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PHOTO: ATSUMI

Prayer under a heavenly flock

The Rev. Alecia Greenfield, vicar of Holy Cross Anglican Church in Vancouver, beams upward in November at the church's latest decoration: a set of 1,000 origami cranes—"birds of happiness" in Japanese tradition, she says, that symbolize protection and peace. Founded in 1903 as a mission to the Japanese community, Holy Cross continues to have a largely Japanese Canadian congregation and holds services in both English and Japanese.

Data show membership falling 10 per cent each year during 2020 and 2021: church statistician



IMAGE: OLGA PRIMACHEK

Sean Frankling
STAFF WRITER

The Anglican Church of Canada is shrinking faster than it was in the years before a much-discussed 2019 report, recently collected data suggest.

According to the church's statistics and research officer, Canon Neil Elliot, metrics of church size including electoral rolls and distinct identifiable donation sources show membership dropping by about 10 per cent nationwide during 2020, and preliminary data suggest a similar decrease in 2021.

The findings follow Elliot's 2019 extrapolation, presented to the Council of General Synod (CoGS) that year, which projected that if the church's rate of membership loss continued there would be no one left by the year 2040. But the rate of decline during the pandemic years is considerably higher than the membership loss of around 2.5 per cent per year the church experienced in the years leading up to COVID-19, Elliot says. The precise reasons for this accelerated decline are unclear, he adds.

See HOPE, p. 10

'A hope to which we are called'

Primate urges church to gentleness, perseverance in difficult times

COUNCIL OF
GENERAL
SYNOD ▶

“The race is not over, but we have the witness of Scripture that God is with us.”

—Archbishop Linda Nicholls, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada

Sean Frankling
STAFF WRITER

Mississauga, Ont.

In her address to the November meeting of the Council of General Synod (CoGS), Archbishop Linda Nicholls, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, urged Anglicans to be gentle with one another as they face a time marked by challenges including the stress and exhaustion of keeping the church going through an ongoing pandemic and growing financial insecurity in some dioceses.

“We need perseverance,” she said, quoting Hebrews 12, which calls Christians to take courage and inspiration from the saints who went before them and from Jesus Christ. “The race is not over, but we have the witness of Scripture that God is with us and that there is a future and there is a hope to which we are called. So may we encourage one another with that hope, may we be gentle with one another in the anxiety, the fear and the exhaustion.”

She described the past seven months since the previous meeting of General Synod as a “roller coaster” of significant events, some of which had been cause for joy and others for deep pain. Among the latter, she said, was the resignation of

See PANDEMIC, p. 7

The Council of General Synod (CoGS) met in Mississauga, Ont. Nov. 11-13.

Some highlights:

- Deficits, program cuts seen at national office post-2023
- Council of the North sees higher costs, less financial aid
- General Synod, Sacred Circle to vote on document for guiding reconciliation in Canada

For our in-depth coverage of CoGS, see pages 6-9.

Chris Harper appointed national Indigenous archbishop



▲ The logo of Sacred Circle, the Indigenous church within the Anglican Church of Canada

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

Matthew Puddister
STAFF WRITER

Bishop Chris Harper of the diocese of Saskatoon has been named the Anglican Church of Canada's new national Indigenous Anglican archbishop and presiding elder of the Sacred Circle.

Harper's appointment was announced by the national office the morning of Dec. 5, hours before this issue of the *Anglican Journal* was to go to press. Harper succeeds Mark MacDonald, who resigned last spring after acknowledged sexual misconduct allegations.

In a news release, Archbishop Linda

See HEALING, p. 11



NEW SERIES:
Hearing the
Lambeth calls

2 ▶
1. Mission and
Evangelism



HEARING
THE
LAMBETH
CALLS ▶

Mission and
Evangelism
First of a
10-part series
on the calls
to the global
Anglican
Communion
made at the
2022 Lambeth
Conference

‘An undercurrent of growth’

Making a church of disciples in a secular age

Sean Frankling
STAFF WRITER

The call on mission and evangelism from last summer's Lambeth Conference charges the Anglican Communion to discern the needs of its communities and find ways to respond to them by lovingly sharing the gospel of Christ. In an address on the call to the conference's assembled bishops, Archbishop of York Stephen Cottrell likened discipleship to the end-product of the work of the church.

“McDonald's makes hamburgers. Cadbury's make chocolate. Starbucks make coffee ... and the Church of Jesus Christ makes disciples. And disciples make peace,” he said.

Similarly, in an address to Sacred Circle in 2018, then-national Indigenous Anglican archbishop Mark MacDonald

spoke of the need for the Indigenous church to make disciples rather than mere members of the church as the only way it could really make a difference in Indigenous communities; and one of the seven guiding principles outlined in the Indigenous church's Covenant is “to nurture and foster the spiritual formation of others.”

Cottrell told the Lambeth assembly that the gospel is full of good news for a world replete with division, fear and loss, but in much of the Western world especially, Anglicans have lost the knack of sharing it. “That's such good news. And we have been so good, particularly in the North and the West, at keeping it to ourselves,” he said. “Let's resolve today to change that.”

In an interview with the *Journal* about declining membership in the church, the Rev. Peter Misiaszek, director of stewardship and development for the diocese of Toronto, says the Anglican Church of Canada is suffering from a similar problem.

IMAGE: MELITAS



“We don't have it in our DNA, in the most recent generations, to be proselytizing publicly,” he says.

While the overall membership of the church both nationally and in Toronto is on the decline, Misiaszek sees what he calls an “undercurrent of growth” in Toronto's numbers. The pandemic years have thrown the numbers into disarray, he says. But as of 2019, 20 per cent of parishes in Toronto were stable and 30 per cent were actually growing.

In a 2020 doctorate of ministry thesis called *Bucking the Trend*, the Rev. Grayhame Bowcott examined parishes in the dioceses of Toronto and Huron and found similar results. While both dioceses had deconsecrated numerous parishes over the past two decades—Huron 57 between 2007 and 2017 and Toronto 64 between 2001 and 2017—both also had some growing parishes.

One common difference between these parishes and their neighbours was what Bowcott's thesis describes as their “local theologies”—that is, the beliefs of their clergy, lay leaders and congregations that define the way they see key elements of church life: mission, worship and—especially relevant—evangelism.

Bowcott says much of the discussion of the church's falling membership is coloured by what he calls the “contemporary Anglican lament,” an attitude that couches the church's identity in the days of its peak membership several decades ago. That idea—that the church is on an inevitable decline—makes it difficult for Anglican churches to envision what growth looks like or what could be done to revitalize their mission and ministry. The result for those congregations is a feeling of paralysis.

To illustrate the lament's effects, he mentions a question he repeatedly asked when attending the deconsecrations of churches as a domestic chaplain in the diocese of Huron: What had these parishes done in the last few years of their lives to reach out to prospective new members?

“The responses that I heard to this question often astounded and discouraged me,” writes Bowcott. In several cases, congregations pointed to new accessibility aids like ramps or elevators—which, he goes on to say, might be useful in eliminating any barriers to theoretical new members but would do little to attract them in the first place. In one parish, a building manager told him the elevator had been used just 12 times before the church shut down.

“The most difficult fact that I see in the autopsy of a dead church is when you ask the question: what did you do in the last few years to form new relationships. Often that's when you hear a lot of silence,” he said in an interview with the *Journal*. “Anglicans in general have lost the capacity to foster new relationships.”

In Canada, the Anglican Church has historically taken an “if we build it, they will come” approach to evangelism, says

Continued on p. 3

“Anglicans in general have lost the capacity to foster new relationships.”

—The Rev. Grayhame Bowcott

Continued from p. 2

David Edwards, bishop of the diocese of Fredericton. But while that method may have worked in the 1960s and 1970s, Edwards adds, today's climate makes it ineffective at best. Today, understanding the Canadian context means understanding the public relations problem facing Christianity nationwide.

“One of the things we face in Canada is overcoming our legacy. And that's going to take time,” he says. “The headlines ... around abuse, etc., have made an impact that has said ‘the church can't be trusted.’ Another part of the problem, he adds, is “how often the church has tried to force people into belief.”

Edwards, who was at Lambeth for the discussion of the call on mission and evangelism, says a central component of the call's intent is that bishops should be aware of and tailor their action to the national and local contexts their evangelism needs to speak into. The Lambeth call encourages Christians to pray that through each of their ministry “at least one person each year might come to faith and grow as a disciple.” And that may work well in areas where the church readily attracts new members, like South Sudan. But the local application of the call here in Canada, he says, requires Anglicans to first work on rebuilding their relationships with their communities.

That's a key thing the congregations that are still growing have in common, says Bowcott: a theology of evangelism that prioritizes forging meaningful ties between a church and the community it serves.

He points to St. Anne's, a parish in the diocese of Huron that was deconsecrated in 2008 due to a lack of donations. In 2013, Bowcott supported a group of people who stepped back into the property the diocese still owned to reconsecrate the church.

“The premise there was, ‘What if you have no money? Maybe you start off with next to no people. Can you grow something bigger out of nothing? And we found out that yeah, you can!’” says Bowcott. In two years, he says, “they turned from six very miserable Anglicans who had experienced the scarcity model of the church into a congregation of 55 who were there on a regularity.”

Bowcott had a full-time job in his own parish at the time, so he was able to be present only twice a week—for a service on Sunday and a coffee meeting on Tuesday—which meant leaving the work of the refounding almost entirely to lay leaders. They renovated the building and even paid back \$16,000 in debt that the previous congregation at St. Anne's had accrued before the church was deconsecrated.

Even more surprising, says Bowcott, much of the money and resources needed to do that came not from the lay leaders or parishioners of St. Anne's but from the wider community, who responded to the service- and relationship-building the new lay leaders placed at the centre of their theology of evangelism.

“The more that they gave back to the community—whether that was raising items for the local school for a breakfast program or hosting coffee and baked goods for a senior's walking group or even partnerships with the local town council—whenever they did something in



▲ Top: St. Anne's six founding parishioners along with visiting clergy and members of the Port Franks community pose for a photo after the official reconsecration service. Bottom left: Five new members of St. Anne's hold candles after their baptismal welcome. In its first year, the church grew from a congregation of six to 35. Bottom right: The lay leaders of St. Anne's did much of the renovation work for the building, which had been unoccupied since 2008, do-it-yourself style.

PHOTOS: CONTRIBUTED

kind to others, the community responded, saying ‘What do you guys need?’”

That strategy of community engagement was born out of a resolve among the lay leaders to focus the church on rediscovering what it meant to be followers of Jesus, says Bowcott. “And to be honest, they also had a bit of, ‘You think we're a dead church? We'll prove you wrong.’ A good healthy dose of spite,” he laughs.

