

COGS Highlights



Council of General Synod

April 1, 2011

Setting the tone

The first joint meeting between the Anglican Church of Canada's Council of General Synod (COGS) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada's National Church Council (NCC) began on the evening of March 31 with a Eucharist celebrated by Susan Johnson, National Bishop of the ELCIC. The Rev. Richard Leggett preached. Following the Eucharist, the Anglican and Lutheran councils met jointly. Bishop Johnson and Archbishop Fred Hiltz, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada each delivered brief updates on where their two churches are in the context of strategic plans and finances.

At 8:45 on the morning of April 1 Anglicans and Lutherans met in mixed Bible study groups.

Orientation from Joint Anglican-Lutheran Commission

At 10:00 Anglican and Lutheran council members gathered for an orientation led by the Very Rev. Peter Wall and Bishop Michael Pryse, co-chairs of the Joint Anglican-Lutheran Commission. They presented a brief history of the nine commitments that exist between their churches.

These nine commitments include a commitment to welcome persons ordained in either church to the office of bishop, priest/pastor, or deacon; a commitment to establish collegial consultation on significant matters of faith and order; and to hold joint meetings of national, regional, and local decision-making bodies. (This COGS-NCC meeting is an example of living out this last commitment).

Dean Wall and Bishop Pryse encouraged council members that this full communion relationship is an example to American Anglicans and Lutherans as well as other denominations seeking to advance church unity.

In their mixed Anglican-Lutheran table groups, council members examined maps that showed the two churches' different administrative boundaries. They also picked their favourite hymns from the Anglican *Common Praise* and *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* and sung them for the group.

Members then heard presentations about the denominations' strategic plans from Bishop Johnson and Archbishop Hiltz.

From 12:00 to 1:30, COGS and NCC members took a lunch break. They met separately for their afternoon sessions.

Primate's Report

Archbishop Hiltz began his report by acknowledging the recent passing of two notable Anglican leaders: Dr. William Winter, founder of the William Winter School of Ministry in Kingfisher Lake, Ont. and the Rev. Dr. Stephen Reynolds, compiler of the popular liturgical text *For All the Saints*.

"Movement" was the primary theme of the Primate's report. He set the scene by describing major world events: the political movement towards democracy in north Africa and the Middle East as well as the movements in recent natural disasters, particularly the earthquakes in Japan and New Zealand. Archbishop Hiltz noted that people of all faiths are drawn to hold these countries in their prayers.

The Primate acknowledged that at home, Canadians are on the move towards an election. He said that poverty should be a major focus in this election, as 4.3 million Canadians (including 1 in 7 children) live in poverty. Archbishop Hiltz noted that we need a national housing strategy, an

increase in the child tax credit, and a comprehensive action plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Spiritual movements were also a thread in the Primate's report. He spoke about the Primates' meeting in Dublin where they considered the nature of primacy in the Anglican Communion and heard inspiring reports about the Bible in the Life of the Church project as well as the new Anglican Alliance for Relief, Development, and Advocacy.

The Primate then turned to discuss the recent London meeting of Canadian and African bishops, organized by Canadian staff—the Rev. Dr. Eileen Scully and the Rev. Dr. Isaac Kawuki Mukasa. The bishops gathered to discuss their common work in mission, and Archbishop Hiltz praised this active work of intentional listening.

Turning back to local concerns, the Primate once again pointed to Vision 2019 as an important guiding document. He described briefly how Vision 2019 guided Church House restructuring. He gave an overview of departments' work.

In his description of the Faith, Worship, and Ministry department, Archbishop Hiltz spoke about the Anglican Covenant. He recently attended the Episcopal Church's House of Bishops, where he heard opinions on the covenant from American, Korean, and Congolese bishops.

Archbishop Hiltz expressed concern about the fourth section of the covenant, which outlines relational consequences of stepping out of communion. He noted that this section does not discuss reconciliation.

"What happens when we end up with an Anglican Communion where some churches are covenanted and some aren't?" he asked.

The Primate then covered highlights of recent departmental work. He mentioned that Dr. Andrea Mann and Henriette Thompson are examining how to reconfigure partnerships in a changing world.

