/105260/final_report_arcic_1.pdf.

⁶ https://www.oikoumene.org/sites/default/files/Document/FO1982_111_en.pdf.

⁷ https://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/102175/the_niagara_report.pdf.

⁸ https://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/102178/porvoo_common_statement.pdf.

1996: The Anglican-Lutheran International Commission publishes *The Hanover Report: The Diaconate as Ecumenical Opportunity*.⁹ Among its many contributions to the ongoing renewal of the diaconate is Paragraph 48: “A general description of diaconal ministers can be given: Diaconal ministers are called to be agents of the church in interpreting and meeting needs, hopes and concerns within church and society.”¹⁰

2001: The General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada and the National Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada enter into full communion on the basis of *Called to Full Communion: The Waterloo Declaration*.¹¹ This action recognizes the full authenticity of the diaconal, presbyteral and episcopal ministries of both churches.

2001: Throughout its history the International Anglican Liturgical Consultation (IALC) has held the issues of Christian initiation and its relationship to ministry, ecclesiology and ordination. In 2001 the IALC issued *The Berkeley Statement: To Equip the Saints* with an accompanying volume of essays, *Equipping the Saints: Ordination in Anglicanism Today* (Dublin: Columba Press, 2006).¹²

2013: The World Council of Churches publishes *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* from the Commission on Faith and Order.¹³ This second convergence statement from the Commission since BEM in 1982 is based upon the communion or *koinōnia* principle as well as the missiological concept of the *missio Dei*.

2016: *The Iona Report: The Diaconate in the Anglican Church of Canada* is received by General Synod.¹⁴

Another source of reflection on mission, ministry and ecclesiology has been the Lambeth Conferences. In 1988 the Conference discussed the ministry of bishops from the perspectives of Christian unity and mission. The 1998 Conference examined *The Virginia Report* and how it treated issues of communion ecclesiology, mission and episcopal ministry. In 2008 the Conference issued its report entitled *Equipping Bishops as Leaders in God's Mission*.

While baptismal ecclesiology and communion ecclesiology have different starting points, they converge in powerful ways. Proponents of both would claim that these ecclesiological principles are not new but rooted in biblical and ancient tradition, and that both are vital for the

⁹ https://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/102181/the_hanover_report.pdf.

¹⁰ https://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/102181/the_hanover_report.pdf.

¹¹ https://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/102184/waterloo_declaration.pdf.

¹² <https://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/120992/berkeley.pdf>.

¹³ https://www.oikoumene.org/sites/default/files/Document/The_Church_Towards_a_common_vision.pdf

f.

¹⁴ <https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/iona-report.pdf>.

renewal of the life and mission of the Church today. Ecclesiology is not so much a propositional discipline as it is a reflection exercise on the praxis of observable ecclesiology. This reflection is based on the expression and experience in witness and mission, theology and teaching, governance and ministry of real communities of Christians in real times and in real places.

Liturgical celebrations are overt manifestations of a community's operative ecclesiology.¹⁵ Christian initiation and ordination are the most explicit expressions of a Christian community's ecclesiology. Because these two rites are celebrated in the midst of congregational and diocesan settings, they have a profound effect on the shaping of the community's understanding of how they participate in God's mission.

The Ordinal 1985 represents an important stage in the Anglican Church of Canada's engagement with questions of Church, mission and ministry. Since its publication and authorization, however, Anglicans have engaged in significant reflection and a renewed understanding of what it means to be Church, what is the mission of God in which the Church participates and what is the role of ordained ministry within the life of the baptized community.

Consequently, there is an urgent need to review and revise the ordination rites of the Anglican Church of Canada so that they reflect, proclaim and support this renewed vision of what it means to be the Body of Christ, a new creation, a royal priesthood.

2. What is the mandate of the Task Group on Ordinal Revision?

By means of Resolution #A141, the General Synod 2010 adopted *Liturgical Principles: Principles for the Revision of the Contemporary Language Authorized Liturgical Texts of The Anglican Church of Canada* and mandated the creation of a liturgical task force to undertake the work outlined in *Liturgical Principles*. Among the rites to be reviewed are those for the ordination to the diaconate, the presbyterate and the episcopate.

An initial step is to ask how the current rites reflect what we currently believe about the church and ordained ministries? The rites have served us well for almost forty years, but the developments noted in the first section of this Rationale are consequential and cannot be ignored.

The Task Group considers that any revision should retain the *ordo*, e.g., the structure and core elements of the rites. However, given the emerging theological consensus on major issues of sacramental theology, ministry and ordained ministry in the Anglican Communion and among our full communion and ecumenical partners with whom we have agreements, it is reasonable for the Task Group to undertake the revision of texts and other elements of the rites. Our review as members of the Anglican Church of Canada is thus situated within our local context

¹⁵ James Empereur, *Models of Liturgical Theology*.

in conversation with the wider Communion, full communion partners and ecumenical relationships.

The Task Group includes deacons, presbyters, bishops and lay leaders and has engaged in consultation with others to undertake its work. The aim has been to reshape certain emphases and to bring to the fore the ecclesial, sacramental, baptismal and missional aspects of the life and work of the Christian community. How do we best express the priestly nature of the whole Church within these rites? How do we best ensure that the rites are about the Church in service of God's mission? How do we avoid an overly narrow focus on the candidates and on the offices to which they are to be ordained?

Significant work has already been done in other Provinces of the Anglican Communion as well as by Anglican and Lutheran scholars in Canada and elsewhere. Members of the IALC have already been of great assistance in providing a research base from which to review the ordinals currently in use in the Communion and will provide a base for constructive critical feedback.

The revision of the Ordinal is taking place in consultation with the bishops and other lay and ordained leaders in our church, as well as with full communion and ecumenical partners. Any proposed rites will be subject to a period of trial use and evaluation as determined by the Council of General Synod. From this period of trial use and evaluation will arise the final proposal presented to General Synod for authorization.

3. What does Liturgical Principles (General Synod 2010) say about the revision of our contemporary language rites for ordination?¹⁶

11.1) (Christian baptism is) the foundation for Christian ministry, both of the church as a whole, and of each of its members, including those called to serve Jesus Christ as bishops, presbyters or deacons. Setting ordination rites in such a theological context is an expression of what is meant by a 'baptismal ecclesiology'. A reaffirmation of baptismal faith could be a significant feature of the rite, enabling the assembly to reaffirm God's call and its response to ministry.

11.2) Ordination rites should be grounded in a baptismal ecclesiology, not only in setting ordination to particular ministries firmly within the context of the ministry of the whole people of God, but also in demonstrating the principle that 'in, through and with Christ, the assembly is the celebrant'. The presenters should represent the wider community of the baptized rather than the personal choice of the candidate.

¹⁶ An excerpt from 'On Ordination Rites'. This section of *Liturgical Principles* (GS 2010) is adapted from *To Equip the Saints: The Berkeley Statement of the International Anglican Liturgical Consultation* (2001). The numeration of paragraphs is that of *Liturgical Principles*.

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11.3) An ordination service is an ecclesial event in which the church's life and ministry is ordered, and so should take place in the context of a eucharist celebrated at a place and time when all its ministries may be most fully represented.

a) The ecclesial nature of ordination may be underscored if the eucharistic readings of the day are used, when they are appropriate, rather than those that focus more narrowly on the particular order being conferred.

b) The particular posture adopted by those involved – both the community offering prayer and those for whom the prayer is being offered – is significant.

i) If the bishop adopts the same posture as the rest of the assembly for the intercessory prayer and invocation of the Holy Spirit, the bishop is identified as praying with the whole community.

ii) If the candidates kneel while others stand, it is more clearly indicated that they are being prayed for.

iii) If both the presider and the assembly stand for the presidential prayer, it is clearer that the act is that of the whole assembly and not just of the presider alone.

iv) If those who are associated with the presidential imposition of hands, i.e., presbyters at the ordination of presbyters and bishops at episcopal ordinations, join in any other manual gesture with the presider throughout the entire prayer, its unity is more clearly demonstrated.

11.4) The incarnational nature of the gospel calls Christians to embrace in their liturgy aspects of local culture that embody the values of the kingdom of God. Such things as dress, language and symbol in ordination rites all shape the way in which participants perceive the nature and significance of ministry, and how it is authorized and imported.

11.5) Among the great diversity of cultural expressions of ordination rites throughout the Communion, (a) the recognition by the church of God's call of the candidates and (b) prayer with the laying on of hands remain the central focus of the ordination rite.

11.6) An ordination service is a celebration of the ministry of the whole people of God. The diversity of ministries is appropriately represented among those who take different roles in the service. Where persons are being ordained or licensed to different forms of ministry at the same service, care must be taken to ensure that this occurs within the context of the ministry of all the baptized and that the distinct character of the different ministries remains clear.

11.7) Opportunity is to be provided for the family of the ordinand, as appropriate, to voice their support of her or his ministry.

4. What is distinctive about the draft rites that the Task Group is circulating for review and comment?

The proposed rites that the Task Group is presenting for review have elements that are distinct from the Ordinal of the BAS.

- The three rites are parallel in structure and, in many cases, in texts. This is intended to enhance an understanding of ordination as rooted in the Christian initiation.
- New rubrics emphasize the importance of the cultural context in which the ordination takes place. Consequently there is explicit mention of territorial acknowledgement as well as the potential for cultural elements that arise from the communities present in the ecclesiastical jurisdiction.
- The emphasis on the cultural and social context has required consideration of language that is faithful to the scriptural and theological tradition and fair to all the people God has called into the communion of the church.
- In each rite there is the option of beginning the ordination with a Thanksgiving for Baptism using one of two forms based on Anglican and Lutheran texts.
- When candidates for ordination are presented, their presenters are to be persons who have participated in the discernment of the candidates' call and suitability for the exercise of the order to which they are being presented.
- Rather than the term 'Examination', the Task Group has chosen to use the term 'Covenant' to describe the exchange of questions and answers. The choice of this term arises from the language of our baptismal liturgy as well as more clearly represent the nature of what is transpiring at this point in the ordination.
- Given the growth of the distinctive diaconate in the Anglican Church of Canada and the wider Communion, the Task Group has been more explicit in identifying how deacons participate in the liturgy. This has meant that a distinction is made in the Covenant between those called to the diaconate and those called to the transitional diaconate.
- The prayers of consecration are parallel in both structure and text with the exception of a paragraph in each prayer specific to the rite being conferred. Each prayer ends with an expanded 'Amen' on the part of the congregation to emphasize that ordination is an act of the whole church.
- Since the vesting is an act of aggregation, e.g., the incorporating of the newly-ordained into their order of ministry, representatives of the order are responsible for the vesting.

Prepared by The Ven. Richard Geoffrey Leggett

with the assistance of The Ven. G. Douglas Fenton and The Rev'd Canon Maylanne Maybee on behalf of the Task Group on Ordinal Revision

The Ordinal (March 2025) for trial use, evaluation, and feedback where permitted by the Ordinary; and for study and feedback publicly.

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Concerning the Ordination of a Bishop

In accordance with ancient custom, it is desirable, if possible, that bishops be ordained on Sundays or on the feasts of apostles or evangelists, or other feasts when a large number of the faithful can attend, unless pastoral reasons suggest another day. Particular Days appropriate for the ordination of bishops can be found in the Further Directions on page 28.

When a bishop is to be ordained, the archbishop, or a bishop appointed by the archbishop, presides. At least two other bishops of the Anglican Church of Canada serve as co-consecrators. Bishops from any full communion partners of The Anglican Church of Canada should participate, when possible, as coconsecrators.

The liturgy is preceded by an acknowledgement of the territory to be prepared in consultation with the local community in which the ordination takes place. This acknowledgement may consist of formal statements and other culturally appropriate actions that accentuate the specific context in which the liturgy takes place. The liturgy may also incorporate other elements expressive of the cultural communities active in the life of the diocese including those of the bishop-elect.

It is appropriate that invitations be made to representatives of churches in full communion to participate in the service.

Representatives of the presbyterate, the diaconate and the laity of the diocese for which the new bishop is to be ordained are assigned appropriate duties in the service. Attention should be paid to the diversity of the diocese in the selection of these representatives and to the languages used in the diocese.

It is the role of deacons to read the Gospel and to make ready the Holy Table for the celebration, preparing and placing upon it the bread and cup of wine, and to lead the Litany and Dismissal.

From the beginning of the service until the preparation of the gifts, the chief consecrator presides from a chair placed close to the people, so that all may see and hear what is done. The other bishops, or a convenient number of them, sit to the right and left of the chief consecrator.

The bishop-elect is vested in a rochet or alb, without stole, tippet or other vesture distinctive of ecclesiastical or academic rank or order.

When the bishop-elect is presented, their full baptismal name (designated by the sign NN) is used. Thereafter, it is appropriate to refer to them only by the name and the pronouns by which they are known. Rubrics provide instruction on the appropriate posture at various points in the service and may be adapted to serve the needs of the congregation.

The Gathering of the Community

A hymn, anthem, or other culturally appropriate expressions of praise may accompany the entry of the bishop and others.

All stand.

The Greeting

The archbishop greets the community.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

All: And also with you.

From Easter Day through the Day of Pentecost:

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

All: The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!

May God's grace and peace be with us.

All: May God fill our hearts with joy.

The following prayer may be added.

Archbishop: Almighty God,

All: to you all hearts are open,

all desires known,

and from you no secrets are hidden.

Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts

by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,

that we may perfectly love you,

and worthily magnify your holy name;

through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The liturgy may continue with the Thanksgiving for Baptism.

Thanksgiving for Baptism

The archbishop says,

We who are baptized into Christ Jesus
have become a new creation.

God has entrusted the ministry of reconciliation to us.

Let us give thanks to the Creator.

All: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Or

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Water is poured into the font (or other vessel) as the archbishop continues with one of the following Thanksgivings over the Water.

Form I:

Blessed are you, holy God.

You are the creator of the waters of the earth.

You are the fire of rebirth.

You pour out your Spirit on your people that
the world may know your peace and truth.

By water and your Word you claim us as a royal priesthood.
Shower us with your Spirit and renew our lives
with your forgiveness and love.

To you be given honour and praise through
Jesus Christ our Lord,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and for ever.

All: **Amen.**

Or the following:

Form II

Blessed are you, O God,
Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.
You are the One who makes all things new.

Breathe your Spirit, O God, upon this water
that your servants who are washed and anointed
may share with your Christ in his death and resurrection.
Let there be no distinction among those
whom one baptism, one Spirit, one faith make one people.
Together, may we stand as a sign and foretaste of your kingdom,

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a covenant to the people, a light to the nations.
We give you praise and honour and worship
through your servant, Jesus the Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and for ever.

All: Amen.

A hymn may be sung. As a reminder of the gift of baptism, the archbishop, assisted by other ministers, may sprinkle the community with the water.

The liturgy continues with the Presentation of the Bishop-Elect.

The Presentation

The people sit. Representatives of the jurisdiction, presbyters, deacons and lay persons, present the bishop-elect. The archbishop begins as follows.

Dear People of God,
we have come together to ordain a bishop in Christ's holy Church.

Presenters: N, bishop in the Church of God,
the Synod of the Diocese (or Province) of N,
trusting in the guidance of the Holy Spirit,
have chosen NN to be a bishop and chief pastor.
We therefore ask you to lay your hands upon N,
and in the power of the Holy Spirit
to consecrate *them* a bishop in the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

The archbishop then directs that testimonials of the election be read. When the reading of the testimonials is ended, the archbishop requires the following promise from the bishop-elect:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, I, NN, chosen bishop of the Church and See of N, do reaffirm the Oaths and Subscriptions made at my ordination; and I solemnly declare that I do believe the holy scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the word of God, and to contain all things necessary to salvation; I do solemnly promise to conform to the doctrine, discipline and worship of the Anglican Church of Canada; and I do pledge myself to render due obedience to the Metropolitan of N and to their successors. So help me God, through Jesus Christ.

The bishop-elect then signs the above declaration in the sight of all present. The witnesses add their signatures.

All stand. The archbishop then asks the response of the people.

Dear friends in Christ, you have heard testimony given that *N* has been duly and lawfully elected to be a bishop of the Church of God to serve in the Diocese of *N*. You have been assured of *their* suitability and that the Church has approved *N* for this sacred responsibility. Therefore, if any of you know any impediment or crime for which we should not proceed, come forward now, and make it known.

A period of silence is held. If no objection is made, the archbishop continues,

Is it your will that we ordain *N* a bishop?

People: **It is.**

Will you uphold *them* in this ministry?

People: **We will.**

The Collect of the Day or one of the following Collects may be said or sung.

Archbishop: Let us pray.

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light,
look favourably on your whole Church,
that wonderful and sacred mystery.
By the effectual working of your providence,
carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation.
Let the whole world see and know
that things which were cast down are being raised up,
and things which had grown old are being made new,
and that all things are being brought to their perfection
by him through whom all things were made,
your Son Jesus Christ our Lord;
who lives and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

All: **Amen.**

Or:

Archbishop: Let us pray.

Creator of all, through your incarnate Word
you have called us into the communion of your universal Church:
hear our prayer for your faithful people
that in our vocation and ministry
we may be an instrument of your love

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and give to your servant N now to be ordained
the needful gifts of grace;
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,
who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All: Amen.

The liturgy continues with the Proclamation of the Word.

The Proclamation of the Word

The Readings

The Scripture readings of the day including the psalm are proclaimed. Lay persons are assigned the readings which precede the Gospel. Normally a deacon reads the Gospel. A psalm, canticle, hymn, anthem or period of silence may follow the readings.

The Sermon

The sermon proclaims the gospel and points to Christ and his ministry. The sermon may further address the role of the bishop as a servant leader of the community's apostolic ministry.

A silence for reflection may follow.

The Nicene Creed

All stand. The archbishop leads the community in the proclamation of the Church's faith.

Archbishop: Let us confess our faith as we say

All: We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of
all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,

begotten, not made,
of one being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father,
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of
the world to come. Amen.

The Covenant

The bishop-elect stands facing the bishops. The archbishop addresses the people.

By the Holy Spirit all who are baptized into Christ Jesus are called into God's own ministry of reconciliation and salvation. We are to proclaim the good news of God in Christ, seeking to serve Christ in all persons. We are to be salt for the earth; we are to be the light of Christ graced by God to participate in the healing and transformation of the world.

Christ is head of the Church and the source of all Christian ministry. Through the ages, the Church has come to ordain bishops, presbyters, and deacons to equip the saints for the work of ministry and for building up the body of Christ.

The bishops remain in place. All others now sit. The archbishop addresses the bishop-elect.

N, every Christian is called to follow Jesus Christ, serving God, the Source of life, through the power of the Holy Spirit. N, the people have chosen you to be a bishop in the Church of God

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and have affirmed their trust in you by acclaiming your election. A bishop in God's holy Church is called to be one with the apostles in proclaiming Christ's resurrection and interpreting the Gospel, and to testify to Christ's sovereignty as Lord of lords and King of kings.

Bishops are to ensure the continuity of the Church's apostolic ministry. You are called to guard the faith, unity, and discipline of the Church; to celebrate and to provide for the administration of the sacraments of the new covenant; to ordain presbyters and deacons, and to join in ordaining bishops. You are to be in all things a faithful pastor and wholesome example for the entire flock of Christ. You are to lead and equip God's people to grow into the full stature of Christ.

Bishops are to exercise godly leadership in that part of the Church committed to their care. The Church looks to you to promote peace and unity among all God's people, and to encourage obedience to God's word. You are to keep the Church true to its faith, as found in Scripture and the Creeds, to teach this faith and proclaim it. You will take your place in the councils of the Church. With your fellow bishops and with all the faithful when gathered in synods you will share in the leadership of the Church throughout the world.

Your heritage is the faith of patriarchs, matriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and those of every generation who have looked to God in hope. Your joy will be to follow him who came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

We praise God and give thanks for your commitment to serve Christ as a bishop in the Church. You are to serve humbly and joyfully. Remember that the life and work to which you are now called is in God's hands.

Do you believe that you are truly called by God and the Church to the life and work of a bishop?

Answer: I believe I am so called.

The following questions are then addressed to the bishop-elect by the other bishops.

Will you accept this call and fulfil this trust in obedience to Christ?

Answer: I will obey Christ, and will serve in his name.

Will you be faithful in prayer, and in the reading and study of holy scripture, that you may have the mind of Christ?

Answer: I will, for Christ is my help.

Will you boldly proclaim and interpret the gospel of Christ, enlightening the minds and stirring up the conscience of the People of God?

Answer: I will, in the power of the Spirit.

As a chief priest and pastor, will you encourage and support all baptized people in their gifts and ministries, nourish them from the riches of God's grace, pray for them without ceasing, and celebrate with them the sacraments of our redemption?

Answer: I will, in the name of Christ, the shepherd and bishop of our souls.

Will you guide, strengthen and sustain the presbyters, deacons and all others who minister in the Church so that Christ and his redeeming love may be made known?

Answer: I will, by the grace given me.

Will you guard the faith, unity and discipline of the Church?

Answer: I will, for the love of God.

Will you share with your fellow bishops in the government of the whole Church; will you take your part in the synods and councils of the Church, taking counsel with the deacons, presbyters, and all the baptized in seeking God's wisdom and purpose for God's mission?

Answer: I will, as one who shares in that mission.

Will you seek to pattern your life and relationships in accordance with the teachings of Christ?

Answer: I will, with God's help.

Will you be merciful to all, show compassion to poor and strangers, and defend those who have no helper?

Answer: I will, for the sake of Jesus Christ.

Will you persevere in prayer, both in public and in private, asking God's grace, both for yourself and for others?

Answer: I will, in the love of the Holy Trinity.

Will you in all things seek not your glory but the glory of Christ?

Answer: I will, to whom be the glory forever.

N, through these promises you have committed yourself to God, to serve the Church in the office of bishop. May the vision of God enlighten your understanding. May God's continuing call sustain your walk with Christ, and keep you joyful.

Answer: Amen.

The Litany

All stand except the bishop-elect who kneels or prostrates before the archbishop. The other bishops, including those from full communion churches, stand to the right and left of the archbishop. A deacon or other assisting minister calls the people to prayer with these or similar words.

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Let us offer our prayers to God before we ordain N for the life and work to which we trust the Holy Spirit has called *them*.

The people remain standing or kneel, as directed by the archbishop. One of the following litanies is sung or said. It is appropriate for a deacon to lead the Litany.

(See Forms I and II of Litany, appended)

Veni Creator Spiritus or Veni Sancte Spiritus

Either the Veni Creator Spiritus or Veni Sancte Spiritus is to be sung following the litany.

Silent Prayer

A generous period of silent prayer follows the singing of the Veni Creator Spiritus or Veni Sancte Spiritus

The Prayer of Consecration

The archbishop and assisting bishops lift up their hands and the archbishop begins the Prayer of Consecration.

We praise and glorify you, gracious God, for throughout the ages you have created a people to love and serve you and formed throughout the world a holy people adopted as your own children, a royal priesthood, a universal Church.

We praise and glorify you, merciful God, because in your great love of creation you sent your only Son Jesus Christ to take the form of a servant; he came to serve and not to be served; and to teach us that whoever would be great among us must be the servant of all.

We praise and glorify you, holy and living God, because through Christ's resurrection and ascension, you have bestowed the gifts of the Holy Spirit on your people and equipped some to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ. We thank you for these many gifts in the one Body of Christ, given for the sake of the world you so love.

And now we give you thanks that you have called your servant N to share in this ministry as a bishop.

Here the archbishop and other bishops lay their hands on the head of the bishop-elect, and the archbishop says,

God of grace, through your Holy Spirit, gentle as a dove, living, burning as fire, empower your servant *N* for the office and work of a bishop in the Church.

Or

Send down your Holy Spirit upon your servant *N*, whom we consecrate in your name to the office and work of a bishop in the Church.

The archbishop continues,

God of all grace, through your Holy Spirit, may *N* be a steadfast guardian of the faith and sacraments, a wise teacher and faithful in presiding at the worship of your people. With *their* fellow servants in Christ, may *N* increase your Church and renew its ministry, uniting its members in a communion of truth and love. Give *them* humility, that *they* may use *their* authority not to hurt but to heal, not to destroy but to build up. Defend *them* from all evil that as an ambassador for Christ they may stand before you blameless and finally, with all your servants, enter your eternal joy.

Accept our prayers, most merciful God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, belong glory and honour, worship and praise, now and for ever.

***All:* Amen! Point us to Christ, the living Way, feed us with Christ, the bread of life, and unite us in Christ rejoicing!**

Vesting and Presentation of the Symbols of Office

The assisting bishops now vest the new bishop according to the order of bishops.

The new bishop is presented with a Bible, with the following words,

Here are words of eternal life. Take them for your guide and, with all the baptized, proclaim them to the world.

The new bishop is presented with a pastoral staff, with the following words,

We welcome you as a shepherd of Christ's flock. Build up the Church in unity and love, so that the world may believe.

The archbishop says,

Do not forget the trust committed to you as a bishop in the Church of God.

The archbishop presents the new bishop to the community, saying,

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I present N, bishop in the Church of God.

The people may offer their acclamations and applause.

The Seating of a Diocesan Bishop

The new diocesan bishop is led to the bishop's seat. After the new bishop is seated, the dean of the diocese says:

People of the *Diocese* of N, let us welcome our new shepherd.

The people say,

N, we receive you as our bishop.

Be among us as our pastor and leader.

**May the Lord stir up in you the flame of holy charity
and the power of faith that renews the world. Amen.**

The Exchange of Peace

The new bishop rejoins the archbishop preparing to address the assembly. The new bishop then says,

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

All: **And also with you.**

Or

The peace of Christ be always with you.

All: **And also with you.**

A deacon or other assisting minister may say,

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

The Holy Communion

The Preparation of the Gifts

It is appropriate for deacons to prepare the elements and place the vessels on the Table.

The archbishop presides and is joined by the new bishop and assisted by deacons.

The Prayer over the Gifts

The Prayer over the Gifts for the Day or one of the following Prayers may be said or sung.

God of faithfulness,
in every age you call your disciples
to make known your love.
May we who celebrate this eucharist today
be so strengthened in the ministries to which we are called,
that we may always witness to your holy name.
This we pray in the name of Jesus Christ.

All: Amen.

Or

Shepherd of Israel,
your flock is never without care.
Accept our grateful offering
and grant that your Church
may always rejoice in faithful pastors
who are servants of Christ
and stewards of your mysteries.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

The Great Thanksgiving

Any of the eucharistic prayers authorized for use in the Anglican Church of Canada may be used.

The Preface of the Day is used or one suitable such as those recommended in the Appendix, page [XY](#) (forthcoming)

The Lord's Prayer

The recitation of the Lord's Prayer should accommodate the diversity of languages used in the community gathered for the ordination.

The archbishop says,

The Ordinal (March 2025) for trial use, evaluation, and feedback where permitted by the Ordinary; and for study and feedback publicly.

As Christ has taught us and in the language of your choice, let us pray...

The Breaking of the Bread

When the consecrated bread is broken for distribution, any authorized fraction anthem may be said or sung. The archbishop then says,

The gifts of God for the People of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

Or

Behold the mystery of your salvation laid out before you.

Behold who you are; become what you receive.

All: Thanks be to God.

The Communion

The new bishop assists in the distribution of communion.

The community shall always be given an opportunity to receive communion at the ordination eucharist.

The Sending Forth of the Community

Prayer after Communion

The archbishop leads the people in the Prayer after Communion of the Day, or the following Prayer.

All your works praise you, O Lord.

All: And your faithful servants bless you.

Gracious God,

**We thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood
of your Son Jesus Christ.**

**May we, who share his body,
live his risen life;
we, who drink his cup,
bring life to others;**

we, whom the Spirit lights,
give light to the world.
Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us,
so that we and all your children shall be free,
and the whole earth live to praise your name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The new bishop blesses the people.

The Dismissal

A deacon dismisses the people with these or similar words. From Easter Day through the Day of Pentecost, Alleluia is added to the dismissal and the people's response.

Go forth into the world,
rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.

All: Thanks be to God.

A hymn may be sung after the dismissal. Other cultural elements appropriate to a sending rite may be included as ways of moving people out from worship into the world.

Further Directions

Feasts of Apostles or Evangelists are particularly appropriate times for the ordination of bishops. Additional commemorations or memorials may also be appropriate, such as days celebrating the ministries of bishops such as John Charles Roper of Ottawa or Francis de Sales, bishops who were particularly celebrated as Teachers of the Faith, such as John Chrysostom or Gregory the Great or missionary bishops such as Anskar or Cyril and Methodius. Consult the current liturgical Calendar of the Anglican Church of Canada in print or online. Feasts may be transferred for use on a day when it is possible to gather the diocese.

According to ancient tradition, Ember Days are considered particularly appropriate days of fasting and prayer in preparation for ordinations.

Ordination is an important event in the life of the one being ordained and as such belongs to the whole Church. Decisions regarding the content and conduct of the liturgy are made by the archbishop.

Ordinations of bishops normally take place in the diocesan cathedral. Circumstances, including the limitations of historic buildings and climate issues may lead liturgical planners to consider other locations for such large diocesan gatherings. The liturgical celebration itself creates a hallowing of time and place in this moment.

When it is possible, all bishops of churches in full communion with the Anglican Church of Canada within the diocese should be invited to participate in the ordination of the bishop-elect.

In planning the rite, attention should be paid to full use of the liturgical space and its centres, e.g., font, lectern, and altar. Visibility and accessibility are key considerations.

The first principle for territorial or land acknowledgments is to ask what the local First Peoples want to be said. Care is to be taken in crafting further liturgical words. This is an emerging field of ethical, doctrinal, and liturgical work for which language needs to emerge locally. If preceding the actual liturgy it may be an acknowledgment; if included in the Gathering Rite, it is more than acknowledgment: the liturgical context creates of it an act of prayer, and it is important that the words reflect an aspect of prayer. It may take the form of a brief act of prayer for the land in penitence and asking God's help in commitment to care for the land for right relationship amongst Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

Liturgical rubrics give instruction on the appropriate posture at various points in the service. The direction to stand for prayer, for example, reflects the preferred posture of the whole congregation as one united in prayer. Within that one worshipping body individual members may or may not be able to stand or to kneel or to walk unaided. The unity of the body consists in its oneness in prayer rather than its uniformity of posture. Adaptation is a pastoral obligation. Any verbal or written instruction should take care to use forms that do not single out disability. Other forms of verbal instruction include: "please rise", or "please rise in body or spirit", and simple hand gestures (raising upturned palms) may accompany verbal instructions. Care is to be taken regarding the mobility needs of all in liturgical roles.

Throughout the rite there are moments when silence or silent prayer are expected. These silences should be of sufficient length to give an opportunity for reflection and prayer.

As a posture of prayer, the bishop-elect may prostrate themselves during the Veni Creator Spiritus or Veni Sancte Spiritus.

If the bishop-elect is not being ordained to serve in a diocese, the terms 'Diocese' and 'See' in the presentation are replaced by the name of the jurisdiction for which the bishop-elect is being ordained.

At the imposition of hands in the ordination of a bishop, care should be taken to maintain the dignity of the gesture so as to avoid crowding around the bishop-elect. It is appropriate for those bishops who cannot conveniently reach the bishop-elect to extend one of their hands toward the bishop-elect.

If anointing with chrism is to be made on the head of the bishop, this is to be done following the vesting, and prior to the presentation of the bishop immediately preceding the Peace. Guidance and words for this are found in the Appendix.

Other bishops, presbyters and deacons may join in the breaking of the bread. It is appropriate for the bishop-elect, assisted by other clergy and lay persons, to distribute communion.

The roles specifically assigned to deacons in this liturgy may be filled by other assisting ministers if there is no deacon available in the diocese. Care should be taken to maintain the diaconal nature of these roles.

See Appendix for: Litany I, II, and III

Further Appendices will be included in the final version, including:

- Ordination Prefaces,*
- Explanation of and texts for Anointing*
- Additional Suggested Scriptural Texts*
- Forms of Blessings*
- Oaths and Subscriptions of the Ecclesiastical Provinces*
- Suggested Hymnody*

Concerning the Ordination of a Presbyter

In accordance with ancient custom, it is desirable, if possible, that presbyters be ordained on Sundays or other feasts when a large number of the faithful can attend, unless pastoral reasons suggest another day. Particular Days appropriate for the ordination of presbyters can be found in the Further Directions on page 44.

Whenever a bishop is to confer holy orders, at least two presbyters must be present.