The point is, says Bowcott, the success of St. Anne's is replicable. In a church where many congregations have an average age of 70, it can be difficult for parishes to see the possibility of fostering new connections. But it's in congregations that try—looking for needs in their communities and finding ways to fill them in ways that create relationships between a parish and its neighbours—that the Anglican Church is still seeing growth.

The national church could help encourage those theologies of evangelism, he says, by ramping up its efforts to put catechesis teaching tools in the hands of “cheerleaders” and teachers in every diocese to foster a shared understanding that the life of Christ means reaching out to forge new relationships. It could also look for opportunities to increase the role of lay leaders so that they see themselves as drivers of the church's mission, as the team at St. Anne's did.

Judith Moses, chair of General Synod's Jubilee Commission on financing the Indigenous church, cites its focus on ministry over buildings as an example of how churches can meet the changing needs of congregations. And adopting Indigenous spiritual practices, she added, could be an important way for the church to reach out to a group with the fastest growing birth rate in Canada.

Like Bowcott, Edwards suggests starting at the level of local relationships, looking out for nontraditional parish structures that may connect with neighbours in unexpected ways. He gives the examples of a parish in England that redeveloped part of its land to create storefront spaces for start-up companies, and, in New Brunswick, the parish of the Nerepis and St. John. Members of the latter, he says, saw a need in their community for a gathering place and transformed a part of the church that had originally been renovating for another purpose into an indoor playpark. After all, he adds, if the structures we've been using have led to decline, there's not much to lose by trying new ones.

“We have to be willing to allow people to experiment and to fail and not criticise them for their failure,” he says.

On one hand, it's important to keep the gospel at the centre of such endeavors, not turn the church into a simple community centre, Edwards says. But the effort to reconnect with secular people in Canada could benefit from meeting them with help, not pressure, he says. Rather than opening with a major push for newcomers to convert and join a church as soon as possible, it might be enough to start by being present at public events just to meet members of the community and let them see Anglicans as friends and neighbours first, he says.

Edwards points to a 1992 Church of England survey of new believers from all denominations. “The big question was: what was the most influential thing in your coming to faith? And the answer was: a friend.” ■

CAPTURING THE LIGHT ▶

The Anglican Journal continues its series of readers' photo and text submissions on stained-glass windows.

Send us a photo of a stained-glass window that has been especially important to you, and tell us why. Photos should be high resolution files in jpg format. Please email them to: editor@national.anglican.ca

Submissions are subject to editing.

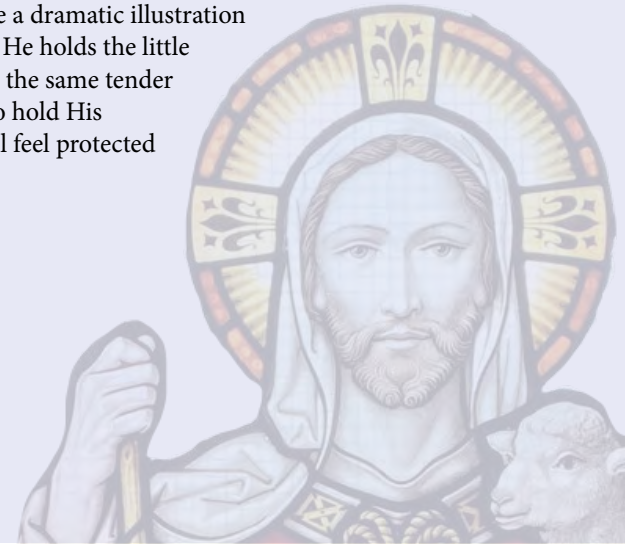


The all-embracing tenderness of the Good Shepherd

Of all the stained-glass windows in St. Augustine Church in Danville, Que., this portrayal of Jesus the Good Shepherd is my favourite.

I often guide visitors and even members of my church to it. Because the window is at a low level a person can stand directly in front of and look at our Saviour Jesus. The life-sized image and beautiful colours are a dramatic illustration of Jesus' care for us. He holds the little lamb in His arms in the same tender way that He longs to hold His followers. We can all feel protected in His gentle arms.

Mary Goodfellow
Danville, Que.



LETTERS ▶

Concerned about expansion of MAID

As a person who lives with a mental illness and volunteers in a mental health facility I am deeply concerned about the medical assistance in dying (MAID) bill and its expansion to include persons with mental disabilities ("Justice and the new assisted death," September, p.1; "Church should not oppose MAID law, primate says," October, p.1).

Our mental health facility has spent countless hours and resources on suicide prevention and now the government wants to make it legal, putting people at risk.

I am also deeply disappointed that our leaders in the Anglican church have chosen not to speak out against this bill or to raise any protest against the broadening of its scope.

Surely the church should speak up for the vulnerable and the disabled in our society and the sanctity of life.

Are we afraid, or have we just settled for the status quo? In the end, our silence harms us all.

Cathy Laing
Hamilton, Ont.

Article corrected common error about Doctrine of Discovery

The November article about King Charles ("Canadian Anglicans ask: Will Charles be the reconciliation king?" p. 1) includes reference to an excellent *Globe and Mail* op-ed by Indigenous lawyer and professor Douglas Sanderson regarding the Doctrine of Discovery.

Professor Sanderson corrected an error that continues to be repeated by Canadian media and Indigenous leaders and groups. Neither Great Britain nor France used the Doctrine of Discovery to take over Indigenous lands in Canada. It first appeared in a papal bull issued in 1493 and permitted the Spanish and Portuguese to forcibly take over much of the land in South America that was not occupied by a "Christian king or prince." The doctrine was later

Enjoyed article on saints

Thanks to Sean Frankling for his informative and amusing article on Anglican saints. When our children were little, we attended St. James', Vancouver—definitely high church—and sang a delightful hymn, "I sing a song of the saints of God, faithful and brave and true" (on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tFIy-iUZKhU>). We especially liked the line about the fierce wild beast.

Phyllis Reeve
Gabriola, B.C.

As a Lutheran who appreciates reading the *Anglican Journal*, I found the article "Unravelling the mystery of Anglican sainthood" in the November issue to be very interesting. The range of views expressed are also found within the wider Lutheran Church.

adopted by the United States Supreme Court in a 19th century case to legitimize the U.S. government's right to forcibly take over any lands occupied by Indigenous people.

In contrast, Canada (the Crown) negotiated with Indigenous peoples rather than adopting the Doctrine of Discovery.

Great Britain and Canada did not seize lands by force and slaughter Indigenous peoples but rather negotiated with First Nations. This is not to say that in today's terms the treaties of the past were fair to the Indigenous peoples, but by adopting negotiation rather than forced occupation and murder, Canada made a far better choice.

Judy Hunter
Retired lawyer, federal department of Justice

Study found no children's remains at Kamloops site

You reported ("Canadian Anglicans ask: Will Charles be the reconciliation king?" November, p. 1) that Canon Murray Still stated that children's remains had been discovered in

However, as much as I think it's appropriate that we can ask a departed believer to pray just as we might ask a believer here in this life to pray, I think motive is crucial. "God looks on the heart." If we think that a departed believer provides a "shortcut" to God or has "more influence" before God, then such prayer is wrong. But it is quite appropriate in my view if "prayer" (or really a "request") to a saint-departed is simply asking that person to join in voicing a specific concern at hand.

In the article I was also hoping to learn if the Anglican church has a process for determining a person to be officially remembered as a saint in somewhat the same way as the Roman Catholic Church.

Thanks for this informative article,

Bishop Allan Grundahl
Saskatoon, Sask.

Kamloops, B.C. and you allowed that statement to remain unchallenged. No children's remains have been found in the Kamloops Residential School grounds.

No doubt some Indigenous people are still finding it difficult to live in a predominantly different society than the one of their traditional ways but I would also say that that Canadian society has little to apologise for given the great benefits of modern life it has provided. I further add that there is too much hyperbole in the press as a whole about colonisation and that accurate reporting is essential to real truth and reconciliation.

If King Charles III can help reconcile differences, more power to him. He and our governors general and lieutenant governors are the representatives of that abstract concept called the Crown, which guarantees us all through our Constitution and the rule of law, peace, order and good government. May it ever be so.

The Rev. Derek Perry
Kitchener, Ont.

Editor's note: The author of the 2021

study of the grounds of the Kamloops Indian Residential School concluded that 200 "probable burials" were found at the site, and no remains have yet been excavated. The Journal regrets this oversight, but notes that more than 50 children are listed by the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation as having died at the school, and that the centre states that the total number of children who died at residential schools is higher than the number of dead students it has been able to name thus far.

In accepting same-sex marriage, church has 'hitched its wagon to current popular culture'

Concerning my respected colleague Tim Kennedy's letter ("Why different views on marriage if we are all made in God's image?", November, p. 5): Firstly, I believe the ancients referred to the believed physical *image* of God. According to the scriptures, we were made perfect, but disobeyed God and were ejected from the Garden. We are deeply flawed and cannot claim our current state is the design of God: that conveniently negates us from responsibility of personal morality. God is without sin.

Discrimination is rightfully illegal and civil unions of same-sex people have been legitimized. The scriptures and Jesus' own teachings, however, are clear. He spoke explicitly about sexual immorality and the nature of marriage. He denounced the former (Matthew 5:28; 15:19) and defined the latter according to Genesis 2:24: "For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh" (Matthew 19:5; Mark 10:7-8).

Jesus affirmed the covenanted union of one man and one woman as the only normative expression of human sexuality. Sadly, the Anglican Church of Canada has hitched its wagon to current popular culture, and in the space of 30-40 years overturned 2,000 years of Christian belief.

Kate Brown
St. James and St. Brandon Anglican Church
Port Colborne, Ont.

The Anglican Journal welcomes letters to the editor.

Since not all letters can be published, preference is given to short correspondence (300 words or less). All letters are subject to editing.

SINGING WITH JOY ▶

Feed your soul, and let God be revealed!



By Linda Nicholls

TEACHERS QUICKLY discover there are a variety of learning styles in any classroom. Some students need to move; they experience learning through their bodies. Others need to dream and visualize the learning, writing it down or drawing a picture. And some need to sing it.

Music translates emotions, ideas and knowledge into sounds—and by their rhythm, intensity, or harmony those sounds can move the human soul to unexpected places of serenity, passion or commitment.

Though its attribution to St. Augustine is hard to prove, I believe the proverb, “The one who sings prays twice” is true. In fact, I’m sure of it—because I love to sing. At a reflective point in parish ministry I realized something was missing from my life and knew that it was music. I had played an instrument since childhood and added many others in university as I studied music education, but the demands of parish ministry had silenced my playing and my soul was missing it deeply. So I joined a choir—and when I moved to another diocese my first task was to find another choir! Since then I have stood in the back rows of the second sopranos delighting in the opportunity to make music—very often, music that was composed for the life of the Church.



▲ “I believe the proverb, ‘The one who sings prays twice’ is true,” the primate writes.