He also announced that Sam Carriere will serve as director of Communications and Resources for

Mission (formerly the Department of Philanthropy). Bev Murphy will now serve as senior manager in the Communications department. In Resources for Mission, new positions will be opening up for a diocesan service coordinator and a stewardship educator (half-time). Suzanne Lawson has been hired for the half-time position of national campaign liaison. Suzanne will step down as chair of the Planning and Agenda Team of COGS, and the Very Rev. Peter Elliott will take over.

The Primate concluded that he wants to spend more time at the national office. "I want to stay as close to the helm as I can be," he said, "especially as we work through this year of transition and work through Vision 2019 and make it happen."

General Secretary's report

The General Secretary, Archdeacon Michael Pollesel, shared updates on the national church office space at 80 Hayden Street Toronto. There is currently a surplus of space at 80 Hayden and leadership is in the process of "reconfiguring" this.

Archdeacon Pollesel also reminded COGS that they must participate in email votes. This led to a discussion about how to motivate members to vote by email.

Members also considered new members for working groups.

Resolution

COGS approved the membership of the Governance Working Group: David Philip Jones, the Ven. Harry Huskins, Cynthia Haines-Turner, Monica Patten, and Bishop Sue Moxley.

The General Secretary announced results of an earlier vote on audit committee membership. Members are Dan Waterston, Michael Wellwood, and Paul Singleton.

Finally, Archdeacon Pollesel reported on the Silent Night Project and noted that \$50,000 has been raised for the Anglican Military Ordinariate.

COGS then heard brief presentations from the

chancellor and the Planning and Agenda Team.

Resolution

COGS resolved the Terms of Reference for the Vision 2019 Implementation Team be adjusted to indicate that four members would be elected and the Primate would appoint two.

The rationale for the above resolution was stated as follows: “at least a third of the members of any task force should be from a diocese that does not have someone currently on COGS. Primatial appointments allow for this. This is an opportunity to ensure that gifts from across the whole church are utilized in the mission of General Synod. As well, primatial appointments can be utilized as a leadership development tool, an opportunity to grow future leaders.”

Nominations

The Nominations Committee presented a slate of new members for the Vision 2019 implementation team. COGS also considered the alternate clergy delegate to the Anglican Consultative Council. Members took time to vote.

Consensus decision-making

Dr. Lela Zimmer led COGS through a brief consideration of their format of consensus decision-making. She said that COGS was improving but needed to consider how difficult it was for new members to express disagreement.

Anglican Journal Board

COGS adjourned and reconvened as a member of the Anglican Journal Board. Bishop George Elliott, chair of the board, led this discussion.

Resolutions

COGS approved the Anglican Journal’s audited financial statements.

COGS also passed a resolution allowing the Anglican Journal to send applications to foundations seeking their financial

support.

COGS then turned to consider a motion that would dissolve the corporation of the Anglican Journal (separately incorporated from General Synod).

Bishop Elliott explained that the board had thoroughly considered both sides. Benefits of de-incorporation would include a cost savings of up to \$100,000 and simplified governance. On the other hand, some board members argued that de-incorporation could threaten editorial independence as well as the financial stability of the Journal.

COGS members asked questions about this motion. Some wondered whether the Journal was becoming a “house organ” with this move.

Bishop Elliott said that editorial independence was still a core value of the Journal. He also emphasized that the Journal was financially solvent and that this move to de-incorporate would not threaten the grant that the Anglican Journal currently receives from Heritage Canada.

Resolution

COGS approved a motion dissolving the corporation of the Anglican Journal and establishing a governance structure to ensure accountability and oversee operations.

Bishop Elliott explained that a small group of directors would oversee this transition. COGS agreed to elect these directors tomorrow.

Elections

The Nominations Committee reported the results of two earlier votes. The Vision 2019 transition team now includes the Ven. Peter John Hobbs, Ms. Jane Osler, Major the Rev. Michelle Staples, and the Rev. Susan Titterington. The alternate clergy delegate to the Anglican Consultative Council is the Ven. Harry Huskins.