The liturgy is preceded by an acknowledgement of the territory to be prepared in consultation with the local community in which the ordination takes place. This acknowledgement may consist of formal statements and other culturally appropriate actions that accentuate the specific context in which the liturgy takes place.

The liturgy may also incorporate other elements expressive of the cultural communities active in the life of the diocese including those of the candidate(s).

It is appropriate that invitations be made to representatives of churches in full communion to participate in the service.

Representatives of the presbyterate, the diaconate and the laity of the diocese for which the new presbyter(s) is (are) being ordained are assigned appropriate duties in the service. Attention should be paid to the diversity of the diocese in the selection of these representatives and to the languages used in the diocese. Presenters should be chosen from amongst those who have been involved in the formation and preparation of the candidate.

It is the role of deacons to read the Gospel and to make ready the Holy Table for the celebration, preparing and placing upon it the bread and cup of wine, and to lead the Litany and Dismissal.

From the beginning of the service until the preparation of the gifts, the bishop presides from a chair placed close to the people, so that all may see and hear what is done.

The candidate(s) is (are) vested in alb or in cassock and surplice, without stole, tippet or other vesture distinctive of ecclesiastical or academic rank or order.

When each candidate is presented, their full baptismal name (designated by the sign NN) is used. Thereafter, it is appropriate to refer to them only by the name and the pronouns by which they are known. They are known as 'candidate' until the consent of the assembly has been given, after which time they are known as 'ordinand.'

Rubrics provide instruction on the appropriate posture at various points in the service and may be adapted to serve the needs of the congregation.

The Gathering of the Community

A hymn, anthem, or other culturally appropriate expressions of praise may accompany the entry of the bishop and others.

All stand.

The Greeting

The bishop greets the community.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

All: And also with you.

From Easter Day through the Day of Pentecost:

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

All: The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!

May God's grace and peace be with us.

All: May God fill our hearts with joy.

The following prayer may be added.

Bishop: Almighty God,

All: to you all hearts are open,

all desires known,

and from you no secrets are hidden.

Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts

by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,

that we may perfectly love you,

and worthily magnify your holy name;

through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The liturgy may continue with the Thanksgiving for Baptism.

Thanksgiving for Baptism

The bishop says,

We who are baptized into Christ Jesus
have become a new creation.

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God has entrusted the ministry of reconciliation to us.

Let us give thanks to the Creator.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Or

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Water is poured into the font (or other vessel) as the bishop continues with one of the following Thanksgivings over the Water.

Form I

Blessed are you, holy God.

You are the creator of the waters of the earth.

You are the fire of rebirth.

You pour out your Spirit on your people
that the world may know your peace and truth.

By water and your Word you claim us as a royal priesthood.

Shower us with your Spirit
and renew our lives with your forgiveness and love.

To you be given honour and praise
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and for ever.

All: Amen.

Or the following:

Form II

Blessed are you, O God,

Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.

You are the One who makes all things new.

Breathe your Spirit, O God, upon this water
that your servants who are washed and anointed
may share with your Christ in his death and resurrection.
Let there be no distinction among those

whom one baptism, one Spirit, one faith make one people.
Together, may we stand as a sign and foretaste of your kingdom,
a covenant to the people, a light to the nations.
We give you praise and honour and worship
through your servant, Jesus the Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and for ever.

All: Amen.

A hymn may be sung. As a reminder of the gift of baptism, the bishop, assisted by other ministers, may sprinkle the community with the water.

The liturgy continues with the Presentation of the Candidate(s).

The Presentation

The people sit. A presbyter and a layperson and additional presenters, if desired, standing before the bishop, present the candidate(s). The bishop begins, saying,

Dear People of God, we have come together to ordain (a) priest(s) in Christ's holy Church.

Presenters: N, bishop in the Church of God, on behalf of the clergy and people of the Diocese of N, we present you NN to be ordained a priest in Christ's holy catholic Church.

Bishop: Have *they* been selected in accordance with the canons and customs of this Church? And do you believe *their* manner of life to be suitable to the exercise of this ministry?

Presenters: We certify to you that *they have* been duly selected, and we believe *them* to be qualified for this order.

The bishop says to the candidate(s),

Will you be loyal to the doctrine, discipline, and worship of Christ as this Church has received them? And will you, in accordance with the canons of this Church, obey your bishop and other ministers who may have authority over you and your work?

The candidate answers,

I am willing and ready to do so; and I solemnly declare that I do believe the holy scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the word of God, and to contain all things necessary to salvation; and I do solemnly promise to conform to the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Anglican Church of Canada.

The candidate(s) then sign(s) the required Oaths and Subscriptions in the sight of all present as the texts are read aloud. The witnesses add their signatures.

All stand. The bishop asks the response of the people.

Dear friends in Christ, you know the importance of this ministry, and the weight of your responsibility in presenting *N* for ordination to the sacred order of presbyters. Therefore, if any of you know any impediment or crime for which we should not proceed, come forward now, and make it known.

A period of silence is held. If no objection is made, the bishop continues,

Is it your will that we ordain this (*these*) candidate(s) (*a*) priest(s)?

People: **It is.**

Will you uphold *them* in this ministry?

People: **We will.**

The Collect of the Day or one of the following Collects may be said or sung.

Bishop: Let us pray.

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light,
look favourably on your whole Church,
that wonderful and sacred mystery.

By the effectual working of your providence,
carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation.

Let the whole world see and know
that things which were cast down are being raised up,
and things which had grown old are being made new,
and that all things are being brought to their perfection
by him through whom all things were made,
your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

All: **Amen.**

Or:

Bishop: Let us pray.

Creator of all, through your incarnate Word
you have called us into the communion of your universal Church:
hear our prayer for your faithful people
that in our vocation and ministry
we may be an instrument of your love

and give to your servant N now to be ordained
the needful gifts of grace;
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

All: Amen.

The liturgy continues with the Proclamation of the Word.

The Proclamation of the Word

The Readings

The Scripture readings of the day including the psalm are proclaimed. Lay persons are assigned the readings which precede the Gospel. Normally a deacon (not an ordinand) reads the Gospel. A psalm, canticle, hymn, anthem or period of silence may follow any of the readings.

The Sermon

The sermon proclaims the good news and points to Christ and his ministry. The sermon may further address the role of the presbyter – as pastor, priest, and teacher - within the community's ministry.

A silence for reflection may follow.

The Nicene Creed

All stand. The bishop leads the community in the proclamation of the Church's faith.

Bishop: Let us confess our faith as we say

All: We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of
all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,

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of one being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and
became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father,
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of
the world to come. Amen.

The Consecration of the Presbyter

The Covenant

The bishop addresses the people.

By the Holy Spirit all who are baptized into Christ Jesus are called into God's own ministry of reconciliation and salvation. We are to proclaim the good news of God in Christ, seeking to serve Christ in all persons. We are to be salt for the earth; we are to be the light of Christ graced by God to participate in the healing and transformation of the world.

Christ is head of the Church and the source of all Christian ministry. Through the ages, the Church has come to ordain bishops, presbyters, and deacons, to equip the saints for the work of ministry and for building up the body of Christ.

All now sit except the ordinand(s), who stand(s) before the bishop. The bishop addresses the ordinand(s).

N, every Christian is called to follow Jesus Christ, serving God, the Source of life, through the power of the Holy Spirit. God now calls you to a particular ministry as pastor, priest, and teacher, working together with the bishop, with deacons and other presbyters, and to take a share in the councils of the Church. You are to proclaim the word of God and to watch for the signs of God's new creation. Formed by that word, you are to call the people to repentance and to declare God's forgiveness to penitent sinners.

In the midst of the gathered community, you are to preside at the sacraments of the new covenant, nourish Christ's people from the riches of his grace and strengthen them to glorify God in this life and in the life to come. With all God's people, you are to tell the story of God's love and baptize new disciples in the name of the Holy Trinity. You are to unfold the Scriptures and to preach the word in season and out of season. You are to love and serve the people among whom you work, caring alike for young and old, strong and weak, rich and poor. Guided by the Spirit, you are to discern and foster the gifts of all God's people, so that the whole Church may be built up in unity, faith, and service.

N, the people have chosen you to be (a) presbyter(s) in the Church of God and have affirmed their trust in you. We praise God and give thanks for your commitment to serve Christ as (a) presbyter(s) in the Church.

You are to serve humbly and joyfully. Remember that the life and work to which you are now called is in God's hands.

Do you believe that you are truly called by God and the Church to the life and work of a priest?

Answer: I believe I am so called.

The following questions are then addressed to the ordinand(s) by the bishop.

Do you now in the presence of the Church commit *yourself* to this trust and responsibility in obedience to Christ?

Answer: I do.

Will you respect and be guided by the pastoral direction and leadership of your bishop?

Answer: I will, with God's help.

Will you be diligent in the reading and study of the holy scriptures, and in seeking the knowledge of such things as may make you a stronger and more able minister of Christ?

Answer: I will, with God's help.

Will you endeavour so to minister the word of God and the sacraments of the new covenant, that the reconciling love of Christ may be known and received?

Answer: I will, with God's help.

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Will you undertake to be a faithful pastor to all whom you are called to serve, labouring together with them and your fellow ministers to build up the people of God?

Answer: I will, with God's help.

Will you seek to pattern your life and relationships in accordance with the teachings of Christ?

Answer: I will, with God's help.

Will you persevere in prayer, both in public and in private, asking God's grace, both for yourself and for others?

Answer: I will, with God's help.

Will you in all things seek not your glory but the glory of Christ?

Answer: I will, to whom be the glory forever.

May God who has given you the will to do these things give you the grace and power to perform them.

Answer: Amen.

The Litany

All stand except the ordinand, who kneel(s) or prostrates before the bishop. The presbyters, including those from full communion churches, stand to the right and left of the bishop. A deacon or other assisting minister calls the people to prayer with these or similar words.

Let us offer our prayers to God before we ordain N for the life and work to which we trust the Holy Spirit has called *them*.

The people remain standing or kneel, as directed by the bishop. One of the following litanies is sung or said. It is appropriate for a deacon to lead the Litany.

(See Forms I and II of Litany, appended)

Veni Creator Spiritus or Veni Sancte Spiritus

Either the Veni Creator Spiritus or Veni Sancte Spiritus is to be sung following the litany.

Silent Prayer

A generous period of silent prayer follows the singing of the Veni Creator Spiritus or the Veni Sancte Spiritus.

The Prayer of Consecration

The bishop and presbyters lift up their hands and the bishop begins the Prayer of Consecration.

We praise and glorify you, gracious God, for throughout the ages you have created a people to love and serve you and formed throughout the world a holy people adopted as your own children, a royal priesthood, a universal Church.

We praise and glorify you, merciful God, because in your great love of creation you sent your only Son Jesus Christ to take the form of a servant; he came to serve and not to be served; and to teach us that whoever would be great among us must be the servant of all.

We praise and glorify you, holy and living God, because through Christ's resurrection and ascension, you have bestowed the gifts of the Holy Spirit on your people and equipped some to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ. We thank you for these many gifts in the one Body of Christ, given for the sake of the world you so love.

And now we give you thanks that you have called your servant(s) *N* to share in this ministry as (a) presbyter(s).

Here the bishop, and the priests gathered around, lay their hands on the head of each ordinand, and the bishop says,

God of grace, through your Holy Spirit, gentle as a dove, living, burning as fire, empower your servant *N* for the office and work of a presbyter in the Church.

Or

Send down your Holy Spirit upon your servant *N*, whom we consecrate in your name to the office and work of a presbyter in the Church.

The bishop continues,

God of all grace, through your Holy Spirit, give your servant(s) strength to proclaim the gospel of your salvation and minister the sacraments of the new covenant. Renew *them* in holiness and give *them* wisdom and discipline to minister faithfully with the people among whom *they* live and work. In union with *their* fellow servants in Christ, may *they* reconcile what is divided, heal what is wounded and restore what is lost.

Accept our prayers, most merciful God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, belong glory and honour, worship and praise, now and for ever.

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All: Amen! Lead us in holiness, that we may grow in the fullness of the stature of Christ.

Vesting and Presentation of the Symbols of Office

The assisting presbyters now vest the new presbyter(s) according to the order of presbyters.

Each new presbyter is presented with a Bible, with the following words,

Receive this Bible as a sign of the authority given you to preach the word of God.

Each new presbyter is presented with a chalice and paten with the following words,

Receive this chalice and paten as signs of the authority given you to administer the sacraments of the new covenant.

The bishop says,

Do not forget the trust committed to you as a presbyter in the Church of God.

The bishop presents the new presbyter(s) to the congregation, saying,

I present N, presbyter(s) in the Church of God.

The people may offer their acclamations and applause.

The Exchange of Peace

The new presbyter, or one of the new presbyters, then says to the congregation,

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

All: And also with you.

Or

The peace of Christ be always with you.

All: And also with you.

A deacon or other assisting minister may say,

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

The Holy Communion

The Preparation of the Gifts

It is appropriate for deacons to prepare the elements and place the vessels on the Holy Table.

The bishop presides and is joined by the new presbyter(s) and assisted by deacons.

The Prayer over the Gifts

The Prayer over the Gifts for the Day or one of the following Prayers may be said or sung.

God of faithfulness,
in every age you call your disciples
to make known your love.
May we who celebrate this eucharist today
be so strengthened in the ministries to which we are called,
that we may always witness to your holy name.
This we pray in the name of Jesus Christ.

All: Amen.

Or

Shepherd of Israel
your flock is never without care.
Accept our grateful offering
and grant that your Church
may always rejoice in faithful pastors
who are servants of Christ
and stewards of your mysteries.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

The Great Thanksgiving

Any of the eucharistic prayers authorized for use in the Anglican Church of Canada may be used.

The Preface of the Day is used or one suitable such as those recommended in the Appendix, page [XY](#) (forthcoming)

The Lord's Prayer

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The recitation of the Lord's Prayer should accommodate the diversity of languages used in the community gathered for the ordination.

The bishop says,

As Christ has taught us and in the language of your choice, let us pray...

The Breaking of the Bread

When the consecrated bread is broken for distribution, any authorized fraction anthem may be said or sung. The bishop then says,

The gifts of God for the People of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

Or

Behold the mystery of your salvation laid out before you.
Behold who you are; become what you receive.

All: Thanks be to God.

The Communion

The new presbyter(s) assist(s) in the distribution of communion.

The community shall always be given an opportunity to receive communion at the ordination eucharist.

The Sending Forth of the Community

Prayer after Communion

The bishop leads the people in the Prayer after Communion of the Day, or the following Prayer.

All your works praise you, O Lord.

All: And your faithful servants bless you.

Gracious God,

**We thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood**

of your Son Jesus Christ.
May we, who share his body,
live his risen life;
we, who drink his cup,
bring life to others;
we, whom the Spirit lights,
give light to the world.
Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us,
so that we and all your children shall be free,
and the whole earth live to praise your name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The bishop blesses the people.

The Dismissal

A deacon dismisses the people with these or similar words. From Easter Day through the Day of Pentecost, Alleluia is added to the dismissal and the people's response.

Go forth into the world, rejoicing
in the power of the Spirit.

All: Thanks be to God.

A hymn may be sung after the dismissal. Other cultural elements appropriate to a sending rite may be included as ways of moving people out from worship into the world.

Further Directions

Days particularly suitable for the ordination of presbyters, in addition to Feasts of our Lord and of the Apostles include: Thomas Bray, Priest and Missionary (February 15), Florence Li Tim Oi, first woman priest in the Anglican Communion (February 26), George Herbert, Priest and Poet (February 27), John and Charles Wesley, Priests and Evangelists (March 3), John Keble, Priest (March 29), John Donne, Priest and Poet (March 31), Frederick Denison Maurice, Priest and Theologian (April 1), Henry Budd, First Indigenous Priest (April 2), William Law, Priest and Spiritual Leader (April 9), Catherine of Siena, Reformer and Spiritual Teacher (April 29), Marie de L'Incarnation, Educator and Spiritual Teacher (April 30), Julian of Norwich, Spiritual Teacher (May 8), Bede, Priest, Monk, Historian and Educator (May 25), John Mason Neale, Priest (August 7), Dominic, Priest and Friar (August 8), Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Maximilien Kolbe, Teachers and Martyrs (August 14), John Stuart, Priest, Missionary (August 17), Bernard, Abbott of Clairvaux (August 20), Robert McDonald, Priest (August 30), Edmund James Peck, Missionary (September 10), Jerome, Teacher of the Faith (September 30), Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross, Spiritual Teachers (October 15), John Wyclif and Jan Hus, Reformers (October 30), Richard Hooker, Priest and Teacher of the Faith (November 3), Charles Simeon, Priest (November 12), Hilda, Abbess of Whitby (November 18), Francis Xavier, Missionary (December 3), Clement of Alexandria, Priest and Theologian (December 5), Simon Gibbons, First Inuit Priest (December 15). Consult the current liturgical Calendar of the Anglican Church of Canada in print or online. Feasts may be transferred for use on a day when it is possible to gather the diocese.

According to ancient tradition, Ember Days are considered particularly appropriate days of fasting and prayer in preparation for ordinations.

Ordination is an important event in the life of the one being ordained and as such belongs to the whole Church. Decisions regarding the content and conduct of the liturgy are made by the bishop.

Ordinations normally take place in a diocesan cathedral, however it may be discerned to be more appropriate for an ordination of a presbyter to take place in a parish church. Care ought to be taken in these circumstances to emphasize that the ordination is an event in which the whole diocese is gathering, in person and spiritually, no matter where it is taking place, and that the ministry of the presbyter is one undertaken within a wider diocesan context.

When it is possible, bishops of churches in full communion with the Anglican Church of Canada within the diocese should be invited to participate in the ordination of presbyters.

In planning the rite, attention should be paid to full use of the liturgical space and its centres, e.g., font, lectern, and altar. Visibility and accessibility are key considerations.

The first principle for territorial or land acknowledgments is to ask what the local First Peoples want to be said. Care is to be taken in crafting further liturgical words. This is an emerging field of ethical, doctrinal, and liturgical work for which language needs to emerge locally. If preceding the actual liturgy it may be

an acknowledgement; if included in the Gathering Rite, it is more than acknowledgment: the liturgical context creates of it an act of prayer, and it is important that the words reflect an aspect of prayer. It may take the form of a brief act of prayer for the land in penitence and asking God's help in commitment to care for the land for right relationship amongst Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

Liturgical rubrics give instruction on the appropriate posture at various points in the service. The direction to stand for prayer, for example, reflects the preferred posture of the whole congregation as one united in prayer. Within that one worshipping body individual members may or may not be able to stand or to kneel or to walk unaided. The unity of the body consists in its oneness in prayer rather than its uniformity of posture. Adaptation is a pastoral obligation. Any verbal or written instruction should take care to use forms that do not single out disability. Other forms of verbal instruction include: "please rise", or "please rise in body or spirit", and simple hand gestures (raising upturned palms) may accompany verbal instructions. Care is to be taken regarding the mobility needs of all in liturgical roles.

Throughout the rite there are moments when silence or silent prayer are expected. These silences should be of sufficient length to give an opportunity for reflection and prayer.

As a posture of prayer the candidate(s) may prostrate themselves during the Veni Creator Spiritus or Veni Sancte Spiritus.

At the imposition of hands in the ordination of a presbyter, care should be taken to maintain the dignity of the gesture so as to avoid crowding around the ordinand(s). It is appropriate for those presbyters who cannot conveniently reach the candidate to extend one of their hands toward the ordinands.

If anointing with chrism is to be made on the hands of the presbyter, this is to be done following the vesting, and prior to the presentation of the presbyter immediately preceding the Peace. Guidance and words for this are found in the Appendix.

Other presbyters, bishops, and deacons may join in the breaking of the bread. It is appropriate for the newly ordained, assisted by other clergy and lay persons, to distribute communion.

The roles specifically assigned to deacons in this liturgy may be filled by other assisting ministers if there is no deacon available in the diocese. Care should be taken to maintain the diaconal nature of these roles.

See Appendix for: Litany I, II, and III

Further Appendices will be included in the final version, including:

- Ordination Prefaces,*
- Explanation of and texts for Anointing*
- Additional Suggested Scriptural Texts*
- Forms of Blessings*
- Oaths and Subscriptions of the Ecclesiastical Provinces*
- Suggested Hymnody*

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Concerning the Ordination of a Deacon

In accordance with ancient custom, it is desirable, if possible, that deacons be ordained on Sundays or other feasts when a large number of the faithful can attend, unless pastoral reasons suggest another day. Particular Days appropriate for the ordination of deacons can be found in the Further Directions on page 60.

Whenever a bishop is to confer holy orders, at least two presbyters must be present.

The liturgy is preceded by an acknowledgement of the territory to be prepared in consultation with the local community in which the ordination takes place. This acknowledgement may consist of formal statements and other culturally appropriate actions that accentuate the specific context in which the liturgy takes place.

The liturgy may also incorporate other elements expressive of the cultural communities active in the life of the diocese, including those of the candidate(s).

It is appropriate that invitations be made to representatives of churches in full communion to participate in the service.

Representatives of the presbyterate, the diaconate and the laity of the diocese for which the new deacon(s) is (are) being ordained are assigned appropriate duties in the service. Attention should be paid to the diversity of the diocese in the selection of these representatives and to the languages used in the diocese. Presenters should be chosen from amongst those who have been involved in the formation and preparation of the candidate.

It is the role of deacons to read the Gospel and to make ready the Holy Table for the celebration, preparing and placing upon it the bread and cup of wine, and to lead the Litany and Dismissal.

From the beginning of the service until the preparation of the gifts, the bishop presides from a chair placed close to the people, so that all may see and hear what is done.

The candidate(s) is (are) vested in alb or in cassock and surplice, without stole, tippet or other vesture distinctive of ecclesiastical or academic rank or order.

When each candidate is presented, their full baptismal name (designated by the sign NN) is used. Thereafter, it is appropriate to refer to them only by the name and the pronouns by which they are known. They are known as 'candidate' until the consent of the assembly has been given, after which time they are known as 'ordinand.'

Rubrics provide instruction on the appropriate posture at various points in the service and may be adapted to serve the needs of the congregation.

The Gathering of the Community

A hymn, anthem, or other culturally appropriate expressions of praise may accompany the entry of the bishop and others.

All stand.

The Greeting

The bishop greets the community.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

All: And also with you.

From Easter Day through the Day of Pentecost:

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

All: The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!

May God's grace and peace be with us.

All: May God fill our hearts with joy.

The following prayer may be added.

Bishop: Almighty God,

All: to you all hearts are open,

all desires known,

and from you no secrets are hidden.

Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts

by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,

that we may perfectly love you,

and worthily magnify your holy name;

through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The liturgy may continue with the Thanksgiving for Baptism.

Thanksgiving for Baptism

The bishop says,

We who are baptized into Christ Jesus

have become a new creation.

God has entrusted the ministry of reconciliation to us.

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Let us give thanks to the Creator.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Or

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Water is poured into the font (or other vessel) as the bishop continues with one of the following Thanksgivings over the Water.

Form I:

Blessed are you, holy God.

You are the creator of the waters of the earth.

You are the fire of rebirth.

You pour out your Spirit on your people
that the world may know your peace and truth.

By water and your Word you claim us as a royal priesthood.

Shower us with your Spirit

and renew our lives

with your forgiveness and love.

To you be given honour and praise

through Jesus Christ our Lord,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and for ever.

All: Amen.

Or the following:

Form II

Blessed are you, O God,

Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.

You are the One who makes all things new.

Breathe your Spirit, O God, upon this water

that your servants who are washed and anointed

may share with your Christ in his death and resurrection.

Let there be no distinction among those

whom one baptism, one Spirit, one faith make one people.

Together, may we stand as a sign and foretaste of your kingdom,
a covenant to the people, a light to the nations.
We give you praise and honour and worship
through your servant, Jesus the Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and for ever.

All: Amen.

A hymn may be sung. As a reminder of the gift of baptism, the bishop, assisted by other ministers, may sprinkle the community with the water.

The liturgy continues with the Presentation of the Candidate(s).

The Presentation

The people sit. A deacon and a layperson and additional presenters, if desired, standing before the bishop, present the candidate(s). The bishop begins, saying,

Dear People of God, we have come together to ordain (a) deacon(s) in Christ's holy Church.

Presenters: N, bishop in the Church of God, on behalf of the clergy and people of the Diocese of N, we present you NN to be ordained a *deacon* in Christ's holy catholic Church.

Bishop: Have *they* been selected in accordance with the canons and customs of this Church? And do you believe *their* manner of life to be suitable to the exercise of this ministry?

Presenters: We certify to you that *they have* been duly selected, and we believe *them* to be qualified for this order.

The bishop says to the candidate(s),

Will you be loyal to the doctrine, discipline, and worship of Christ as this Church has received them? And will you, in accordance with the canons of this Church, obey your bishop and other ministers who may have authority over you and your work?

The candidate answers,

I am willing and ready to do so; and I solemnly declare that I do believe the holy scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the word of God, and to contain all things necessary to salvation; and I do solemnly promise to conform to the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Anglican Church of Canada.

The candidate(s) then sign(s) the required Oaths and Subscriptions in the sight of all present, as the texts are read aloud. The witnesses add their signatures.

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All stand. The bishop asks the response of the people.

Dear friends in Christ, you know the importance of this ministry, and the weight of your responsibility in presenting *N* for ordination to the sacred order of deacons. Therefore, if any of you know any impediment or crime for which we should not proceed, come forward now and make it known.

A period of silence is held. If no objection is made, the bishop continues,

Is it your will that we ordain this (*these*) candidate(s) to be (*a*) deacon(s)?

People: **It is.**

Will you uphold *them* in this ministry?

People: **We will.**

The Collect of the Day or one of the following Collects may be said or sung.

Bishop: Let us pray.

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light,
look favourably on your whole Church,
that wonderful and sacred mystery.
By the effectual working of your providence,
carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation.
Let the whole world see and know
that things which were cast down are being raised up,
and things which had grown old are being made new,
and that all things are being brought to their perfection
by him through whom all things were made,
your Son Jesus Christ our Lord;
who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Or:

Bishop: Let us pray.

Creator of all, through your incarnate Word
you have called us into the communion of your universal Church:
hear our prayer for your faithful people
that in our vocation and ministry
we may be an instrument of your love
and give to your servant *N*,

now to be ordained
the needful gifts of grace;
through our Lord and Saviour
Jesus Christ,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God,
now and for ever.

All: **Amen.**

The liturgy continues with the Proclamation of the Word.

The Proclamation of the Word

The Readings

The Scripture readings of the day including the psalm are proclaimed. Lay persons are assigned the readings which precede the Gospel. Normally a deacon (not the candidate) reads the Gospel. A psalm, canticle, hymn, anthem or period of silence may follow the readings.

The Sermon

The sermon proclaims the good news and points to Christ and his ministry. The sermon may further address the role of deacons within the community's ministry.

A silence for reflection may follow.

The Nicene Creed

All stand. The bishop leads the community in the proclamation of the Church's faith.

Bishop: Let us confess our faith as we say

All: **We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of
all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,**

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God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father,
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Consecration of the Deacon

The Covenant

The bishop addresses the people.

By the Holy Spirit all who are baptized into Christ Jesus are called into God's own ministry of reconciliation and salvation. We are to proclaim the good news of God in Christ, seeking to serve Christ in all persons. We are to be salt for the earth; we are to be the light of Christ graced by God to participate in the healing and transformation of the world.

Christ is head of the Church and the source of all Christian ministry. Through the ages, the Church has come to ordain bishops, presbyters, and deacons to equip the saints for the work of ministry and for building up the body of Christ.

All now sit except the ordinand(s), who stand(s) before the bishop. The bishop addresses the ordinand(s).

N, every Christian is called to follow Jesus Christ, serving God, the Source of life, through the power of the Holy Spirit. God now calls you to the particular ministry of deacons, as heralds of God's new creation. As (a) deacon(s) your ministry is one of service, interpretation and witness directly under the authority of the bishop. You are to assist in public worship, in the ministration of God's word and sacraments and carry out other duties assigned by your bishop. You are to take your place in the councils of the Church. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are to be a model of service, especially among any who are afflicted by poverty, illness or isolation. As (a) deacon(s) in Christ's Church, you are to make Christ's redemptive love known, by your word and example, to those among whom you live and work and worship.

Through prayer and preaching, you are to interpret to the Church the needs, concerns, and hopes of the world and the cries of the earth itself, God's creation. You are to accompany those searching for faith and bring them to baptism. At all times, your life and teaching are to show the People of God that in serving the least among us, we are serving Christ himself.

N, the people have chosen you to be (a) deacon(s) in the Church of God and have affirmed their trust in you. We praise God and give thanks for your commitment to serve Christ as (a) deacon(s) in the Church.

You are to serve humbly and joyfully. Remember that the life and work to which you are now called is in God's hands.

In the case of candidates who have been discerned for ordination to the diaconate:

Bishop: Do you believe that you are truly called by God and the Church to the life and work of a deacon?

Answer: I do.

Or:

In the case of candidates who have been discerned for ordination to the priesthood:

Bishop: It is the practice of our church that those called to the priesthood serve in the diaconate for a period of time. Do you believe you are called to this service?

Answer: I believe I am so called.

The following questions are then addressed to the ordinand(s) by the bishop.

Do you now in the presence of the Church commit *yourself* to this trust and responsibility?

Answer: I do.

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Will you respect and be guided by the pastoral direction and leadership of your bishop?

Answer: I will, with God's help.

Will you seek nourishment from the holy scriptures and study them with God's people, so that the whole Church may be equipped to live out the gospel in the world?

Answer: I will, with God's help.

Will you be diligent in seeking knowledge of such things as may make you a stronger and more able minister of Christ?

Answer: I will, with God's help.

Will you persevere in prayer, both in public and in private, asking God's grace, both for yourself and for others?

Answer: I will, with God's help.

Will you look for Christ in all others, being ready to help and serve those in need?

Answer: I will, with God's help.

Will you work faithfully to discern the needs and cares of the world, to bring these to the Church in prayer, and to stir up the people of God in faithful response to those needs?

Answer: I will, with God's help.

Will you lead the people of God to participate in the life and work of the community, to seek peace and justice and to show compassion for all people?

Answer: I will, with God's help.

Will you seek to pattern your life and relationships in accordance with the teachings of Christ?

Answer: I will, with God's help.

Will you in all things seek not your glory but the glory of Christ?

Answer: I will, with God's help.

May God who has given you the will to do these things give you the grace and power to perform them.

Answer: Amen.

The Litany

All stand except the ordinand, who kneel(s) or prostrates before the bishop. The deacons, including those from full communion church stand to the right and left of the bishop. A deacon or other assisting minister calls the people to prayer with these or similar words.

Let us offer our prayers to God before we ordain N for the life and work to which we trust the Holy Spirit has called *them*.

The people remain standing or kneel, as directed by the bishop. One of the following litanies is sung or said. It is appropriate for a deacon to lead the Litany.

(See Forms I and II of Litany, appended)

Veni Creator Spiritus or Veni Sancte Spiritus

Either the Veni Creator Spiritus or Veni Sancte Spiritus is to be sung following the litany.

Silent Prayer

A generous period of silent prayer follows the singing of the Veni Creator Spiritus or the Veni Sancte Spiritus.

The Prayer of Consecration

The bishop lifts up their hands and begins the Prayer of Consecration.

We praise and glorify you, gracious God, for throughout the ages you have created a people to love and serve you and formed throughout the world a holy people adopted as your own children, a royal priesthood, a universal Church.

We praise and glorify you, merciful God, because in your great love of creation you sent your only Son Jesus Christ to take the form of a servant; he came to serve and not to be served; and to teach us that whoever would be great among us must be the servant of all.

We praise and glorify you, holy and living God, because through Christ's resurrection and ascension, you have bestowed the gifts of the Holy Spirit on your people and equipped some to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ. We thank you for these many gifts in the one Body of Christ, given for the sake of the world you so love.

And now we give you thanks that you have called your servant(s) N to share in this ministry as (a) deacon(s).

Here the bishop lays their hands on the head of each ordinand, and the bishop says,

God of grace, through your Holy Spirit, gentle as a dove, living, burning as fire, empower your servant N for the office and work of a deacon in the Church.

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Or

Send down your Holy Spirit upon your servant N, whom we consecrate in your name to the office and work of a deacon in the Church.

The bishop continues,

God of all grace, through your Holy Spirit, give these your servant(s) strength to fulfil their ministry and constancy in advancing your gospel in the world. May *they* follow the example of Christ who washed the feet of his disciples. May *their* words declare your love and *their* actions reveal your glory, so that your people may walk with *them* in the way of truth and be made ready for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Accept our prayers, most merciful God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, belong glory and honour, worship and praise, now and for ever.