PHOTO: FRANTICOO

So much of the rich repertoire of choral music was written to support worship, liturgy or biblical education. For some choristers the music is simply another form of poetry, one expressed in sound; but it is the heart of my faith. Singing allows the Holy Spirit to speak to my soul through the gifts of great composers.

At Christmas I delight in singing Handel’s *Messiah*. From the playfulness of “For Unto Us a Child is Born” to the sonorous contrasts of “Since by Man Came Death” to the complex praise of “Worthy Is the Lamb,” my heart and soul are fed. And who among us does not rise to their feet at the opening chords of the “Hallelujah” chorus? George Frederick Handel knew how to take the texts and give them life

through sounds in ways that still move us centuries later.

Whether singing the melodies of Gregorian chant or 21st century classical tonalities of Morten Lauridsen or the rich tradition of hymnody we enjoy in *Common Praise* or *Sing a New Creation* every Sunday I know that I need music to express my faith. Music has given me courage in tough times, sustained me in hope and always been a companion in rejoicing.

Not everyone is a musician at heart. But I do believe that everyone has a particular way in which faith reaches into their soul. For some it is dance and movement. For others it is in the written word of poetry or prose. For others it will be in art—stained glass, canvas and paint, sculpture or other medium.

Whatever your way is into faith, nurture it! We are the design of a creative God whose vivid imagination created infinite ways to express life. Feed your soul in the unique way that God has gifted to you. It took me some years for me to remember and know what I needed to fully nurture my faith. Listen to your heart and let it tell you how you best hear and respond to God. In this season of Epiphany let God be revealed to your heart again in whatever way speaks with joy and passion! ■

Archbishop Linda Nicholls is the primate of the Anglican Church of Canada.

INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES ▶

Sacred Circle: an epiphany for Indigenous Anglicans



By Murray Still

ACCORDING TO the Merriam-Webster dictionary, one meaning of the word “epiphany” is “a usually sudden manifestation or perception of the essential nature or meaning of something.” In the case of the Church, the feast of Epiphany is celebrated Jan. 6 to commemorate the coming of the Magi as a “manifestation of Christ” to the Gentiles.

In a sense, the season of Epiphany continues beyond Jan. 6, as Christ continues to be manifest and made known to us. Indigenous Anglicans in Canada have met in a sacred gathering for more than 30 years, starting with the National Native Convocation in 1988 at Fort Qu’Appelle, Sask. In all that time, Christ has been made known in these gatherings through Word and sacrament and heard in the voices of many who called for self-determination within the church.

Today, the convocations are known as the Sacred Circle and they have traditionally been held every three years, usually ahead of General Synod. The last time Indigenous Anglicans from coast



▲ A firekeeper lights the Sacred Fire at Sacred Circle, Pinawa, Man., 2012.

PHOTO: GINNY DOCTOR

to coast to coast met was 2018 in Prince George, B.C. In 2020 the whole of the Anglican Church of Canada was forced to modify its approach to business and ministry as a result of the pandemic. The Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples (ACIP), which is elected at Sacred Circle to continue its work between gatherings, moved online to conduct meetings, provide worship and, most recently, to raise up the next Indigenous archbishop.

ACIP also wrote the equivalent of a constitution and bylaws for the Indigenous Anglican church, called “The Covenant and Our Way of Life.” This document,

found on the Anglican Church of Canada website at https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/SC-covenant-owol_single.pdf, guides Indigenous Anglicans in our quest for self-determination. Two virtual Sacred Circles were called to complete the document, which will now go to an in-person Sacred Circle to be held this spring in Ontario.

Through it all, Christ has been with us, leading us in the hope of achieving the vision of our elders for self-determination. Colonization, the residential schools, youth suicides, the Sixties Scoop and COVID-19 have been challenges, but our persistence has proven we are a resilient people, a people of the land and waters who want to return to our Indigenous ways of being.

As the Epiphany season approaches, we look forward to the ways we will continue our journey, shaped by the Holy Spirit manifest among us. May our Creator bless our vision and bless us all with healing, reconciliation and new life. ■

Canon Murray Still is incumbent of the Church of St. Stephen and St. Bede in Winnipeg. He is chair of the Rupert’s Land Elders’ Circle and co-chair of ACIP.

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IMAGE: LEMBERG VECTOR STUDIO

Church sees deficits, program cuts post-2023

Sean Frankling
STAFF WRITER

Tali Folkins
EDITOR

The Anglican Church of Canada's national office is forecast to have a balanced budget this year—but substantial deficits and program cuts are likely in the years to follow, documents prepared for the November meeting of Council of Synod (CoGS) state.

The budget for 2023 is expected to have a modest surplus of \$43,000, according to a budget document prepared for CoGS and dated Oct. 27. This includes the projected cost of \$791,900 for the meeting of General Synod planned for the summer, as well as a gathering of Sacred Circle planned in the spring. To balance its budget, the church will use just over \$1 million in funds that were set aside in previous years to cover these expenses, General Synod treasurer Amal Attia told CoGS. The national church was expected to have a similarly modest surplus in 2022, she said.

Prospects for coming years, however, are revenues are expected to fall, are not as rosy. The Oct. 27 document forecasts a deficit of \$495,000 in 2024, \$1.45 million in 2025, \$460,000 in 2026 and \$524,000 in 2027, and a budget narrative predicts cuts at Church House.

"Years 2023 to 2027 in the trend indicate that in the absence of increased revenue, program cuts will likely be



▲ General Synod's investments enjoyed good returns in 2020 and 2021, but had taken substantial losses in 2022 by November, treasurer Amal Attia told CoGS.

PHOTO: MATTHEW PUDDISTER

necessary," it states.

The budget projection shows expected revenues from diocesan contributions—by far the largest element of the national office's revenues—falling from 2021's \$7.25 million to \$6.93 million in 2024, and then staying at \$6.93 million until 2027, the last year covered by the projection.

The office of the general secretary of General Synod, Attia told CoGS, was over-budget as of Sept. 30 2022 because of a legal expense that is not expected to continue. In response to a request for more details from CoGS member Michael Siebert of the ecclesiastical province of Rupert's Land, Attia replied that legal fees totalling about \$175,000 were due to the case of Mark MacDonald, the former national Indigenous Anglican archbishop who resigned in April 2020 after acknowledging allegations of sexual misconduct.

In response to a fact-checking email from the *Journal*, however Attia said she had brought up costs incurred by the MacDonald case only as an example of the items that had caused the general secretary's office to run over budget in 2022. And in an interview, General Secretary Archdeacon Alan Perry said he understood Attia to have misspoken; legal costs, which as of Sept. 30 stood at \$182,494, were for a variety of services, he said, including advice on property matters and on copyright contracts for the church's new hymn book, on employment issues, and to deal with a statements of claim that inappropriately

name General Synod.

Perry confirmed the events surrounding MacDonald's resignation were part of this total, in the interview estimating them at less than 30 per cent, but wrote in a later email that he was unable to give a figure or percentage.

"I really can't say how much has been spent on any given legal matter as I simply don't have those figures at hand, so it would be inaccurate to put any percentage figure on it," his email states. When pressed, Perry replied he would not share the amount of any legal bill.

During her presentation, Attia announced that despite unusually high gains in the church's investments for the years of 2020 and 2021, those investments had to date lost around \$700,000 during 2022 as the stock market took dips related to the war in Ukraine and an incoming recession. David Edwards, bishop of the diocese of Fredericton, asked Attia why the national church had not followed the strategy his diocese's broker had recommended—to realize its gains by taking money out of the market before the drop in financial markets that caused the losses. Attia replied that they had not received the same advice from the General Synod's financial broker and were now considering changing to another broker.

Many of the world's stock markets declined considerably in the first half of 2022. In a November email discussion with the *Journal*, Attia said things could change in the fourth quarter of 2022. ■

Northern dioceses face higher costs, less financial aid

Sean Frankling and Matthew Puddister
STAFF WRITERS

Mississauga, Ontario

While they are grateful for the donations and aid sent by individual dioceses and by the national church, Anglican ministries in northern Canada will struggle to handle any further reduction in budget, Council of General Synod (CoGS) heard Nov. 12.

"Recently someone said to me it's time for the Council of the North to live sacrificially. And I have to say, I thought we were living sacrificially," David Lehmann, bishop of the diocese of Caledonia and chair of the Council of the North, told CoGS in a presentation. The Council of the North is a grouping of northern dioceses that get financial help from the national church.

However, he said, the Council of the North faces unique challenges in ministering to a vast and sparsely populated stretch of northern Canada. Its bishops often serve as incumbents for multiple parishes—as many as nine in one case. That portfolio requires them to spend 12-hour days on the road amid rising fuel costs, travelling from one to the next to meet the spiritual needs of communities struggling with the impact



PHOTO: MATTHEW PUDDISTER

Members of CoGS attend a presentation at the council's November meeting.

of COVID-19 on top of poverty and high shipping costs. A case of bottled water in the North, he said, could cost \$45.

In 2019, General Synod's annual grant to the council was reduced five per cent from about \$2.6 million to about \$2.1 million. At \$2.15 million in 2021 and in the 2022 budget, it remains General Synod's greatest single expense. According to General Synod treasurer Amal Attia, CoGS has been considering a further five per cent reduction in 2024, with church revenue expected to continue declining.

Commenting at the end of Lehmann's presentation, Jody Butler Walker, of the ecclesiastical province of British Columbia and Yukon, said, "I think it's safe to say that if there are more cuts, many things will need to be changed.

And in keeping with the spirit and intent of reconciliation ... it's very important that funding be maintained to the Council of the North."

In his presentation, Lehmann thanked the Anglican Church of Canada and its members for their assistance. "Through this generosity we've been able to do some incredible ministry in northern and remote parts of Canada," he told CoGS. Donations from across Canada, he said, helped in the pastoral response to the stabbings at James Smith Cree Nation and the nearby community of Weldon, both in Saskatchewan, Sept. 4. Twelve people died in the stabbings.

"As you can imagine, there were a number of funerals and support that was needed and we were able to assist the diocese in bringing in clergy and being

able to tend the incredibly profound needs that were there at the time," he said.

Lehmann also noted a \$100,000 gift by the Anglican Church Women (ACW) of the diocese of New Westminster to support retired clergy in the Council of the North, set up after the *Anglican Journal* reported Jonas Allooloo, former dean of St. Jude's Cathedral in Iqaluit, was homeless for a time following his retirement. The ACW partnered with the Anglican Foundation of Canada to distribute the gift and challenged other branches to donate what they could to bolster the fund. Including the initial gift, ACW branches had raised a total of \$260,000, he told CoGS.

"While we're working on the details of how [the \$260,000] will be administered, it is an exciting thing to see the response to articles of one person's troubles and ... realize that it was actually a far more systemic issue," Lehmann said, adding, "This gift, while it will not last long, is profound and comes with much appreciation."