Questions about committee reports

Members asked a variety of questions about committee reports. One member wondered if all

national youth initiatives could be explained in one document from General Synod. Another member asked for an update on the national suicide prevention project that was funded by the Amazing Grace Project. National Indigenous Anglican Bishop Mark MacDonald gave an update on the pilot project that is being developed for use in the north.

From 5:00 to 7:00, COGS and NCC members gathered for dinner.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Henriette Thompson, General Synod's coordinator for ecumenical, interfaith, and government relations, introduced a presentation on Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission on residential schools. The purpose of the presentation was to lead COGS in considering what the churches want to achieve in terms of reconciliation.

Esther Wesley, Anglican Healing Fund coordinator, shared thoughts from two of the commissioners, Marie Wilson and Justice Murray Sinclair (chair), about what reconciliation means. She urged COGS members to think about the many generations that were impacted by residential schools.

The Ven. Sidney Black, co-chair of the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples (ACIP), spoke about the dynamics before and after the Indian Residential School Settlement. He described his work ministering on a reserve. He has witnessed much pain, often like "the aftermath of a horrendous battle," but today he sees a freshness and optimism in some places.

National Indigenous Anglican Bishop Mark MacDonald shared some thoughts on reconciliation from a recent meeting of ACIP. He said ACIP was surprised that the church was asking them for advice on reconciliation. He said it was as if the church, an organization devoted to God's reconciliation, had lost its confidence to speak about its own reconciliation.

Bishop MacDonald then traced several essential steps to reconciliation: making a confession and apology; taking a fearless moral inventory; making

amends; then walking together in newness of life.

In table groups, COGS members considered two questions: What would it take to help bring about reconciliation in your situation? What are some ways in which your thinking or manner of life would need to be addressed?

Members offered a range of feedback from their table groups. Bishop MacDonald said he was encouraged to hear people recognizing that reconciliation took a long time. He said this marked a maturity in the conversation.

At 9:00 COGS met for night prayer with NCC members in the chapel.

COGS Highlights

Council of General Synod

April 2, 2011

Today was the second day of joint meetings between the executive councils of the Anglican Church of Canada (ACC) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC). The Council of General Synod (COGS) is the ACC's executive council and the National Church Council (NCC) is the ELCIC's executive council.

Dwelling in the Word

At 8:45, members gathered for an NCC tradition called "Dwelling in the Word" where an ELCIC member describes how a certain piece of scripture is personally significant. NCC secretary Don Storch shared how he has been influenced by Joshua 24:15 "But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

"Tilling New Ground"

In small groups, Anglicans and Lutherans considered two topics: the upcoming joint national gathering in 2013, and future work to be shared by Anglicans and Lutherans. They discussed these topics from 9:00 to 10:50.

Groups reported back in plenary. Members of the Joint Anglican-Lutheran Commission sat together as a "listening panel" to receive and record their feedback.

Members provided a wide range of input. On the subject of the 2013 meeting, some members suggested that the Anglicans and Lutherans could produce a joint piece of liturgy. Others offered a vision of how they would like to see the joint meeting portrayed in the media.

On the subject of future shared work, some members shared concerns about a proposed joint national office. Others suggested that international Anglican and Lutheran partners in places like Jerusalem could work more closely together.

COGS and NCC members spent time reflecting on and recording their personal answers to the question "What am I going to do differently based on this experience together?"

From 12:00 to 1:30, COGS and NCC members gathered for a lunch break. The afternoon and evening business sessions were separate.

Chair of General Synod Planning Committee

The Primate announced that the Very Rev. Peter Wall will serve as chair of the General Synod 2013 Planning Committee.

PWRDF

Adele Finney, executive director of the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF) led a presentation on several aspects of PWRDF's recent work.

She began by celebrating the fact that PWRDF's 50 refugees program will reach their goal of sponsoring 50 refugee families. She read a moving letter of thanks from an Iraqi man whose family was welcomed by Anglicans in Saskatoon.

Ms. Finney updated COGS on some recent PWRDF initiatives. She said a new confirmation resource, spearheaded by the youth council, will soon be available online. PWRDF has also prepared a brief series of statements for Anglicans to ask their local candidates in the upcoming federal election.