All: Amen! Lead us to Christ, in whose service is perfect freedom!

Vesting and Presentation of the Symbols of Office

The assisting deacons now vest the new deacon(s) according to the order of deacons.

Each new deacon is presented with a Bible, with the following words,

Receive this Bible as a sign of the authority given you to proclaim God's word and to assist in the ministration of Christ's holy sacraments.

Each new deacon is presented with a towel and basin with the following words,

Receive this towel and basin. Remember that strength and growth in the life of discipleship come not by power, authority, or even miracle, but by faithful service.

The bishop says,

Do not forget the trust committed to you as a deacon in the Church of God.

The bishop presents the new deacon(s) to the congregation, saying,

I present N, deacon(s) in the Church of God.

The people may offer their acclamations and applause.

The Exchange of Peace

The bishop then says to the congregation,

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

All: **And also with you.**

Or

The peace of Christ be always with you.

All: **And also with you.**

The new deacon, or one of the new deacons, then says,

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

The Holy Communion

The Preparation of the Gifts

The new deacon prepares the elements and places the vessels on the Holy Table.

The bishop presides and is assisted by deacons.

The Prayer over the Gifts

The Prayer over the Gifts for the Day or the following may be said or sung.

God of faithfulness,
in every age you call your disciples
to make known your love.
May we who celebrate this eucharist today
be so strengthened in the ministries to which we are called,
that we may always witness to your holy name.
This we pray in the name of Jesus Christ.

All: **Amen.**

Or

Shepherd of Israel,
your flock is never without care.
Accept our grateful offering

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and grant that your Church
may always rejoice in faithful pastors
who are servants of Christ
and stewards of your mysteries.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

The Great Thanksgiving

Any of the eucharistic prayers authorized for use in the Anglican Church of Canada may be used.

The Preface of the Day is used or one suitable such as those recommended in the Appendix, page [XY](#) (forthcoming)

The Lord's Prayer

The recitation of the Lord's Prayer should accommodate the diversity of languages used in the community gathered for the ordination.

The bishop says,

As Christ has taught us and in the language of your choice, let us pray...

The Breaking of the Bread

When the consecrated bread is broken for distribution, any authorized fraction anthem may be said or sung. The bishop then says,

The gifts of God for the People of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

Or

Behold the mystery of your salvation laid out before you.

Behold who you are; become what you receive.

All: Thanks be to God.

The Communion

The new deacon(s) assist(s) in the distribution of communion.

The community shall always be given an opportunity to receive communion at the ordination eucharist.

The Sending Forth of the Community

Prayer after Communion

The bishop leads the people in the Prayer after Communion of the Day, or the following Prayer.

All your works praise you, O Lord.

All: And your faithful servants bless you.

Gracious God,

we thank you for feeding us

with the body and blood

of your Son Jesus Christ.

May we, who share his body,

live his risen life;

we, who drink his cup,

bring life to others;

we, whom the Spirit lights,

give light to the world.

Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us,

so that we and all your children shall be free,

and the whole earth live to praise your name;

through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The bishop blesses the people.

The Dismissal

The new deacon, or one of the new deacons, dismisses the people with these or similar words. From Easter Day through the Day of Pentecost, Alleluia is added to the dismissal and the people's response.

Go forth into the world,
rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.

All: Thanks be to God.

A hymn may be sung after the dismissal. Other cultural elements appropriate to a sending rite may be included as ways of moving people out from worship into the world.

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Days particularly suitable for the ordination of Deacons, in addition to Feasts of our Lord and of the Apostles include: Marguerite Bourgeoys, Educator in New France (January 12), Vincent, Deacon of Saragossa (January 22), Emily Ayckbowm foundress of the Community of the Sisters of the Church (April 5), Florence Nightingale (Nurse, Social Reformer) (May 12), William Wilberforce, Social Reformer (July 29), Stephen (26 December or 3 August), Laurence, Deacon and Martyr (August 10), Nicholas Ferrar, Deacon (December 3). Consult the current liturgical Calendar of the Anglican Church of Canada in print or online. Feasts may be transferred for use on a day when it is possible to gather the diocese. According to ancient tradition, Ember Days are considered particularly appropriate days of fasting and prayer in preparation for ordinations.

Ordination is an important event in the life of the one being ordained and as such belongs to the whole Church. Decisions regarding the content and conduct of the liturgy are made by the bishop.

Ordinations normally take place in a diocesan cathedral, however it may be discerned to be more appropriate for an ordination of a deacon to take place in a parish church. Care ought to be taken in these circumstances to emphasize that the ordination is an event in which the whole diocese is gathering, in person and spiritually, no matter where it is taking place, and that the ministry of a deacon is exercised in direct responsibility with the diocesan bishop.

When it is possible, bishops of churches in full communion with the Anglican Church of Canada within the diocese should be invited to participate in the ordination of deacons.

In planning the rite, attention should be paid to full use of the liturgical space and its centres, e.g., font, lectern, and altar. Visibility and accessibility are key considerations.

The first principle for territorial or land acknowledgments is to ask what the local First Peoples want to be said. Care is to be taken in crafting further liturgical words. This is an emerging field of ethical, doctrinal, and liturgical work for which language needs to emerge locally. If preceding the actual liturgy it may be an acknowledgement; if included in the Gathering Rite, it is more than acknowledgment: the liturgical context creates of it an act of prayer, and it is important that the words reflect an aspect of prayer. It may take the form of a brief act of prayer for the land in penitence and asking God's help in commitment to care for the land for right relationship amongst Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

Liturgical rubrics give instruction on the appropriate posture at various points in the service. The direction to stand for prayer, for example, reflects the preferred posture of the whole congregation as one united in prayer. Within that one worshipping body individual members may or may not be able to stand or to kneel or to walk unaided. The unity of the body consists in its oneness in prayer rather than its uniformity of posture. Adaptation is a pastoral obligation. Any verbal or written instruction should take care to use forms that do not single out disability. Other forms of verbal instruction include: "please rise", or "please rise in body or spirit", and simple hand gestures (raising upturned palms) may accompany verbal instructions. Care is to be taken regarding the mobility needs of all in liturgical roles.

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Throughout the rite there are moments when silence or silent prayer are expected. These silences should be of sufficient length to give an opportunity for reflection and prayer.

As a posture of prayer the candidate(s) may prostrate themselves during the Veni Creator Spiritus or Veni Sancte Spiritus.

If there are no other deacons present, the vesting of the new deacon may be done by the presenters or others who have been involved in the new deacon(s)'s formation for ordained ministry.

Other deacons, bishops, and presbyters may join in the breaking of the bread. It is appropriate for the newly ordained, assisted by other clergy and lay persons, to distribute communion.

The roles specifically assigned to deacons in this liturgy may be filled by other assisting ministers if there is no deacon available in the diocese. Care should be taken to maintain the diaconal nature of these roles.

See Appendix for: Litany I, II, and III

Further Appendices will be included in the final version, including:

- Ordination Prefaces,*
- Explanation of and texts for Anointing*
- Additional Suggested Scriptural Texts*
- Forms of Blessings*
- Oaths and Subscriptions of the Ecclesiastical Provinces*
- Suggested Hymnody*

Appendix: The Litany

Form I	Form II	Form III
God the Father, have mercy on us.	God the Father, have mercy upon us.	Holy God, holy and mighty, holy immortal one Have mercy on us.
God the Son, have mercy on us.	God the Son, have mercy upon us.	Holy God, holy and mighty, holy immortal one Have mercy on us.
God the Holy Spirit, have mercy upon us.	God the Holy Spirit, have mercy upon us.	Holy God, holy and mighty, holy immortal one Have mercy on us.
Holy Trinity, one God, have mercy upon us.	Holy, blessed and glorious Trinity, have mercy upon us.	Holy God, holy and mighty, holy immortal one Have mercy on us.
We pray to you, Lord Christ. Lord, hear our prayer.	From all evil and mischief; from pride, vanity and hypocrisy; from envy, hatred and malice; and from all evil intent, Good Lord, deliver us.	Govern and direct your holy Church; fill it with love and truth; and grant it that unity which is your will. Hear us, O Christ.
For the holy Church of God, that it may be filled with truth and love, and be found without fault at the day of your coming, we pray to you, O Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.	From sloth, worldliness and love of money; from hardness of heart and contempt for your word and your laws. Good Lord, deliver us.	Pour out your Spirit on all your faithful who, in baptism, have joined your mission in the world. Hear us, O Christ.
For all members of your Church in their vocation and ministry, that they may serve you in a true and godly life, we pray to you, O Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.	From sins of body and mind; from the deceits of the world, the flesh and the devil, Good Lord, deliver us.	Give your people grace to witness to your word and bring forth the fruit of your Spirit. Hear us, O Christ.
For all your faithful people who, in baptism, have joined your mission in the world. Lord, hear our prayer.	In all times of sorrow, in all times of joy; in the hour of death, and at the day of judgement, Good Lord, deliver us.	Enlighten N our <i>archbishop/bishop</i> , and all bishops, priests, and deacons with your knowledge and understanding, that by their teaching and their lives they may proclaim your word. Hear us, O Christ.
For N our <i>archbishop/bishop</i> , and for all bishops, priests and deacons, that they may be filled with your love, may hunger for truth, and may	Govern and direct your holy Church; fill it with love and	

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<p>thirst after righteousness, we pray to you, O Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.</p> <p>For N, chosen <i>bishop/priest/deacon</i> in your Church, we pray to you, O Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.</p> <p>That <i>this person</i> may faithfully fulfil the duties of this ministry, build up your Church, and glorify your name, we pray to you, O Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.</p> <p>That by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit <i>this person</i> may be sustained and encouraged to persevere to the end, we pray to you, O Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.</p> <p>For all who fear God and believe in you, Lord Christ, that our divisions may cease and that all may be one as you and the Father are one, we pray to you, O Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.</p> <p>For God's mission in the world, that in faithful witness to your resurrection the Church may proclaim the good news to the ends of the earth, we pray to you, O Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.</p>	<p>truth; and grant it that unity which is your will. Hear us, good Lord.</p> <p>Pour out your Spirit on all your faithful who, in baptism, have joined your mission in the world. Hear us, good Lord.</p> <p>Give us boldness to preach the gospel in all the world, and to make disciples of all the nations. Hear us, good Lord.</p> <p>Enlighten your ministers with knowledge and understanding, that by their teaching and their lives they may proclaim your word. Hear us, good Lord.</p> <p>Bless your servant now to be made <i>bishop/priest/deacon</i>, that this person may serve your Church and reveal your glory in the world. Hear us, good Lord.</p> <p>Give your people grace to hear and receive your word, and to bring forth the fruit of the Spirit. Hear us, good Lord.</p> <p>Bring into the way of truth all who have erred and are deceived. Hear us, good Lord.</p>	<p>Give your wisdom and heavenly grace to N., chosen <i>bishop/priest/deacon</i> in your Church, that this person may faithfully fulfill the duties of this ministry, build up your Church and glorify your name. Hear us, O Christ.</p> <p>Sustain and encourage N/NN by the indwelling of your Holy Spirit to persevere to the end. Hear us, O Christ.</p> <p>Give us boldness to preach the gospel in all the world, and to make disciples of all nations. Hear us, O Christ.</p> <p>Bring all who have lost their way into the light of your truth. Strengthen those who stand; comfort and help the fainthearted; and raise up the fallen. Hear us, O Christ.</p> <p>Guide the leaders of the nations into the ways of justice and peace. Hear us, O Christ.</p> <p>Grant health and favour to all who hold office in this land and help them to serve the people according to your will. Hear us, O Christ.</p>
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<p>For all who search for the Wisdom of God, that our paths may lead us to lives of justice, kindness and humility, we pray to you, O Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.</p> <p>For those who have no faith, and for those who have lost their faith, that they may receive the light of the gospel, we pray to you, O Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.</p> <p><i>Additional prayers may be offered at the discretion of the bishop.</i></p> <p>For ourselves: for the forgiveness of our sins, and for the grace of the Holy Spirit to amend our lives, we pray to you, O Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.</p> <p>For all who have died in the communion of the Church, and those whose faith is known to you alone, that, with all the saints, they may have rest in that place where there is no pain or grief, but life eternal, we pray to you, O Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.</p> <p>Rejoicing in the communion of [the ever-blessed Virgin Mary, (blessed N) [and for...]] and all the saints, let us commend ourselves, and one</p>	<p>Strengthen those who stand; comfort and help the fainthearted; raise up the fallen; and finally beat down Satan under our feet. Hear us, good Lord.</p> <p><i>Additional prayers may be offered at the discretion of the bishop.</i></p> <p>Give us true repentance; forgive our sins of negligence and ignorance, and our deliberate sins; and grant us the grace of your Holy Spirit, to amend our lives according to your holy word. Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal one, have mercy upon us.</p> <p><i>The archbishop prays,</i></p> <p>Almighty God, you have promised to hear those who pray in the name of your Son. Grant that what we have asked in faith we may obtain according to your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.</p>	<p>Prosper the labours of those who take counsel for the nations of the world, that a spirit of respect and reconciliation may grow among all peoples. Hear us, O Christ.</p> <p>Give us the will to use the resources of the earth to your glory and for the good of all. Hear us, O Christ.</p> <p>Bless and keep all your people. Guard and protect all children. Hear us, O Christ.</p> <p>Comfort and unburden the lonely, the oppressed, and all those who are in sorrow or mourning. Hear us, O Christ.</p> <p>Keep in safety those who travel and all who are in peril Hear us, O Christ.</p> <p>Heal the sick in body, mind or spirit and provide for the homeless, the hungry and the destitute. Hear us, O Christ.</p> <p>Forgive our enemies, persecutors and slanderers, and turn their hearts. Hear us, O Christ.</p> <p>Rejoicing in the communion of saints, we remember those who have died. Hear us, O God, and grant them a share</p>
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<p>another, and all our life to Christ our God. To you, O Lord.</p> <p><i>The archbishop prays,</i></p> <p>Almighty and eternal God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth, mercifully accept the prayers of your people, and strengthen us to do your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.</p>		<p>in your eternal glory. Hear us, O Christ.</p> <p><i>Additional prayers may be offered at the discretion of the bishop.</i></p> <p>Give us true repentance, forgive us our sins of negligence and ignorance and our deliberate sins; and grant us the grace of your Holy Spirit to amend our lives according to your word. Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, Have mercy on us.</p> <p><i>The archbishop prays,</i></p> <p>Almighty God, you have promised to hear those who pray in the name of your Son. Grant that what we have asked in faith we may obtain according to your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.</p>
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COUNCIL OF GENERAL SYNOD
Queen of Apostles Renewal Centre
March 7 – 9, 2025

Moved by: Susan Bell (Niagara)

Seconded by: Rosie Jane Tailfeathers (Calgary; ACIP Co-Chair)

MOTION:

Be it resolved:

- a. that this Council of General Synod approve for Study, Trial Use, Evaluation, and Feedback, *The Ordinal (2025)* for use where permitted by the Ordinary for a period of three years or up to the time of the next meeting of the General Synod.
- b. request of dioceses that any use of *The Ordinal (2025)* be followed with a feedback

A) Does this motion contain within it any financial implications?

Yes _____ No X

B) If yes, has the CoGS Expenditures Committee considered the implications?

Yes _____ No _____

C) Does this motion contain within it any staffing implications?

Yes X No _____

CARRIED

ARC Canada Statement on Church Apologies

December 2, 2024

“I’m sorry.”

Many of us know the profound healing effect of hearing these or similar words spoken, in sincerity and truth, by someone who has in some way wronged us. Many of us also know the deeply humbling feeling of being the one who offers a genuine apology.

In recent years several churches have offered formal apologies to individuals and communities of people who have been harmed – sometimes traumatically – by our words and deeds. In Canada, for example, Catholic and Anglican leaders have formally apologized for our churches’ role in the destructive system of Indian Residential Schools.

Do such apologies make any difference? What makes an apology genuine? Why apologize in the first place? These are some of the questions we’ve heard people inside and outside of our churches ask, and they’re among the questions we’ve asked ourselves in preparing this latest work of the Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue of Canada, which also includes Lutheran and Eastern Catholic participation.

This document explores the idea of apology through the lenses of scripture, theology, and history. We hope that this study might help the members of our churches reflect on the meaning and importance – and limits – of making formal apologies to those whom we have wronged. It can also be a resource for church leaders who may be called upon to offer such an apology on behalf of the church to which they belong.

A user guide offers suggestions on some of the different ways this study might be used in your own local context, and we encourage you to find ways to do so. The season of Lent, with its penitential focus, would be a particularly appropriate time to reflect on some of these questions with the help of this document.

When an apology is genuinely offered, the hope is that it will be genuinely accepted and that it will mark a new beginning in the relationship between the one forgiven and the one forgiving. Such forgiveness is at the heart of our common Christian faith – confessing sometimes painful truth in the hope that we might know reconciliation with one another and with God.

Most Rev. Brian Dunn
Archbishop of Halifax-Yarmouth
Roman Catholic Co-chair

Rt. Rev. Bruce Myers
Bishop of Quebec
Anglican Co-chair

Status of this document

This document is produced in the name of the Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue of Canada (ARC Canada) and does not necessarily represent the official views of the Anglican Church of Canada (ACC) or the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB). The ARC Canada dialogue is, however, formally sponsored by the ACC and CCCC, and its members are appointed to it by those bodies to undertake this work.

Introduction

The Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue of Canada (ARC) has been in existence since 1971. Over the years it has published various statements, messages, and educational resources on topics of ecumenical interest for these two churches in the Canadian context. With the deepening of full communion relations between Anglicans and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada over the last two decades, recent years have seen the appointment of two Lutheran participants in the dialogue, serving as Lutheran members within the Anglican contingent. The addition of perspectives from Eastern Catholic churches has also enriched the dialogue.

Inspired by the historic visits to Canada in 2022 of Pope Francis and Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, the Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue of Canada has been exploring the reality and history of church apologies. An initial round of presentations by six smaller ARC working groups reviewed aspects of what we understand by apology in Scripture, church doctrine, church history, penitential traditions, sources beyond the church, and Eastern Christian perspectives. A conversation with members of the ARC Bishops Dialogue in October 2023 led to our decision to produce a document that could help church leaders who may be called on to make new apologies, as well as to assist church members reflect on the meaning and significance of church apologies. We hope that the following text fulfils that twofold purpose. It is accompanied by a user guide that offers suggestions for how it might be studied and used. What this document is not, is a “how to” manual on the process of acknowledgement, apology and resulting action. Nor is it an extensive analysis of any single instance of apology.

The post-Second World War era has seen the rise of truth commissions, official public apologies, monuments, memorials, commemorations, and other acknowledgements of political injustice. These initiatives respond to the realities of past wars, genocide, dictatorship, racism, and systemic abuse of Indigenous Peoples. In this culture of confession and apology for human rights violations, churches, too, have been called to account for the broken parts of their histories.

Turning to their own biblical and theological traditions, many churches have sought ways to respond that are faithful to their self-understanding yet responsive to the signs of the times. In line with civic society, recognition of specific violations of the fundamental rights of persons and communities has been a critical element in the several apologies issued by various churches over the years. Statements expressing shame, regret, and contrition have been made with respect to a variety of historic and more recent failings, including, for example, intra-Christian persecution, antisemitism and the Holocaust/Shoah, sexual abuse in the church, and the church’s role in colonialism. For Catholics, the Millennium Day of Pardon was a high-profile example of a

global and comprehensive act of repentance addressed to various groups, including women, ethnic, cultural, and religious communities. These apologies prompt questions about the meaning of apologies on behalf of a church, the elements of these apologies, and whether and how these can lead to reconciliation, transformed relationships, and healing of memories.

Scripture

It is significant to note that apology, in the narrow sense of the word, is almost entirely absent from the biblical narrative. This is likely the result of cultural differences of the times and places when and where the scriptures were written. The community figures much more prominently in relation to seeking right relations in biblical contexts than is commonly the case in our times which tend to be oriented far more towards the individual. However, related terms such as confession and repentance are regular themes. The subject of “reconciliation,” as another specific example, permeates scripture. It is understood as the responsibility of restoring right relations between the community and God on the one hand, and among members of the community on the other. Indeed, one could see this as one of the most fundamental threads of the biblical narrative woven throughout.

The Bible also seems to be far more interested in actions that right wrongs than it is in verbal expressions about those actions. There may be a verbal acknowledgement of wrongs as one part of a larger process, but the emphasis is much more on contrition and repentance being displayed through restitution and making amends. This is a pertinent observation because some form of this sentiment often emerges in discussions of apology in the churches today: Saying words is important, but now show me your words in action.

In the Eastern Christian traditions, the priority of the Psalms within the Scriptures, particularly with their attention to petitions for both judgment and mercy from God in response to certain actions and situations, offers much ground for fruitful reflection. The public recognition of sin was an important part of the corporate worship life of the People of Israel, which can be instructive to Christians in its own way as well.

ARC’s study in this area also leads us to the insight that one potential limitation of the biblical material is that there can be a tendency to highlight how the activity of the offender makes things right between them and God, while the corresponding reparation for the victims does not receive as much attention. In the contemporary discussions of church apology, the latter dimension tends to be much more in view.

Reflections on Biblical episodes of confession, conversion, and community.

While it has already been noted that there are few if any instances of apology in Scripture, there are strong themes of repentance, confession, conversion, and community throughout. The stories of Zacchaeus and the Prodigal Son, along with Psalm 51, provide helpful starting points for conversation along these lines.

Luke 19 – Zacchaeus

The encounter with Zacchaeus, while it does not involve an apology from an offender to a victim, is perhaps the closest analogue in the New Testament. In a setting where restitution was more significant than verbal apology, Zacchaeus' commitment to restitution highlights both his public acceptance of guilt and his initiative towards repairing relationships with those he has wronged. The first part of his offer is to give half of his possessions to "the poor." This is not a specific compensation to individuals he has wronged, but it can be read as a recognition by Zacchaeus that his bad acts have harmed the community as a whole and impoverished many of its members.

The second part of Zacchaeus' offer promises fourfold restoration to anyone he has wronged directly. In general, Jewish law provides for double compensation in the case of simple theft: typically, this is interpreted as imposing on the thief the same loss which the thief would have caused to the victim. The only specific example of fourfold restoration comes in Exodus 22:1, where the theft of a sheep requires four sheep in recompense. Zacchaeus' offer to repay four times what he has stolen is, on the one hand, an acknowledgement that he was more than a simple thief; and on the other hand, it is an appeal to his community to receive him back with proportionate generosity. Since one aspect of Torah details the ways in which the community cares for its poor, this offer can also be seen as expressing a desire to be restored as a member of that community.

The story also does not directly feature any victims of Zacchaeus's career in white-collar crime. We are left to wonder what their response might be, and what their role is in the restoration of community.

Luke 15 – The Prodigal Son

The responses of the father and the older son present two different responses to the confession of the one who has harmed them. On the one hand, the father's response is immediate, perhaps even premature – the forgiveness begins even before the confession is spoken – and unequivocal. The older son's response is quite the opposite: reluctant (some would say angry) and expressing the ways he feels that he has been wronged.

Once the son is honest about the troubles he has made for himself, he makes a plan to return home with a confession: "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you." While "before you" is somewhat ambiguous – is he recognizing the hurt he has caused his father or is he simply expressing his shame at being seen in such a state by his father? – the confession acknowledges that there are other parties involved and that his actions have affected those other parties.

The son's confession is somewhat ambiguous in its motives. He could be offering a confession that is rooted in a realization that he has harmed his father (and brother?), or he could be offering a thinly veiled attempt to get back home to a roof over his head and some food on the table. Putting aside the question of the motive, the son's confession could be seen as a step back into community. The confession could also be heard as a desire for a changed relationship in that

community. Perhaps we could read “Treat me as one of your hired hands” as an intention to re-enter the household in a new way, as a servant rather than as a master.

There is a third party involved as well, and we could ask whether the older son has also been wronged, even if indirectly. There is no contact between the sons in the story, but their relationship has clearly been affected. Is a confession complete, or can healing begin to happen, if some relationships in the community are left unaddressed?

Psalm 51 – Against you only have I sinned

Psalm 51 raises another perspective concerning third parties. The psalmist confesses to God: “Against you, you alone, have I sinned.” On the one hand, the confession is helpful in its acknowledgement that a sin against another is a sin against God. This makes God not simply an observer or judge, but one of the parties affected by the sin. The community that is broken does not consist only of the one who is harmed and the one who has been harmed. Rather, the community includes God as well, and when relationships between people are broken the relationship with God is in some way broken. Matthew 25 works this out even more explicitly.

The confession is *incomplete*, though, in that it does not acknowledge the one who has been directly harmed, and throughout the psalm, the psalmist does not seem to suggest that a change in behaviour or some kind of direct restitution is needed. So the victim is still isolated, the perpetrator expresses no intention to right what has been wronged, and the community – the psalmist, the one wronged, and God – is still broken.

As with the story of Zacchaeus, we are also left to wonder what the response of the victim might be, and what role their voice will play in the healing of broken relationships.

Theological Considerations

Christian people share a common belief in the dignity of every human being as being created in the image of God. The church bears an innate responsibility to uphold human dignity in a common commitment to resisting and overcoming injustices for the sake of every person and the integrity of creation. God’s grace enables the church and its people to face their fault in harms done to others, seek forgiveness, and work towards reconciliation.

In their reflection on the central importance of grace in Christian life and mission, members of ARC Canada turned to the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (JDDJ),¹ a consensus document solemnly signed by representatives of the Lutheran World Federation and the Catholic Church in Augsburg, Germany on October 31, 1999. Officially recognized and mutually received by the respective church bodies, this agreement has great ecumenical significance as it effectively resolves one of the key theological conflicts of the Reformation.

1

<https://lutheranworld.org/sites/default/files/Joint%20Declaration%20on%20the%20Doctrine%20of%20Justification.pdf>

Since then, the JDDJ has been affirmed by the World Methodist Council, the Anglican Consultative Council and the World Communion of Reformed Churches.

It states: “By grace alone, in faith in Christ’s saving work and not because of any merit on our part, we are accepted by God and receive the Holy Spirit, who renews our hearts while equipping and calling us to good works” (JDDJ, 15). Our shared faith in the justifying grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ gives assurance of God’s grace, forgiveness of sins, and liberation from the power of sin and death. God’s grace enables the faithful to hear God’s promises anew, confess their sins, participate in life in Christ, and be exhorted to live in righteousness. This grace empowers our churches to reflect upon wrongs committed in the name of the church against individuals and groups of people, admit our failures, and seek forgiveness from those who may have been harmed by actions of the church or its members.

In March 2019, representatives of Anglican, Lutheran, Methodist, Reformed, and Roman Catholic churches met at the University of Notre Dame to explore the implications of their shared adherence to the JDDJ. They issued a joint statement affirming:

“that justification calls for sanctification, a holiness of life which is both personal and social, and advances a common commitment to resisting and overcoming injustices, which should lead to a life of justice in the world, recognizing and defending human dignity and the integrity of all that God has created.”²

Christians believe that all human beings are created in the image and likeness of God, redeemed in Christ, and called to communion with God. All share an equal and inalienable dignity which is not dependent on any accomplishment or membership in any group and cannot be lost by any birth defect, disease or crime – it just is. The implications of this core belief are spelled out in the Second Vatican Council’s *Gaudium et Spes*, the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World,³ which states:

“With respect to the fundamental rights of the person, every type of discrimination, whether social or cultural, whether based on sex, race, colour, social condition, language or religion, is to be overcome and eradicated as contrary to God’s intent” (art. 29).

In this context, the specific character of the wrongs committed in the name of the church against individuals and groups of people is clearly identified. Recognition of specific violations of the fundamental rights of persons and groups has been a key element in the several apologies issued by various churches over the years.

Furthermore, our churches agree that sin can be characterized as personal sin committed by an individual; corporate sin committed by a group or organization; and structural or systemic sin that is embedded in a society. In its ecclesial identity, the church in its visible form is “one body,” and the responsibility for wrongs committed in the name of the church transcends the

² https://news.nd.edu/assets/315013/jddj_final_statement.pdf

³ https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_cons_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html

limitations of time. The Vatican's International Theological Commission document *Memory and Reconciliation* quotes Pope John Paul II:

“because of ‘the bond which unites us to one another in the mystical body, all of us, though not personally responsible and without encroaching on the judgment of God who alone knows every heart, bear the burden of the errors and faults of those who have gone before us.’”⁴

In 2006 the Church of England apologized for its complicity in the transatlantic slave trade, which was abolished in 1807. During a debate about the apology at the Church of England's General Synod, then-Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams made a similar point about the need for the present-day church to accept responsibility for the sins of its past:

“The Body of Christ is not just a body that exists at any one time; it exists across history and we therefore share the shame and the sinfulness of our predecessors, and part of what we can do, with them and for them in the Body of Christ, is prayerful acknowledgment of the failure that is part of us, not just of some distant ‘them’.”⁵

In recent decades our communions of churches have reflected on past errors committed in the name of the church and sought to take responsibility according to the biblical principles of confession, repentance, and amendment of life.

Picking up on the Jewish tradition as expressed in the Ten Commandments (Ex 20:1-17; Deut 5:1-22), the Gospels frequently remind the Christian community that their relationship with God is intimately linked to how they relate to one another. For example, the last judgement scene leaves no doubt that “whatever you did to one of the least of these who are members of my family you did it to me” (Mt 25:40), and the First Epistle of John states clearly, “those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen” (1 Jn 4:20). In light of the above, Matthew's Gospel offers practical advice which can be seen as a direct response to questions about the importance of apologizing for injury inflicted on a neighbour: “When you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled with your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift” (Mt 5:23-24). Further, as Zacchaeus' encounter with Jesus makes clear, repentance for past wrong-doing includes reparation and commitment to a new way of life (Lk 19:1-10).

In human experience, apology is an important step – but only a first step – in rebuilding relationships between individuals and groups. In the theological understanding of our communions of churches, apology is accompanied by repentance (turning around) and conversion (amendment of life) evidenced by faith active in love towards God and our neighbours. The sincerity of any apology will be judged by actual changes in behaviour. As the old adage states: “I can't hear what you're saying because what you're doing is ringing so loud

⁴ https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti_documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20000307_memory-reconc-itc_en.html

⁵ <http://rowanwilliams.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/1783/bicentenary-of-the-act-for-the-abolition-of-the-slave-trade-speech-to-general-synod.html>

in my ears.” With this in mind, apologies usually include commitments to take action to correct wrongs leading to concrete change, healing and reconciliation towards right relationships. In apologies by the churches, actions towards reconciliation may be specific to the group wronged and may be developed in dialogue with representatives of the wronged party. The depth and effectiveness of the apology will be judged not only by the wronged party’s response but also by the degree of transformation within the church as it bears witness to the gospel of Christ in word and action.

Archbishop Michael Peers, in the 1993 apology of the Anglican Church of Canada to Indigenous Peoples for its role in the Residential Schools of Canada, speaks for all our churches, when he says,

“I know that it is God who heals, and that God can begin to heal when we open ourselves, our wounds, our failures and our shame to God. ... I know how often you have heard words which have been empty because they have not been accompanied by actions. I pledge to you my best efforts and the efforts of our church at the national level, to walk with you along the path of God’s healing.”⁶

Historical Church Apologies

Confession of wrongs and sins carried out by members and leaders of the church is by no means only a modern phenomenon. However, during the second half of the 20th century, there was a significant increase in public actions and admissions to acknowledge past harms and failings. This has continued into the first two decades of the 21st, and it seems clear that a penitential emphasis will remain significant to the vocation of the churches for the foreseeable future, across a range of traditions and communions.

Church apologies often come with very difficult stories surrounding them, and these can be painful to review. Yet this process is instructive towards a better understanding of the thinking that goes into the apologies, the range of feelings about how they have been received, and their potential subsequent impact on and meaning for others. Reflecting on such stories ecumenically can perhaps help our churches to learn from one another’s experiences in this common area of responsibility in our time. While in no way exhaustive in scope, the sampling below will seek to draw out contemporary lessons and perhaps derive some common insights that will help us to engage in this work of confession and repentance appropriately as needs continue to arise in the future.

Intra-Christian Persecution

Throughout history, the divisions that have emerged between Christians have at times devolved even further into shameful acts of persecution and violence against one another. Unfortunately, there is no shortage of evidence to this end, at least as far back as the fifth century following the third and fourth Ecumenical Councils which sought to define Christological doctrine. In the latter

⁶ <https://www.anglican.ca/tr/apology/english/>

half of the 20th century, an interesting acknowledgement of and contrition for this history can be observed. A few examples show this clearly.