Other projects Lehmann highlighted include education programs such as Huron University College's licentiate in theology, which allows anyone living in a Council of the North diocese to take courses for free. ■

Church to vote on national 'Covenant of Reconciliation'

Matthew Puddister
STAFF WRITER

Sacred Circle and General Synod are expected to vote on a draft document outlining principles to guide reconciliation in Canada when they meet this spring and summer, Council of General Synod (CoGS) heard Nov. 12.

Parties to the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement, including the Anglican Church of Canada, have produced a draft Covenant of Reconciliation in response to Call to Action 46 from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Dawn Maracle, the church's reconciliation animator, presented the current draft to Council of General Synod (CoGS) on Nov. 12. The draft was approved by the Government of Canada in April 2021 and will be brought before Sacred Circle when it meets May 28-June 2 and General Synod in July. The hope, she said is that the prime minister of Canada will approve the document's final version

next fall.

Call to Action 46 called on parties to the settlement agreement, known as the All-Parties Table, to "develop and sign a Covenant of Reconciliation that would identify principles for working collaboratively to advance reconciliation in Canadian society." Drafting of the Covenant of Reconciliation began in 2016.

Maracle asked CoGS to consider the language in the draft and provide feedback. Other churches and institutions from the All-Parties Table are currently going through their own parallel processes, she said.

"People are waiting for this work to be done," Maracle said. "This is one of the many calls to action that haven't been enacted yet. We want a document that we agree on, so that then each institution can create a strategic plan and start creating action steps to live out that covenant."

"People at the All-Parties Table recognize that Indigenous people and communities and Canadians across the country are ready for this to

happen ... It has to happen in a way that we all agree to," she added. "But it is time. It is time for action to start happening."

The draft Covenant of Reconciliation reaffirms the parties' commitment to reconciliation; repudiates concepts such as *terra nullius* ("nobody's land") used to justify European sovereignty over many Indigenous lands and peoples worldwide; adopts the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation; and supports the renewal or establishment of treaty relationships based on mutual recognition.

Presentation of the draft followed the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples (ACIP) report to CoGS. Canon Murray Still, ACIP co-chair, said a selection committee had finished interviewing candidates for the next national Indigenous archbishop. Still said ACIP was hoping to have a new national Indigenous archbishop in place by the end of 2022. ■

Members of ACIP, Still said, recently held an in-person meeting in Toronto where they shared their feelings around the loss of former national Indigenous archbishop Mark MacDonald following his resignation over acknowledged sexual misconduct.

MacDonald's resignation "has been a big blow for us and has set us back a little bit," Still said. "But we were also encouraged to continue to move forward in the understanding that what we have done to this point is good work, and we need to continue that good work with the help of the Holy Spirit."

ACIP is currently planning two upcoming gatherings, he said. A young adult Sacred Circle will take place in March in Beausejour, Man. The main Sacred Circle will follow from May 28 to June 2 at the Fern Resort in Ramara, Ont., and is expected to consider endorsing the Covenant and Our Way of Life, founding documents for the self-determining Indigenous church. ■



▲ The church has made progress, Nicholls said, in creating policies to cement the boundaries between senior management and Anglican Journal staff.

PHOTO: MATTHEW PUDDISTER

Pandemic has many clergy in 'profound exhaustion': primate

Continued from p. 1 former national Indigenous Anglican archbishop Mark Macdonald after admitting sexual misconduct—an event she said had caused much shock and sorrow, especially in the Indigenous church.

"We long for our leaders to live into the purity and righteousness of the gospel. And when in their humanity that is not always possible, it can be a great source of despair," she said.

And though this challenging stretch caps off more than two years of lockdowns and mask mandate stress, Nicholls said, it's important not to forget that the pandemic is still ongoing, requiring both compassion for those who continue to be vulnerable to infection and for those affected by its financial and emotional stress. In particular, she said, she had been hearing a pattern of "profound exhaustion" among the bishops and clergy in many dioceses.

"During a time of high anxiety and constant change, adrenaline and focus have kept many working very, very hard. And now that some return

to a more normal pattern ... the exhaustion of that emotional, spiritual and physical roller coaster is being felt," said Nicholls.

Particularly concerning, she said, was a spiritual poll by Bishop Larry Kochendorfer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada in which his respondents reported that they were struggling to name where they found hope.

Offering her own advice on where to find that hope, Nicholls encouraged CoGS attendees to compare the church's recent difficulties to the struggles of God's people in biblical history, keeping in mind the big picture, even if solutions seem slow in coming.

"Remember that in the midst of the Exodus and the exile and the personal struggles, it often required years of perseverance and faithfulness before they reached the end."

In some places, important work has already begun, she said—for example in dioceses' implementation of the five transformational aspirations, statements designed to guide the development of the

changing church which its strategic planning group debuted at March's CoGS meeting. Nicholls said she had seen encouraging progress in the ways dioceses have been including the aspirations in their planning for the future. She also said she had found several opportunities to recommend dioceses to look to the successful methods of others elsewhere in the country—not to imitate them, but so they could exchange inspiration on how to apply the calls to their mission in their local context.

There has also been progress, she said, in the creation of new policies to cement the boundaries between the roles of senior management and editorial staff in the *Anglican Journal*—part of an effort to prevent the recurrence of incidents like the leak of information about survivors meant to be anonymous in an *Epiphanies* article on sexual misconduct.

Since that incident and MacDonald's sexual misconduct came to light, Nicholls said, the church has undertaken several methods to become one where "harassment or

abuse cannot find a home." These, she said, included the organization of several meetings throughout the year for church leaders to begin retooling the church's processes for handling complaints of misconduct and a visit to Canada by Mandy Marshall, director for gender justice at the Anglican Communion office. Marshall toured Canada and delivered several seminars on power and identity and trauma-informed care and response, including one on Nov. 11 to CoGS itself.

The primate also dedicated a significant segment of her address to discussing the opportunities the Canadian House of Bishops had to meet and worship with other bishops from across the Anglican Communion, hear global concerns and share Canadian perspectives at last summer's Lambeth conference. She said she attended the installation of Archbishop Anthony Poggio as the new secretary general of the Anglican Communion, after which he accepted her invitation to join the Anglican Church of Canada for General Synod next summer. ■

“ People are waiting for this work to be done ... This is one of the many calls to action that haven't been enacted yet.

—Reconciliation Animator Dawn Maracle



IMAGE: LEMBERG VECTOR STUDIO

Campaign seeks to familiarize Anglicans with new strategic plan

Matthew Puddister
STAFF WRITER

A team working on a strategic plan for the Anglican Church of Canada has embarked on a major communications campaign to familiarize as many members of the church as possible with the plan's five central points before General Synod meets this summer.

The Strategic Planning Working Group's campaign includes the launch of a new website with a video and accompanying Bible study for each of the five points—known as “transformational aspirations”, broad goals and values the church should uphold—communications director Joseph Vecsi told Council of General Synod (CoGS) Nov. 12. Each video will be promoted on social media, Vecsi said.

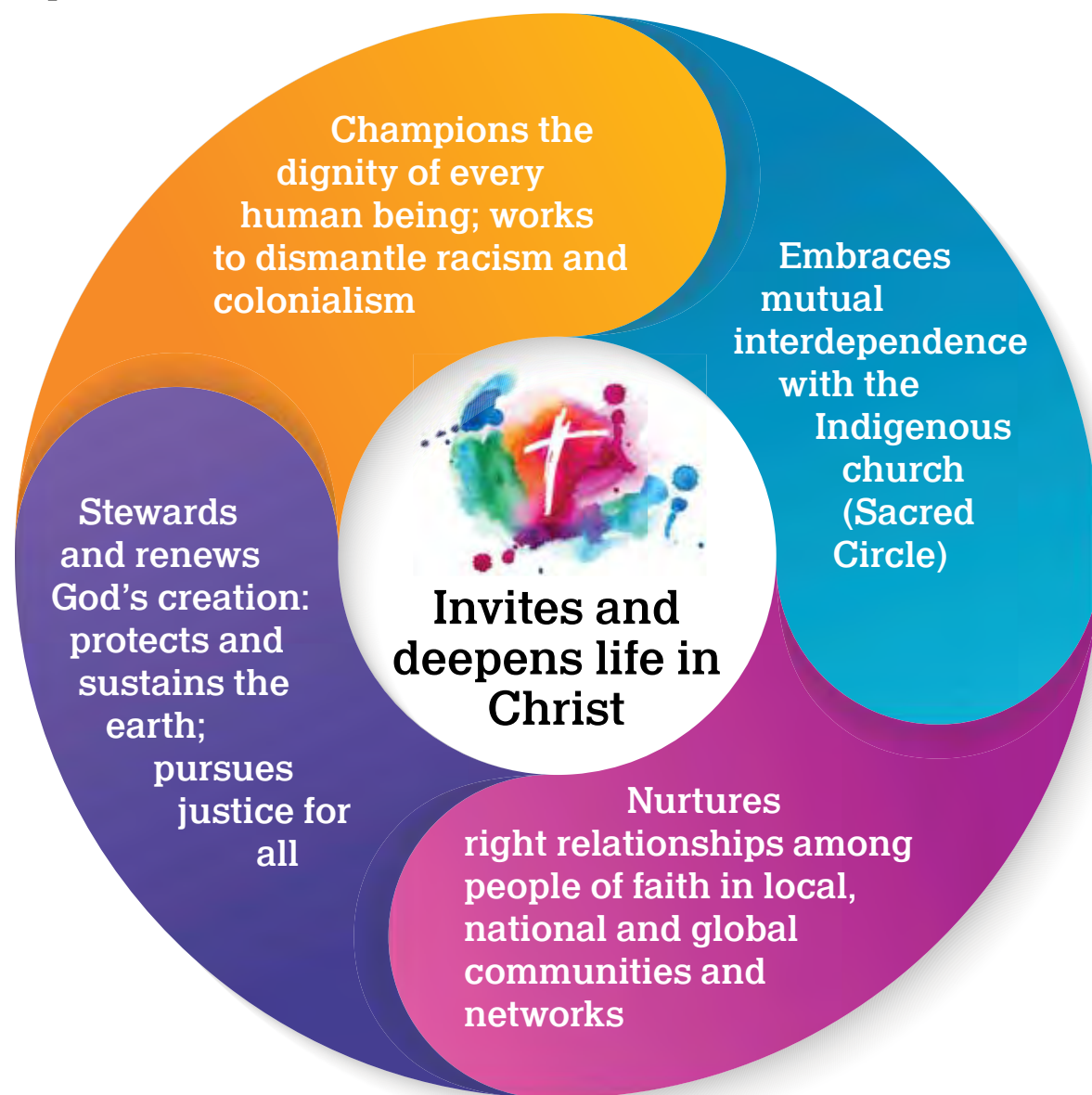
Anglican Video, the national church's video production unit, has been working on the videos since summer and had released one so far, Vecsi said. It had also created a sixth clip known as the “Genesis video” that explains the strategic planning process, gives context and shows the diversity of voices that went into the plan.