Finally, Ms. Finney reported on PWRDF's recent work around strategic planning and governance. Its new vision is "a truly just, healthy, and peaceful world. Its mission is "As an instrument of faith PWRDF connects Anglicans in Canada to communities around the world in dynamic partnerships to advance development, respond to

emergencies, assist refugees and act for positive change.”

Ms. Finney asked COGS members to consider two questions: Who do you say PWRDF is within the ministry of General Synod? What might be the implications for PWRDF in the life of COGS?

After some small group discussion, COGS members provided a range of feedback. Some described PWRDF as “our face to the world.” Others wondered if there was still overlap between PWRDF and current General Synod work. Some wondered whether the question of de-incorporating PWRDF should be reexamined.

Financial statements and resolutions

Michèle George, General Synod treasurer, presented the audited financial statements for the Anglican Church of Canada’s resolution corporation, consolidated trust fund, and General Synod.

“We have come in essentially on budget for 2010,” said the treasurer.

In 2010, General Synod ran a deficit of \$490,000. It had budgeted for a deficit of \$492,000 as part of a gradual movement away from deficit budgeting. General Synod plans to have a balanced budget in 2011 and 2012. This depends, however, on improved revenues from dioceses and Philanthropy (now Resources for Mission).

Ms. George described some changes between the 2009 and 2010 fiscal years. Her points included the following: diocesan contributions decreased as expected. It was a normal year for investment income, especially compared to 2009, which was a recovery year after the economic downturn of 2008. General Synod expenses were down in 2010 by \$500,000 because of reductions in global grants, reductions in staffing, contained travel costs, and other factors.

***Resolution**

COGS approved financial statements for General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada for 2010.

***Resolution**

COGS approved financial statements for the consolidated trust fund and the ACC resolution corporation for 2010.

***Resolution**

COGS approved Ernst and Young as auditors for General Synod.

Council of the North

Bishop Michael Hawkins presented a proposal for new funding levels for the Council of the North. Currently the 10 northern dioceses of the council are supported by grants from the national church. General Synod committed to keep current funding levels consistent from 2007 until the end of 2011.

The council’s bishops collaborated with the Financial Management and Development Committee to propose an “orderly reduction” in grants beginning in 2012.

***Resolution**

COGS approved a proposal for council funding over the next five years at a reduced rate of 5% per year (based on the prior year’s grant), to be reviewed by COGS in 3 years’ time, be given consideration as part of the budget 2012 process.

Resolutions

COGS passed the following resolutions without debate and by consensus:

***Resolution**

COGS resolved to ask the General Secretary to write to all dioceses, before the Common Ground [ecumenical youth ministry] conference in June, encouraging them to consider hosting a Justice Camp and to encourage any dioceses who come forward to send representatives to the Toronto 2012 Justice Camp and to the planning sessions related to it.

***Resolution**

COGS resolved to ask the General Secretary to request of all national standing committees and councils to complete anti-racism training before the end of this triennium.

***Resolution**

COGS resolved to ask the Primate to exercise prophetic voice in a pastoral letter to all Anglicans at the time of this 2011 federal election: to encourage them to raise questions with candidates in their respective ridings and at all-candidates meeting, with respect to issues of poverty and homelessness (General Synod resolution A178), climate change (A180 R1), Indigenous rights (A176 R1), healing and reconciliation (A179 R2) and other issues of peace and justice.

***Resolution**

COGS resolved to adopt the Guidelines for Anglican and Lutheran Clergy/Rostered Ministers Serving Appointments in Each Other's Churches.

***Resolution**

COGS resolved that it will send a letter to the members and staff of the Consultation of Bishops in Dialogue expressing the gratitude of the Anglican Church of Canada for the witness of *A Testimony of Grace*.

***Resolution**

COGS resolved to enact a resolution that

a) places before the next session of General Synod a motion changing the name of the department to the 'Resources for Mission Department' and the name of the committee to the 'Resources for Mission Committee', and,

b) until this matter is taken up for debate and decision by the next session of General Synod, temporarily makes these name changes for all of our working purposes except in those instances in which the use of the present names of the Department and the Committee are canonically or legally required.

After moving through these items on the No Debate list, COGS turned to consider other resolutions.