In 1204, during the Fourth Crusade, armies of Western Christians marched on the Byzantine capital of Constantinople. Parts of the city were destroyed, its wealth was looted, large numbers were killed, and some of its residents were taken away as prisoners and slaves. This was a military attack by Catholic Christians upon their Eastern Orthodox siblings in Christ and one which has long served as a symbol of the fullest expression of the East-West schism. That is why it was so significant when in 2001, during a visit to Greece, Pope John Paul II referenced these events and publicly called the church to a “liberating process of purification of memory.” In his address, the “assailants” were explicitly identified as “Latin Christians,” and there was a clear recognition that they were directly targeting people who should have been understood as “their own brothers in the faith.” The pope suggested that all Catholics corporately should today feel “deep regret” for these events, should acknowledge God’s “judgment” upon them as a result, and therefore implore divine mercy to help them “heal the wounds.” Importantly, these words of confession were officially received by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I a few years later, on the 800th anniversary, in 2004.

Beginning around 1410, a Bohemian priest by the name of Jan Hus began to articulate several major reforming ideals which would come to greater prominence in the Western church over the next 200 years. While Hus always sought to remain loyal to the church, his criticisms and challenges drew considerable suspicion from ecclesiastical powers. He was called to the Council of Constance in 1415 and promised safe passage to openly express his views. However, upon arrival, he was arrested, tried, excommunicated, and ultimately burned at the stake as a heretic. In 1999, at a gathering in present-day Czechia, Pope John Paul II publicly recognised Hus’ “moral courage” in expressing the convictions of his conscience and called his condemnation and execution at the command of the Council a “cruel death.” He expressed “deep regret” for the way that this violent act had created a “wound” upon the minds and hearts of the Bohemian church and people, which itself contributed to the divisions in the church in that region from that point on. A desire for “reconciliation” and a commitment to seeking “renewed relationships” was also made. Significantly, John Paul II made a point of stating that he felt compelled to make this acknowledgement on the eve of the turn to the third millennium, and in connection with several other penitential words and actions which he offered during the liturgical events associated with the Reformation period.

The persecutions, torture, and deaths of both Roman Catholics and dissenting Protestants in England during the English Reformation and following are widely known, not only for their scope but also their ferocity. The Catholic Church officially commemorates over 300 martyrs from this period, and there were undoubtedly thousands more between the years 1534 and 1681. In 2017, as part of the commemorations of the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation era in Europe, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York together issued a message of confession and remorse for these acts. It spoke of the “defiance of the clear command of Jesus Christ to unity and love,” and called for an attitude of “repentance” for the part which leaders of the Church of England played in advocating this violence in the name of their cause.

Significantly, it was named that this repentance must be of a tangible kind, “linked to action aimed at reaching out to other churches and strengthening relationships with them.”

Of course, tensions and violence between divided Christians in Reformation-era Europe ran deep not only along Roman Catholic and Protestant lines. There were also persecutions among the different reforming movements who disagreed about the extent to which the reforms must go and how best to bring them about. In this regard, the Lutheran majority in Germany was responsible for considerable atrocities carried out in the name of eliminating the so-called radicalizing Anabaptists as an illegitimate expression of reformation, including heavy persecution and even penalties of death. And so, in 2010, after a period of mutual study and dialogue between contemporary Lutherans and Mennonites, the Lutheran World Federation felt called to account. That same year, the LWF issued an expression of “deep regret and sorrow” for this chapter of their history. Notably, the statement explicitly “asks for forgiveness – from God and from our Mennonite sisters and brothers,” while also pledging commitment to continued education, dialogue, and partnership, as a means of seeking “a healing of our memories and reconciliation.” These words were issued not just in the abstract, but in the context of a prayerful ceremony, and with Mennonites present to hear and respond to the words and actions.

Antisemitism and the Holocaust

Another area where there have been several public expressions of corporate contrition from churches in past decades is in connection with the church’s role in contributing to antisemitism and the persecution of Jewish people. Post-Holocaust awareness of the need for Christians to take their share of responsibility in this regard and seek to ensure that such evils could never happen again undoubtedly contributed to these actions.

The writings of Martin Luther have been controversial in this regard, particularly from later in his life when he seems to have directly advocated the destruction of Jewish places of worship in Christian lands, restrictions of the practice of their faith, and even outright violence. This aspect of Luther’s legacy began to be faced in a focused way during the 1990s, and various Lutheran jurisdictions have sought to do so in honest and forthright ways. For example, in 1995 the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) acted to publicly repudiate Luther’s latent antisemitism, particularly the way that it was coopted in later generations to justify genocide. The statement recognised that the ELCA “deplores” and “grieves” this element of Luther’s teaching, sees it as a “contradiction and an affront to the Gospel,” and recognises the way it has made the church “complicit” in the history of hatred and violence.

Roman Catholic recognition of this history and the church’s responsibility in it came to greater prominence after the Second Vatican Council and subsequent interreligious work. During the 1970s and 80s, various national conferences of Catholic bishops in Europe began processes of examination of conscience and confession of sin in relation to antisemitism and its effects during the Second World War. A particularly significant example is that of the Catholic bishops in France, a majority of whom not only failed to oppose but even actively aided the occupying Nazi regime. This acknowledgement culminated in 1997 with the reading of a public apology from French church leadership in the presence of Jewish leaders. The statement not only

acknowledged fault in relation to the events of 1941-44 but also recognised the ways in which the Catholic Church's own teachings had contributed to laying the foundation for modern antisemitism and the Holocaust itself. The language was very honest and explicit in its contrition, as the following quote makes clear: "We confess our fault. We implore the pardon of God and ask the Jewish people to hear our words of repentance."

Church promotion of antisemitism also predates the 20th century. In 13th-century England, a series of provisions were passed that strongly discouraged social connections between Christians and Jews, imposed fines on Jewish people for their religious nonconformity, and forced Jews to wear badges on their clothing to publicly identify themselves as Jewish. Subsequent laws forbidding the construction of new synagogues and even the expulsion of over 3,000 Jews from England can also be traced to these decisions of the church. In May 2022, 800 years after the Synod of Oxford at which the original directives were issued, Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby called upon the Church of England to "repent" of its part in advancing anti-Judaism and antisemitism in the past and to "reject" them still in the present. Commentators on this action have observed that it is somewhat unique in that it seems to have emerged not from advocacy for it by the Jewish community in England, or wider society, but rather the initiative of the church itself as a tangible expression of recent repudiations of harmful theological distortions about Jewish people and Judaism that are named in the 2019 document *God's Unfailing Word*.⁷

Sexual Abuse

Apologies for sexual abuse experienced within the church and at the hands of leaders of church communities and organizations are tragically numerous. Such sins are especially heinous, and therefore the way the church has acknowledged or failed to acknowledge them is a matter of utmost importance today.

Perhaps among the most notable examples of a 2010 public confession for church-based sexual abuse is that of Pope Benedict XVI to Irish victim-survivors and families. In this case, a seven-page letter was written and then publicly read at all masses in Ireland. The pope called the abuses "sinful and criminal," acknowledged that he is personally "truly sorry," and, in the name of the whole church, expressed "shame and regret." While the church itself was not described as sinful, the text was very explicit in naming the abusive and predatory actions of clergy and members of religious communities, who were acting in the name of the church, as sins. Interestingly, a series of corporate acts of penance (fasting, works of mercy and charity, etc.) were also proposed to the Catholic Church in Ireland as a means of making "reparation for the sins of abuse." In this latter charge, there seems to be a clear recognition of the corporate nature of sin in the church and that the sins of individual members can in some sense be carried and responded to by the repentance of the wider whole. Commitments were also made that the letter would be followed by an "apostolic visitation," a thorough and formal investigation into several Irish dioceses in which abuse and other sexual misconduct was believed to have become especially chronic. Several

⁷ <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/18977>

years later, Pope Francis also travelled to Ireland to personally meet with groups of victim-survivors, at their request, as a further act of ecclesial contrition.

Colonialism and Canada's Residential Schools

A major priority for many of the churches descended from European Christendom is facing up to the legacy of complicity in colonialism. Following Confederation, the Canadian government pursued a policy of cultural assimilation towards Indigenous Peoples, seeking to eradicate their culture and identity. The residential school system, initiated by the government and run mainly by the Catholic, Anglican, United, and Presbyterian churches, removed Indigenous children from their families, often subjecting them to harsh conditions, abuse, and loss of culture.

Apologies and Statements to Indigenous Peoples of Canada

- 1970 – *Corporate Confession to Indigenous Peoples*, Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Winkler
- 1984 – *Speech to Aboriginal and Inuit Peoples*, Pope John Paul II, St. Anne de Beaupre, Québec
- 1986 – *Apology to the Native People of Canada*, 31st General Council, United Church of Canada
- 1987 – *Address to the Native Peoples of Canada*, Pope John Paul II, Fort Simpson
- 1991 – *Statement by the National Meeting on Indian Residential Schools*, Saskatoon (Catholic dioceses and other entities)
- 1991 – *An Apology to the First Nations of Canada*, Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate
- 1992 – *500 Years After Statement*, Mennonite Central Committee
- 1993 – *Apology to Native Americans for Past Mistakes*, Fr. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, SJ, Superior General, Society of Jesus (Jesuits)
- 1993 – *Message to the National Native Convocation, Minaki, Ontario*, Archbishop Michael Peers, Primate, Anglican Church of Canada
- 1994 – *Confession Regarding Injustice Suffered by Canada's First Nations Peoples*, 120th General Assembly, Presbyterian Church in Canada
- 1998 – *Apology to former students of Indian Residential Schools and to their families and communities*, Rt. Rev. Bill Phipps, General Council Executive, United Church of Canada
- 2008 – Archbishop Gerald Pettipas, Archbishop of Grouard-McLennan, Alberta
- 2009 – Archbishop Murray Chatlain, Bishop of Mackenzie-Fort Smith, Inuvik
- 2013 – *Statement on behalf of Congregations of Women Religious involved in the Indian Residential Schools of Canada*, Marie Zarowny, SSA

2019 – <i>An Apology for Spiritual Harm</i> , Archbishop Fred Hiltz, Primate, Anglican Church of Canada
2022 – Pope Francis (Rome, Maskwacis, Edmonton, Québec, Iqaluit)
2022 – Archbishop Justin Welby, Church of England (Prince Albert, Saskatchewan)
2024 – <i>Apology for Complicity in Colonization and the Residential School System</i> , 149th General Assembly, Presbyterian Church in Canada

The reports of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)⁸ highlight the widespread problems within residential schools: inadequate education, poor care, and severe discipline, with most becoming sites of abuse despite the positive intentions of some staff. While the government aimed to assimilate Indigenous children, Indigenous leaders stressed that schooling should foster economic development, not assimilation.

By the 1950s, many churches recognized the failure of residential schools, and by the 1980s and 1990s, several denominations began supporting Indigenous efforts for justice and reconciliation, leading to formal apologies acknowledging the harms inflicted, including intergenerational trauma.

The Anglican Church of Canada apologised in 1993 for its role in helping to operate Indian Residential Schools, acknowledging their part in a government program of assimilation of Indigenous Peoples and the elimination of Indigenous languages and culture. One area of harm which was not named at that time, however, was the spiritual harm which was an integral part of the Anglican Church's involvement in the wider colonial project. At the request of Indigenous communities and members of the Anglican Church, Archbishop Fred Hiltz took up this further call in the years leading up to the gathering of the General Synod of the ACC in 2019. At that meeting, while seated with a group of Indigenous elders from across the country, and in the presence of the whole body of the Synod, an *Apology for Spiritual Harm*⁹ was read. Six times the phrase "I confess our sin" is followed by an account of very specific actions and an acknowledgement of the damage and hurt they caused. The words of the prayer of confession in the *Book of Common Prayer* are quoted:

"We followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts... We have offended against thy holy laws... We have left undone those things which we ought to have done... And we have done those things we ought not to have done."

This is followed by an explicit naming of commitments to enact repentance, including steps to implement actions on the recommendations of the TRC's *Calls to Action*, affirmation of the articles of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*,¹⁰ and the creation or continuation of other church-based programs of reparation, education, and Indigenous

⁸ <https://nctr.ca/records/reports/>

⁹ <https://www.anglican.ca/news/an-apology-for-spiritual-harm/>

¹⁰ https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP_E_web.pdf

self-determination. After a period of discernment and consideration over the next few days, a response from the leaders representing those communities who were addressed was also received.

In the spring of 2022, Pope Francis met with Indigenous delegates in Rome and later visited Canada on a “pilgrimage of penitence.” During his address in the Cree community of Maskwacis, he acknowledged the unique values of Indigenous culture, the enduring trauma caused by residential schools, and the need for authentic reconciliation, offering this apology:

“In the face of this deplorable evil, the Church kneels before God and implores his forgiveness for the sins of her children.¹¹ I myself wish to reaffirm this, with shame and unambiguously. I humbly beg forgiveness for the evil committed by so many Christians against the Indigenous peoples.”

Pope Francis spoke of “walking together” towards a future of healing, asserting that the “memory of those children urges us to ensure every child is treated with love, honour, and respect.” He emphasized that the Catholic Church’s commitment to reconciliation must go beyond words, with a dedication to mending relationships among Indigenous Peoples, Christians, and Canadian society.

Throughout his visit, Pope Francis reiterated that asking for forgiveness “is not the end of the matter.” He stressed the importance of investigating the full truth of what occurred in residential schools and supporting survivors in their journey to “experience healing.” He also called for fostering relationships between “Christians and civil society,” urging people to “accept and respect the identity and the experience of the Indigenous peoples... We are speaking of processes that must penetrate hearts.” His apology expressed not only in words but through his presence and the support of Canadian bishops, stands as “a testimony to our will to persevere on this path.” At their first plenary following Pope Francis’ visit, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops issued “That We May Walk Together”,¹² a series of four pastoral letters, one to each of the three indigenous delegations and one to the people of God, identifying specific commitments arising from the visit.

Contemporary Lessons from History

These stories are moving and powerful, and indeed there is something sacred in their retelling even in this abbreviated form. From this partial historical review, there are a few significant observations that can be made about how churches apologise and what seems to be part of the process when they are deemed to have done so most authentically.

Many of these apologies were presented in the presence of people representing communities which were historically mistreated and harmed and included opportunities for messages of confession and regret to be received and responded to by contemporary representatives of the wronged party. Some were developed after a period of mutual study and dialogue between

¹¹ cf. John Paul II, *Incarnationis Mysterium* [29 November 1998], 11: AAS 91 [1999], 140

¹² <https://www.cccb.ca/indigenous-peoples/that-we-may-walk-together-series-of-pastoral-letters-2023/>

contemporary representatives of both parties. Both factors seem to convey a critical insight: It is perhaps not sufficient, or only minimally effective, for a church apology to merely be spoken into the abstract, even if that may have some value on its own. Rather, it is when such expressions can be made on the basis of and within the context of real relationships, they become far more fully authentic.

It is also worth recognizing that church apologies seem to be strengthened by the inclusion of a ritual gesture or liturgical element as part of public expression. Words only go so far. Of course, this only makes sense because human beings are bodies, minds, and spirits, and therefore the speaking or publishing texts should always be accompanied by actions that engage the whole person. Perhaps most importantly, apologies that make commitments to concrete changes to redress the harm done and to, as much as possible, ensure that it does not happen again are always far more powerful than simply voicing feelings of shame and grief.

Finally, while the degrees of emphasis placed within certain church traditions on varying theological principles and categories do sometimes result in differences of articulation about the relationship between the wrong done and its impact on the essential nature of the church, in practice there does seem to be an ecumenical consensus that it is possible for members of the church in the present to carry a genuine collective responsibility for these sins of their predecessors in the past. Because that is held to be true, therefore, how we talk about and respond to these failings and offences in the present can have a spiritual significance for the past, the present, and the future. This also implies that actions of restitution and redress undertaken on behalf of our forebears are not only possible but perhaps even necessary.¹³

Conclusion

During our study on church apologies, ARC Canada has met in person three times in Chateaugay, Quebec (May 2022), Halifax, Nova Scotia (October 2023), and Edmonton, Alberta (November 2024), and online four further times. We also consulted regularly with the ARC Bishops' Dialogue, which has helped focus this report on church apologies, their meaning, and their significance.

In part I, we explored three passages: the encounter with Zacchaeus in Luke 19, the parable of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15, and Psalm 51. In our review of these passages, we note the absence of anything that looks like an apology as we are familiar with in our own experiences. Instead, the biblical accounts emphasise actions that right wrongs and restore relationships rather than verbal expressions of regret. We asked ourselves how reading these accounts affects how we

¹³ A more fulsome discussion on the elements that help form an authentic, victim-centred apology can be found in chapter 14 of the 2024 final report of the Independent Special Interlocutor for Missing Children and Unmarked Graves and Burial Sites associated with Indian Residential Schools: <https://osi-bis.ca/osi-resources/reports/>. See also this 2019 report on apologies issued by the United Nations' Special Rapporteur on the Promotion of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Guarantees of Non-recurrence: <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n19/214/38/pdf/n1921438.pdf>.

“read” the episodes in our own lives and the lives of our communities that call for confession, repentance, and apology.

Our theological reflections in part II considered the patterns of conversion, confession, and repentance exemplified in Christian tradition and liturgy. In our shared understanding, apology is accompanied by repentance and conversion evidenced by faith active in love towards God and our neighbours. The *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* reminds us that conversion and repentance are the work of the justifying grace of God. By grace, we are empowered to hear God’s promises anew, confess our sins, and seek forgiveness from those we have harmed. Our Christian conviction that all human beings are created in the image and likeness of God, redeemed in Christ, and called to communion with God reminds us that every person shares equally in an inalienable dignity. Thus, wrongs committed by the church against the dignity of individuals and groups of people are particularly egregious. These violations are the subject of the apologies that we have studied over this phase of our dialogue.

We note a consensus among our churches that sin takes different forms: personal, corporate, and structural. Through our different theological formations, we share an understanding that sins committed in the name of the church are the burden of all members of the body of Christ. Each in their own way, Pope John Paul II and Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams remind us that our repentance for the sins of our forebears is “part of what we can do, with them and for them in the Body of Christ.” To repent for the sins of the past is not to cast blame upon earlier generations, but rather “is prayerful acknowledgement of the failure that is part of us, not just of some distant ‘them.’” Perhaps our repentance and apologies could be understood as prayerfully asking God by his mercy to forgive our forebears.

Part III of our report explores examples of apologies given in the name of the churches. The stories that we selected are not finished. The apologies, such as they are, are points in history that might, by God’s grace, become turning points in the relationships broken by these tragic events. An apology marks not the end but rather the beginning of a long journey of truth and reconciliation that must be accompanied by actions that repair, heal and restore right relationships.

We offer these reflections on church apologies in the prayerful hope that our churches will continue to act to heal the wounds of our shameful histories. By God’s grace, may it be so.

Members of ARC Canada

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How do I use this resource?

We envision Christians – Anglican, Lutheran, Roman Catholic – reading and reflecting on this document both personally but also in dialogue with others. However you choose to engage this resource, we encourage you to approach it in a spirit of prayer and with an openness to learning and being transformed. How do you feel as you read? What have you learned about your own or another tradition? How do these themes touch your own life and faith? How is God calling you to repentance and conversion, personally and as a community or tradition? These are just some of the questions that we hope you will reflect and pray on.

Some suggestions:

There are questions for reflection provided at the end of the user guide that may be used for personal or group prayer and reflection.

If you choose to reflect on this document with others, you might consider the following settings: (a) a parish-based faith-sharing group; (b) a grassroots ecumenical dialogue group; or (c) a seminary or theological school classroom. However you proceed, we'd encourage you to invite members of another church tradition to learn with you in this process.

Your reflection might benefit from breaking the document into two sections. For example, you might consider reading and reflecting on the Introduction as well as Parts 1 (Scripture) and 2 (Theological Considerations) in advance of a first group session. This first session could include a process of *Lectio Divina* (see below) and or a group discussion on how the biblical passages selected relate to or inform our respective traditions' doctrinal teaching and how both challenge us to personal and ecclesial conversion. A second session might focus on Part 3 (Historical Apologies and Contemporary Lessons) and begin with the suggested questions for reflection and end with a penitential service (see below). Alternatively, you might consider choosing one of the historical episodes and or an official statement associated with it to form the focus of your discussion (see the links in the document, for some examples).

Consider engaging in a process of *Lectio Divina*, either individually or in a group setting. Choose one of the three biblical passages in Part 1 and pray with it. Begin with a prayer to the Holy Spirit. Read the passage a first time and try to place yourself in the scene. Which word or short phrase stands out to you? Read the passage a second time. Rest in silence for a few moments and meditate on the following question: which one of the themes of repentance, confession, conversion, or community stands out to you today and why? Read the passage a third time. Rest in silence again for a few moments and meditate on the following questions: how is God speaking to me personally in this passage? What do I want to say to God in response? How am I called to change or live differently?

Consider organizing a public (and possibly ecumenical) penitential service that invites participants to confess their personal and ecclesial sins, to pray for God's mercy and forgiveness, and for the grace needed to walk the path of truth and reconciliation with others. In structuring this service, you might choose one or more of the biblical passages that form the focus of Part 1

and or utilize the Litany included below. When celebrated at the end of a process of group study and discussion, participants should feel empowered to highlight the issues and concerns that are most meaningful to them as a community.

Questions and suggestions for reflection:

Scripture

With the help of the three biblical passages referenced above, we have reflected briefly on themes of repentance, confession, conversion, and community. How might these passages and their central themes help us “read” the episodes in our own lives and in the lives of our communities (church, neighbourhood, nation, etc.) that call for the same?

Are there other passages that speak to similar themes that resonate with you and why?

Theological Considerations

How and why do our traditions emphasize the importance of apology, including for past wrongs committed in the name of the church?

How does theology help us to understand why apology is only the first step in rebuilding relationships among individuals and groups?

Historical Apologies and Contemporary Lessons

What are some of the emotions you felt while reading this section of the document? Which of these historical episodes stand out to you and why? What lessons do these episodes teach us? Where and how are our own communities and traditions called to repentance and conversion today?

Reflect on an episode – personal or communal – from your own life history where you or someone else confessed wrongdoing, asked for forgiveness, and sought to restore right relationship. What obstacles did you face? What did you learn in this process? How does this episode relate to or shed light on this document’s examples?

Which relationships are you and your community called to restore? What steps have you and your community already taken? How are you called to act in support of reconciliation now and in the future?

A litany to be used in conjunction with the ARC Canada Statement on Church Apologies

This litany draws on themes discussed in the ARC Canada Statement on Church Apologies. It may be used to accompany either individual or group study of the text. In the context of group study, it could be incorporated into a liturgical prayer of repentance or reconciliation. Planners may select from the petitions provided or may write new petitions specific to the setting where the litany is being used.

Opening prayer

God of all goodness, your grace calls our churches to reflect upon wrongs committed in your name, to admit our failures, and to seek forgiveness from – and restoration for – those who have been harmed by actions of the church or its members. You are ever faithful, even when we are unfaithful, forgiving our sins and granting that we may bear true witness to you. Gather our prayers and petitions into one; that our confession and repentance will be inspired by the Holy Spirit, that our sorrow will be conscious and deep, and that, humbly viewing the sins committed in the name of the church, we will be converted to your way of justice and reconciliation.

Together, we pray:

Enable us to embrace anew your life-giving promises.
Open our ears to the cries of the violated and wounded.
Help us to see the depth of our fault.
Give us words to confess our sin with integrity.
Enflame our hearts in the fire of Christ's love,
And turn us evermore towards truth and righteousness.
Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy.

Petitions

1. Merciful God, on the night before his passion your Son prayed for the unity of all who believe in Him; yet, the divisions which have emerged within the Christian family have at times devolved even further into acts of persecution and violence against one another. We deeply regret these events and ask forgiveness from you, and from all who have suffered from these shameful actions.

Let us pray that our recognition of the sins which have rent the unity of the body of Christ will facilitate the way to reconciliation and communion among all Christians.

Response: *Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy.*

2. God of our ancestors, you chose Abraham and Sarah to bring your Name to the nations; yet, the history of relations between Christians and Jews is a tormented one. You call Christians to acknowledge the ways in which the churches' own teachings have contributed to laying the

foundations for antisemitism and the Holocaust itself. We confess our fault. We implore your pardon for our churches' harm to Jews, our elder siblings in faith.

Let us pray that as we acknowledge our churches' role in contributing to antisemitism and the persecution of Jewish people, we may be moved to ensure that such evils will never happen again.

Response: *Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy.*

3. Holy God, you have created all people in your own image and likeness; yet, we know that this dignity has been violated and faith has been shaken by serious crimes of sexual exploitation and abuse of young or vulnerable persons by clergy and others in positions of responsibility in our churches. These crimes become even more heinous when church leaders fail to act upon the victims' claims of abuse or to report these crimes to the appropriate civic authorities.

Let us pray for those who have suffered abuse that they may find healing, health, freedom, and joy; and for those who have perpetrated abuse that they may repent of the harm they have done and seek healing and wholeness.

Response: *Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy.*

4. Triune God, you commissioned your disciples to proclaim your gospel to all creation. Your love is shown in the life of Jesus who always invited but never demanded acceptance of his teachings; yet when Christians have settled throughout the world, our presence has often brought harm instead of healing, death instead of life. As we continue to learn and to struggle with the churches' alignment with colonizing powers in Canada, you call us to honesty, humility, a spirit of repentance, and a commitment to right relations between settlers, newcomers, and the first peoples of this land.

Let us pray that our words of truth and reconciliation will be not words alone, but will lead to actions that build new relationships of justice, peace, and friendship among all peoples who call this land home.

Response: *Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy.*

5. God of truth and justice, you are opposed to every type of discrimination; yet many of our churches participated in the residential school system designed to separate Indigenous children from their families, their language, and their culture. While some church leaders have made heartfelt apologies to victims of residential schools and their descendants, you call us to walk together towards a future of healing, ensuring that every child is treated with love, honour, and respect.

Let us pray that residential school victims to the seventh generation will find healing and wholeness, and that all residents of this land will receive and offer dignity to every human being.

Response: *Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy.*

Concluding prayer

Gracious God, trusting in your mercy and forgiveness, we commit here today

to resist and overcome injustices,
to defend human dignity and the integrity of all that you have created,
to rebuild healthy relationships with those who have been harmed by our sinful actions,
and to the steadfast pursuit of truth and reconciliation.

We pray that our churches will continue to act to heal the wounds of our histories and that you would enable and prepare us to walk together in a good way into the future. In your unfathomable grace, remake us in your image.

Amen.

COUNCIL OF GENERAL SYNOD
Queen of Apostles Renewal Centre
March 7 – 9, 2025

Moved by: _____ *Susan Bell (Niagara)* _____

Seconded by: _____ *Adam MacNeil (Niagara)* _____

MOTION:

Be it resolved: _____

Be it resolved that this Council of General Synod receive and commend to the Church the Anglican Roman Catholic Dialogue of Canada's *Statement on Ecclesial Apologies*.

A) Does this motion contain within it any financial implications?

Yes _____ No X _____

B) If yes, has the CoGS Expenditures Committee considered the implications?

Yes _____ No _____

C) Does this motion contain within it any staffing implications?

Yes _____ No X _____

CARRIED

Anabaptism at 500: Looking Back and Looking Forward Through an Ecumenical Lens

A Joint Message from Members of the Anglican-Mennonite Dialogue in Canada

In 2017, the ecclesial world was taken up into a complicated process of trying to appropriately mark the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's publication of the 95 Theses and the symbolic beginning of the Lutheran Reformation in central Europe. On the one hand, many Christians look to this moment in Church history as a time of significant renewal – a movement of the Holy Spirit leading to recovery of the heart of the Gospel in the face of forces that had allowed it to become distorted or obscured. On the other, it also led to a major rupture in the bonds of unity between Christians, and kicked off waves of suspicion, hostility, and violence that still reverberate even today. If fodder for polemical fights are what we are looking for, there is ample ammunition that can be thrown at one side or the other. But what about for those who are seeking to view the past through an ecumenical lens? Is the Lutheran Reformation an event to celebrate? A thing to lament? Or something somewhere in between? In the end, 'commemoration' was the terminology that rose to the fore, which feels about right.

The year 2025 provides us with another quincennial occasion to ask these kinds of hard questions, this time in connection with start of the so-called Anabaptist Reformation beginning in 1525 in Switzerland. In this case, figures such as Conrad Grebel, Felix Manz, and others, took issue with perceived inconsistencies in the policies of another reformer, Ulrich Zwingli, over the extent to which the civil authorities should be allowed to be involved in determining matters of theology and Church practice. The action to publicly (re)baptize themselves and their followers as adult believers against the decree of the Canton of Zurich against this serves as another symbolic point in Church history. The various Christian communities which have derived particular inspiration from the Anabaptist movement since that time – Amish, Hutterites, Mennonites, Church of the Brethren, etc. – have continued to express this unique charism of fidelity to Jesus as they have come to be planted in new contexts all over the world. And yet, while some have interpreted these events as examples of great conviction and courage in the name of true faith and Gospel freedom, others have decried it as a radical choice for disorder and schism which did harm to the witness of the Church. Here too, then, the word commemoration seems most able to capture the appropriately nuanced sentiment that seems to be required.

Based on their origins and early history, the Anglican and Mennonite traditions might be understood to be as far apart from one another in their assessment of the church-state issue in the Radical Reformation as it is possible to be. For that reason, it could be assumed that an Anglican-Mennonite ecumenical dialogue would find great difficulty in being able to speak together about Anabaptism at 500. And yet, we, as members of the Anglican-Mennonite Dialogue in Canada, feel inspired, both by our love for one another, and by our desire to walk together as disciples of Jesus in our context today, to find a way to

say something meaningful about this commemoration together. We do so by drawing on the ecumenical methodology that we have chosen to follow to undergird our conversations and our work: i.e., that of Receptive Ecumenism.

For the first few decades of its existence (especially the 1940s through 80s), the modern ecumenical movement was dominated by an approach to the task which can be described as Consensus Ecumenism. From this perspective, the problem that keeps Christians apart is their distinct doctrinal differences, and the way to heal the rifts in the Church lies in achieving a satisfactory agreement on those historically controverted issues. Consensus Ecumenism, therefore, begins in the past, and takes the characteristic – perhaps even necessarily somewhat caricatured – features of divided expressions of Church as defining of the terms of the relationship at present. Paradoxically, it can even unintentionally serve to reinforce those differences by expending so much effort into defining them.

Receptive Ecumenism, by contrast, has a different starting point. Rather than looking at the historical differences and working to overcome them through a convergence of doctrinal articulations, it begins by looking at where the communities descended from these traditions find themselves now, giving thanks for the other's present gifts, and imagining how they might bring some needed balance and healing to one's own present ecclesial wounds if they were able to be shared together. The emphasis in the Receptive model is much more on what could be in the future.

Keeping this methodology in mind is instructive for those who seek to engage the 500th anniversary of the origins of Swiss Anabaptism from the perspective of an ecumenical worldview. It allows Anglicans and Mennonites to avoid getting caught up in either mythologizing or adjudicating between heroes and villains, winners and losers, right and wrong. Instead, we give God great thanks together for the ways that the Anabaptist movement has borne unique witness and continues to serve as a special sign and instrument of God's grace, justice, and peace in the world. We can grieve together the way that our forbearers' inability to listen to or understand one another, exacerbated by both political motivations and human weakness, led to disdain, estrangement, and even persecution between fellow disciples of Christ. And perhaps most importantly, we can ask each other honestly what we need to receive from one another now as we seek to become faithful followers of the Jesus Way together again, both today and tomorrow.

It is in this future-oriented posture which we share this joint message as Mennonites and Anglicans in dialogue in 2025. Anniversaries are a perfect opportunity for thinking not about the past but about the future; what we want to bring with us into that future, and what we must leave behind; what we hope for in the future, and how to prepare ourselves to live into it even now. As two churches with very different stories to this point, including how we came to be present in these lands we know as Canada today, we are both seeking to rediscover what we are called to at the end of the eras of Christendom and colonialism. We are seeking to learn how to be more peripheral or marginal voices alongside many others in public discourse, but also how to foster prophetic and transformative discipleship in a

complicated spiritual age. There is no doubt that we have much to learn from one another, and that we will need each other greatly in whatever lies ahead in the next 500 years.