Senior producer Lisa Barry said that with so many potential stories across the church, Anglican Video had opted to focus on one story for each aspiration. “My guiding principle for this work has always been, the most personal is the most universal,” Barry said. The campaign's long-term goal, she added, is to provide a platform where Anglicans can show what they're doing in their own contexts to live out the aspirations and share their stories.

A resolution passed at the March 2022 meeting of CoGS directed the general secretary to communicate the draft aspirations across the Anglican Church of Canada.

Vecsi told CoGS that the resolution “really enabled us to embark on one of our most ambitious projects in the last three years. We wanted to take the language and the passion behind the five transformational aspirations and communicate this content as widely as possible throughout the church.”

The five aspirations include calls for the Anglican Church of Canada to be a church that “invites and deepens life in Christ”; “champions the dignity of every human being; works to dismantle racism and colonialism”; “embraces mutual interdependence with the Indigenous church (Sacred Circle)”; “stewards and renews God's creation; protects and sustains the earth; pursues justice for all”; and “nurtures right relationships among



▲ The church's strategic plan has five broad goals, which it calls “transformational aspirations.”

GRAPHIC: SASKIA ROWLEY

people of faith in local, national and global communities and networks.”

In her report to CoGS, working group chair Judith Moses said her team had been busy using the extra year provided for its work by the postponement of the next General Synod to 2023 and hoped that additional time would also benefit the next council.

“The challenge will be for the next CoGS to pick up this work as seamlessly as possible,” Moses said. “The next CoGS can continue I think what has turned out to be a very rich dialogue and learning and relationship-building ... Hopefully there will be a focus on implementation.”

Since March, the working group has been restructuring and expanding to prepare for implementation of the strategic plan, Moses said. Five new members have been brought onboard to help the group cope with the workload and add new skills. Meanwhile, a new steering committee is overseeing the work to reduce the need for full working group meetings.

Focused working groups have been added for communications, diocesan pilot

projects and the Office of General Synod, with the latter examining where and how the work of General Synod supports the aspirations. The update to CoGS highlighted pilot projects in the dioceses of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, Toronto and New Westminster to connect the aspirations to diocesan priorities.

The Strategic Planning Working Group will invite General Synod, when it meets this summer, to take up the transformational aspirations as its basis for planning, allocating resources and collaboration with dioceses and parishes. It will also encourage General Synod to set up planning teams for continuing work with the primate, Sacred Circle and provinces and dioceses and to report on implementation to CoGS and the next meeting of General Synod, which is planned for 2025.

“So far we've heard a lot of resonance across the country with these aspirations,” Moses said. “I'm hoping that that kind of resonance will continue into that next session of General Synod.” ■

Survey charts women's church leadership by the numbers



Ordnained in 1976, the Rev. Beverly Shanley was one of the Anglican Church of Canada's first two female priests.

Matthew Puddister
STAFF WRITER

A national survey is tallying women's leadership in the Anglican Church of Canada leading up to the 50th anniversary of the ordination of women in 2026.

Twenty out of 30 dioceses have offered results for Holding Up a Mirror, a project created by Global Relations director Andrea Mann and executive archdeacon Linda Hill. Canon Neil Elliot, the church's statistics and research officer, helped develop the survey in which dioceses reported the number of women in central decision-making bodies and in active ordained ministry.

The study found that in 2022, women made up 55% of central diocesan leadership in the Anglican Church of Canada, 41% of bishops, 35% of priests and 60% of deacons.

Between 1995 and 2019, women made up 14% of bishops on Council of General Synod (CoGS), 18% of clergy, 58% of laity and 61% of youth members. On the 2019-2023 council, women comprised 20% of bishops, 75% of clergy, 50% of laity and 25% of youth. For CoGS as a whole, 38% of members from 1995 to 2019 were women, compared to 36% between 2019 and 2022. ■



PHOTO: KEIFERPIX

Health-care chaplains become official FWM ministry network

Matthew Puddister
STAFF WRITER

Council of General Synod (CoGS) has recognized Anglican health-care chaplains, also known as spiritual care professionals, as an official network of the national church's department of Faith, Worship, and Ministry (FWM).

The council passed a resolution Nov. 12 that welcomed FWM initiatives in creating networks to support local ministries. It recognized in particular the Anglican Health Care Spiritual Care Professionals Network as an official FWM ministry network.

The Rev. Eileen Scully, director of FWM, said the motion of support from CoGS would offer recognition to Anglican spiritual care professionals, who had recently held their second national gathering in the same space at the Queen of Apostles Renewal Centre in Mississauga (see “Amid a health-care system ‘in crisis,’ chaplains seek more support, recognition from church,” pg. 3 in the December issue of the *Anglican Journal*).

Making the health-care chaplains' network official, Scully said, would also give it a formal mandate in a way she compared to the establishment of the Youth Secretariat to help organize youth ministry. Scully thanked CoGS after the motion carried for their “support in growing this important network.”

The FWM committee report also included an update on the task force for ordinal revision.

FWM established the task force last spring to revise the liturgies of ordination in the *Book of Alternative Services*, based on a mandate from General Synod 2010 that called for revision of the Anglican Church of Canada's contemporary-language liturgical texts.

According to the committee's report prepared for CoGS, the task force is currently studying ordinals of other provinces of the Anglican Communion, plus full communion and ecumenical partners, and that members are in the process of discussing and revising the first draft of a rite for the ordination of bishops. ■

General Synod to take place June 27-July 2 at University of Calgary

Matthew Puddister
STAFF WRITER

The 2023 Assembly will take place from June 27 to July 2 at the University of Calgary, General Secretary Archdeacon Alan Perry said in his report to Council of General Synod (CoGS).

Encompassing the Anglican Church of Canada's General Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) National Convention, the Assembly was originally scheduled for July 2022. Due to concerns over travel amid an upsurge in COVID-19 cases, the Assembly Planning Committee on Feb. 18 decided against holding an in-person event that summer.

At its subsequent March meeting, CoGS passed a resolution for the next session of General Synod to take place in 2023, with the hope for it to be



The MacEwan Hall atrium at the University of Calgary

PHOTO: RILEY BRANDT, UCALGARY

concurrent with an Assembly meeting with the ELCIC and for the Assembly Committee to decide the time. CoGS also resolved for the following session of General Synod to take place in 2025. Perry said the original site,

the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, was unable to host the Assembly in summer 2023 and credited event planner Angela Chorney with helping organizers find an alternative venue. ■

Hope for smaller, healthier church seen

Continued from p. 1

Some church leaders, however, say there's more to the church than the number of its members—and numeric decline is no reason for despair.

"The church absolutely will be smaller, we absolutely know that ... I think it's too simplistic to simply say we're dying. I think we're going through an age of transformation," says the Rev. Peter Misiaszek, director of stewardship for the diocese of Toronto. "And that age of transformation will mean fewer parishes, but hopefully healthier parishes."

Elliot adds that it's important not to blame the shrinking of the church on anything its clergy or parishioners are doing—or failing to do. Rather, he describes the phenomenon as part of a "spiritual climate change," which is affecting not just the Anglican church, but religious communities across North America and Europe, too.

Since its peak in 1961, when 1.3 million Anglicans made up about seven per cent of Canada's population, the Anglican Church of Canada has followed a steady rate of decline, losing about the same number of people every year for much of that time. In the 50 years between 1961 and 2001, its membership dropped by half to about 641,000. Then, in a much shorter 16 years, it roughly halved again to about 282,000 in 2017. Elliot notes that this change reflects, albeit somewhat more dramatically, overall statistics on Canadians' engagement with organized religion.

Data from Statistics Canada show that in 2021, 34.6 per cent of Canadians reported having no religious affiliation, more than double the 16.5 per cent recorded in 2001. Just over half of Canadians—53.3 per cent—identified as Christian, down from 77.1 per cent in 2001. There have been similarly dramatic drops in the proportion of people who regularly attend group religious activities.

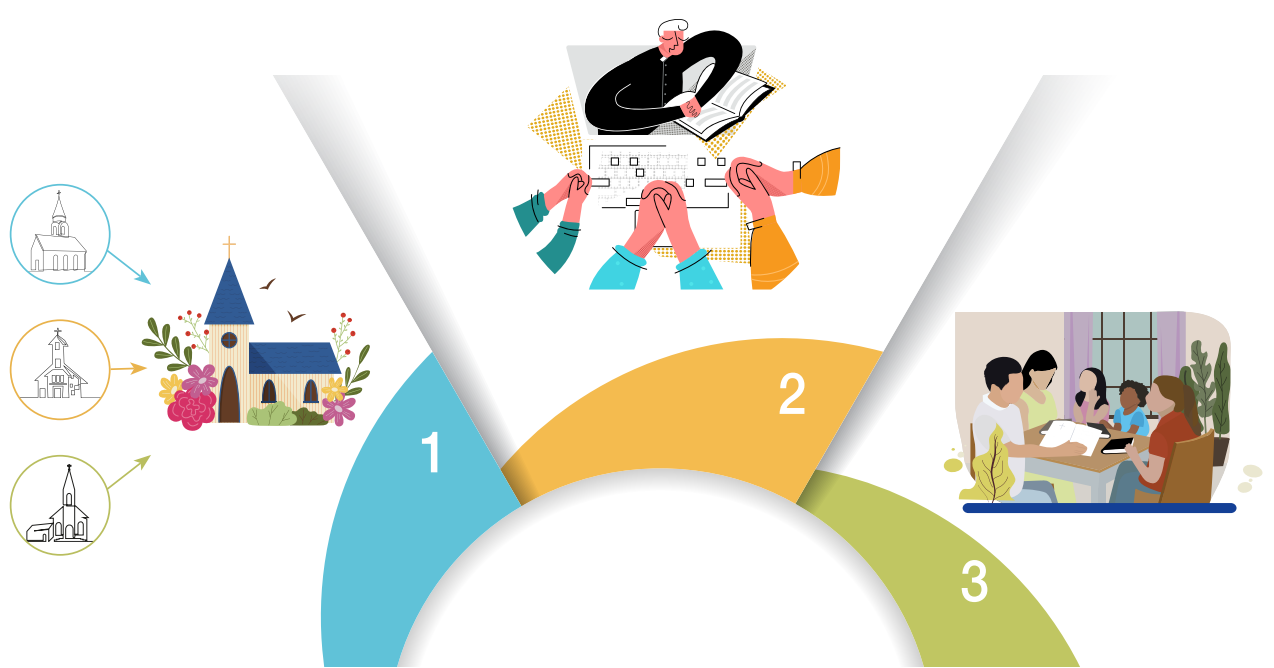
Church membership in other Western countries has been shrinking too. Data released in November by the U.S.-based Episcopal Church (TEC) show average Sunday attendance in 2021 down by 43 per cent from pre-pandemic levels. At November's meeting of CoGS, Liza Anderson, representative to the council for TEC, said a recent report to the Episcopal Church's executive council showed that half of those who had stopped coming to church during the pandemic would likely never return.