***Resolution**

COGS resolved to gratefully accept the invitation of the Diocese of Toronto to host the 2016 General Synod in that diocese.

***Resolution**

COGS resolved that when votes are required between in-person meetings of COGS, these shall be done by email. The request for such a vote shall:

1. Indicate in the subject line that it is a request from COGS for an email vote, and
2. Specify a deadline by which the email vote must be received by the General Secretary.

The outcome of the vote shall be determined by a majority of the votes received by the deadline (provided that votes have been received from a majority of the members of COGS and all Orders are represented as required by Section 35 a) of the Constitution).

All members of COGS are expected to vote. A member of COGS who does not have email may be notified by mail that the vote will occur and may vote by mail.

Pensions resolution

Judy Robinson, director of the Pensions Office Corporation, introduced a resolution that would allow for General Synod's Continuing Education Program to be registered as a charity. The Pensions Office Corporation has been seeking this status with the Canada Revenue Agency for several years. COGS passed this resolution.

Missionary Society

COGS adjourned and reassembled as the board of directors for the Missionary Society of the Anglican Church of Canada (MSCC)

Founded in 1903, the MSCC carried out the missionary work of General Synod, including running residential schools. The MSCC stopped its work in 1969 but continued as a corporation. It still receives some bequests and currently has a value of \$2.75 million. Current uses of this fund include giving car loans to clergy in northern dioceses.

***Resolution**

COGS approved the MSCC financial statements for 2009 and waived requirement for separate audit,

since the statements of General Synod incorporate the operations of the MSCC.

The MSCC board of directors adjourned and reassembled as COGS.

Budget principles

Suzanne Lawson, chair of the Planning and Agenda Team, led COGS to reconsider the budgeting principles they had developed last year. These principles guide the Management Team as they develop a budget. Ms. Lawson noted that these principles should be reconsidered now that Vision 2019 has become a guiding plan for General Synod.

COGS began to revise the principles and decided to return to this work tomorrow.

5:30 to 7:00 COGS and NCC members ate dinner together.

Solemnization of marriage

Dr. Lela Zimmer and the Rev. Dr. Lynne McNaughton, members of the Faith, Worship, and Ministry Committee (FWMC) asked COGS to clarify a resolution regarding the solemnization of marriage that had been adopted at General Synod 2010 and then referred to their committee.

In their table groups, COGS members considered the wording of the resolution, then reported back. Some members suggested that the resolution placed too much work on an already busy committee. Others felt that the ACC needed to better understand the issues that surround the blessings and marriages the church performs.

COGS agreed that FWMC work a revised version of the resolution. They should produce a study "of the canonical, theological, liturgical implications as well as the potential effects on the mission and witness of the ACC of the cessation of the solemnization of matrimony by the clergy of the ACC."

Supplemental hymnbook

COGS considered a resolution that would mandate FWMC to begin a working group on a supplemental hymnbook to *Common Praise*.

Because the resolution had funding implications it was ruled out of order and after some discussion, another resolution was approved.

***Resolution**

COGS recognizes the desirability of FWM developing a supplemental hymnbook to *Common Praise* as work emerging out of the Principles for Liturgical Revision and in response to the call of Vision 2019 for the renewal and enlivening of our worship and as a means of fulfilling the first and second Marks of Mission.

Liturgy Task Force

COGS considered another FWMC resolution related to the funding of the Liturgy Task Force, which was mandated by General Synod. This motion was also withdrawn because it had budget implications.

Nominating Committee

The Ven. Harry Huskins reported on behalf of COGS's Nominating Committee. He announced that the Rev. Chris Harper had been chosen as the COGS member of the General Synod Planning Committee.

COGS adjourned and reconvened as member of the Anglican Journal Board. They approved a slate of directors to oversee the Anglican Journal Corporation as it transitions away from being a separately incorporated body apart from General Synod. The directors will be

- Bishop George Elliott
- The Rev. Canon Robert Towler
- The Rev. Canon Peter Davison
- Robert Dickson

COGS adjourned as member of the Anglican Journal Board and reconvened as COGS.