Anglican Church of Canada

Elin Goulden (Co-Chair)
Vincent Solomon (ACIP Member)
Chris Bishopp (ELCIC Member)
Charlie Scromeda
Bram Pearce
Ryan Turnbull
Scott Sharman (Staff)

Mennonite Church Canada

Sarah Kathleen Johnson (Co-Chair)
Irma Fast Dueck
Michael Pahl
Neill von Gunten
Edith von Gunten
Caleb Kowalko
Doug Klassen (Staff)

COUNCIL OF GENERAL SYNOD
Queen of Apostles Renewal Centre
March 7 – 9, 2025

Moved by: _____ *Susan Bell (Niagara)* _____

Seconded by: _____ *Andrew Stephens-Rennie* _____

MOTION:

Be it resolved: _____

that this Council of General Synod receive and commend to the Church the Statement of the Anglican Mennonite Dialogue on the occasion of the 500th Anniversary of the Anabaptist Reformation.

A) Does this motion contain within it any financial implications?

Yes _____ No X _____

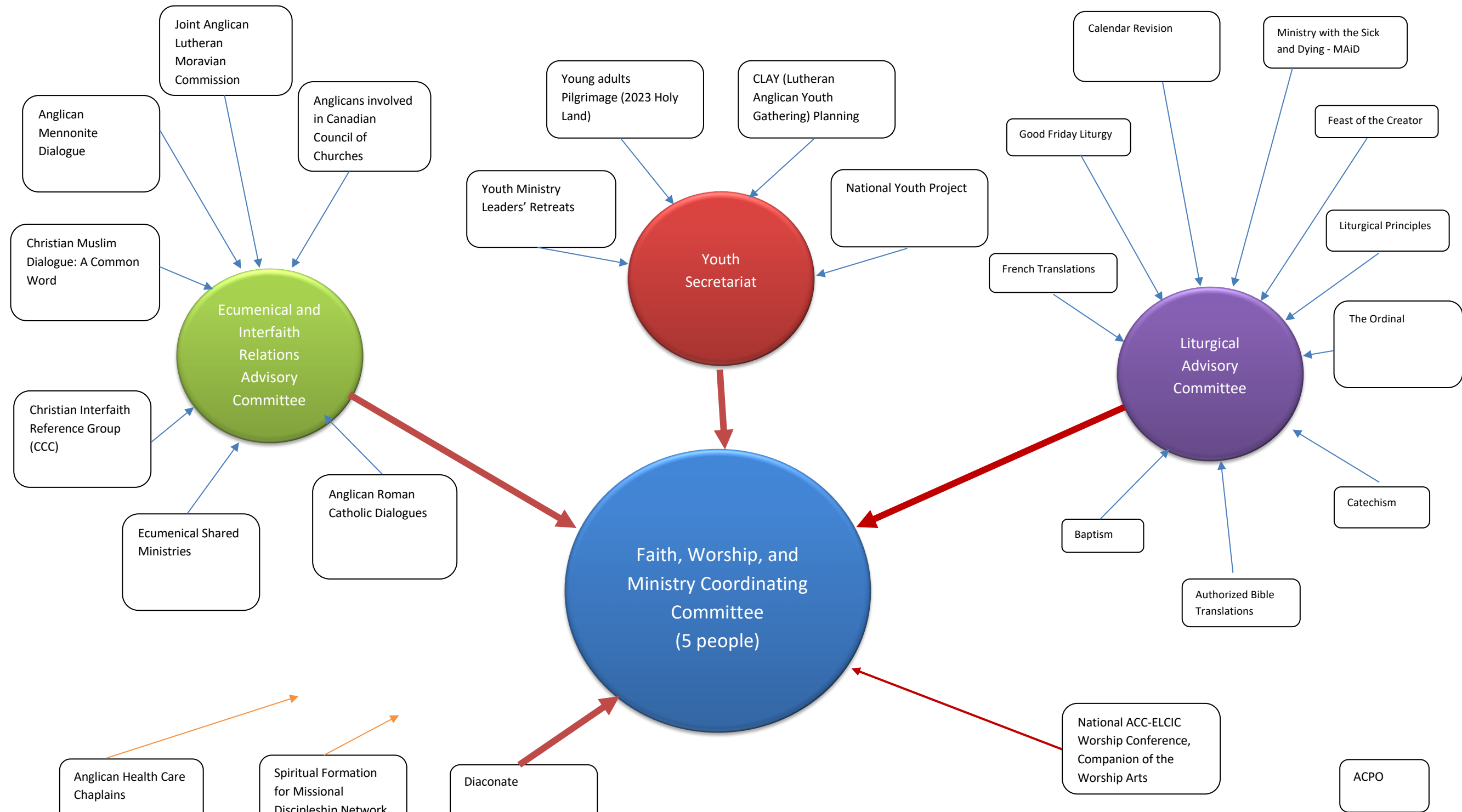
B) If yes, has the CoGS Expenditures Committee considered the implications?

Yes _____ No _____

C) Does this motion contain within it any staffing implications?

Yes _____ No X _____

CARRIED



REPORT OF THE GENERAL SYNOD ARCHIVIST TO GENERAL SYNOD 2025

FOR INFORMATION

Invites and deepens life in Christ

The General Synod Archives continues to provide witness to the life of the church, its teachings, its decisions, and its relationships by collecting the records of General Synod and its national office departments, nationally significant individuals, Indigenous parishes, and ecumenical coalitions. Significant acquisitions included the records of the Council of the North, the John Cooper Robinson family, the Aboriginal Rights Coalition (ARC), and the Rt. Rev. Terry Brown.

Dismantling racism and colonialism and embracing mutual interdependence with the Indigenous Church

Records of Indigenous communities and related residential schools – The General Synod Archives has been receiving more requests from Indigenous communities for their records, especially in relation to residential school students who died at the school. Sometimes they hire third party research firms to gather the records (Know History, etc.) or they request the records to be scanned and sent to them. We are happy to comply with these requests. In 2023-2024, records and photographs provided related to Mohawk Institute, Pelican Lake residential school, and Old Sun residential school.

Missing Children and Unmarked Graves

Office of the Independent Special Interlocutor for Missing Children and Unmarked Graves and Burial Sites Associated with Indian Residential Schools (OSI) – Questionnaires answered, and records shared on cemeteries and names and known information on children who died at Anglican residential schools.

Visit from the Inuvialuit Corporation – regarding Residential School Missing Children Community Support Funding Project. A delegation from the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation came to research missing children from the residential schools in the Inuvialuit Region. They were also looking for information on TB related illness and deaths. There were 15 people, which we were able to accommodate because we have a large meeting room next to the Archives Reading Room. This was the largest group we ever had. In the past we had four to six people.

Diocese of the Arctic Archives

- 2024 - Canada Youth Employment grant – a project archivist arranged and described the 29 boxes of records from the Diocese of the Arctic synod office, including scanning 660 photos and describing 383 of the photographs.
- 134 enquiries – Indigenous genealogical research and residential school research.

Diocese of Keewatin Archives

- 2023 - Canada Youth Employment grant – a university student arranged and described 1969 files from the records of the Diocese of Keewatin synod office and the records of 27 parishes.
- St. Paul's, Churchill parish registers were scanned and sent to the church so they would have access to all the records to answer requests themselves.
- 27 enquires - Treaty Status research and genealogical research.

Nurtures right relationships among people of faith in local, national and global communities and networks

Volunteers

- The General Synod Archives continues to benefit from the faithfulness of volunteers from local parishes, who process records and catalogue books.

Anglican Diocesan Archivists

- The General Synod Archives continues to support diocesan archivists and frequently refers genealogical researchers to the relevant diocese. We try to keep the list of diocesan archivists up to date on the archives website and support each other using the Anglican Archivists google group.
- The Anglican Diocesan Archivists met in November 2023, hosted by the Diocese of Algoma at Algoma University. The meeting was hybrid, so that more of the archivists could participate since funding was not available for all to attend. The archivists attending in person appreciated touring the former Shingwauk residential school building and the Chapel, which is still onsite.

Canadian Church Historical Society

- Bishop Terry Brown, the president of the Canadian Church Historical Society, died unexpectedly over the Easter weekend 2024. Although he was best known as a parish priest, missionary, and diocesan bishop, he was also a prominent and accomplished Canadian church historian who leaves a significant volume of original published research. The CCHS gives thanks for his life and mourns his untimely death.
- The Canadian Church Historical Society (CCHS) hosted an international hybrid conference in April 2024 to mark the 60th Anniversary of the 1963 Toronto Anglican Congress. As Secretary-Treasurer, the General Synod Archivist was highly involved with the logistics of the meeting and fostered relationships during the planning of and participation in the conference.

Stewards and renews God's creation; protects and sustains the earth; pursues justice for all people.

- The General Synod was able to hire a Project Archivist to assist in preparing for the future electronically, using electronic records management, and physically, by preparing archival material for the move anticipated in 2026.
- The General Synod Archivist has been joining in meetings with the United Church Archivists and the Presbyterian Church Archivists to plan an ecumenical archival space in anticipation of the move to 300 Bloor St. W., which will shrink the footprint of all three churches.

Submitted by,

Laurel Parson
General Synod Archivist

REPORT OF THE GOVERNANCE WORKING GROUP TO GENERAL SYNOD 2025

- A. The Governance Working Group (“GWG”) met during this biennium to address two motions referred from General Synod/CoGS:

1. C009: Consensus Decision-Making

This motion directed CoGS to determine what would be necessary to implement a consensus model of decision making for future meetings of the General Synod (“GS”), drawing on existing models currently used by other churches, as well as the Sacred Circle, the Canadian Council of Churches, and the World Council of Churches. GWG was asked to look into this and report back to CoGS.

GWG first looked to define what the hallmarks are of consensus decision making and determined that these include:

- Cooperation
- Collaboration
- Egalitarianism
- Inclusion; and
- Participation.

GWG then looked at various models and determined that a critical part of the process is having a so-called “blocking rule”, that determines when consensus has not been reached. Additionally, GWG learned that some matters are commonly excluded from consensus decision making, for example, the passing of an operating budget.

GWG concluded that for GS itself to proceed by way of consensus decision-making on all current legislative matters is likely to be cost prohibitive and non-inclusive as it would require GS to gather for a much longer period of time (perhaps several weeks) making it even more difficult for those members of the laity who are working to attend. The committee then consulted with CoGS and, after discussion, it was agreed that consideration should be given to:

- Making changes to Pre-Synod meetings to better reflect the hallmarks of consensus decision-making; and
- Making use of the time as Committee of the Whole at GS to better reflect the hallmarks of consensus decision-making by, for example, table discussion that is then reported into the plenary.

2. C012: Process of Election to the Council of General Synod

When looking into this, GWG determined that the impetus for the motion was a concern for the difficulty that some Provinces have in finding GS members who are prepared to serve as members of CoGS. In the result, GWG recommended that no change be made to the process

for election but rather a change be made to the way that GS members are recruited so that a willingness to serve as a member of CoGS is one of the things expressly to be considered by individuals before they agree to serve as a member of GS.

B. GWG additionally met during this biennium on an ad hoc basis to address various matters at the request of the Acting Primate and/or CoGS. Set out below is a summary of those issues.

1. Motion C001 being the motion to amend Canon 3 to permit the Primate in their sole discretion to retain the offices of Metropolitan and/or Diocesan Bishop as well as the Office of Primate.

GWG was asked to consider the matter of whether, if passed at GS2025, this motion would be effective in respect of the election of a new Primate at GS2025.

GWG is unanimously of the view that this motion cannot be effective in respect of the election of a new Primate at GS2025 because:

- The Primatial election and discernment process started at the April meeting of the Order of Bishops as which nominees were selected, and it is not canonically sound to change the Canon as it relates to the Primate in the midst of the election for that Office; and
- The motion must be passed at two successive sessions of GS in order to be effective as, among other things, it engages matters of discipline.

GWG also discussed this matter with the Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors in attendance at the National Chancellors' Conference in April where the overwhelming majority agreed that Canon 3 should be reviewed in its entirety following the election of the new Primate and not in a piecemeal fashion.

2. **The Motions from GS2023 which were withdrawn but which sought to amend Section 11 of the Declaration of Principles in order to:**

- a. **Remove the phrase “voting at two successive sessions of Synod” at 11(a)(ii) in respect of any change to the Declaration of Principles; and**
- b. **Change the requirement for a 2/3 majority in each house to effect such a change to require that the requirement be a 2/3 majority of GS with a minimum of a simple majority in each house.**

GWG was asked by the Acting Primate to consider whether these motions should be brought back to GS 2025 for consideration by General Synod.

The Chancellor and the Prolocutor consulted extensively about this question and are of the view that these motions are unlikely to pass by the required 2/3 majority at this time. In the result, GWG after discussion with the national Chancellors and Vice Chancellors has decided not to bring these motions to the floor of GS2025 for a vote.

However, GWG has asked the General Synod Planning Committee to make time in the GS2025 agenda for these matters to be discussed in the committee of the whole and to design a modified consensus decision making process to allow General Synod to have a fulsome discussion. The feedback from GS2025 can then be considered by CoGS and appropriate follow-up arranged in the context of the recommendations of Primate's Commission.

Submitted by,

Canon Clare Burns,
Chancellor and Chair of the Governance Working Group

REPORT OF THE PARTNERS IN MISSION COORDINATING COMMITTEE
TO GENERAL SYNOD 2025

1. **FOR ACTION OR CONSIDERATION**

A. **RESOLUTION: Just Peace in the Philippines**

Moved By: The Rev. Canon Dr. Philip Der
Seconded By: The Rev. Dr. Blessing Shambaré

B. **RESOLUTION: A National Strategy for Local Ministries of Hospitality and Advocacy with Migrant Workers in Canada**

Moved By: The Rt. Rev. Dr. Susan Bell
Seconded By: The Rev. Dr. Blessing Shambaré

2. **FOR INFORMATION**

The ministries of Global Relations and the Partners in Mission Coordinating Committee 2023 – 2025 served to strengthen and develop relationships between the Anglican Church of Canada, the Anglican Communion and international ecumenical organizations in three key thematic areas: Promoting Justice, Peace and Reconciliation; Tackling Human Trafficking, Modern Slavery and Enforced Migration, and Support for Covenant Companionships. This work was informed and shaped through regular consultation and collaboration with global church partners, national and diocesan leaders, ecumenical organizations, and volunteers.

BRIEF UPDATES ON PRIORITY AREA PROGRAMS

A. **JUSTICE, PEACE, AND RECONCILIATION: *To Pursue justice for all; To champion the dignity of every human being and work to dismantle racism and colonialism.***

May the God of mercy strengthen the afflicted, soften the hearts of those who hold power, and bring forth a peace that upholds justice, preserves human dignity, and safeguards the presence of all people in the land to which they belong.

The Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem, February 2025

This is our Kairos moment, a time to assure that all are welcome at the eschatological table, a time loaded with promises and hopes for a new and pulsating peaceful future based on Jesus Christ's promise of an abundant life for all (John 10:10) — a just, egalitarian, participatory, self-reliant and sustainable society.

The National Council of Churches in the Philippines, January 2025

a. Just Peace Palestine and Israel:

- i. The 2023 Joint Assembly Resolution Peace and Justice for Palestine and Israel provided clear direction for continuing engagement by church leaders and members in acts of compassionate solidarity and prophetic advocacy with Communion and Canadian partners, groups, and peoples toward just peace for Palestine and Israel.
- ii. Endorsement of and participation in Saint Paul University conference *Palestine, Western Churches, and Settler Colonialism*, May 28-30, 2025, wherein National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop Chris Harper and Archbishop Linda Nicholls represented Canadian Anglican church leadership.
- iii. Since October 2023, 16 calls (<https://www.anglican.ca/publicwitness/peace-and-conflict/israel-and-palestine/>) to church members and government leaders for prayer and action calling Israel and Hamas to account for violations of international law, calling for a permanent ceasefire, humanitarian relief to the people of Gaza, for the release of all captives, an end to all arms transfers to Israel, and an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian Territories.
- iv. Support and promotion to Anglican leaders and members participating in the Kairos Canada hosted Gaza Ceasefire Pilgrimage, throughout spring 2024, culminating in a national march, vigil, and advocacy meetings with Members of Parliament and Government, May 22-23, 2024 ([Gaza Ceasefire Pilgrimage: Canadian Churches for Just Peace - KAIROS Canada](#)).
- v. Continuing participation in national ecumenical groups for research, planning and implementing strategies of solidarity and advocacy.

b. Just Peace Philippines:

- i. Ecumenical and global partner collaboration in developing the 2025 General Synod Resolution: Just Peace in the Philippines, to update and identify current and future priorities for solidarity and advocacy with church partners in the Philippines working for the renewal of a peace process toward rule of law and just peace for all in the Philippines.
- ii. Endorsement and support for the International Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines – Canada (ICHRP-C) – annual meeting and conference, May 2-5, 2024, Montreal, including bursary support for the participation of three national Anglican student activists.
- iii. Participation in ICHRP- Global Interfaith Network including development of worship resources for the first National Day of Prayer for Just and Lasting Peace for the Philippines, September 1, 2024.
- iv. Participation with National Council of Churches in the Philippines 2025 International Observer Mission, May 6-17, 2025, in solidarity with ecumenical partners' call for a free, fair, and informed federal election.
- v. 6 calls (<https://www.anglican.ca/publicwitness/peace-and-conflict/philippines/>) to church members and government leaders for prayer and action calling for just peace and freedom for the flourishing of democracy and transformative social change.

c. World Student Christian Federation – Asia Pacific (WSCF-AP):

- i. Solidarity and funding support to the WSCF-AP Human Rights, Justice and Peace program for a Capacity Building, Training, and Immersion Consultation for 50

young adult delegates from the Asia Pacific Region, *to strengthen solidarity among youth to defend God's gift of human dignity inherent in every individual, especially among the marginalized and oppressed.* \$5,000

B. TACKLING HUMAN TRAFFICKING, MODERN SLAVERY, AND ENFORCED MIGRATION: *To champion the dignity of every human being and work to dismantle racism and colonialism; To nurture right relationships among people of faith in local, national, and global communities and networks.*

Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

I will, with God's help

Anglican Church of Canada Baptismal Covenant

a. Migrant Justice:

- i. A joint Global Relations and Public Witness Task Group, including additional volunteers, developed the 2025 General Synod Resolution: A National Strategy for Local Ministries of Hospitality and Advocacy with Migrant Workers in Canada, in support of existing and future Canadian Anglican ministries with migrant workers from coast to coast to coast, through resources and connections with other faith-based communities engaged in similar ministries of hospitality and advocacy. The resolution serves to build awareness and bridges between diverse communities in Canada, and with global partners, and supports education toward racial justice.
 1. Members of the Task Group: The Rev. Antonio Illas (Niagara), Mr. Christopher Sorio (Toronto), The Rev. Enrique Martinez (Huron), The Rev. Augusto Nunez (Toronto), Ms Erie Maestro (New Westminster), with Global Relations and Public Witness staff.
- ii. Joint Global Relations and Public Witness leadership in developing a Churches Witnessing with Migrants – Canada (CWWM-C) network to bring together churches and church-based agencies, migrants, and migrant serving organizations in the shared work of migrant justice in Canada and globally. Since its inaugural launch in Ottawa, 2024, CWWM-C has continued to develop as a national platform for gathering member groups, planning future collaboration, sharing information about solidarity and advocacy campaigns, and local ministries of welcome and hospitality.
- iii. Continuing partnership with global ecumenical church organizations, with funding support toward research, analysis, and gatherings:
 1. Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants/ Interfaith Network for Migrants & Churches Witnessing with Migrants-International:
 - a. 2023: Interfaith Service and Advocacy Conference, Japan, \$10,000
 - b. 2024: Interfaith Service and Advocacy Conference, Indonesia, \$10,000
- iv. Participation in Anglican Global Working Group on Migration, and Resource Development Task Group.

b. Tackling Human Trafficking:

- i. 2024 Freedom Sunday, February 20: Focus: Stolen People – Sacred Teaching
- ii. 2025 Freedom Sunday, February 23: Focus: Local Parish Learning and Engagement

C. Covenant Companionships: *To nurture right relationships among people of faith in local, national, and global communities and networks.*

This is what the LORD says: “A voice is heard in Ramah, mourning and great weeping, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.”

Africa Six Strategic Planning Retreat
Jeremiah 31:15

We cannot work alone so everything we do must be done in partnership with others.

Primate Marinez R. Bassotto,
Igreja Epsicopal Anglicana do Brasil

I am happy we are highlighting the Companions of Jerusalem - I have included Archbishop Naoum and the Diocese of the Holy Land in our prayers of the people at Holy Family every Sunday since Oct. 7th.

Participant, Companions of Jerusalem Book Club on *The Wall Between: What Palestinians and Jews Don't Want to Know About Each Other*, Wilkinson and Khouri (2023), July 2024

a. Africa 6 Center for Anglican Women's Leadership and Research in Africa (CAWLRA):

- a. 2025 in-person participation in the Africa 6 Advisory Council, and funding support for a Strategic Planning Retreat, Lesotho, January 2025 and the launch of the Center for Anglican Women's Leadership and Research in Africa (CAWLRA), St. Paul's University, Limuru, Kenya, February 2025.
- b. The Retreat provided significant, in-person opportunities for the clarification of CAWLRA's vision, mission and strategic priorities through prayer, thematic discussion, SWOT analysis, and critical decision-making. Notable results toward the Center's launch in February 2025 also included the development of an Executive Governance Structure and Strategic Work Plan. Funding Support: \$6,000
- c. Striving to fulfil CAWLRA's mission of Empowering Africa's Anglican Senior Women Leaders for a Transforming Church and Society, programs, and activities in 2025 will address issues of visibility, sustainability, advancement of women clergy, and spiritual formation and growth of Anglican women leaders. Every aspect of CAWLRA's ministry and the Advisory Council will be based upon the core values of justice, engagement, reasoning, scripture, collaboration, and integrity.
- d. The Africa 6 currently serving Anglican African women bishops: Bishops Elizabeth Awut (South Sudan), Darcy Dlamini (Eswatini), Vicentia Kgabe (Lesotho), Rose Okeno (Kenya), Emily Onyango (Kenya), and Filemona Teta (Angola).

b. Council of Anglican Provinces in Africa (CAPA):

- a. 2023 In-person partners' Consultation with CAPA Board of Governors and Management Staff to participate together in an interim review of CAPA's strategic

planning process and draft 2024-2028 program plan, current programmatic and administrative work and context, including current institutional challenges, and draft budget information for 2024 and 2025 operations and program, including the concurrently occurring General Assembly, All Africa Bishops Conference III, and CAPA@45 celebration, April 2025, Nairobi. The external funding of partners for CAPA's infrastructure recovery and strategic planning following the pandemic is required for the short term, specifically for the operations of the Secretariat. Funding support: \$20,000.

- b. 2024 International partners' welcome African Primates' Abuja Statement of Affirmation and Commitment, July, affirming CAPA's *enduring relevance as an enduring indigenous African creation which must be owned and supported by African provinces*. Infrastructure and revenue challenges continued. Funding support: \$20,000.
- c. 2025: Future of partnership with CAPA to be determined in consultation with CAPA Board and Management.

c. Igreja Episcopal Anglicana do Brasil (IEAB):

- a. 2023 online partnership meetings and November in-person partnership visit with the Primate of the IEAB and Bishop of Amazonia, the Most Rev. Marinez R. Bassotto, and her Provincial and Diocesan teams in the Diocese of Amazonia. The Canadian delegation included Primate Linda Nicholls, Bishop Todd Townshend (Huron), and Dr. Andrea Mann (Global Relations). The purpose of the visit was to refresh friendship and partnership with the IEAB by participating in worship, visiting local parishes and ministries, and through conversations and discussions, learning about the IEAB's current Provincial programmatic and administrative contexts, including the operations and needs of the Provincial Office, exploring further possibilities for companion diocese relationships between Brazilian and Canadian dioceses, receiving strategic planning and draft budget documents, if available, for IEAB 2024 operations and program, and confirming the designation of Global Relations 2024 grant to the Province of the IEAB. Funding in support of the Primate's Office and Provincial Travel was identified as a priority, resulting in greater capacity for deeper national Primatial oversight and international partnership in mission. Funding Year 1/3: \$15,000
- b. 2024 Funding Year 2/3 for Primate's Office and Travel: \$20,000
- c. In 2024, the Dioceses of Toronto and Brasilia began a Companion Diocese Relationship. The dioceses of Huron and Amazonia continue to enjoy their long-term companionship.
- d. 2025: Funding Year 3/3 for Primate's Office and Travel: \$25,000

d. Anglican Church of Melanesia (ACOM):

- a. 2023 partnership priority to support ACOM hosting, in Honiara, Solomon Islands, the Anglican Oceania Fono annual gathering of Primates, Provincial Secretaries, and Senior Bishops. The 2023 Fono took place in Honiara, Solomon Islands, under the theme Fellowship and Growth in Regional Anglican Diversity, where intentional discipleship, theological education, disaster preparedness and more were discussed. Bishop Terry Brown represented the Anglican Church of Canada at the Fono, as a participant and a presenter. Funding Support: \$6,000.
- b. 2024 in-person partnership visit with ACOM leadership, including meeting with Board of Mission directors, orders of religious women and men, a site visit to the Christian

Care Centre for women and children following domestic abuse. The 2024 partnership priority was to support the Women on the Front Line (WFL) program of Lambeth Palace, hosted by ACOM and the Solomon Islands-Pacific Province in the Community of the Sisters of the Church, at Tetete Ni Kolivutu, for training and strengthening the skills and leadership of Anglican women in ministries of conflict resolution and reconciliation. More than 30 women participated from all four Provinces. Funding Support: \$10,000

- c. 2025 partnership priority to support the Anglican Oceania Fono travel bursary fund. The Fono took place in the Province of Aotearoa and New Zealand. Funding Support: \$6,000

e. The Canadian Companions of Jerusalem:

- a. The Companions community and Council continue to serve the church's partnership with the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem through:
 - i. annual Jerusalem and Holy Land Sunday, in Full Communion with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, on the Seventh Sunday of Easter, providing fresh yearly worship resources and an archive of past years,
 - ii. regular news postings and stories on the Companions Face Book,
 - iii. semi-annual e-newsletters to Companions,
 - iv. learning events e.g. Online Summer Book Club
 - v. regular Council and task group meetings, and
 - vi. raising funds through Companions' fees and donations in support of diocesan health ministries, especially the Al Ahli Arab Hospital, Gaza; the Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre, Jerusalem; and the Penman Clinic, Al Zababdeh, West Bank. Funding support: 2023-2024: Al Ahli Arab Hospital programs with children. \$40,000. Other designated donations to Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre.
 - vii. Since October 2023, Companions have also responded generously to the Archbishops' Advent and Christmas Appeals for Local Parishes and Families. Funding support 2023-2024: \$9,000
- b. New Companions Council members from 2023-2025 include: Bishop Jane Alexander, Archbishop Anne Germond (Acting Primate ex officio), Ms. Abigail Harding, Mr. Christopher Sanford Beck, and The Ven. Peter Wall.
- c. 2025 Companionship Project: Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre Training Program for Pediatric Orthopedic health care professionals to work with injured and amputee Gazan children, in partnership with Al Ahli Arab Hospital, Gaza City.
- d. Jerusalem and Holy Land Sunday, June 1, 2025

f. Companion Diocese Relationships:

- a. Canadian Anglican Companion Diocese Relationships with Communion partners were reviewed and information updated:
<https://www.anglican.ca/gr/global-local-mission/ccdp/dioceses>
- b. Initial discussion began regarding the value and purpose of within-Canada Companion Diocese Relationships, recommended for further development and support.

g. Anglican Communion Networks:

- a. Support to the Provincial Link for Canada, The Ven. Linda Hill (Ottawa), International Anglican Women's Network (IAWN), and IAWN-Canada

D. The Partners in Mission Coordinating Committee 2023-2025 members included:

The Rev. Canon Dr. Philip Der, Chair
The Rev. Grace Delaney
The Rev. Antonio Illas
Mrs. Edith Marshall
The Rev. Dr. Blessing Shambaré
Prolocutor Ian Alexander (Ex Officio)
The Very Rev. Alan T. Perry (Ex Officio)
Dr. Andrea Mann (Staff)

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Canon Dr. Canon Philip Der
PIMCC Chair

REPORT OF THE PENSION COMMITTEE TO GENERAL SYNOD 2025

The Pension Committee is responsible for the following pension and benefit plans:

1. *The General Synod Pension Plan (Canon VIII)*
2. *The Lay Retirement Plan (Canon IX)*
3. *The Long-Term Disability Plan (Canon VIII)*
4. *The Pension Endowment Funds (Canon VIII)*
5. *The Group Employee Benefits Program*
6. *The Self-Insured Death Benefit Plan*
7. *The Continuing Education Plan (Canon XII)*

The following is a summary of the work of the Pension Committee during the period June 2023 to March 2025.

1. GENERAL SYNOD PENSION PLAN (GSPP) – UPDATE

The GSPP is a target multi-employer plan currently registered with the Canada Revenue Agency as a Specified Multi-Employer Plan. The plan membership is currently composed of 3,061 pensioners and inactive members and 3,498 active members.

Conversion

The GSPP will be converting to a target benefit plan in line with the requirements of the recently released Ontario Target Benefit Pension Plan Framework. The Framework became effective on January 1, 2025, and it is expected that a Guidance document will be released in due course to assist stakeholders in interpreting and complying with the Framework in due course. In the meantime, the Pension Office is working in conjunction with Koskie Minsky LLP (Legal Advisors) and Eckler (Canada) Ltd (Actuarial Advisors) to ensure that the conversion is conducted within the stipulated timeframe.

Actuarial Valuations

Eckler (Canada) Limited, completed and filed a valuation in 2022 and the next valuation is proposed to be held by December 31, 2025.

Valuation Results: Going Concern (\$000s)

	Dec. 31, 2022	Jan. 1, 2020
Actuarial value of assets	\$1,043, 883	\$893, 288
Total liabilities	\$830,731	\$672,264
Going concern excess/(deficiencies)	\$213,152	\$221,024
Funded ratio	125.7%	132.9%

Valuation Results: Wind-Up (\$000s)

	Dec. 31, 2022	Jan. 1, 2020
Wind-up assets	\$1,006, 823	\$941, 526
Wind-up liabilities	\$948,892	\$964, 307
Wind-up excess/(deficiencies)	\$57,931	(\$22,781)

Valuation Results: Solvency

	Dec. 31, 2022	Jan. 1, 2020
Solvency assets	\$1,043, 883	\$892, 288
Total solvency liabilities	\$1,129,247	\$940,451
Total solvency excess/(deficiencies)	\$87,864	(\$48,163)
Solvency ratio	106%	98%

GSPP Expansion

The GSPP Expansion Committee continues to expand on existing initiatives and its network to attract new plan members. On the GSPP future marketing landscape, it has been determined that the plan could leverage its Anglican identity to pursue participating employers in the religious sector and other smaller organisations that would prefer deeper connections that are often hard to cultivate in large, superficial settings. It is also being considered that allocating a reasonable budget/resources to market the plan may be helpful in driving growth and expansion. The Committee acknowledges that the GSPP, as a pension plan, requires a targeted approach to expand its reach and the success of such an initiative can only be determined through direct effort and strategic engagement.

General Synod Pension Plan – Investment Performance

The market value of the assets of the GSPP as of December 31, 2024, was \$135,278,091

GSPP – Investment Returns – December 31, 2024

	3 months	6 months	1 year	4 years	10 years
Total Fund	2.11%	6.34%	11.73%	6.19%	8.18%
Total Fund Benchmark	2.22%	8.19%	14.95%	5.77%	7.53%
Excess Return	-0.11%	-1.86%	-3.22%	0.42%	0.65%
Quartile in Mercer’s Universe of Balanced Fund Portfolios	Q2	Q4	Q4	Q4	Q1

Membership in the GSPP

The total membership of the GSPP for the past 4 years is as follows:

Non-Retired Members	2021	2022	2023	2024
▪ Active	1,424	2,364	2,442	2,539
▪ Inactive	574	738	788	959
Total	1,998	3,102	3,230	3,498
Pensioners				
▪ Members	2,351	2,386	2,391	2,399
▪ Surviving Spouses	666	654	645	649
Total	3,017	3,040	3,036	3,048

Salary for Pension Purposes

The Pension Committee was made aware of discrepancies between Diocesan practices and the GSPP Pension Regulation 1.18 (Regulations of Canon VIII) regarding the definition of salary for pension purposes. In response, the Trustees consulted with Koskie Minsky LLP for legal advice and Eckler (Canada) Ltd for actuarial implications to assess the potential impact of proposed changes to the Regulation to address the discrepancy.