"Organizationally, we're in the phase that all organizations go through right before they collapse in on themselves and die," she said.

However, Anderson added, "that doesn't mean the Episcopal Church is dying. Because the church is not synonymous with its bureaucratic organizational structures ... All of us have work before us that's given us to do. And whether or not any of these particular organizational instantiations of that work continue, well, that was actually never the point."

For his part, on the trend of church decline, Elliot says, "There may be things we can do individually to mitigate it, but mostly it happens at a level we can't directly affect. Mostly what we need to do is to adapt."

With the pandemic came a sense of uncertainty, he says. While the national church seems to have continued shrinking by about 10 per cent per year, there was a



▲ **OPTIONS FOR A SHRINKING CHURCH**
As attendance declines, possibilities open to the church include merging parishes; supplementing limited in-person worship with online services; and moving to home worship, some leaders say.

ILLUSTRATIONS:
SHUTTERSTOCK

lot of variance from one parish to another. Some shrank even faster. Others seemed to be unexpectedly growing. Many parishes reported rising view counts on their online services, though the relationship between online engagement and actual membership is still unclear. As a result, the exact effect the pandemic has had on the church's shrinking membership is hard to specify, says Elliot.

"[We saw] what I described as instability—which I see as hopeful," he says. "In engineering, when those kind of changes happen, it means that the system as a whole is undergoing substantial change and you don't know where it's going to end up. Anecdotally, I can say that in my area, I see a lot of willingness to embrace change now that I didn't see before the pandemic."

Within the decade, Misiaszek cautions, some dioceses may see a "tipping point," where multiple parishes have to close at one time, placing strain on the national church's ability to help other struggling dioceses.

"Over the last 20 years, we [the Diocese of Toronto] have closed or amalgamated four congregations each year. That's a normalized pattern," he says. "But what happens if in one year—and it could be five years down the road from us—instead of having four of those parishes closing, you have 20?"

Both Elliot and Misiaszek agree that as the church shrinks, it will need to restructure—not least because as attendance dwindles, donations follow. That means that many parishes may not be able to afford the upkeep on their buildings for one thing, not to mention the salary for a full-time member of the clergy.

"Here's an exercise that any parish can do: Ask the envelope secretary to estimate the age of their top five donors ... because typically, your top five donors are responsible for upwards of 20 to 25 per cent of your parish revenue. And what if they're all in their 80s?" says Misiaszek. It can feel a little harsh, he adds, but it may also provide an idea of when a parish might face a sharp reduction in donations.

Elliot and Misiaszek have some ideas of what adapting to that change might look like. For one thing, as some parishes begin to face falling donations, they may need to shutter their church buildings and look to one of a few alternative solutions, they say.

The first possibility is simply combining with other parishes, adding congregations

together until they reach the mass necessary to make a building and a priest viable. This has the advantage of getting to continue meeting in a physical church space, but it may come with downsides if, for example, the newly incorporated parish's building is too far for people from neighbouring areas to get to.

Another option, they say, is holding limited in-person services and supplementing them by meeting online, something many parishes were forced to do during the pandemic. Elliot says this necessity actually helped break the church's inertia, its resistance to change. Online services offer their own advantages, including low costs and accessibility for people who otherwise can't make their way to an in-person service due to distance or disability. They're also a low-pressure way for people who have never been to church before to try it out. And many churches that offer online services have found themselves gaining viewers from entirely different parts of the country or the world, he adds.

Misiaszek says he knows of at least one parish in the diocese of Toronto that has left off physical meetings permanently and now meets only over Zoom. He's not sure this is the right way forward for most parishes, however. While it may work for small groups of people who already know each other in person, he says, a purely online model may not be enough to build a real community.

"To what extent is a virtual experience a genuine sense of connectedness? It's one thing to be able to view a service online, but are you really connected to that community?" he says. "You're missing out on the fellowship, you're missing out on the sense that you're not alone in this and there are other people on the journey." It will take more time to assess how moving online affects a church's community and financial health, he concludes.

What both Misiaszek and Elliot think might work for congregations that are no longer able to afford their buildings is a move to smaller gatherings in parishioners' homes. These gatherings might stand alone or be satellite groups with a physical church building at the heart of the community. They might be led by clergy or laypeople, or a travelling clergy member could support several congregations.

Continued on p. 11

SACRED CIRCLE ▶

Healing and unity to be top priorities: Harper

Continued from p. 1

Nicholls, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, said she looked forward to working with Harper.

“Archbishop-elect Chris Harper brings years of experience in ministry among and with Indigenous Anglicans, urban and on reserve,” she said. “He has a passion for walking together with respect that will be essential as the Sacred Circle within the Anglican Church of Canada establishes its way forward.”

In the same news release, ACIP co-chair Caroline Chum said, “Gitchi-Meegwetch (great thanks) to everyone for their prayers and blessings during the selection process for our presiding elder. We look to you now to continue your support for Indigenous Ministries and our National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop Chris, as we journey to our Sacred Circle 2023. We are truly blessed. Thanks be to God.”

Canon Murray Still, ACIP’s other co-chair, said the council was unanimous in choosing Harper.

“He is a pastoral man with vision and



▲ Archbishop-elect Chris Harper has a “passion for walking together with respect,” said Archbishop Linda Nicholls.

PHOTO: ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF SASKATOON

administrative skill. He also preaches well and knows the Christian and traditional spirituality. Walking in two worlds, Bishop Chris can gently bridge the two traditions at a time this is desperately needed,” Still said. The Indigenous House of Bishops Leadership Circle of which Harper was a part, Still added, had played a large part in developing the Indigenous church’s two

founding documents, the Covenant and Our Way of Life.

Harper told the *Anglican Journal* he was “incredibly honoured” by his selection as national Indigenous archbishop. He identified healing and unity as priorities— healing “the legacy that as Indigenous people we’ve lived with,” acknowledging and honouring residential school survivors and understanding that all are one in Christ.

The son of a residential school survivor, Harper is Plains Cree and worked as an emergency medical technician before earning his certificate of Indigenous Anglican theology from James Settee College in Prince Albert, Sask. He received his master’s of divinity degree from Wycliffe College in 2005 and was priested the same year. In 2016 Harper was appointed as Indigenous native priest for the diocese of Toronto, a role he held until his election as bishop of Saskatoon in 2018. He has served on numerous committees of the church including the Council of General Synod, and is a member of Sacred Circle. ■

INTENTIONAL LIFE ▶

Solitary religion offers ‘fruitful’ way of living alone

Sean Frankling
STAFF WRITER

Despite the suffering caused by the enforced solitude many people have had to endure since March 2020, for at least some it seems to have spurred spiritual growth.

During the pandemic lockdowns of the past two years, people around the world got a sample of what it might be like to live a more contemplative, slower paced life, says the Rev. David Brinton, general secretary of the Conference of Anglican Religious Orders in the Americas. And while those lockdowns also caused a lot of stress and loneliness, they also resulted for some in a lifestyle similar to that of people who take religious vows.

“It will be interesting to see how people’s spiritual lives were changed by the pandemic,” says Brinton. “Solitude became something that was much more a part of many of our lives whether we wanted it to be or not. And I think some people who



PHOTO: SIXTEEN-MILES-OUT/UNSPLASH

were already predisposed to silence and solitude didn’t find it all that hard.”

For Karen Ann McKinna, solitude has been a spiritual path for some time. In 1996 she responded to what she refers to as a persistent, gentle call from God and took vows before her diocesan bishop to live as a solitary religious person.

McKinna’s vows include celibacy,

obedience and simplicity of life. They also require her to remain unmarried and limit her social interaction mainly to the time she spends working as a tutor and volunteering. (She volunteers at a retreat centre and an organization that supports people with intellectual disabilities in her community.) McKinna spends most of her time in prayer and contemplation.

“Apart [from] the presence of technology I do not expect there would be much difference in how I live this out compared with a Christian of earlier times,” she says.

Because it involves taking vows and living by a set of guidelines designed to encourage a slow, prayerful life, the calling is somewhat like living in a religious order, she says, with some key differences. “I realized I was not called into religious community but that I was called to something similar. Friends have called me a ‘sort of a nun.’”

Indeed, Brinton adds, the celibate life has a firm basis in Scripture, which
Continued on p. 14

STATE OF THE CHURCH ▶

Restructuring with purpose: options for a shrinking church

Continued from p. 1

“Maybe we have 12 people meeting around a kitchen table and making a spaghetti dinner on a Saturday night and doing a Eucharist afterward,” says Misiaszek, comparing this type of small intimate gathering to the early days of the church in Rome, when Christians met in secret in the catacombs under the city. In those days, he says, Christian community thrived even without physical churches.

“What we do know about the church in the catacombs is ... how people gathered and shared a meal and they had all things in common—how they recognized the giftedness of each one, and everybody contributed. There was this great sense of hospitality and welcome.”

Canon (lay) Ian Alexander, a member of General Synod’s Strategic Planning Working Group, says the group’s plan could help Anglican parishes, dioceses and the national church maintain a sense of purpose as they go through the difficult process of restructuring.



▲ “To what extent is a virtual experience a genuine sense of connectedness?” Misiaszek asks. “It’s one thing to be able to view a service online, but are you really connected to that community?”

PHOTO: RIMMA DIKIKH

“Inevitably, at some point through that process they go ‘Why are we doing this?’” he says. When he hears that question, he offers the strategic plan’s five “transformational aspirations” as a guide. They’re a set of mission statements that place the goal of inviting and deepening life in Christ at the centre of a circle of priorities that include racial justice, cooperation with the Indigenous church, climate justice and interfaith relations, he says. One goal of the aspirations is to

provide parishes and dioceses with a way to evaluate whether their reorganized structures are continuing to serve the core mission of the church.

“The central story of our church is a story of death and resurrection,” he says. “What the aspirations provide is that even if there have to be certain forms of dying or shrinking, there can be new life and new birth and new growth on the other side.”

The key lesson emerging from the pandemic’s uncertainty, says Elliot, is that identifying opportunities for change, and getting started on them, should be a top priority for the church. Otherwise, the only result from this turbulent time will have been a loss of members.

“My concern is that we try to go back to how it was before COVID, which will put us back to the place where we were in that steady decline—but we will have taken significant steps down the ladder because of those people we have lost during COVID,” he says. ■

FAITH AND TECHNOLOGY

“I see [online worship] not as a hindrance, but a great chance and opportunity.”