PWRDF and Partnerships

Henriette Thompson, coordinator of ecumenical, interfaith, and government relations, and Adele Finney, executive director of PWRDF, shared how they are seeking new ways to work together. Ms. Thompson is in General Synod's Relationships Department and PWRDF is separately incorporated. Ms. Thompson and Ms. Finney said a

discernment group has been formed with Relationships staff, PWRDF board members, PWRDF staff, and the Primate.

At 9:00, COGS met with the NCC for night prayers.

COGS Highlights



Council of General Synod

April 3, 2011

Today was the third day of joint meetings between the executive councils of the Anglican Church of Canada (ACC) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC). The Council of General Synod (COGS) is the ACC's executive council and the National Church Council (NCC) is the ELCIC's executive council.

At 8:45, COGS members met for Bible study. At 9:30 they gathered for business.

COGS engagement in priority decision-making

COGS returned to address a subject raised yesterday: how COGS and standing committees set budget priorities. Many COGS members felt unclear about COGS's role not only in determining budget priorities but also interpreting how these priorities shape work and spending in standing committees.

After some discussion, COGS decided that the General Secretary will work on a way to clarify COGS's governance position. A possible solution is for standing committees to report to COGS how they plan to prioritize the work assigned to them from General Synod. COGS members would then have the opportunity to provide feedback.

Reports from partners

Martha Gardner, partner from the Episcopal Church, said it was once again a "delight" to meet with COGS, this time alongside the NCC. She said that after this meeting she was inspired to learn more about Anglican-Lutheran relations in the US. She also was reminded of the importance of small group discussions and the presence of youth members.

Ms. Gardner challenged COGS to find ways to incorporate people of other races and ethnicities in their decision-making. She also wondered how the

church's linguistic diversity could be reflected in worship at COGS.

David Pritchard, partner from the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF), also shared reflections. He noted, among other things, that COGS members are conciliatory in expressing concerns and helpfully use humour to push through difficult conversations. He also said that the PWRDF board could learn from COGS's use of consensus decision-making and their process of voting by email.

Vision 2019

After a short coffee break, COGS members considered how Vision 2019 is functioning as a guiding document in their communities. In small groups they considered two questions: Are you aware of V2019 impacting the work in your province at this time? Have you personally taken any steps to raise awareness about Vision 2019 in your province?

Members provided a range of feedback. Some noted that Vision 2019 was developed out of input from parishes and is now returning to these same areas of the church. Others noted that Vision 2019 may not generate new work, but instead provide a lens through which to understand current work.

COGS members spent time writing their evaluations of the meeting as well as their key messages. They will share this input with COGS's Planning and Agenda Team.

Sharing results of COGS and NCC meetings

Members of COGS and the NCC gathered to hear results from the other's meeting.

ELCIC National Bishop Susan Johnson gave an overview of NCC meetings. She provided updates

on decisions arising from their Structural Renewal Task Force and their Human Sexuality Task Force, as well as other matters. A letter from the NCC to the ELCIC is [available online](#).

Archbishop Fred Hiltz, ACC Primate, noted that while the NCC is ramping up for their national convention in July, COGS is sorting through tasks assigned to it at General Synod 2010. The Primate covered highlights from the COGS meeting, ranging from tracking the implementation of General Synod resolutions to an evening spent considering the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The Primate celebrated again the occasion of the first joint COGS-NCC meeting. "This is going to be a watershed moment in the life of our churches together," he said.

From 12:00 to 1:30, COGS and NCC members took a lunch break.

Eucharist and tree planting

COGS and NCC members joined together for a final Eucharist, celebrated by Archbishop Fred Hiltz. Archbishop Hiltz and Bishop Johnson provided a joint homily.

After the service, members processed behind a bagpiper to the front yard of the Queen of the Apostles Renewal Centre. A Green Mountain Sugar Maple tree had been planted to symbolize the churches' work of "growing together." Archbishop Hiltz and Bishop Johnson placed fresh soil around the tree, then COGS and NCC members poured water, which they had brought from their home communities, on the newly planted tree. The maple, donated by Sheridan Nurseries, is expected to grow to 80 feet. ACC and ELCIC leaders hope the tree will stand as a visible sign of church unity.

With business and worship completed, COGS and NCC members returned to their home communities.