Following Koskie Minsky's recommendation and the Trustees' analysis, it was agreed that Diocesan practices should align with the Regulation. The wording of the Regulation will be clarified to specify the components of salary to be included in pension contribution calculations. The aim of these changes is to ensure that compensation amounts used by Dioceses in pension calculations are consistent with the wording of the pension plan regulations.

The potential effect of these changes is that the salary for pension purposes may be reduced for certain clergy members. As pension contributions are based on salary and pension benefits are derived from contributions, this may lead to a slight reduction in both contributions and benefits for some clergy members. To mitigate this impact, contribution rates will be increased to a total of 18% of salary for members whose employer contribution rate is currently 12.5%. In these cases, the employer contribution rate will rise from 12.5% to 13.0%, while the employee contribution will remain at 5% of salary.

It should be noted that the increase in the employer contribution rate (and corresponding pension benefit) will also apply to all members whose employers currently contribute at a rate of 12.5%, even though the amended salary definition will not result in a reduction of salary for pension purposes for all lay members and some clergy members.

The timing of these changes will be communicated later this year, following further analysis regarding the implementation process. In the meantime, no action is required by participating employers pending further instruction.

2. LAY RETIREMENT PLAN (LRP) – UPDATE

By way of background, the LRP (for which Canada Life was the provider) was amended to wind up, and contributions to the plan ceased. Effective January 1, 2022, all active LRP members began participating in the GSPP. Multiple options were provided to LRP members for managing their existing account balances, including transferring to the GSPP; transferring to Canada Life's Next Step RRSP; or opting for a lump sum payment. Members who did not make an election were advised that the plan sponsor or Canada Life could purchase a deferred annuity on their behalf.

Despite significant communication efforts, 488 members with account balances totalling about \$12M did not make an election regarding their LRP balances as of October 25th, 2023. In response to GSPP's proposal, FSRA accepted the proposal for small pension payments to about 250 of the remaining members and recommended that cheques be delivered to these members. This process has been implemented accordingly. The default option for the remaining members continues to be the annuity purchase.

The Pension Office is currently engaged in efforts to contact members who have not made an election and once this is completed further steps will be discussed with FSRA to resolve the pending elections for the members who have not yet made a decision.

3. THE LONG-TERM DISABILITY PLAN (LTD) (Members, who are disabled Jan. 1, 2005, or later)

The revised Long-Term Disability plan became effective on January 1, 2005. The plan allows self-insured benefits payable after 4 months of disability, for a maximum of 18 months and if disability continues, benefits are insured by Manulife.

Investment Management

These funds originally held by Letko Brosseau from January 31, 2007, to March 10, 2020, were transferred to Phillips, Hager & North (PH&N-RBC Global Asset Management Inc.) on March 11, 2020. The investment report from PH&N reflects that the one-year returns as of December 31, 2024, is 13.09% against a benchmark of 14.22% and the market value of the fund is \$2,026,934.

Statistics

For the self-insured plan, there were 15 claims and the average monthly payout from the LTD Plan for the period July 1 to December 31, 2024, was \$58, 939 compared to \$56, 617 for the period January 1 to June 30, 2024.

Claims Management

Oncidium was appointed as the Disability Manager effective January 1, 2017. Oncidium is an occupational health and disability management organization with extensive medical and rehabilitation expertise across Canada. Oncidium's role is to adjudicate new claims and assist employees throughout their long-term disability period by:

- Providing objective medical recommendations for each case.
- Maintaining confidentiality of personal medical information; and
- Providing support/advice on return-to-work processes and accommodation for a safe and timely integration to work activities if warranted.

4. THE PENSION ENDOWMENT FUND

Over the years, various donations and gifts have been made to the Endowment Fund with the request that they be used to supplement the pensions of retired members and their spouses.

Investment Management

These funds originally held by Letko Brosseau from January 31, 2007, to March 10, 2020, were transferred to Phillips, Hager & North (PH&N-RBC Global Asset Management Inc.) on March 11, 2020. The investment report from PH&N reflects that the one-year returns as of December 31, 2024, is 12.38% against a benchmark of 13.29% and the market value of the fund is \$5, 487,116

Statistics

In December 2024, we distributed a “13th cheque” to the GSPP pensioners and survivors in the amount of \$255,875. The endowment fund payments, previously made every July, are combined with the 13th cheque payments in December to simplify administration and reduce costs. Cards and letters of appreciation are sent on behalf of the pensioners to the donors for their thoughtfulness and to the Pension Committee for their stewardship in managing this fund.

Please note that in addition to making cash donations to the endowment fund, it is possible to give stocks and bonds with advantageous tax consequences to the donor/estate. An account has been set up to facilitate sales of any such securities which are given to the Endowment Fund.

5. THE GROUP EMPLOYEE BENEFITS PROGRAM

The following changes must be reported to the Pension Office, and not to Manulife directly:

- Address Change.
- Removal or Addition of a Dependent.
- Changes to Secondary Coverage through a Spousal Plan.

The following insured benefits are provided for active members under the Group Policy which are underwritten by Manulife Financial:

Life Insurance

Optional Life Insurance (For Member & Spouse)

Short Term Disability

Extended Health Care

Dental Care

Vision Care

Long Term Disability

6. THE SELF-INSURED DEATH BENEFIT PLAN (SIDB)

Investment Management

These funds originally held by Letko Brosseau from January 31, 2007, to March 10, 2020, were transferred to Phillips, Hager & North (PH&N-RBC Global Asset Management Inc.) on March 11, 2020. The investment report from PH&N reflects that the one-year returns as of December 31, 2024, is 15.70 against a benchmark of 17.14 and the market value of the fund is 5, 279,478.

7. THE CONTINUING EDUCATION PLAN (CEP)

The Pension Office is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the plan while policy decisions, educational support to members and the authorization of sabbatical/special grants are the responsibility of the Continuing Education Administrative Unit. The unit includes the Administrator of the plan and five members appointed by the Pension Committee. The administrative unit meets and reports to the Pension Committee twice a year.

Utilization

	2023		2024	
	Number	Amount \$	Number	Amount \$
Books	82	12,414	84	33,066
Computers	188	249,292	187	220,358
Courses	205	125,852	177	159,051
Educational Trips	31	90,348	23	59,421
Sabbatical Grants	12	36,141	21	67,675
Coaching/Spiritual Direction	24	9,491	16	15,266
Retreat	51	35,133	85	53,558
Other	21	16,166	15	11,595

CEP Website – Update

Effective April 1, 2025, the CEP website was taken down however users will be able to access relevant information including their CEP claims and balances using the “Check Your Balance” tab on the Pension Office website.

Assessments

The assessment to sustain the fund is \$900 per year effective January 1, 2021, from each member in respect of each of the member’s account holders. Assessments shall be paid quarterly and remitted within 30 days of the expiration of such period.

Review of Various Grants

Disparity Grant

Purpose

The Disparity Grant is provided to support CEP members who face significant barriers to accessing educational opportunities, particularly due to distance or lack of local resources.

Status

Following a recommendation from the CEP Committee for an increase in the amount allocated to Disparity Grant and the amendment of the attendant administrative guidelines, the Pension Committee approved that the Disparity Grant be increased to \$750 effective January 1, 2025, and a further increase to \$900 effective January 1, 2026.

Salary Source Account

Purpose

The Salary Source Account is used by employers to conduct group activities like clergy conference, pre-retirement seminars etc.

Status

The Pension Committee has approved that the Salary Source Account allocation be maintained at 5% for one-year effective January 1, 2025.

Bonus for Use

Purpose

This is added to withdrawals from individual accounts.

Status

The Bonus for Use to be continued at 10% for 2025. Both Salary Source and Bonus for Use will be revisited in September 2025.

Investment Management

These funds originally held by Letko Brosseau from January 31, 2007, to March 10, 2020, were transferred to Phillips, Hager & North (PH&N-RBC Global Asset Management Inc.) on March 11, 2020. The investment report from PH&N reflects that the one-year returns as of December 31, 2024, is 12.38 against a benchmark of 13.29 and the market value of the fund is 8,863,006.

8. 2023 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The Trustees met with Bishara Rizek and Yasir Moin of BDO Canada LLP in May 2024. At the meeting, the Trustees reviewed and approved the 2023 Audited Financial Statements for the various plans. The said Financial Statements are available on the Pension Office website

9. OTHER

Pension Office Update

Margaret Davidson, Manager of Pension & Benefits of the Pension Office Corporation of the Anglican Church of Canada retired at the end of January 2025, after over 41 years of distinguished service. Margaret's invaluable contributions have significantly shaped the Pension office. Yvonne Ng, who has served as a Pension & Benefits Administrator for over seven years, stepped into Margaret's role effective February 1, 2025. Additionally, following Kathy Edgar's retirement on June 20, 2024, Emily Honoridez transitioned to the role of Manager of Finance & Systems on July 1, 2024, bringing with her 23 years of experience in the Pension Office.

Pension Committee Membership

Bishop Helen Kennedy was appointed as a member of the Pension Committee to fill the vacancy left by Bishop Mary Irwin-Gibson of the Diocese of Montreal, who resigned her membership on the Committee in May 2024. Board of Trustees Membership

Mr. Stephen Tam was appointed to the Board of Trustees for an initial term beginning October 18, 2024, and ending on May 21, 2027.

Appreciation

The Right Reverend William Cliff expressed his profound appreciation to the Pension Committee for their dedication and commitment to the GSPP as they complete their term on the Committee in June 2025. He thanked the Trustees, Asset Mix Committee, GSPP Expansion Committee, Governance Committee, Audit Committee, Central Advisory Group, CEP Administrative Unit, Governance Committee, Rekha Menon (Executive Director) and the entire Pension Office staff for their contributions and service.

Those members who would not be returning to the Committee following the General Synod expressed their appreciation for having the opportunity to serve on the Pension Committee. They also thanked the Pension Committee and the Pension Office staff for their dedicated service.

If you have any questions about any aspect of the Pension or Employee Benefits program, we will again have a Pension Office staff member at the General Synod who will be available to provide information on pension policies and answer questions.

For Action

Be it resolved that this General Synod confirm the amendments to the General Synod Pension and Benefits plans approved by the Council of the General Synod as attached to this resolution. Resolution No: A170.

Be it resolved that this General Synod confirm the amendments to the Continuing Education Plan (CEP) approved by the Council of the General Synod as attached to this resolution. Resolution No: A171.

Respectfully submitted by,

The Right Rev. William Grant Cliff
Chair, Pension Committee

Ms. Rekha Menon
Director of Pensions

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC WITNESS FOR SOCIAL AND ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE COORDINATING COMMITTEE TO GENERAL SYNOD 2025

1. FOR ACTION OR CONSIDERATION

- Motion: The Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty
- Motion: Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Motion: A National Strategy for Local Ministries of Hospitality and Advocacy with Migrant Workers in Canada

2. FOR INFORMATION

The ministry of Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice (PWSEJ) is the work of the whole Church and is rooted in the calls for justice and dignity found in our scripture. The PWSEJ Coordinating Committee works to give shape and direction to national efforts addressing key issues in our society, rooted in our faith. Current priorities for the ministry of PWSEJ reflect the Anglican Church of Canada's commitment to the 4th and 5th Marks of Mission.¹ These priorities include:

- Migrant Justice and Human Trafficking
- Care for Creation
- Reconciliation and right relations with Indigenous Peoples
- Responsible resource extraction
- Homelessness and affordable housing
- Justice and corrections
- Peace, conflict and violence

The current members of the Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice Coordinating Committee are:

- The Rev. Canon Paulette Bugden (Chair; Diocese of Western Newfoundland),
- Miriam Blair (Diocese of Quebec),
- Nadia Sinclair (Diocese of Brandon),
- Christopher Sorio (Diocese of Toronto),
- The Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Green (Diocese of Algoma)
- The Ven. Tanya Phibbs (Ex-officio; Diocese of Huron)

The Coordinating Committee experienced significant challenges in moving ahead with its work due to the limited availability of committee members to participate. Members have not been available for various reasons. Therefore, there have not been many meetings over the past two years because of time constraints and scheduling issues, however the commitment to lifting up issues of migrant justice and migrants' rights as a particular focus for the work of the committee remains.

Below is a summary of some work in the ministry areas covered by Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice.

¹ To transform unjust structures of society to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

Selected Updates on Programming and Priority Areas

A. Dismantling Racism

- The Anglican Church of Canada is a strong supporter of Black Anglicans of Canada. PWSEJ collaborated with Black Anglicans of Canada to put on Disrupt, Heal, Lead, a successful first national conference for Black leaders across the Anglican Church of Canada held in Winnipeg, Manitoba. This conference was supported with a grant from the Ministry Investment Fund of the General Synod.
Conference attendees heard excellent presentations, participated in life-giving worship, and celebrated together at a gala dinner featuring the Deputy Premier of Manitoba. Disrupt, Heal, Lead was attended by approximately 30 people representing 10 dioceses and the Saskatchewan Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.

B. Care for Creation

- The Creation Matters Working Group continued to meet regularly, under the leadership of co-chairs Nancy Harvey (Diocese of Huron) and the Very Rev. Dr. Tim Dobbin (Diocese of Niagara), including working steadily to prepare two environmentally-focused motions for General Synod which are listed in this report.
- Season of Creation activities were held in dioceses and parishes across the country between September 1 and October 4. Events ranged from special diocesan services, to outdoor worship, to speakers' series and more.
Season of Creation activities and initiatives continue to see increased participation across the church.
- The Anglican Church of Canada continues to provide active leadership to the For the Love of Creation (FLC) faith-based campaign for climate justice through education, advocacy, and local congregational engagement. FLC celebrated its 4th anniversary and various members met together for conversation on strategic visioning for the future of the network.

C. Homelessness and Affordable Housing

- Three representatives from the Diocese of Ottawa's Homelessness and Affordable Housing Working Group joined the Lead Animator for Public Witness at the 2024 National Conference on Ending Homelessness in Ottawa, ON. Participants shared their experiences and learnings with the wider diocesan community and are now preparing ways of engaging Anglicans across the diocese.

D. Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery

- PWSEJ and Global Relations staff have taken active leadership in developing a Churches Witnessing with Migrants – Canada network to bring together churches and church-based agencies, migrants, and migrant-serving organizations in our shared work for migrant justice in Canada and around the world.
Churches Witnessing with Migrants – Canada launched with an event in Ottawa on November 23, 2024, where migrants, various faith-based groups and advocates attended the event. This network is continuing to develop as a national platform for gathering member groups, planning future collaboration, sharing information about solidarity and advocacy campaigns, and local ministries of welcome and hospitality, both in Canada and globally.

At the event in Ottawa, discussions took place on how the church is the destination of newcomers when they arrive in Canada. Noting also that there are faith-based groups who are promoting anti migrants and right-wing political beliefs. Human trafficking victims are also highlighting how pastors and religious leaders are victimizing migrants as they act as recruiters (situation of The Promised land Consultancy in BC).

Among the recommendations is for CWWM Canada to map out faith-based groups that are supporting and promoting migrant justice.

- A joint Partners in Mission Coordinating Committee (PIMCC) and Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice Coordinating Committee (PWSEJCC) Task Group met regularly since December 2024, regarding a National Anglican Church of Canada Strategy for Hospitality and Solidarity with Migrant Workers in Canada of which the joint resolution and the presentation to General Synod 2023 was a result.

Members of the Task Group include: Mr. Christopher Sorio (Diocese of Toronto), The Rev. Antonio Illas (diocese of Niagara), The Rev. Enrique Martinez (Diocese of Huron), The Rev. Augusto Nunez (Diocese of Toronto), and Ms. Erie Maestro (Diocese of New Westminster). Dr. Ryan Weston, Lead Animator for Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice, and Dr. Andrea Mann, Director of Global Relations accompanied as staff support.

The objective of the Task Group was to begin to discuss the Anglican Church of Canada's need for a national strategy in support of migrant workers in Canada, with specific focus on:

1. Awareness raising about the scope, contributions, and situations of migrant workers in Canada;
2. Education and resources that will equip local parishes, dioceses and other Anglican groups for engagement in hospitality and justice for local migrant workers; and
3. Renewed national church policy in support of migrant justice and the eradication of modern slavery/human trafficking in Canada and globally.

E. Government Relations

- Regular advocacy with the federal government continued in key areas of concern including:
 - Migrant justice and human trafficking
 - Peace and Justice in Palestine and Israel
 - Environmental justice
 - Poverty and housing
 - Human Rights
 - Indigenous Justice

F. Justice and Corrections

- Pamela Dillon (Diocese of Montreal) continues to represent the Anglican Church of Canada on the Restorative Justice Working Group of the Canadian Council of Churches.
- The Restorative Justice Working Group held a successful webinar celebrating the work and legacy of the Church Council on Justice and Corrections and looking ahead to the next steps in this work.
- Ryan Weston, Lead Animator for Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice, will act as a liaison between the Commission of Justice and Peace and the Restorative Justice Working Group.

G. Peace and Conflict

- Ryan Weston, Lead Animator, serves on the Steering Committee for Kairos.

*Respectfully submitted by the Rev. Canon Paulette Bugden,
Chair, Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice Coordinating Committee*

**TASK FORCE ON ABILITY AND INCLUSION:
REPORT TO THE ELCIC NATIONAL CHURCH COUNCIL FOR THE 2025 CONVENTION**

This task force was established upon the acceptance of recommendation #4 by its predecessor, the Task Force Addressing Ableism, at the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) 2023 Special Convention.

The National Church Council (NCC) appointed the members of this committee at the subsequent NCC-2024-04 meeting.

The Task Force was initially named, “Task Force Addressing Ableism”. The request of the current Task Force was to shift the focus to a more positive one, thus a request to the NCC, which was approved at the NCC-2024-09-21 meeting, to change the title and subsequent work of the Task Force to “Task Force on Ability and Inclusion”.

What is Ableism?

Ableism is a philosophy which promotes discrimination against all those who are disabled in any way. It supports the marginalization, exclusion or demeaning of those with disabilities. According to ableist thought or behavior a disabled person is a “lesser being” in value to society as a whole or to any organization predicated on membership or inclusion.

Who are Disabled Canadians?

As of 2022, results from “The Canadian Survey on Disability” by Statistics Canada identifies twenty-seven percent of the Canadian population as disabled. This means that more than one in four Canadians aged 15 years and over have a disability. This is a sharp increase from the twenty-two percent identified in the previous census in 2017, and it constitutes more than eight million of our fellow citizens.

The Challenge

Many individuals with a disability feel left outside the circle of worshipping congregations and Christian communities.

The reason for this sense of alienation, not belonging, or even exclusion is profound and takes us to the heart of the practice of Christian Theology itself. Through many centuries Christians and Christianity have associated a disability as a mark of sin, a failure of faith, a test of spiritual strength. Words like blind, deaf, and crippled are openly used to mean spiritual failure. The bent of Ableist Theology with its open and blatant discrimination has prevailed until a wondrous breakthrough in the late twentieth century.

Disability Theology

In 1994 seminal work by authour Nancy Eiesland was provided in her book “The Disabled God”, which challenged and largely banished the discriminatory theology of the last many centuries. Disability Theology has become a vibrant and leading area of Christian thinking and action around the world. DISABILITY THEOLOGY proclaims the following ten clarion tenets:

1. Imago Dei (Image of God):

All people, including disabled individuals, reflect God's image. Disability is part of human diversity, not a flaw.

2. Rejection of the Sin-Disability Link:

Disability is not caused by sin or divine punishment. It is a natural part of life, not a spiritual failing.

3. Jesus and Disability:

Jesus' interactions with disabled people focus on inclusion, dignity, and community rather than on fixing disability.

4. Healing vs. Wholeness:

True wholeness is not about curing disability but about love, inclusion, and full participation in the faith community.

5. Social Model of Disability:

Disability is not an individual problem but is created by societal barriers that exclude or marginalize disabled people.

6. The Role of the Church:

Churches should be places of radical hospitality, accessibility, and leadership opportunities for disabled people.

7. Suffering and Lament:

Suffering is acknowledged, but it does not define disabled lives. Lament provides a way to express pain while maintaining dignity.

8. Eschatology and Resurrection:

The assumption that disability will be 'fixed' in the afterlife is questioned. Resurrection may include diverse bodies.

9. Prophetic Witness:

Disabled people bring unique theological insights and challenge injustices within the church and society.

10. Interdependence Over Independence:

Christian theology values interdependence, mutual care, and shared vulnerability over the modern ideal of self-sufficiency.

ELCIC Task Force on Disability and Inclusion Rationale:

The Task Force feels that the church needs to be focusing on all abilities (not just disabilities), inclusion and welcome. Our thoughts are informed by studies in Disability Theology, particularly, "The Disabled God", named above, by author Nancy Eiesland. She challenges the traditional and ableist philosophy of many Christian Churches. She argues for a new and deeper wisdom for all to understand not only each other but the fundamental call of Christianity for a truly sacramental inclusion of those who are disabled. This approach demands the opening of hearts and understanding toward the full acceptance of the gifts and perspective each one brings to the whole communion.

Her work has sparked an energized and stimulating, radical new approach to Christian thought. More than five hundred works and lectures are currently available. Schools and faculties of theology have been formed to focus on Disability Theology. It is rapidly changing contemporary Christian thought on disability. In the 1970-80's much work was done by all levels of government concerning the physical access to buildings and spaces. Various pieces of federal and provincial legislation set our requirements. The role of congregations is to understand and use the legislation and regulations to deal with physical issues, including adding elevators, ramps, handrails and other physical devices.

The ELCIC Task Force on Ability and Inclusion Focus:

It is incumbent on all to ensure what the law and Human Rights practice demands in terms of access and accommodation are upheld. However, for Christians, there is a more important test. That is to understand and accept the gifts offered by the disabled individual to that person's Christian community. Going forward, our work will be built upon this premise.

Results of the Task Force Addressing Ableism Recommendations from Convention 2023:

Recommendations #1 through #3 recommended "certified accessibility and ableism training" for various groups within the ELCIC. This Task Force was informed that no such "certified training" is available. The assigned staff and task force then developed a workshop, "Enabling Inclusion: Cultivating a welcoming and Accessible Church Community".

Recommendation #4 led to the development of the current Task Force.

The members of the Task Force volunteered in response to a call from the National Office of the ELCIC and are:

- Victoria Featherston, Eastern Synod clergy serving the South Shore Shared Ministry in Nova Scotia. (Secretary)
- Nadine Schroder-Kranz, Eastern Synod clergy serving St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Zurich Ontario. (Co-Chair)
- Don Storch, retired Social worker, member of Lutheran Church of the Cross in Victoria, BC.
- Jodey Porter, retired from public service leadership roles, member of St. Mark's Anglican Church, Niagara On The Lake, Anglican Church Canada appointee from the Anglican Diocese of Niagara, Ontario. (Co-Chair)
- 2024 recommendation #5 led to the part time employment of Carmen Ramirez, ELCIC staff member, assistant to the Bishop for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Recommendation from the Task force:

1. The Task force respectfully request that the NCC begin a process of consideration for the adoption and proclamation of the tenets of Disability Theology.
2. A workshop, entitled, "Embracing Inclusion: Cultivating a Welcoming and Accessible Church Community" has been developed. We recommend that it be a "pilot" presentation at the September 2025 NCC meeting. A resource list of articles and videos will be compiled to be presented to allow individuals and groups to continue this work. Any necessary changes will be made following this trial run and then the workshop will be offered to all other expressions of this Church.

3. That the assigned staff member recruit a group of individuals and train them to facilitate the workshop so it can be presented to Congregational groups and other groups within this church.
4. We requested that the worship planners of the 2025 Convention find ways to incorporate those who are differently abled in the worship of the Convention.
5. To NCC, we ask that the tenure and terms of reference for this task force be clarified. We believe that the work should continue, and that the task force, with expanded membership could serve as a resource to the Diversity Equity and Inclusion staff member and to help forward this work within this church.
6. We are unclear if there are/or will be similar initiatives taken at Synodical levels, and if so, how the National and Synodical groups would integrate?
7. We recommend that the ELCIC establish a web-based chat line so that individuals and congregations might share their stories and ask questions about the work of Ability and Inclusion. We acknowledge that there are budget implications of such a recommendation, both for the technology and for staff time to moderate the chat line.
8. We recommend that the ELCIC develop a set of study guides for Bible Study using Disability Theology as their base.

References:

Eiesland, Nancy L. *The Disabled God: Toward a Liberatory Theology of Disability*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994

Government of Canada, Statistics Canada. (2024, May 28). *A demographic employment and income profile of persons with disabilities aged 15 years and over in Canada, 2022*. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-654-x/89-654-x2024001-eng.htm>

The Wheaton Center for Faith and Disability, www.wheaton.edu/faithanddisability, retrieved on 02/15/2025

REPORT OF THE RESOURCES FOR MISSION COORDINATING COMMITTEE TO GENERAL SYNOD 2025

The Coordinating Committee of Resources for Mission (RFM) provides leadership in efforts to invite generous giving across the Anglican Church of Canada.

Priorities for the biennium:

- Revenue generation for the ministries of General Synod
- Revenue generation for the Anglican Journal
- Increase knowledge and understanding among Anglicans of the ministries of General Synod
- Enhance reputation of Resources for Mission and General Synod for efficiency, accountability and transparency
- Support the work of Resources for Mission through the five Transformational Commitments

Ministry Highlights

Giving with Grace raised \$800,000 in unrestricted funds for the ministries of General Synod.

Total raised for all ministries of General Synod: \$1,578,315.

Anglican Healing Fund
Council of the North
Indigenous Ministries
Faith, Worship, and Ministry
Global Relations
Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice

The Anglican Journal appeal raised \$644,020 over the past two years.

Sponsorship for General Synod 2025 topped \$100,000.

Multi-channel methods were used to reach donors, including social media, email blasts, direct mail and email campaigns.

Collaborative efforts between Alongside Hope and the Anglican Foundation raised awareness about legacy initiatives.

Five Transformational Commitments and its impact on the work of Resources for Mission

Invites and deepens life in Christ.

Resources for Mission fosters spirituality through generosity by integrating it into our communications with donors. We incorporate the teachings of Jesus in communication materials, such as direct mail campaigns, Journal advertisements and email requests.

Champions the dignity of every human being; works to dismantle racism and colonialism.

We demonstrate the church's diversity by representing it in all its forms. We avoid stereotyping certain communities as helpers and others as beneficiaries.

Embraces mutual interdependence with the Indigenous church (Sacred Circle).

We support Indigenous Ministries by sharing knowledge and skills to help generate revenue. We collaborate closely, following the leadership of Archbishop Chris Harper and his ministry team.

Nurtures right relationships among people of faith in local, national, and global communities and networks.

We partner with ministries, such as Global Relations, to support their efforts in communities outside of Canada. We remain committed to sharing our expertise and resources across the Church.

Stewards and renews God's creation; protects and sustains the earth; pursues justice for all people.

We do our part by respecting God's gifts that help sustain the earth - conserving energy, promoting online donations to reduce paper waste, and minimizing unnecessary resource use.

We are grateful for the work of the dedicated staff team at Resources for Mission. Our sincere thanks to donors and supporters who continue to believe in the mission and work of the Church.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Canon Neil Mancor
Chair, Resources for Mission Coordinating Committee

Committee members:

Ms. Valerie Bennett
The Reverend Ruth Dantzer
The Reverend Tellison Glover
The Venerable Alan Perry – (ex-officio) General Secretary
Canon Ian Alexander – (ex-officio) Prolocutor

Staff:

Deborah Barretto – Director
Fe Bautista – Database Administrator
Grace Lanca – Annual Giving and Database Coordinator

Creating Pathways

for the

Transformational Change of the General Synod

AN OFFERING FROM THE PRIMATE'S COMMISSION ON PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL IN
THE 21ST CENTURY



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THIS REPORT AT A GLANCE

The Primate's Commission ('Commission'), having consulted with Anglicans from coast to coast to coast, have developed 6 pathways that the Commission trusts have the potential to strengthen the ministry of inviting and deepening life in Christ through the Anglican Church of Canada's General Synod and make a positive impact on Ecclesiastical Provinces, Dioceses and Territories, Parishes and Congregations.

The Commission looks specifically at the work of 'General Synod' that is defined for the purpose of this report as: *The national organizational entity, instituted by dioceses, that has continued to evolve since its inception in 1893 to take on specific responsibilities to hold Anglicans across the country in relationship with one another and with Anglicans across the Communion.*

Commissioned by the Most Reverend Linda Nicholls near the end of her term as Primate, the Commission, "Reimagining the Church: Proclaiming the Gospel in the 21st Century," was mandated to think creatively and reimagine what changes need to be made so that the gospel could continue to be at the centre our church's life. Restricted to a two-year time frame that began in July 2023, the Primate's Commission understood its tasks to be:

- to ask the question of what is needed now at the national level—in the 21st century—to effectively proclaim the gospel in sustainable and life-giving ways;
- to chart a path for transformation of General Synod structures and resources to assist churches and communities of the Anglican Church of Canada to proclaim the Gospel, and;
- to honour the ongoing journey with the Sacred Circle as described in *The Covenant and Our Way of Life*.

The report seeks to communicate a sense of prophetic imagination, urgency, a refusal to ignore difficult conversations, and an invitation to embrace provocative risk-taking ideas. It is not limited by the 'way things have always been done' but rather embraces our current context and the hope-filled mission to walk on the road with Jesus alongside us as the Gospel is proclaimed.

This work emerges from a current context that invites adaptation for the future. It is in large part a response to the precipitous decline in participation in parishes and congregations across Canada. Data about this time of transition from Anglican statistician the Rev. Dr. Neil Elliot is outlined.

In the report, the Commission's process of listening to clergy, laity, and bishops from across Canada, using provocative hypotheses is described. Through its consultative

process the Commission learned about hopes for the ways in which the General Synod could be of benefit to the Anglicans across Canada as well as confusion about what General Synod currently seeks to achieve on behalf of the Church. Additionally, many voices shared a dissatisfaction with the legislative processes and concern about underrepresented and marginalized communities.

The report outlines three core areas of work foundational to the ministry of the General Synod in its efforts to support dioceses and communities across the country. These three core areas are a commitment to **communicate, connect, and convene** so that all Anglicans in Canada (individuals, parishes, and dioceses) are assisted in their ability to proclaim the Gospel.

Six Pathways are outlined with recommendations for next steps. The pathways are:

1. Organizational Structure
2. Management Overview & Restructuring
3. Inclusion & Diversity in Decision-Making
4. Communications
5. Walking Together in Partnership: Indigenous Church (Sacred Circle) with the Historic Settler Church (General Synod, Provinces, Dioceses and Territories)
6. Ministry in Remote Northern Communities

Most of the recommendations contained in this Report are process oriented. We propose that the General Synod empower General Synod's Officers to claim a convening and coordinating role and take responsibility for directing the next steps of this work. This will include directing some of the work to other committees, leaders and teams (such as the Transformational Commitments Implementation Group) but may also include maintaining a responsibility of some aspects that sit within the realm of the oversight work of the Officers of General Synod as a group.

Commission members, through our consultations, conversations and discernment see very clear intersections between various pathways. These intersections revolve around three key areas of implementation: structural change across all levels of church governance (national, provincial, diocesan) (Pathways 1 & 3); the relationship between Sacred Circle, Council of the North and the General Synod (Pathways 5 & 6); and management of the Office of General Synod (Pathways 2 & 4).

GUIDING THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?' ~ Luke 24:32

It was the very day of the resurrection but, for the disciples walking along the road to Emmaus, it was a day of confusion and worry. They had given up many things to follow Jesus and his crucifixion was not what they had expected. Their friends' strange story of angels and a missing body did nothing to ease their anxiety and so they had left Jerusalem with its danger and its sorrows.

But then, even as they were walking away, Jesus, unrecognized by them, came alongside them. He reminded them of the promise of the Scriptures, showing them that all they had endured was a necessary part of the path for all who would follow the Messiah. He reminded them that this path was created by God and had been travelled by many who had gone before them and would continue to welcome the generations yet to come.

The disciples reached their destination and urged this wise stranger to stay with them. So, Jesus went in and blessed and broke bread, and gave it to them, feeding them as he had done many times before. Their eyes were opened and they knew Jesus had been with them on the road. They knew, even though he had disappeared from sight, that Jesus was alive and with them still. They knew their journey was not over.

They returned to Jerusalem to share the good news. What had seemed like the end, was revealed to be a beginning.