—The Rev. Michael Coren

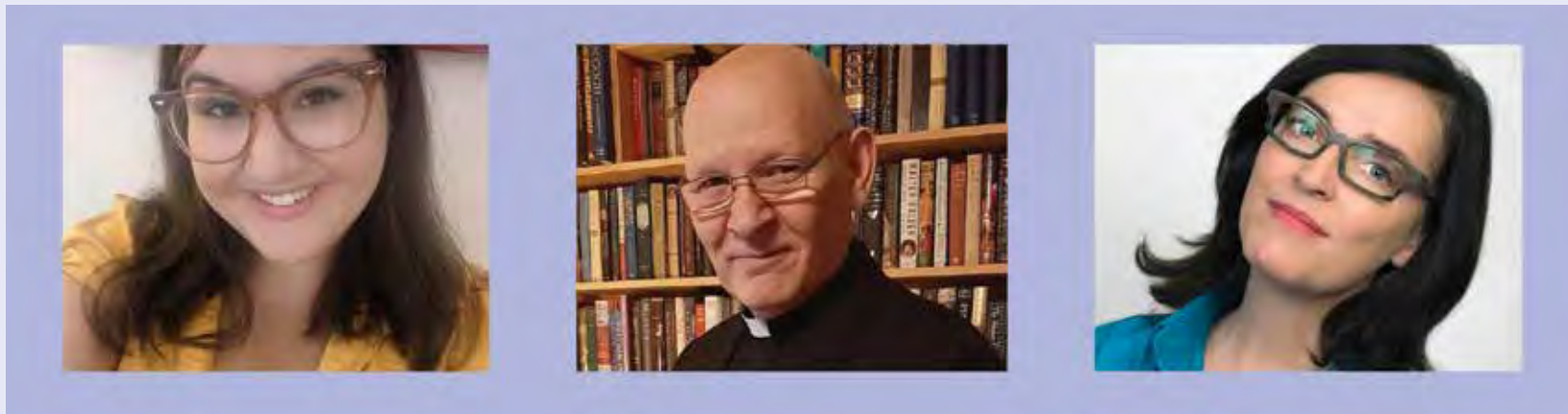


PHOTO: WWW.STBENEDICTSTABLE.CA

Speaking at Babel 2.0, an online conference presented by Winnipeg liturgical community st. benedict's table, were (l-r): Katherine G. Schmidt, associate professor and chair of theology and religious studies at Molloy University in New York; the Rev. Michael Coren, assistant curate of the parish of St. Christopher and priest-in-charge at St. Elizabeth's, Burlington, Ont.; and Nora Young, host and creator of the CBC radio show Spark.

Conference sees potential for faith to grow online

Matthew Puddister
STAFF WRITER

A columnist, author and Anglican priest says he sees great potential for faith to grow in online spaces, even as he acknowledges obstacles churches face in an increasingly secular society.

“One of the main problems with church for the longest time ... is that although the door may be unlocked, it seems locked” to many, the Rev. Michael Coren, an Ontario priest and regular columnist with the *Toronto Star*, said in a talk at Babel 2.0, a Nov. 5 conference built

around the theme “Can Faith Survive Online?” He pointed to recent data from Statistics Canada that show one-third of Canadians have no religious affiliation. Christianity has seen the biggest decline; 53 per cent identified as Christian in the 2021 census, down from 77 per cent in 2001.

But during the pandemic, Coren said, he had seen people who would never attend church in person show up for worship on Zoom or similar platforms. In online worship, Coren saw a great opportunity for ministry, one he believed churches have not taken full advantage of.

“Online worship is not a panacea ... but it is a possibility,” he said. “As we’ve been forced by this darkness to adopt a new way of conducting worship and community, out of that darkness I believe something light can be produced.”

“I’ve seen it happen several times during the peak and height of the pandemic—less so now I admit,” he added. “There were people who felt alone and they were frightened. They had a certain spiritual feeling and maybe their parents had been churchgoers. They would never go into a church building. But they joined us on

Continued on p. 13

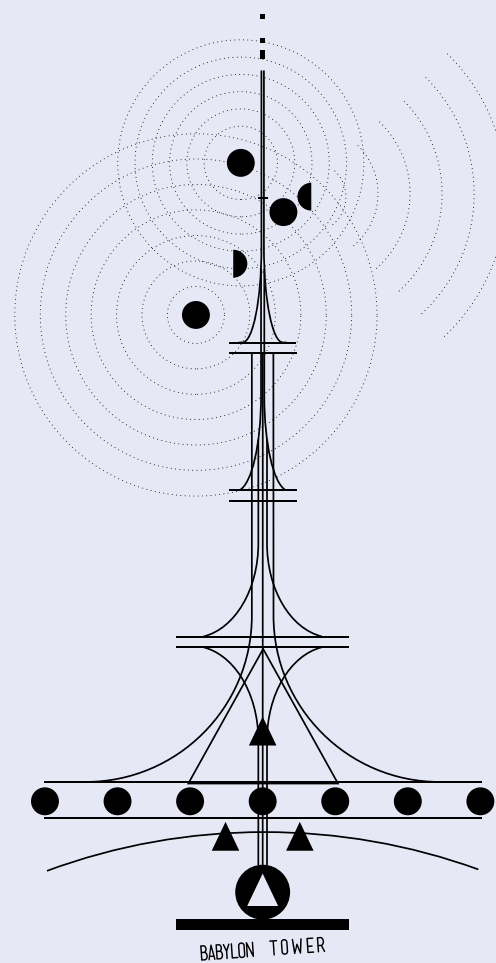


IMAGE: TOWER OF BABEL BY VONZUR

Continued from p. 12

Zoom, and they would chat to me in the chatroom... and say, ‘Could we meet? Could you recommend a book? Could you answer this question for me?’ That’s pretty good evangelism.”

“If our aim is to bring more people into the kingdom,” Coren said, “to have more people understanding the real authentic teaching of the rebel Jesus, I see [online worship] not as a hindrance, but a great chance and opportunity.”

Coren’s 2021 book, *The Rebel Christ*, argues for an understanding of Jesus as a social radical.

Presented by the Winnipeg-based Anglican liturgical community saint benedict’s table with support from the Colledgeville Institute, Babel 2.0 took place at Canadian Mennonite University and was also livestreamed. Coren, who serves as assistant curate of the parish of St. Christopher and priest-in-charge at St. Elizabeth’s, Burlington, Ont., was one of three main speakers. Others included Katherine Schmidt, associate professor and chair of theology and religious studies at Molloy University in New York; and Nora Young, host and creator of the CBC radio show *Spark*, which focuses on technology and culture.

Schmidt, whose 2020 book *Virtual Communion* examined the “theology of

the internet” from a Roman Catholic perspective, also said she saw in the internet possibilities for the church to reach more people.

“Online space creates new space for evangelization,” she said. Many marginalized groups or those who have fallen out of church life, she said, are able to participate online in ways they had not before. “New technologies allow for innovation and creativity,” she added, pointing to podcasts as an example. Describing herself as a “digital optimist”, Schmidt called for digital literacy training in all forms of ministry.

Schmidt also, however, said her colleagues expressed various anxieties about worship in online spaces. These include the anonymity that allows people to spew vitriol and hate; a “crisis of authority” in which questioning expertise can pass into spreading misinformation; a growing gap between those with internet access and those without; digital surveillance by corporations and government; and a general feeling of “disembodiment” in online interactions.

Ecclesiology, the understanding of church, is what lies behind many such anxieties, Schmidt said. The Christian faith is centred on the physical embodiment of God in Jesus.

Sacramentality itself has a physical dimension, such as in the Eucharist. As a result, Schmidt said, Christians often express concern about whether online church is “really” church.

Young said digital tools had provided a “lifeline” for people to maintain connections during the pandemic, along with other benefits such as lower carbon footprints from reduced travel.

The shift to online formats, Young said, had also revealed limitations to platforms such as Zoom. She recalled an interview on *Spark* with Deb Roy, director of the MIT Centre for Constructive Communication: “Consider, he said, that you can’t even tell if someone is looking at you or if they’re looking at another person, or even if they’ve opened at another tab and they’re looking at Instagram.”

“That’s a pretty basic failure in digital communication,” Young said. Still, as technologies continue to improve and hybrid forms of gathering become more common, she said, spiritual people should continue to explore the potential of digital spaces for connection, community and contemplation.

Babel 2.0 sessions are available in video and podcast formats at stbenedictstable.ca.



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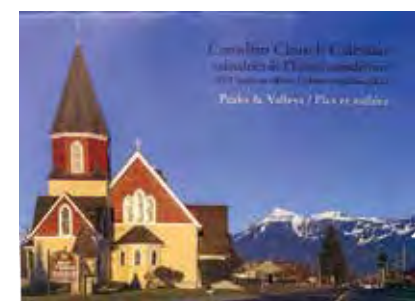
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A liturgically-organized 2023 awaits



2023 Canadian Church Calendar

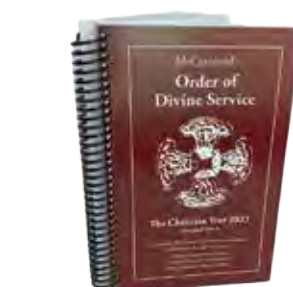
With 12 full-sized and 12 thumbnail-sized colour photos of Canadian Anglican churches that reflect the calendar’s theme of “Peaks & Valleys.” Details include notes on liturgical colours, saints’ days, important dates, previous and next month calendars on each page spread and more.

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The 2023 Canadian Church desk and pocket diaries

feature each week of the year in a double-page spread format. They include Sunday citations, feasts and holy days from the Revised Common Lectionary; adopted by the Anglican Church of Canada. The Church’s liturgical colours are also provided for reference. An ecumenical resource, the desk diary also notes the festivals and commemorations (and their corresponding liturgical colours) for Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. The desk diary is wire-bound and lays flat or folds back to provide versatility. The pocket diary contains a bookmark ribbon to hold places as you plan.



2023 McCausland’s Order of Divine Service

Includes all the basic information for planning services and selecting readings and collects for every day of the church year. Full citations for the Sunday lectionaries of the RCL and BCP daily eucharistic readings of the RCL and BCP, and daily office citations from the BAS and BCP. Hymns for each Sunday and major feasts are selected from Common Praise and the 1938 and 1971 Hymnals.

“What are these two Padres so happy about?”

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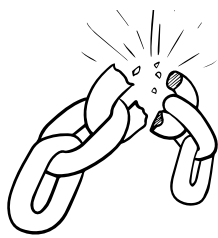
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BOOK

Apostolic Succession: An Experiment that Failed by David W. T. Brattston Resource Publications, an imprint of Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2020.