The story of the road to Emmaus was the guiding scriptural narrative for the creation of the Transformational Commitments and it continues to guide this report. It is a story of Jesus' power to bring clarity to confusion, courage to fearfulness, and hope to anxiety. It is a call to trust in Scripture, in the Sacraments, and in one another's experiences of the Risen Christ. It is also a strong reminder that while the landscape may change and the path may appear to wander, we are called to continue our journey in faith, proclaiming the gospel that burns in our hearts, trusting that what might seem like an ending is always the revelation of a new beginning.

DEFINING “GENERAL SYNOD”

The Primate’s Commission (‘Commission’) looks specifically at the work of ‘General Synod’. For the purpose of this report ‘General Synod’ is defined in the following way:

The national organizational entity, instituted by dioceses, that has continued to evolve since inception in 1893¹ to take on specific responsibilities to hold Anglicans across the country in relationship with one another and with Anglicans across the Communion.

Please Note: When ‘General Synod’ is referred to in this document it is referring to the organizational entity and not the ‘Meeting of the General Synod’ event that is also commonly referred to as General Synod. Nor is it referring to the ‘Office of General Synod’ (commonly known as Church House). For the purpose of this report the ‘Meeting of General Synod’ and the ‘Office of General Synod’ will be used, when necessary, in an attempt for clarity.

INITIATING THE TASK OF THE PRIMATE’S COMMISSION

In light of emerging new opportunities and challenges facing the Anglican Church of Canada, in 2023, Archbishop Linda Nicholls initiated a Primate’s Commission entitled “Reimagining the Church: Proclaiming the Gospel in the 21st Century.” The Primate asked the Commission (see full list of members in Appendix 1) to think creatively about our church’s life, and to ‘reimagine’ what changes need to be made so that the gospel could continue to be at the centre of who we are.

Archbishop Nicholls provided the following as the basis of her thoughtful and wise implementation of this work:

A core task of the church is to proclaim the gospel – the Good News of Jesus Christ - wherever we may be, always aware of the context we address. So much has changed around us in recent decades through technology in addition to rapid social shifts. In the midst of changing patterns, uncertainties and possibilities we are called to proclaim the

¹ For a history of the evolution of General Synod please see:

<https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/Evolution-of-General-Synod.pdf>

gospel with joy in the context of Canadian urban, rural, Indigenous and isolated communities. To do that effectively we need support structures that are appropriate to our time and needs. We have inherited much that is good and helpful but can always be improved and may need to be transformed.

What is needed now at the national level – in the 21st century – to effectively proclaim the gospel in sustainable and life-giving ways? Are changes needed? If major changes are needed – how do we implement them with care and attention to their impacts? If we need to improve current patterns – how do we celebrate and support the gifts we have and use them well now and into the future? How will the structure of the General Synod need to shift or improve to be most effective? If we were to create the General Synod today, what would we create?

The Commission was invited to explore these questions and offer a report to General Synod 2025 with recommendations for next steps.

Understanding of the Task

The scope of the work outlined in this report is focused on the role of the organizational entity of General Synod, and how it might be reshaped to better facilitate the proclamation of the Gospel for decades to come.

The work of transformation of the structures and resources of the General Synod will not be done overnight. Existing structures and required timelines that are part of the current decision-making processes of the General Synod will result in many of the tasks outlined in this report taking significant time. Thoughtful discernment with stakeholders and a commitment to communicate with Anglicans across the country will also require space for meaningful engagement.

The Primate's Commission considers the phase outlined in this document to be the exploratory phase of a multi-year process of transformation.

Within the two-year biennium cycle that began in July 2023, the Primate's Commission understood its tasks to be as follows:

- 1. To chart a path for future transformations of General Synod structures and resources to assist Anglican churches and communities across the country as they proclaim the Gospel.*
- 2. To honour that the work of this report walks alongside the ongoing evolution of The Sacred Circle as found in The Covenant and Our Way of Life² that is being led by Indigenous Anglicans throughout the country. With deepest respect this report recognizes that there are many ways in which the Anglican Church of Canada continues to be on an ongoing journey with the Sacred Circle and that the work of developing and defining that partnership is evolving.*

Current Context

The report seeks to communicate a sense of prophetic imagination, urgency, a refusal to ignore difficult conversations, and provocative risk-taking ideas. It is not limited by the 'way things have always been done' but rather embraces our current context and the hope-filled mission to walk on the road with Jesus alongside us as the Gospel is proclaimed.

The God of creation has called the Anglican Church of Canada to become a diverse grouping of followers of Christ spanning the width of a continent and stretching from the most northern communities of the Arctic to the southern tip of Ontario, worshiping in the Anglican tradition. These lands are stewarded by the Indigenous peoples of Canada, as they have been since time immemorial. Today they are also shared with peoples from diverse nationalities and origins. The face of Canada as we know it is changing, as is the face of Anglicanism. The religious institution many of us have long known and loved does not look now as it did even twenty years ago, and it will not look the same twenty years from now.

² The Covenant and Our Way of Life. Sacred Circle, found at:
https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/SC-covenant-owol_single.pdf

According to Dr. Neil Elliot in work directed by the General Synod³, membership and participation in Anglican parishes in 2023 was approximately one quarter of what it was in 1967. There are about half as many paid priests. The number of bishops has increased and average Sunday attendance is seventy-eight percent lower than in 1967. The following table provides a demonstration of this significant change on the road upon which we travel.

	1967	2023	
Active Bishops	36	39	+8%
Paid Priests	1943	1084	-44%
# Parishes	1849	1474	-20%
Total # on Parish Rolls	1,218,666	294,382	-76%
Average Sunday Attendance	272,400	58,871	-78%

For many, the significant transitions demonstrated in the numbers above evoke grief, fear and longing. Memories of filled-to-the-brim Cathedrals along with church expansions to accommodate ever-increasing Sunday Schools and church functions lead to commiseration when contrasted against today's landscape. While the authors of this report honour the memories and the lamentation of the early 20th-century Anglican church, this nostalgia cannot be a barrier to a spirit-inspired, hope-filled excitement for the future work of Anglicanism in Canada as the people of God continue to deepen and invite life in Christ in new and diverse ways.

This report does not seek to reverse current trends, but to respond to them to empower a much smaller church to thrive as it proclaims the gospel today and in the future.

This is a report that seeks to embrace a time in church history that is filled with many opportunities to walk alongside Jesus in new and different ways. A time in which we are inspired by what has gone before and emboldened by where Jesus is calling us in the future. The members of the Primate's Commission are not grieved by this paradigm shift but rather embrace these opportunities for new beginnings with a burning in our hearts.

³ <https://numbersmatters.ca/2024/03/15/dioceses-of-the-acc-by-numbers/> and <https://www.anglican.ca/ask/faq/number-of-anglicans/statistical-archive/>

It is an invitation to all Anglicans in Canada to consider what structures and resources are needed by the General Synod today so that it can most effectively assist Anglicans across the country to deepen and invite life in Christ now and in generations to come.

*The church is changing and the Anglican Church of Canada of 2050 will not be the same as the Anglican Church of Canada of 1960 or 2016. But that change is not the same as the end of the church. That change may be uncomfortable, but being uncomfortable is not the same as the end of the church.*⁴

~ The Rev. Dr. Neil Elliot

Some caveats to consider regarding the scope of this work:

- While there are likely many ways that this work can provide witness to others, we do not hold the mandate of addressing needs at every level of the Church or any of the work led by Sacred Circle, even if all areas of the Anglican Church in Canada and the Sacred Circle are relevant to the work to which we have been called.
- This is not a proposal about revitalizing the spiritual life of individual churches (although we hope it might help), or recruiting more young people, or increasing attendance in general, even if these are all goods in and of themselves. Instead, this is a proposal for a significant review of the General Synod and the unique and valuable role it has to play for the benefit of all Anglicans in our country.
- The members of the Primate's Commission recognize that there is a variety of influences, constraints and challenges impacting the Anglican Church across Canada and the work of the General Synod. These include financial constraints, ongoing institutional decline (as discussed above) and wider social changes.

⁴ Please see: How Grow's the Vineyard brochure at numbersmatter.ca:
<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/4jkzucd7qcsgwl3l6t2yd/How-grows-the-vineyard.pdf?rlkey=r45yq9v8rl0sjnxox77wt46la&e=1&dl=0>

Guiding Lenses and Principles

The foundational principles the Commission took as its starting point were threefold. On an individual level, the commitments of the **Baptismal Vows**⁵ as they're found in the Book of Alternative Services were considered. These vows constitute the heart of who Anglicans are as a people called to walk together in the journey of faith.

On an institutional level, the work was rooted in the **Mission Statement of the Anglican Church of Canada**⁶ (1989) that states:

As a partner in the worldwide Anglican Communion and in the universal Church, we proclaim and celebrate the gospel of Jesus Christ in worship and action. We value our heritage of biblical faith, reason, liturgy, tradition, bishops and synods, and the rich variety of our life in community. We acknowledge that God is calling us to greater diversity of membership, wider participation in ministry and leadership, better stewardship in God's creation and a stronger resolve in challenging attitudes and structures that cause injustice. Guided by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to respond to this call in love and service and so more fully live the life of Christ.

Additionally, the Commission considered the **Five Transformational Commitments**⁷ of the Anglican Church of Canada, adopted in 2023:

1. Invite and deepen life in Christ.
2. Champion the dignity of every human being; work to dismantle racism and colonialism.
3. Embrace mutual interdependence with the Indigenous church (Sacred Circle).

⁵ Anglican Church of Canada, ed., *The Book of Alternative Services of the Anglican Church of Canada*, 8. pr (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1993), 158-159. <https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/BAS.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.anglican.ca/about/mission-statement/#:~:text=As%20a%20partner%20in%20the,of%20our%20life%20in%20community.>

⁷ <https://changingchurch.anglican.ca>

4. Nurture right relationship among people of faith in local, national and global communities and networks.
5. Steward and renew God's creation: protect and sustain the earth; pursue justice for all.

From these three foundational lenses the Commission sought to identify areas within the structures and work of the General Synod that could be deemed priorities for exploration, transformation and adaptation for the future.

Enabling Conversation through Seven Hypotheses

*Hypothesis: supposition made on limited evidence
as a starting point for further investigation.*

~ Oxford Dictionary

The Primate's Commission was committed to a listening approach based on models of appreciative inquiry; to ask questions that would elicit conversation and enable hopes and goals (as well as challenges and differing opinion) to emerge.

To enable wide engagement in a conversation about how structures can best enable the proclamation of the Gospel, the Primate's Commission posited seven hypotheses. Each was crafted to be deliberately provocative in the hope of stimulating authentic and vulnerable dialogue, even if it evoked difficult conversations. An initial Hypotheses document outlining these seven possibilities for structural change (see Appendix 3) was created alongside a historical review of the Evolution of General Synod (see Appendix 2).

The topics found within the seven hypotheses were not new. They have been discussed informally (and sometimes formally) for years. The intent was for the hypotheses to be used as starting points for conversation in a consultation process that was held in-person, via Zoom, and through an online survey tool between May and November 2024.

Using the Seven Hypotheses document, the Primate's Commission sought to engage Anglicans across the country in conversations about key areas of structure and work of the General Synod. Eighteen conversations were conducted online and in person, facilitated by at least one member of the Commission:

- Presentations and engagements at House of Bishops (2) and Council of General Synod (2)
- Presentations and engagements with all Provincial Synods (4)
- Online opportunities open to members of the Meeting of General Synod and Partners (4)
- Meetings/engagements with Senior Management Staff (2)
- Meeting/engagement with the Office of General Synod Staff (non-Management) (2)
- In-Person engagement with Council of the North (1)
- Online engagement with ACIP (1)
- Presentation and engagement with the Diocese of Niagara Synod (1)
- Presentation and engagement with seminary students at Vancouver School of Theology and seminary students from the Diocese of Nova Scotia and PEI at Atlantic School of Theology (2)

After each conversation, participants were sent a survey to complete. The survey was also available on the Anglican Church of Canada website for all interested individuals. The online survey garnered 85 responses from participants in engagement activities and 212 participants who were drawn to the survey through word of mouth, media or other means.

The Commission analyzed notes from the conversations and the survey data (highlights from the responses can be found in Appendix 4) to assist in identifying **Three Core Areas of Work of the General Synod** as well as determining **Six Pathways for Transformational Change**.

CORE AREAS OF WORK OF THE GENERAL SYNOD

The Primate's Commission has identified three core areas of work as foundational to the ministry of the General Synod as it seeks to support dioceses and communities across the country. These three core areas are a commitment to **communicate, connect, and convene** so that all Anglicans in Canada (individuals, parishes, and dioceses) are assisted in their ability to proclaim the Gospel.

Communicating

- Disseminating information about the life of Canadian Anglicans and the work of General Synod throughout the church as well as to the wider world
- Creating and providing communication materials in support of the work of the General Synod
- In partnership with the Sacred Circle, creating and providing communication materials for the purposes of disseminating information about the Self-Determining Indigenous Church
- Developing and sharing common materials, including liturgical resources to be used at the discretion of Bishops and Dioceses

Connecting

- Facilitating networks of relationships, resource sharing, and collaboration among various facets of the Anglican Church throughout Canada
- Facilitating connections between Anglicans in Canada and across the Communion
- Facilitating connections between Canadian Anglicans and partners in other denominations, other faiths, and civil society
- Lending expertise to the task of referring work to other bodies, as appropriate
- Enabling a just, equitable, and robust relationship between the General Synod and the Sacred Circle and amongst Anglicans throughout Canada.

Convening

- Calling people together, either in-person or online, for the purposes of deliberation, decision-making, and building up of our common life
- Maintaining and developing the national archive of the Anglican Church of Canada

Six Pathways for Transformational Change

The Primate's Commission has identified, with help from Anglicans from across the country, six pathways for transformational change that are recommended for exploration and further development and implementation.

The six pathways, while linked to the original seven hypotheses, are not a direct carrying forward of the statements contained in the initial Hypotheses document with one dropped. Rather, having the input from well over 200 Anglicans across the country and feedback from 297 online surveys, the pathways are aimed to encompass broader ideals as identified over the course of our engagement.

It is important to reiterate that these pathways do not suggest any directives to the work of the Sacred Circle. The work of this report walks alongside the ongoing evolution of the Sacred Circle as found in The Covenant and Our Way of Life⁸ that is being led by Indigenous Anglicans throughout the country. With deepest respect, this report seeks to recognize that there are many ways in which the Anglican Church of Canada continues to be on an ongoing journey with the Sacred Circle and that the work of developing and defining that partnership is evolving.

⁸ The Covenant and Our Way of Life. Sacred Circle, found at:
https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/SC-covenant-owol_single.pdf

1. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE PATHWAY

Where we are now

In 2023, the Anglican Church of Canada was less than one-quarter of the size it was in 1967 in terms of the number of people attending on Sunday and the number on parish rolls. Despite this drastic and ongoing decline in participation and membership, the governance structures of the church remain largely the same in size; albeit with various attempts at reductions and adaptations of Standing Committees, Working Groups, Coordinating Committees, etc. Although strategic plans and governance reviews have reduced the size of diocesan delegations to the Meeting of General Synod, national committees, and even the Council of General Synod, the overarching structures of thirty dioceses, four provinces, and two national bodies (General Synod and Sacred Circle) have been sustained with a drastically decreased base of support.

While the number of staff employed by the General Synod has been reduced over the past 40 years, from 94 in 1987 to 39 currently, the structure of the Anglican Church of Canada, in its Provinces and Dioceses, has continued. Indeed, as Dr. Neil Elliot's statistics demonstrate, the number of bishops has increased.

It is our view that current institutional structures are larger than necessary at every level (especially ecclesiastical provinces, and the number of dioceses). This top-heavy structure focuses human and financial resources on maintaining outsized institutions rather than proclaiming the gospel in local communities.

Current institutional structures are more complex than necessary in terms of how decisions are made, implemented, and evaluated. These decision-making structures impede making decisions quickly and transparently and limit access to the knowledge and power to make decisions to a small established group.

In addition to practical challenges, the large and complex nature of these structures contributes to an institutional culture characterized by shared anxiety about institutional survival, deep discouragement about the

possibility of change, and mistrust among groups and individuals, all of which are counter to proclaiming the gospel of the risen Christ.

Where we want to be next

To thrive in the future, the Anglican Church of Canada needs smaller and simpler governance structures at every level so that the gospel can be proclaimed more effectively in local communities.

In a church one-quarter the size and shrinking, this pathway describes how the convening power of the institution of General Synod can initiate a process to address the question:

How can the size of church governance structures in the Anglican Church of Canada be reduced by 75%?⁹

Canada is geographically large and regionally diverse, making it necessary to hold in tension two structural priorities:

1. Focusing resources on proclaiming the gospel in local communities through a shift to smaller national, provincial, and diocesan structures; and,
2. Establishing a strong centre focused on a shared commitment to proclaiming the gospel to foster relationships and collaboration across expansive diversity.

Building relationships and trust across distance and differences requires decision-making processes that are accessible, transparent, and accountable.

Steps along the way

The questions of organizational structure outlined here have implications for every level of governance: national (General Synod and Sacred Circle), provincial, and diocesan. Therefore, the institution of General Synod has a crucial convening role in initiating a conversation that involves the people and groups required to design and implement a new organizational structure for the Anglican Church of Canada.

⁹ This number is intended to be provocative and invite deep and urgent conversation about significant change.

We propose that the Officers of General Synod (Primate, General Secretary, Treasurer, Prolocutor, and Deputy Prolocutor, two Officers at Large, Chancellor, and Vice Chancellor) are given the mandate and resources to propose a major revision to organizational structures that would be proposed for implementation at the Meeting of General Synod in 2028. To achieve this goal, we recommend that the Officers:

1. Create a working group to develop a proposal for a new organizational structure.

This working group will address church structure at all levels: the General Synod, ecclesiastical provinces, and dioceses. This group of nine to eleven people would have a joyful vision for a smaller church structure that faithfully enables the gospel to be proclaimed. Members would include: specialists in organizational structure, newcomers to the Anglican tradition, Indigenous Anglicans, younger Anglicans, governance/canon lawyers, representatives of each ecclesiastical province, and laity, clergy, and bishops.

2. Task the working group with answering the following questions:

- a. How can national and provincial structures be drastically reduced in size? What is essential at the provincial level, if anything? What is essential at the national level, if anything? How can levels of governance be streamlined, combined, eliminated, or re-created to better align with the Transformational Commitments and the current context of the Anglican Church in Canada? How will/should structures interact with those of the Sacred Circle?
- b. What is the role of the primate in a new organizational structure? What can we learn from other parts of the Communion about alternative ways to structure this role, including the primate being a diocesan bishop?
- c. How can the number of dioceses be reduced? How can dioceses be encouraged to work together as steps toward amalgamation? How can natural moments of transition, such as the retirements of bishops or financial shifts, be opportunities to assess options? What can we learn ecumenically from the structure of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and The Episcopal Church?

- d. How can processes of accountability, transparency, evaluation and adaptation be further instilled in the operational structure of the General Synod?
- e. How does the General Synod interact with its key partners; namely Anglican Foundation, Alongside Hope and the Anglican Church of Canada Pension Fund?
- f. What alternatives to the current structures, procedures and practices used for the creation and operation of General Synod Working Groups, Coordinating Committees, councils, other committees, etc. might better serve decision-making, especially in terms of being accessible to a broader range of people (who are predominantly volunteers) and increased nimbleness in facilitating change? (This is informed by a commitment to upholding the dignity of every human being that is highlighted in the “Inclusion and Diversity in Decision Making” pathway outlined below.). Additionally, what processes and procedures of the Meeting of the General Synod should also be adapted?

3. Convene a Constitutional Convention

Convene a Constitution Convention involving all parties required to make a concrete proposal regarding a new organizational structure on a timeline that would facilitate the presentation of the new structure at the 2028 Meeting of the General Synod and the provincial synods that precede it. Full-communion partners and broader Anglican networks could also be represented.

We acknowledge substantial revisions to the canons, and potentially to federal and provincial legislation, will be required to implement changes to organizational structures at this level.

We recognize that the process itself as well as the results of the process are part of living into a new structure. The work of designing and implementing a new church structure must therefore be characterized by building trust and relationship, as well as an urgent and hopeful vision for change, anchored in a shared commitment to inviting and deepening life in the risen Christ.

2. MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW & RESTRUCTURING PATHWAY

Where we are now

The Office of General Synod¹⁰ is the main operational arm of the Anglican Church of Canada. Over the past few decades various restructuring efforts have had an impact both internally and externally, among the staff and amongst the wider church. At the same time, a shifting culture around employment has brought external influences—such as remote work, contract work, new information technologies, and artificial intelligence—to bear on the Office of General Synod.

The most recent intentional review and adaptation of governance and staff structures of the General Synod was done through the Preparing the Way planning process that began in 1992. While there has been a variety of adaptations since that time, many of the restructuring principles that occurred through that process continue to be the foundation of the ways in which the Office of General Synod operates, over thirty years later.

Today, there are nine different departments of the General Synod (Office of the Primate, Communications and Information Resources, Faith, Worship and Ministry, Financial Management, Global Relations, Indigenous Ministries, Office of the General Secretary, Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice, and Resources for Mission) that are tasked with implementing policies set by Anglicans through various committees and councils¹¹.

Gathered data from both the Primate's Commission engagements and the Transformational Commitments process (2019-2023) continually identified the reality of significant confusion throughout the country around what the Office of General Synod does, can do, and should do. This confusion contributes to a lack of 'value' attributed to the Office of General Synod and

¹⁰ For more information on the structures and roles of General Synod see:

<http://www.anglican.ca/about/handbook/>

¹¹ For a full description of the various Committees, Councils and Corporations of General Synod see:

www.anglican.ca/about/ccc/

the General Synod as a whole (which in turn negatively impacts the commitment to cost sharing by dioceses for the operational expenses of General Synod). Deep frustrations exist among members of the wider church who are asked to share their own declining financial resources with the Office of General Synod without a clear understanding of what takes place there or where accountability lies.

The Primate's Commission also recognizes that staff in the Office of General Synod have, for decades, had ever increasing responsibilities assigned to them with little sense of projects ever coming to completion. There appears to be a lack of clarity around the accountability structures governing the General Synod as it relates to the staff of the Office of General Synod and its interconnections with the various committees and councils (that are primarily comprised of volunteers from across the country). Staff receive directions from the Meeting of General Synod, from the Council of General Synod, from departmental heads, from upper management, and sometimes individual Anglicans who misunderstand the roles of General Synod staff. This lack of clarity leads to significant frustration around decision making and role clarity and negatively impacts effectiveness, job satisfaction and the well-being of employees. Furthermore, the lack of clarity becomes a barrier to the ways in which dedicated staff are able to assist in the proclamation of the Gospel through efforts of the Office of the General Synod.

Where we want to be next

How can the structures of the General Synod support clear, transparent, and manageable expectations for the people who have been tasked with managing the national supportive structures that bind Anglicans together across the country? How can the work of General Synod, and the staff and volunteers doing the work, be valued and treated with dignity and respect? What supports, structures and environments are needed for this important work to be accomplished?

“The church structures need to exist to enable ministry and pastoral care and to the extent to which we don’t do that well we need to improve them.”¹²

~ The Venerable Alan Perry

General Secretary of the Anglican Church of Canada

The overarching question that needs to be asked is whether the operating and management structure that has governed the Office of General Synod for the past generations is ideally suited to the needs of the Anglican Church of Canada that are fulfilled by General Synod in the 21st century.

Departments must be reviewed to ensure that work areas align with the current needs of the Anglican Church of Canada and the policies emerging from its various committees and councils¹³ and that work that is no longer in alignment can effectively conclude. Additionally, structures must aim towards creating efficient, transparent, manageable and accountable work environments that clearly articulate roles and responsibilities, job descriptions, priority setting, and job scope.

Consideration should also be given to the review of existing policies and further adoption of appropriate best practices around the evolving employment landscape by drafting consistent policies on remote work, AI usage, contract work, and new information technologies.

The way forward involves the engagement and consultation of staff at every level of the Office of General Synod. It is important to ensure that staff are able to give feedback and to have their voices heard.

Steps along the way

Guided by the hope of the General Synod to support the proclamation of the gospel in the 21st century, and the core work of connecting, convening, and communicating, this Report recommends a management review and restructuring process be carried out with recommendations presented and an implementation process instigated by 2028. This process must be led by

¹² See The Ministries of the General Synod video series:

www.anglican.ca/about/departments/gso/

¹³ For a full description of the various Committees, Councils and Corporations of General Synod see:

<https://www.anglican.ca/about/ccs/>

an unbiased team that might most appropriately be a third-party outside consultant.

This process would offer increased clarity internally about task prioritization and evaluation and accountability structures, as well as increased clarity externally about the capacity, role, functions, and scope of the Office of General Synod staff work and the relation to committees, dioceses and others. In dialogue with Pathway #1, adaptations to the role of the Primate will also be considered.

This review would be intended to recognize, communicate, and value the contributions of Office of General Synod staff and bring awareness to the rest of the church of what they do. In that vein it would clarify job descriptions and mitigate overlapping responsibilities or gaps. It would provide assessment tools and metrics that would enable staff to determine what lies inside and outside the scope of their work.

Furthermore, it could provide a review and adaptation of management tools for clear evaluation and assessment processes that would further enable the growth and personal development of the Office of General Synod staff. It would aim to strengthen and foster a supportive environment that would enable staff to understand, accomplish, and celebrate their important work. It would also provide clear processes for re-prioritizing, adopting new activities, and bringing other work to a close. It would nurture right relationships and champion the dignity of every human being.

3. INCLUSION & DIVERSITY IN DECISION-MAKING

Where we are now

According to Statistics Canada data from 2023, Anglicanism continues to be the third largest Christian denomination¹⁴ in Canada. An additional statistic indicates that one in five Christians in Canada are immigrants¹⁵. While there is an increase in diversity in many of our Anglican communities across Canada, there continues to be a lack of diversity represented in the work of the General Synod and barriers to the inclusion of diverse cultures, socio-economic realities, backgrounds, identities, and abilities.

Despite the many changes in the cultural landscape of Anglicanism across Canada, and various efforts to increase representation in all aspects of its work, the General Synod continues to attract and privilege older, affluent, white and able-bodied individuals in the Meetings of General Synod and its committees and councils.

Additionally, the General Synod's canonically oriented governance processes, including committee appointment and legislative procedures, is a system that privileges debate towards decision making as its default community discernment processes. Yet there are other community discernment processes that are less oriented towards debating points and more oriented towards deep listening and engagement.

Overall, inadequate procedures on the Meeting of General Synod floor and processes of the Meeting were repeatedly identified through the Commission's consultation process. It was felt that barriers are created and decision-making processes do not effectively enable participation by all. Some perceive that the governance system creates a bullying environment in which many voices are silenced.

Where we want to be next

To increase the effectiveness of the General Synod to be an instrument that enables Anglicans to proclaim the Gospel in an increasingly diverse country,

¹⁴ See: www.statcan.gc.ca/o1/en/plus/3392-happy-easter

¹⁵ See: numbersmatters.ca/2024/05/24/immigration-and-religion-in-canada/

decisions of national importance need to be made by legislative bodies more widely representative of the Canadian population.

Voices heard within the Commission's consultations expressed a desire to re-visit and adapt General Synod structures to enable a wider participation in all aspects of the work of the General Synod. This wider participation includes not just people who identify as Indigenous and BIPOC but also people of different abilities and socio-economic realities (and other diversities).

A desire exists to change governance structures so that barriers and power differentials, including perceived procedural barriers at Meetings of General Synod, can be eliminated or radically reduced. Many sought to discuss ways in which the Meeting of General Synod, and all other meetings and activities convened by the General Synod on behalf of Anglicans across the country, could be places of relationship building, dialogue and discernment across vast diversity.

The 135-year-old structure for the Meeting of General Synod is no longer effective for the diverse body of Anglicans from across the country that it seeks to include. Current mechanisms inflate geographical and theological division rather than unity across difference. As the church moves into the next decades, new issues and priorities are emerging that are in urgent need of addressing—particularly around how to proclaim the Gospel in the post-modern realities of a digital age.

Steps along the way

This Diversity & Inclusion Pathway is one that seeks to inform the efforts of all other Pathways contained within this Report. The principles of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion are paramount to be attended to at all levels of church governance. The six guiding principles of diversity, equity and inclusion—bias, transparency, accountability, empathy, accessibility, and intersectionality—should be considered in all future transformations, adaptations, and processes of the General Synod¹⁶.

¹⁶ 15five, a consulting firm with expertise in DEI, elaborates on these guiding principles. See: www.15five.com/blog/6-guiding-principles-of-diversity-equity-and-inclusion/

1. Steps ahead should include a review and adaptation of canons and regulations to ensure wider participation in the work of the church nationally. This will include communicating these expectations to dioceses as they prepare to elect and recommend participants in various General Synod activities. This work could be led by the Transformational Commitments Implementation Group and the National Advisory Council on Dismantling Racism along with the Governance Working Group and the Officers of the General Synod.
2. We propose that the Council of General Synod, upon the nomination of the Officers, appoint a national DEI team so that principles of diversity, equity and inclusion be enfolded within the life of the Anglican Church of Canada's General Synod, Ecclesiastical Provinces, Dioceses and Territories, Parishes and Congregations. This work may be done in partnership with, and with advice from, the National Advisory Council on Dismantling Racism. Work may begin after the first COGS meeting of the 2025-2028 triennium. Specifically, this team is to look at how Anglican Church of Canada processes and structures could facilitate greater inclusion of language and cultural differences, including, but not limited to¹⁷:
 - Age
 - Family composition
 - Cultural diversity
 - Gender Diversity
 - Linguistic diversity (i.e., church members for whom English is a second language)
 - Racial diversity
 - Regional differences in legal structures
3. The Office of General Synod can witness to (and share resources with) the rest of the Anglican Church in Canada by including anti-bias training as a mandatory requirement to all paid and volunteer leadership roles. To respect and build consistency with the Sacred Circle, resources available in the Our Way of Life document should

¹⁷ "Equal treatment as defined by the Human Rights Code should be a guarantee for all paid and volunteer participants in the work of General Synod"

also be made a mandatory requirement of participation in all work of the General Synod¹⁸.

4. The 2028 (Meeting of) General Synod Planning Committee should be invited to establish ways in which the following objectives can be incorporated in the design and implementation of the next and future Meetings of General Synod:

- Community building opportunities — enabling participants at the Meeting of General Synod to meet each other and learn more about the contexts of local ministries.
- Smaller group sessions with mixed groups (as opposed to set table-groups or diocesan delegations) to build consensus.
- Creative meeting management structures: re-imagining the way information is shared, processed and decisions are made to enable a productive and consultative meeting that minimizes reliance on historic structures of debate and decision making.
- Incorporation of changes, as early as possible, to any decision-making canons that may emerge out of the Organizational Structure Pathway outlined above.

¹⁸ See: www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/SC-covenant-owol_single.pdf

4. COMMUNICATIONS PATHWAY

Where we are now

Communications is deemed critically important and highly valued for the well-being of the Anglican Church of Canada at all levels, from the national church to local parishes. There is a strong desire for the General Synod to be responsible for effectively sharing information across the country so that Anglicans can learn and care about each other and witness to how the Gospel is being proclaimed in different ways in different places.

The Office of General Synod currently operates two modes of communication: an ‘independent’ journalistic mode through the Anglican Journal (both in print and online) and a corporate communications mode through the Communications Department and its work on anglican.ca, social media, Anglican Video, supporting of committee work, etc. Oversight of both modes is within the mandate of the Communications Committee.

The Commission heard that, for some Anglicans, the Anglican Journal is perceived as having an important truth-telling role and a responsibility to hold General Synod and/or church leaders to account. For others, this role was seen as divisive and counter to the objectives of General Synod. Whether for good or ill, journalism was perceived to be outside of the control of General Synod. However, this independence was called into question due to the journalism being funded by General Synod.

The Commission also heard that, for many Anglicans, the Anglican Journal is the only meaningful source of communication from the General Synod or across the national church and they deeply value learning about what is happening at other levels and in other places. Given this, decreasing circulation is a concern, as is the disparity of internet access and usage due to geography, age, ability, and economics.

Where we want to be next

Communication is one of the core areas of work for the General Synod. Anglicans need to share stories about their ministries and the ways in which they are seeking to live into the transformational commitments and proclaim the Gospel. Anglicans need to be able to hear from and speak back to church

leaders at the national level. They need to be able to tell the story of the Gospel and participate in national and international conversations. Anglicans need communication methods to be accessible across the country, across generations, and across economic circumstances. Finally, Anglicans need to know that all of this communication is contributing to a culture of honesty, transparency and accountability.

The work of communications—sharing stories, building relationships, and increasing capacity—across the Anglican Church of Canada is a multifaceted responsibility that requires multifaceted tools and resources. Opportunities to utilize online, web-based communications and community building technologies must be explored while also recognizing the value of other modes of communication such as print. The efforts of the Communications Department must respond to the needs of Anglicans across the country to learn from each other and share resources, information, and lessons learned. Communications must not just be about journalism, and a robust Communications Department must identify new ways to provide value to Anglicans across the country.

Journalism funded by the organization itself, such as the Anglican Journal, is not a sufficient tool to ensure accountability and transparency across the Anglican Church in Canada. As such the need for the development of an appropriate tool or set of tools for ensuring accountability and transparency that includes all aspects of General Synod's work has been recommended in the Operational Pathway outlined above.

Steps along the way

It is evident that communicating on behalf of the Anglican Church in Canada is an integral and important role of the General Synod. A clear and public mandate should be established as soon as possible. Within the 2025-2028 triennium, the Communications Committee and Director of Communications should be tasked with examining the current mandate, format, and funding model of the Communications Department for approval by the Council of General Synod within the 2025 - 2028 triennium.

The creation of this mandate should explore the purpose of the Anglican Journal, which is currently defined in the Anglican Church of Canada Handbook as (in part):¹⁹

The Anglican Journal (whether in print and/or digital formats) is a journalistic enterprise, and as such is expected to adhere to the highest standards of journalistic responsibility, accuracy, fairness, accountability and transparency. Its journalism is fact-based, fact-checked and in-depth, tackling important issues, asking and answering difficult questions.

The Anglican Journal is committed to representing the widest possible diversity of information and opinion across the Anglican Church of Canada. It promotes informed engagement by Anglicans in the life of their church, and nurtures healthy self-reflection, respectful dialogue and constructive debate.

This review should include voices from across the country and attempt to gather input on whether the Anglican Journal is valued as a ‘journalistic enterprise’ or if its most important role is that of a communications tool that connects Anglicans across the country. Questions should clearly articulate that an exploration of the Anglican Journal does not mean that all print communications would be cancelled but rather that the current context invites a conversation around the development and implementation of effective and cost-efficient communication tools that are needed by Anglicans across the country.

Alongside the development of an updated mandate of the Communications role of the General Synod, the Communications Committee, in partnership with the Director of Communications, should be tasked with developing a Strategic Communications Plan that will address the following goals:

- The development of an efficient, nimble, and cost-effective Communications Plan that is responsive to the current context of the General Synod and has been developed with the engagement of Anglicans across the country to determine communications needs

¹⁹ Handbook of the General Synod, Appendix C: The Anglican Journal at <https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/303-2019-app-c.pdf>

and creative opportunities to support those needs (when the needs fall within the mandate of the Communications Department of the General Synod).

- Ensuring that the Communications tasks and products of the General Synod support and strengthen the Five Transformational Commitments of the Anglican Church of Canada.
- Providing a way for people to hear about the work of the General Synod and other stories across the Anglican Church in Canada.
- Providing a way for people to communicate back to General Synod and national church leadership.
- Exploring diverse and creative tools that can enable the connection of individuals and communities from across the country for the purpose of story sharing and capacity building. This may include enabling the sharing of resources across the country on pertinent ministry areas such as changing parish structures, amalgamation of parishes, lessons learned around parish development, and/or parish closure processes.
- Utilizing diverse modes of communication such as print, electronic and social media tools that maintain access to information for people in varying circumstances.

5. WALKING TOGETHER IN PARTNERSHIP: INDIGENOUS CHURCH (SACRED CIRCLE) WITH THE HISTORIC SETTLER CHURCH (GENERAL SYNOD, PROVINCES, DIOCESES AND TERRITORIES)

Where we are now

After years of dialogue, discernment and development, there exists much hope of finding a good way forward between the General Synod and the Self-Determining Indigenous Church (Sacred Circle). There is a high level of commitment amongst Anglicans throughout Canada towards ongoing partnership and relationship in the future.

While there is hope and desire to move forward together, there are feelings of unease around how to effectively do so. There is confusion about the nature of the desired relationship between Sacred Circle and General Synod and the role each plays in the life (and decision-making) of each. Differing governance and decision-making processes are a barrier to effective conversation and collaboration. Furthermore, there is confusion about how the Sacred Circle and the Council of the North function together (or separately) to serve Indigenous Anglicans in Canada in the future.

Amongst Indigenous Anglicans there is distrust towards the Anglican Church of Canada; specifically with Council of General Synod, Senior Representatives of the Office of General Synod; and processes at the Meeting of General Synod. With regards to the Meeting of General Synod a sense of hurt seems evident as well.

Amongst non-Indigenous Anglicans there remains explicit and implicit adherence to historic colonial structures along with a lack of knowledge about the 'Our Way of Life' Covenant. Non-Indigenous Anglicans are hesitant to engage in dialogue and discussion for fear of being considered offensive and/or racist.

Where we want to be next

A strong desire and commitment exists around the development of an effective church-to-church partnership between the General Synod and the Indigenous Church (Sacred Circle) that is committed (structurally and financially) to the Truth and Reconciliation efforts of the Anglican Church of Canada. There is deep hope for a new way to be established that will be based on a trusted relationship between the Sacred Circle and the General Synod and will enable the entire Anglican Church in Canada to walk together to proclaim the Gospel and deepen and invite life in Christ.

The development of partnership processes that enable open communication and dialogue between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Anglicans engaged in the work of General Synod and the work of Sacred Circle will assist in continuing the mutual hope to walk together in the future. Methods of decision-making that include a commitment to creating safe space for mutual understanding, education and listening, as well as conflict resolution, will further enable success.

It should be noted that the work of the Organizational Pathway (as described above) should consider the aim of a church-to-church pathway as structures are reviewed and transformed.

Steps along the way

The Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada and the Presiding Elder of Sacred Circle are invited to consider instigating the following tasks with an aim to bring recommendations to the Meeting of General Synod in 2028:

1. The development of a definition, clearly communicated to Anglicans across the country, of what is understood as a church-to-church partnership between the General Synod and Sacred Circle along with a clear articulation of what it means that both are independent and yet connected as the Anglican Church of Canada.
2. The creation of effective governance processes (i.e. canons) to support and clearly articulate the relationship between the Sacred Circle and General Synod.

3. The development of a Working Group, comprising Indigenous and non-Indigenous Anglicans, that will look specifically at ways to walk together in partnership from where we are now to where we want to be. This Working Group could be tasked with the following:
 - a. The creation and/or an adoption of a new model of committee processes and decision-making (some of which will unfold through the work of Pathway #1, #2, and #3).
 - b. The development of a new structure of conversation and decision-making for the Meeting of General Synod that enables the full participation of Indigenous members and open and honest conversation amongst all participants. (This should be done within the tasks outlined in Pathway #3).
 - c. Support for the Sacred Circle to create an in-depth communication strategy across dioceses to increase awareness and understanding of the 'Our Way of Life' Covenant and the work of Sacred Circle. (This is connected to the Communications Pathway).
 - d. If deemed necessary, the development of a mediation strategy to discuss past challenges between the members of ACIP, General Synod Senior Staff and Directors to create a good path forward for future work.
4. The development of a sustainable financial and organizational relationship between General Synod and the Sacred Circle.
5. An in-depth conversation between General Synod, Sacred Circle and the Council of the North to determine how the three groups can move forward in a good way. This conversation should also inform and/or be done in partnership with the proposed work identified with Pathway #6.

6. MINISTRY IN REMOTE NORTHERN COMMUNITIES PATHWAY

Where we are now

Currently, the General Synod provides significant financial support for remote communities (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous) through the Council of the North ministry. This support is provided on behalf of all dioceses across Canada who provide funding by way of their annual apportionment commitments. The Council of the North was established in 1976 as a result of a 1970 working group established to consider the challenges and opportunities for ministry in the northern parts of Canada.

“Our purpose is to respond to God’s Call to mission and ministry in the northern regions of Canada.”

~ from the Council of the North Policy Handbook

Through the Primate’s Commission engagement process, it is clear that the Council of the North continues to be considered an integral ministry of the General Synod. However, a variety of questions emerged that brought to light some of the existing concerns regarding the ways in which the General Synod can (or cannot) provide grant funds to support vulnerable communities in the future. These questions include:

1. How does the Council of the North interact with the Sacred Circle?
Are both a ministry to Indigenous Anglicans in Canada?
2. What about the increasing reality of vulnerable communities in all areas of the country? Immigration patterns, introduction of new cultures in established or “traditional” communities, and the recognition of long-standing issues such as poverty and racism are also presenting an emerging need for the Gospel to be proclaimed for peoples who find themselves alienated even within a crowd.
3. As the Anglican Church of Canada faces decline across all metrics, resources are increasingly strained across the board. This means support for remote communities has been diminished and will likely continue to diminish in the future. How can the Ministry of the Council of the North develop other successful stewardship methods to sustain ministry in the future? When the General Synod has to

decrease grant funding, how will it work with diocesan and local leaders to assist these communities to build capacity for their local stewardship?

Historically, Anglican churches in remote Northern communities have provided a spiritual home for residents. In some cases, these Anglican churches have become community hubs, and in other places they are the only institutions that have remained to serve people who are left behind as their communities continue to erode. Bishops and clergy within the Council of the North work within this landscape with the challenge of low stipendiary compensation (or none at all), inadequate housing and impossible geographical challenges that impact the ability to travel and attend to the needs of the various communities throughout a diocese. These challenges leave little time for the ongoing need to update policies, review structures and seek new opportunities for sustainability.

Where we want to be next

The development of the Council of the North in 1976 was an effective response of the Anglican Church of Canada as it sought to strengthen ministry in remote communities in the North. Over the last fifty-five years, support to the North provided by Anglicans throughout Canada via the General Synod has become an integral lifeline for parishes in Northern communities to invite and deepen life in Christ.

It is clear from the work of the Primate's Commission that there is deep concern amongst Anglicans across Canada regarding ministry in these remote communities of the North as well as for vulnerable communities throughout neighbourhoods in all areas of the country.

That said, it is clear that the context of 1976 is quite different from the realities of 2025. As was articulated earlier in this report, demographic and financial realities must be faced by the General Synod (and its supporting dioceses) to determine what capacity it has to support this ministry in the future.

Additionally, while the Council of the North was at one time the only way in which the General Synod supported Indigenous Anglicans in Canada, that is

no longer the case. Today, the emergence of the self-determining Indigenous Church is also an important ministry priority of the General Synod. Clarifying the ways in which these two ministries overlap (or do not overlap) will be necessary for a successful way forward.

Steps along the way

Anglicans across Canada hunger for a clear and transparent understanding of who the Council of the North is and the reasons why the Council of the North is the only block grant funding of the General Synod. Furthermore, the need to understand the delineation between the Council of the North and Sacred Circle is becoming increasingly important.

As noted in Pathway #5, an in-depth conversation between General Synod, Sacred Circle and the Council of the North will be an integral first step in determining how the three groups can move forward in a good way. The outcomes of this conversation and any ensuing work that emerges from it should be clearly communicated to Anglicans across Canada.

The General Synod must be clear and transparent about its inability to fully fund vital ministry in remote areas. However, it is recommended that the General Synod, through the Resources for Mission department, strengthen its offering of stewardship support and training for remote communities, with the aim to help them build capacity toward self-sufficiency. This may include local stewardship and fundraising, but also the exploration of other external sources of funding. (It should be noted that Sacred Circle may also seek similar support as its development continues). Additionally, the Council of the North may benefit from shared resources from other areas of the country regarding changing parish structures, amalgamation of parishes, and/or parish closures as outlined in Pathway #4 as a potential communications role for the General Synod.

The Council of the North is invited to examine the ways in which its context has changed (particularly in some of the cities and communities within the Council of the North boundaries that may actually be less vulnerable than they once were in terms of demographics and socio-economic realities). This examination should include a review of the structures outlined in the 2008 Handbook of the Council of the North (and subsequent edits) and the

development of new procedures and self-understanding to guide the Council in the future, particularly as it relates to the Sacred Circle. The Commission recognizes and respects that the Council of the North has its own approaches to updating its procedures and processes. However, it is noted that there may be creative opportunities to solicit support for this work from the Office of General Synod and amongst the many Anglicans in Canada who feel a strong connection to this Ministry.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS

The exploratory phase of the Primate's Commission was initiated by Archbishop Linda Nicholls at General Synod 2023. The first (and only) in-person meeting of the Primate's Commission met over three days in the Diocese of Montreal in late January 2024. Over an intense twelve months the members of the Commission attempted to respond to the question; "If we were to create the General Synod today, what would we create?"

Of course, the Commission was well aware that starting from a blank slate is neither possible nor desirable. Anglicans throughout Canada and the General Synod have been on a journey with Jesus in this country for generations and the road has included a multitude of ways in which Jesus has been revealed, bringing hope and causing hearts to burn. Increasingly, the General Synod walks alongside Indigenous Anglicans in Canada, grappling with ongoing revelations of harms that have been done on the road along the way and the desire for better paths forward, rooted in the commitment for reconciliation.

In 2023, the Meeting of General Synod adopted the Five Transformational Commitments that served as a key lens to this Report. As the Transformational Commitments continue to be implemented in the processes and governance of the General Synod, there is a natural alignment between much of the work proposed in this Report and the Transformational Commitments Implementation Group.

In the changing context of the Anglican Church in Canada there is much to be hopeful for. Dioceses and Parishes continue to proclaim the gospel and deepen and invite life in Christ. The Sacred Circle is continuing to emerge

with a commitment to walk alongside the Anglican Church of Canada. Individuals of diverse ages and backgrounds dedicate themselves to the mission of Christ throughout our various landscapes.

The General Synod continues to serve Anglicans in Canada. For years individuals have committed themselves to the ongoing adaptation and transformation of its structures and resources to respond to current contexts. The work of the Primate's Commission is but one part of this ongoing journey.

Most of the recommendations contained in this Report are process oriented. We propose that the General Synod empower General Synod's Officers to claim a convening and coordinating role and take responsibility for directing the next steps of this work. This will include directing some of the work to other committees, leaders and teams (such as the Transformational Commitments Working Group) but may also include maintaining a responsibility of some aspects within the realm of the work of the Officers of General Synod as a group.

Commission members, through our consultations, conversations and discernment, see very clear intersections between various pathways. These intersections revolve around three key areas of implementation: structural change across all levels of church governance (national, provincial, diocesan) (Pathways 1 & 3); relationship between Sacred Circle, Council of the North and the General Synod (Pathways 5 & 6); and Management of the Office of General Synod (Pathways 2 & 4).

The next phase of this work must be embraced by the people of God within the Anglican Church of Canada. Those who seek to embrace a prophetic imagination. Those who understand the need for urgency. Those who refuse to ignore difficult conversations. Those who are provocative risk-takers that will not be limited by the 'way things have always been done'.

The Primate's Commission encourages the Council of General Synod, the 2025 Meeting of the General Synod and the newly elected Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada to embrace this report and commend it to the Officers of General Synod (as elected at the 2025 Meeting of General Synod)

to provide oversight on all next steps, direct specific tasks to appropriate individuals and/or groups, and take responsibility for ensuring that the work continues for the purpose of informing and enabling transformational change.

Embracing this report acknowledges and emboldens a prophetic hope emerging from the people of God in this place and this time. This does not suggest that all of the ideas in this Report will journey in exactly the way that has been written but that the movement forward, with Jesus alongside us, will lead us to future revelations, and continue to inspire the Anglican Church of Canada, and all of its many facets, to proclaim the Gospel and invite and deepen life in Christ.

*And they worshipped him,
and returned to Jerusalem with great joy.*

Luke 24:52

APPENDIX 1 – COMMISSION MEMBERS

Commission Members:

- The Rev. Dr. Kyle Wagner, NS & PEI
- The Ven. Rhonda Waters, Ottawa
- Mr. Dion Lewis, Montreal
- The Very Rev. Peter Elliott, New Westminster
- The Ven. Monique Stone (Chair), Ottawa
- The Ven. Nick Pang, New Westminster (Kootenay when appointed)
- The Rev. Cole Hartin, currently serving in the Episcopal Church of the United States
- The Rev. Jasmine Chandra, Fredericton
- Dr. Sarah Kathleen Johnson, Director of Anglican Studies, St. Paul University
- The Rt. Rev. Rachael Parker, Brandon
- The Rev. Rod Brant Francis, Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory, Ontario
- The Rev. Vincent Solomon, Diocese of Rupert's Land

APPENDIX 2 – EVOLUTION OF GENERAL SYNOD

The full document can be found here: <https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/Evolution-of-General-Synod.pdf>

APPENDIX 3 – BEHIND THE HYPOTHESES

The full document can be found here: <https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/Behind-the-Hypotheses.pdf>

APPENDIX 4 – HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

When the Primate's Commission's work was launched in November of 2023, the team sought to be intentionally provocative in an attempt to generate interest and elicit engagement around some of the issues that have been discussed over many years across the National Church. The Commission was not surprised when the Seven Hypotheses brought out a wide variety of reactions, including negative ones. Many are well aware that this is a time in church history when the current context and the need for change are causing fear, anxiety and worry. Additionally, it is evident that there is a faith-filled hope amongst committed Anglicans who have contributed to this process and are eager to be engaged in the future.

A pleasant surprise was how many people wanted to get involved and provide comment. Over three hundred people took the time to complete the online survey, with each providing significant input. Whether people agreed or vehemently disagreed, it was clear that people feel that the time is now to have open and vulnerable conversations about the future of the General Synod and the ways in which it can continue to support Anglicans across the country.

A number of comments stretched beyond the scope of the Primate's Commission as participants used the Commission work to comment on other issues going on with General Synod at this time (i.e., the financial crisis, the plan for decreased funding to the Council of the North, unknowns about the development of Sacred Circle). These responses were valuable as they demonstrated the areas that people are concerned about.

The Commission believes that the work created by its membership, in conjunction with the heart-felt input of well over 350 Anglicans from across our country, will guide the mandates of our future Primate, Council of General Synod, and the Officers and Senior Management of General Synod.

Here are some overall highlights of the feedback received:

- There were several comments and questions about the General Synod: Why does it exist? What does it do? Who makes the decisions and how do they happen? Is there still value in it?
- There was a sense that the General Synod was in need of more transparency, communication, and adaptability in order to foster trust and move forward more effectively.
- While there is an awareness that money is a key contributor to current challenges, it was reiterated several times that any proposed changes should not be motivated just by finances.
- Some commented that our Commission is not going to make a difference and expressed a feeling that apathy and protectionism continually halt the courage to change.

Hypotheses Highlights:*Hypothesis #1 (Sacred Circle/Council of the North/General Synod Conversation)*

Out of 255 responses, 53% of respondents agreed with this hypothesis and 48% marked it as urgent. Twenty-two percent disagreed with some element of the hypothesis and 21% thought that this was not an urgent issue.

- There was a clear and direct message from many corners that the Commission needs to have a voice from the Council of the North and Indigenous Anglicans. (This helped the Commission recruit 3 new members: two Indigenous members and one bishop of a Council of the North diocese).
- There was confusion over how the Council of the North operates and many saw it as synonymous with the Indigenous Church. This led to questions about how vulnerable churches are supported, how they are defined and specifically how the Council of the North is involved in these churches and communities.
- Overall, it was expressed that there needs to be a deep and difficult conversation about how to create a church-to-church relationship with the Sacred Circle and what the future looks like between Sacred Circle, Council of the North and the General Synod.

- It was also acknowledged that finances would have to be part of this discussion but that there also needed to be an acknowledgement about the relational nature of this ministry.

Hypothesis #2 (Diversity of Participation in Governance):

Out of 255 responses, 61% of respondents agreed with this hypothesis and 57% marked it as urgent. Eighteen percent disagreed with some element of the hypothesis and 21% thought that this was not an urgent issue.

- We heard about a number of barriers to inclusion, encompassing factors such as race, income levels, structural processes, and intimidation.
- There was a clear need to understand what General Synod is; some people were thinking of the whole National church, others were thinking of Church House, while others thought of the triennial meeting.
- There was a clear lack of trust in a number of the responses. A particular concern was who gets to make decisions and how these decisions are made.

Hypothesis #3 (Levels of Governance):

Out of 255 responses, 50% of respondents agreed with this hypothesis and 44% marked it as urgent. Seventeen percent disagreed with some element of the hypothesis and 22% thought that this was not an urgent issue.

- While there was a lot of agreement that some sort of restructuring is needed, there were many different opinions on what that looked like.
- Benefits and risks of eliminating different levels of governance were noted.
- It was made clear that what the General Synod does and hopes to do needs to be looked at before any changes take place.

Hypothesis #4 (Role of the Primate):

Out of 255 responses, 45% of respondents agreed with this hypothesis and 49% marked it as urgent. Twenty-five percent disagreed with some element of the hypothesis and 18% thought that this was not an urgent issue.

- This hypothesis generated a lot of interest in exploring the idea. There were concerns that it would lead to burnout and doubts that it would actually save any costs. There was also a question of whether it might lead to preferential treatment for whatever diocese the Primate resides in.

- It was pointed out that there is a sacramental nature to reintegrating the Primate's office into a local Diocese. This led to questions of re-examining the episcopate as a whole—how does the role of the Primate fit with the episcopacy?
- This led to more questions about the nature of the ACC. Are we a joint collaboration of Dioceses or one entity that everything flows out of?

Hypothesis #5 (Reduction of Travel):

Out of 255 responses, 64% of respondents agreed with this hypothesis and 53% marked it as urgent. Nine percent disagreed with some element of the hypothesis and 12% thought that this was not an urgent issue.

- The main comment around remote work was that it should be balanced with in-person gatherings. The value of being together in person was highlighted and there was concern over what would happen if this was taken out entirely.
- The inconsistency in reliable internet service in different parts of the country was also mentioned as a key barrier.

Hypothesis #6 (Church House)

Out of 255 responses, 56% of respondents agreed with this hypothesis and 48% marked it as urgent. Fourteen percent disagreed with some element of the hypothesis and 21% thought that this was not an urgent issue.

- There were quite a few people who were confused over how and when the decision came for the new office space. People were wondering why we were posing this hypothesis when the decision to move has already been made. This tied in with questions about structures of management and how decisions in general were made.
- For the most part, people agreed that Church House is in need of re-visioning. There were some who did not know what Church House does or is. Many felt that a review and restructuring of the priorities and programs that staff should be focused on must come before questions of where they work are tackled.
- There was strong support to embrace remote staffing while also noting the value of face-to-face interaction.

- There were responses from staff who were indicating confusion over what to do as tasks keep being added without any work being concluded or ending.
- The question was asked if the central office should be in a less expensive/more central location?

Hypothesis #7 (Independent Journalism):

Out of 255 responses, 38% of respondents agreed with this hypothesis and 34% marked it as urgent. Thirty-one percent disagreed with some element of the hypothesis and 32% thought that this was not an urgent issue.

- The primary value of the Anglican Journal was that it helps people stay connected across the country. The concern was about ensuring everyone has access to story sharing and connecting (with many concerned that this was an attempt to turn everything into digital media when not everyone has access to the internet).
- Although the quantitative responses indicated that most people are in agreement with the hypothesis, the written responses revealed more ambiguity and a general lack of consensus about what the hypothesis was suggesting. Many responses did not explicitly declare themselves pro or con but rather turned to various kinds of problem-solving or critiquing the status quo. Particularly in the public survey, many people expressed the need to have more information in order to form an opinion.
- For some, the Anglican Journal plays an accountability role for the Anglican Church of Canada. Several noted that there is a need for an independent watcher to hold us and our leadership accountable, and that this is why the Anglican Journal and journalists are needed. This raised the question of whether or not we should be funding our own accountability or if accountability and transparency should be embedded more effectively in our systems and processes.
- Some raised the concern that the Anglican Journal is not part of the communication strategy and there is a need for a way to communicate in an organized way and explore communications more holistically.

REPORT OF THE CANADIAN CHURCH HISTORICAL SOCIETY TO GENERAL SYNOD 2025

1. Introduction

Our beloved late President, Bishop Terry Brown, died suddenly on 31 March 2024 (Easter Sunday). The Rt. Rev. Terry Brown had been the President of the Canadian Church Historical Society (CCHS) since 2015. The CCHS conference held in April 2024 grew out of Terry's vision. The entire conference and a great deal of the planning, presentations, and large number of attendees bore witness to his peerless knowledge of the Anglican Congress of August 1963, and of the implications of the Mutual Responsibility document produced at Huron College in the weeks prior to the Congress. Bishop Terry's vocation was, in many ways, a witness to that revolutionary work. Both the conference and the journal volume are dedicated to Bishop Terry with enormous gratitude for his life and service to the Anglican Church in Canada and around the world. On behalf of the CCHS Committee, I wish to acknowledge our profound sadness and sense of loss. Bishop Terry was the driving force behind the MRI@60 conference.

On behalf of the CCHS Committee, I wish to express our thanks to the Anglican Foundation for a \$10,000 grant in support of our international conference, "Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ at Sixty", or MRI@60, 12-14 April 2024. Further funds were gratefully received from the Historical Society of the Episcopal Church (HSEC). The conference commemorated a transformational process in the life of the Anglican Communion. Although the term "post-colonial" was not used in 1963, the papers given explored in detail the effects of the MRI document as it shaped the succeeding decades in a post-colonial world.

The publication of *Documents of the Mohawk Institute: The Journals and Reports of Robert Ashton, 1872–1876, and the Diary of Alice Ashton, 1877* in May 2024 gave a detailed exploration of the origins of modern models of Indian Residential Schools in Canada. Our forthcoming conference (2026) on Canadian missions will explore in detail all aspects of missions and missionary culture, 1700-1922, in Canada. The MRI conference and published papers, the *Ashton* papers, and the missions conference mark the CCHS' commitment to dismantling racism and colonialism; and, to further our understanding of the effects of racist and colonial policies and practices within the Anglican Church, and more broadly. In these publications, conferences and lectures (see our recent activities, pt. 2, and upcoming activities, pt. 5) we are committed to furthering and deepening our relationships with Indigenous Church leaders.

2. Recent activities

The CCHS Executive Committee has met regularly since CCHS became a General Synod committee, usually by Zoom, but was able to meet in person informally in early December 2024. These meetings have usually consisted of planning for future events and monitoring publication of the CCHS *Journal*. Our last General Meeting was held by Zoom on 8 November 2024. General meetings also include a programme with a featured speaker. At that meeting, the very distinguished scholar, Dr. Kwok Pui-lan, Dean's Professor in the Candler School of Divinity at Emory University, gave a presentation on "Postcolonialism and Anglicanism."

3. Committee membership

Current members of the CCHS Committee and their positions, as approved by the CCHS General meeting on 8 November 2024, are as follows:

Executive Members

President	Dr. Bill Acres, London, Ontario
Vice-President	The Rev'd Andrew Rampton, Hamilton, Ontario
Secretary	Dr. Susan Paterson Glover, Toronto, Ontario
Treasurer	Laurel Parson, General Synod Archivist
Journal Editor	Dr. Thomas Power, Toronto, Ontario
At-large members	The Rev'd Daniel F. Graves, Aurora, Ontario The Rev'd Dr. Alan Hayes, Toronto, Ontario

Committee Members

The Rev'd Stephen Sharman, Selkirk, Manitoba
 The Rev'd Canon Philip Hobson, Toronto, Ontario
 The Rev'd Dr. Norman J. Knowles, Calgary, Alberta
 Canon Trevor Powell, Regina, Saskatchewan
 Dr. Richard Virr, Montreal, Quebec

CoGS Member: The Right Rev. Susan Bell, PhD. Bishop of Niagara Diocese.

General Synod Archivist: Laurel Parson, Toronto, Ontario

The Rev'd Paul G. Walker, Toronto, Ontario (CCHS Past President)

It should also be noted that the Primate and National Indigenous Archbishop are Patrons of the Society and are always welcome at CCHS Committee meetings.

Current overall paid-up membership in the CCHS at the end of 2022 was 31 personal memberships and 46 institutional memberships, although because of a grace period the actual numbers of those on the membership list are higher. Institutional memberships are largely tied to the subscription to the CCHS *Journal*. In the last few years, institutional memberships have dropped as the *Journal* is published online as part of the ATLA consortia. A membership drive was discussed for individuals in November 2024.

4. *Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Society*

Dr. Thomas Power, formerly of Wycliffe College, University of Toronto, was unanimously elected Editor of the *Journal* in March 2024. He brings a wealth of experience in scholarly editing and publications. The most recent issue of the *CCHS Journal* is dated 2021 and 2022 but did not appear until 2 May 2024. This is a special book-length issue containing the edited journals of the Rev'd and Mrs. Robert Ashton, 1872-7 with a lengthy introduction by Dr. Bill Acres. This edition will be of significance in understanding the operation of the Mohawk Institution and identifying Indigenous students and their experiences there. Copies will be available for sale at the General Synod, 2025, at the CCHS booth.

Two other *Journal* volumes are in preparation: Dr. Todd Webb and Dr. Bruce Douville of the Society of Canadian Church History (our secular sibling) are editing a special commemorative volume in memory of the late Prof. William Westfall, Professor Emeritus at York University, and historian of Trinity College, Toronto.

Dr. Power is currently completing an edition of papers given at the Society's conference 12-14 April, 2024, an international meeting "MRI@60", held at St. Paul's, Bloor St. The Rev. Daniel Graves' appreciation and brief life of Bishop Terry will front the volume. Professor Mark Chapman of Oxford University, a major scholar of Anglicanism, gave a superb keynote, an edited version of which will appear in this volume as well as in the *Anglican and Episcopal History*, the journal of the Historical Society of the Episcopal Church (HSEC), where a companion volume of further Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ (1963) conference papers will be published.

These two most recent volumes of the *Journal* will be published in 2025.

5. Upcoming activities

CCHS is planning a conference (hybrid in-person and on-line) on the history of missions in Canada in June 2026 at Huron University College. The Call for Papers will be distributed in late summer, 2025. It is anticipated that the papers given at this conference will comprise an issue of the CCHS *Journal*. Laurel Parson, Treasurer of the Society, will be present with Dr. Bill Acres and others at the CCHS booth at General Synod in June, 2025. The Executive of the CCHS is currently undertaking a membership drive. Our Annual General Meeting will be held in conjunction with the national meeting of Anglican Archivists in November, 2025.

6. Conclusion

Interest in Anglican church history remains high at the parish level. CCHS is working on resources to support that interest. However, as the Anglican Church of Canada undergoes retrenchment at all levels, including in theological education, sometimes archives and church history are not regarded as high priorities. The existence of CCHS and its inclusion in General Synod is witness that the Anglican Church of Canada believes otherwise and that we still have much to learn from the past, both its strengths and weaknesses. The CCHS has committed to the work of right relationships through its conferences, journal, and special events.

Dr. Bill Acres
President, Canadian Church Historical Society

**REPORT OF THE HANDBOOK COMMITTEE
TO GENERAL SYNOD 2025**

Corrections and alterations to legislation made by the Handbook Committee

Section 11 f) of the Declaration of Principles empowers the Handbook Committee to make corrections and alterations to the legislation of the General Synod (the Declaration of Principles, the Constitution, the Rules of Order and Procedure and the Canons) provided that such changes related only to matters of form and not of substance. Any such changes must be reported to the next meeting of the General Synod and may be put aside by the Synod.

Changes made by the Handbook Committee in the current edition of the Handbook are listed in this report.

1. “Canadian Forces” changed to “Canadian Armed Forces”

The federal government changed the name of the Canadian Forces to Canadian Armed Forces, necessitating a number of legislative changes to correct the name. The Handbook Committee has changed 19 references to the Canadian Forces. These are found in the following places:

Declaration of Principles section 6 s)
Constitution sections 8 b) vi); 8 g) (2 references); 33 f) iii)
Canon VIII section 1 b) ii)
Canon XVII sections 1 a); 2 e); 3; 6 b)
Canon XXI sections 25 (4 references); 35 (4 references); 36

2. Corrections to Canon XX

An obsolete note at the end of Canon XX has been deleted.

A gendered reference to the Chancellor in Appendix A section 9 (1) has been made gender neutral, by changing “is an officer of the Court by virtue of his office” to “is an ex officio officer of the Court.”

Respectfully submitted,

The Ven. Alan T. Perry
General Secretary