This book is the first in generations to examine writers in the early church in order to ascertain the original Christian intent as to how early Christian clergy were authorized, and the methods of confirming them in church office. This book demonstrates what was meant by the first writers who advocated apostolic succession and how church authority would be transmitted. Besides writings in the first to third centuries AD, this book draws on later material to query the assertions made today for bishops claiming apostolic succession.

early and modern Christianity have been published internationally by a wide variety of denominations, including Anglican newspapers in Canada.

May be ordered on the publisher's website here: <https://wipfandstock.com/9781725264571/apostolic-succession/>

or on Amazon.com here: <https://www.amazon.com/Apostolic-Succession-Experiment-that-Failed/dp/1725264579>

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The author resides in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia. His fourteen books and over four hundred articles on

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Soli Deo Gloria

Rekha Menon takes over as pensions director

Matthew Puddister
STAFF WRITER

A 10-year veteran of the Anglican Pension Office Corporation has been named its new leader.

Rekha Menon, who came to the pensions office a decade ago and was most recently its deputy director and compliance officer, has been named pensions director, effective Jan. 1. Speaking to the *Journal* in November 2022, Menon said she was excited to take on her new job, succeeding Judy Robinson, who was to retire at the end of 2022 after 19 years in the role.

She said her experience with the office had given her a very good understanding of the pensions and benefits it oversees. "I also take pride in the goodwill that I have built with participating employers across Canada and with the national office of the Anglican Church of Canada, the plan members and our internal staff," she said.

Menon said the General Synod Pension Plan, which has roughly \$1 billion in assets under management, was in a "very healthy" position. She pointed to Council of General Synod's approval in March of a nine per cent increase in pensions accrued to the end of 2021, which took effect July 1, 2022.

Born and raised in Kerala, India, Menon has worked as a company secretary in the pharmaceutical and automobile sectors as well as the pension industry and has a bachelor's degree in commerce. She



PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

Menon had been deputy director and compliance officer at the pension office.

worked in India and the United States before joining the Anglican Church of Canada's pension office, her first job in Canada.

"I feel like I know the culture of this organization and I plan on making it even more robust and nurturing, motivating and inclusive" as pensions director, Menon said.

General Secretary Alan Perry said Menon's selection as director followed an extensive search for the right candidate.

"In her time as compliance officer and, more recently, deputy director, Rekha has always been competent, efficient and unfailingly cheerful," Perry said. "I look forward to her leadership of the pension office in the years ahead." ■

UPCOMING EVENT

DREAMWORK CANADA is an ecumenical group (Anglican, Mennonite, United Churches) that tries to reconnect, develop and help carry on the vital Judeo-Christian dreamwork tradition which has functioned in the Church from the time of the Old Testament. We are offering two opportunities via Zoom to explore our dreams as one of the ways God speaks to us. Each session will enable participants to explore dreams from different approaches within a Christian context using the concepts of Carl Jung.

Workshop Opportunities

Tuesday, February 21, 2023 6:30 PM—8:30 PM EST
Movement, Body and Faith in Dreams
Led by Alexandra Caverly-Lowery, MDiv, ThM.

An opportunity to explore, through gentle body movement and active imagination, ways to engage with the images, voices and physically-felt experiences that arrive in our dreams. Individually and together, we participate in God's Dream for an Earth Community living in wholeness and right relationship. In this session, ideas for ongoing practices will be provided.

Tuesday, February 28, 2023 6:30PM—8:30 PM ET
Exploring Dreams Through Six Magic Questions
Led by Rev. Greg Little

The participants will be introduced to the process for using the "six magic questions" approach to exploring dreams. This approach can unlock the meaning of dream images and the meaning of their dreams. The participants will have opportunities to work with other participants in applying the method to dreams in a small group setting.

Tickets and Information dreamworkcanada.squarespace.com/

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'A journey of learning and movement'

Continued from p. 11 presents it as a way of connecting with the Christian faith and setting oneself apart from a secular world. St. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians that a unique relationship with God is possible for those who leave open the space in their life that might otherwise be occupied by the obligations of marriage.

It can be a striking choice to make in the 21st century, Brinton says, when the idea of sexual restraint is treated with skepticism and sometimes animosity.

When someone feels called to take up the single consecrated life, they seek out a spiritual advisor and approach their diocesan bishop for evaluation and approval, which may include a psychological evaluation to ensure they are taking up the calling for appropriate reasons and are suited to carry it out healthily. They then begin by taking a set of temporary annual vows, committing to the life for a year at a time until, if and when they and their advisors agree they are ready, they undertake the life as a lifelong commitment. To be eligible, applicants must be single, widowed or divorced and at least 30 years old.

Brinton says it's important to

“There are more people living this way of life than we are aware of.”

—The Rev. David Brinton

note, however, that this process only applies to those few who have taken formal vows.

"There are more people living this way of life than we are aware of because not everybody chooses to make personal vows to the bishop," he says.

Some people may be living single, prayerful lives that they are quite committed to. But for others, formal vows can be an important way to contextualize their experience. "There are some people who find themselves single, and making a vow helps them to make sense of their single state. [It] helps them to turn that singleness into something of benefit to the Kingdom," Brinton says. "The vow helps to make your singleness fruitful"

For her part, McKinna says she thinks there may be more people called to the consecrated single life. While she says the idea of stepping into the spotlight to draw attention to her own life is at odds with the

humility of her calling, she believes it is important to get the message out that there is meaning to be found in this unique way of life.

"This is a journey of learning and movement, not stagnant nor still! There is always more to come, more insight, more joy, more peace, more delight. These characteristics of God's Grace are there for us all. In my case I seem to experience them in this life of solitude and silence," she says.

Brinton agrees she's on to something in looking for a way to spread the word while respecting the quiet of the calling.

"The consecrated life is like a mustard seed; it's meant to be hidden," he says, referring to a parable in which Jesus describes the kingdom of God as a tiny seed that must be buried before it can grow. "Its essence in some ways is being small and anonymous."

Now, however, may be a good time to share it with people who are looking for ways to expand their spiritual lives, he adds. "There's no question that the enforced solitude of the pandemic has provided an opportunity for some people to examine the benefits of not being quite so frantic in the way we live." ■

february BIBLE READINGS

DAY	READING	DAY	READING	DAY	READING	DAY	READING
<input type="checkbox"/> 01	Psalm 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 09	Acts 10:1-21	<input type="checkbox"/> 17	Isaiah 1:1-17	<input type="checkbox"/> 25	Matthew 10:16-31
<input type="checkbox"/> 02	Psalm 147	<input type="checkbox"/> 10	Acts 10:22-43	<input type="checkbox"/> 18	Matthew 16:13-20	<input type="checkbox"/> 26	Micah 6
<input type="checkbox"/> 03	Psalm 72	<input type="checkbox"/> 11	Matthew 2:13-23	<input type="checkbox"/> 19	1 Timothy 1:1-17	<input type="checkbox"/> 27	Psalm 15
<input type="checkbox"/> 04	Matthew 1:1-17	<input type="checkbox"/> 12	Matthew 3:1-12	<input type="checkbox"/> 20	1 Timothy 1:18-2:7	<input type="checkbox"/> 28	1 Corinthians 1:18-31
<input type="checkbox"/> 05	Matthew 1:18-25	<input type="checkbox"/> 13	Psalm 40	<input type="checkbox"/> 21	1 Corinthians 1:10-17	<input type="checkbox"/> 29	Matthew 5:1-12
<input type="checkbox"/> 06	Matthew 2:1-12	<input type="checkbox"/> 14	1 Corinthians 1:1-9	<input type="checkbox"/> 22	Matthew 4:12-25	<input type="checkbox"/> 30	Isaiah 58
<input type="checkbox"/> 07	Isaiah 60:1-6	<input type="checkbox"/> 15	Amos 5:1-13	<input type="checkbox"/> 23	Isaiah 8:11-9:7	<input type="checkbox"/> 31	Psalm 112
<input type="checkbox"/> 08	Psalm 29	<input type="checkbox"/> 16	Amos 5:14-27	<input type="checkbox"/> 24	Acts 26:9-32		

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THORNELOE UNIVERSITY is an innovative Anglican college in Sudbury, Ontario offering creative programs in Theology. Largely through distance education, the School of Theology offers courses at the certificate and diploma levels, as well as a Bachelor of Theology. Thorneloe University has 58 single rooms in its community focused residence, which is open to students at Laurentian. For more information, please contact the President of Thorneloe University at: president@thorneloe.ca Website: www.thorneloe.ca

TRINITY COLLEGE Shaped by the generous breadth of the Anglican tradition, Trinity prepares Christian leaders of varied backgrounds to participate in God's mission to the world. The college offers professional and graduate level programs focused on preparing students to engage with the needs of contemporary society and to contribute to the future of God's church. The Faculty of Divinity enjoys particular expertise in historical and contemporary forms of liturgy, church history, contemporary ethics and theology, Anglican and Eastern Orthodox studies, philosophy of religion, and congregational studies. In ecumenical collaboration within the Toronto School of Theology and in federation with the University of Toronto, the Faculty of Divinity offers the following degree programs: MDiv, MTS, MA, ThM, DMin and PhD. Short-course Certificate programs are available, with concentrations that include Anglican Studies, Orthodox Studies, and Diaconal Ministry. For more information please contact: Faculty of Divinity, Trinity College, 6 Hoskin Avenue, Toronto ON M5S 1H8 (416) 978-2133 divinity@trinity.utoronto.ca www.trinity.utoronto.ca/study-theology

VANCOUVER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY is called to educate and form thoughtful, engaged and generous disciples of Jesus Christ for service to the church and the world in the 21st century. A theological education at VST combines the love of scholarship, courage to take up the issues of our time and readiness to collaborate with our local and global neighbours for the good of God's world. VST strives to cultivate a community where hospitality, generosity and imagination infuse our common life. Our graduates are thoughtful people, reflective about how to interact with the large challenges of our time on the basis of the deep resource of faith. They don't rush to thin relevance, but linger with scripture, tradition and scholarship to expand our common imaginative repertoire. Our students learn together with and from our Indigenous partners and those of other faith traditions. To learn more and to register for your course of study at VST, please contact Samuel Andri at sandri@vst.edu

WYCLIFFE COLLEGE, at the University of Toronto is an evangelical Anglican community of learning within the Toronto School of Theology offering both masters level and advanced degree programs. Our programs are designed to challenge, encourage, and equip students from many denominations to live out their faith and provide leadership as either ordained or lay leaders in their church and wider communities. Programs of special interest to the Anglican community include the Master of Divinity (MDIV) and the Master of Theological Studies in Development (MTSD). The flexibility of part time study and online learning in the masters programs provides accessibility. Financial support in all programs is available. Visit us at www.wycliffecollege.ca or telephone (416) 946-3535 for further information.



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Photo: Archbishop Linda Nicholls was chosen by her fellow primates in the Americas region to serve on the Anglican Communion's Primates' Standing Committee. Credit: Neil Turner for The Lambeth Conference

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