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PHOTO: KAT SMITH

Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Winnipeg, needs \$7 million in repairs to avoid structural collapse. The vestry has been exploring options for worship elsewhere in case safety problems arise.

'A constant trickle ... until there's little or nothing left'

Massive loss of cultural wealth feared as cash-strapped churches struggle to preserve buildings



▲ **Peter Coffman**
PHOTO: DIANE LAUNDY

Matthew Puddister
STAFF WRITER

The destruction by fire of St. Anne's Anglican Church in Toronto last June underscores risks faced by aging churches across Canada, an architectural historian says—and the country could face significant loss of cultural heritage in the years to come.

Peter Coffman, a Carleton University art and architectural history professor who specializes in Canadian Gothic Revival buildings, says many churches are in danger of being destroyed or collapsing. As their congregations shrink, so does the money to pay for their maintenance and preservation.

Canada's loss of its historic churches is likely to be a protracted process, he says.

"I doubt there's going to be a wave," Coffman says. The danger, he says, is that it will be "more of a constant

trickle—drip, drip, drip—until there's little or nothing left."

For Coffman, the loss of St. Anne's is instructive. He describes the unique Byzantine Revival church, which housed the only known religious artwork by members of the Group of Seven, as "in a class of its own in terms of its heritage importance." Yet, he adds, "they still were scrounging year after year to raise enough money to patch the roof."

A May 1998 report on CBC's *The National* said the congregation at St. Anne's was trying to raise \$1 million to fix a leaky roof. Another report that summer by *The Globe and Mail* estimated the cost of repairs at \$2.25 million, though the latter figure included costs to repair the brick exterior of the church.

Even before the fire, Coffman says,

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Northern bishops speak out against primate's commission

Council of the North chair blasts as 'offensive' paper drafted by panel with no Indigenous members



Sean Frankling
STAFF WRITER

Two bishops in the Council of the North, a grouping of northern dioceses that get financial support from the national church, have raised concerns about the process by which a primatial commission has approached the council's future.

Bishop Lesley Wheeler-Dame of the diocese of Yukon is a member of the Council of the North and Bishop David Lehmann of the diocese of Caledonia is its chair. They're unhappy that, among other things, the primate's commission, officially titled Reimagining the Church: Proclaiming the Gospel in the 21st Century, is attempting to start conversations about structures and financing that affect Indigenous Anglicans without any Indigenous members on its roster—though Archbishop Linda Nicholls, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada as this issue headed to press and founder of the commission, says Indigenous leaders were consulted in the selection of its members and it will continue to seek guidance from Indigenous leaders as its work proceeds.

At issue is the first of a slate of seven statements or "hypotheses" the

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▲ **Bishop Lesley Wheeler-Dame (top) and Bishop David Lehmann (bottom)**

PHOTOS: CONTRIBUTED



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ENDANGERED LEGACY: CHURCHES AT RISK ▶



PHOTO: PATRICK MORRELL/CBC NEWS

An aerial view shows the degree of destruction at St. Anne's Anglican Church in Toronto after it was ravaged by fire June 9.

Churches struggle to pay for sprinklers, insurance

Continued from p. 1

the future of St. Anne's was far from secure. More than 25 years ago, he visited the church to do research and spoke to then-rector the Rev. Peter Orme.

Orme, he recalls, "was pointing out to me in various spots where there was water damage and water coming in. It was affecting the ceiling. They've been trying in a sort of patchwork, piecemeal way to fix that for two or three decades."

Modern sprinkler systems, Coffman says, have helped reduce the threat of fires—but cash-strapped churches often cannot afford them. In a *Toronto Star* article published after the fire at St. Anne's, rector the Rev. Don Beyers said the church had no

sprinkler system. A traditional one, he said, would have put "too much pressure" on the historic structure.

"It's not an easy thing to retrofit a sprinkler system into a building like that," Coffman says. "You've got to add a lot of plumbing and it's going to cost some money. It might require some structural reinforcement because plumbing and water are heavy. So it's a big investment."

An official investigation into the fire at St. Anne's was still underway as this article was being written, though police have said the blaze is not considered suspicious.

Other churches face collapse due to long-term structural damage. The 140-year-old Holy Trinity Anglican Church in Winnipeg needs \$7 million in repairs and faces possible demolition. The vestry has been exploring options for alternative worship locations, including nearby St. John's College, in case of an emergency arising from structural and safety issues.

Structural deterioration is not the only fire risk. On July 24, a wildfire burned the historic St. Mary and St. George Anglican Church in Jasper, Alta. to the ground.

The Anglican Foundation of Canada often provides grants for church repairs and maintenance. But it requires properties to have fire insurance in place beforehand as a security measure—and insuring church buildings, foundation executive director Scott Brubacher says, has become much more expensive in recent years after a wave of church fires and the continuing threat of wildfires.

Challenges preserving churches are by no means confined to the Anglican Church of Canada. Coffman, who spent two years at Dalhousie University on a research fellowship looking at conditions of historic churches in Nova Scotia, says he has recently seen important Roman Catholic churches in the province up for sale with "astonishingly small" asking prices—but little buyer interest.

"There are no nibbles because nobody knows what to do with them," he says.

For Coffman, the likelihood that a society will preserve a historic building is tied to its perceived usefulness.

"If a building isn't needed, if a building has literally no use... it's either just going to fall apart or it's going to catch fire or it's just going to be demolished," Coffman says.

Conversely, he adds, the first task in preserving a church building is to find a use for it—whether religious, secular, or both. It also means being selective, since it is likely not feasible to preserve every historic building, Coffman says.

Some Anglican churches have successfully preserved their buildings as purely religious spaces. John Ross, trustee for overseeing building projects at Christ Church Cathedral in Vancouver, says the 129-year-old church has undergone several major renovations in the last 15 years.

In 2014-2015, Christ Church Cathedral launched a successful fundraising campaign to replace its roof and add a new bell tower. Among those who donated was the B.C. government, which gave \$1 million for the campaign. The cathedral also installed a new sprinkler system and upgraded the structure to protect against earthquakes.

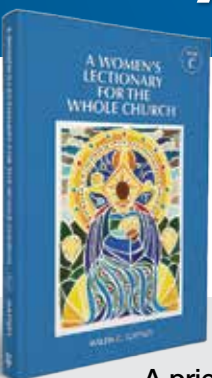
"We've been very fortunate that we consider ourselves Vancouver's downtown church, and a lot of people come by and support the building just because they like it," Ross says. "They appreciate it. They might come in and sit for a while or attend a service the odd time. But I think a lot of people who work downtown have provided support, both individuals and corporations... We've had significant support from the general public in addition to our own congregation, so we've been very fortunate that way."

A more secular use was found for St. Philip's Anglican Church in Winnipeg, put up for sale in 2021. CTV News reported in 2023 that when Stephen Borys, director and CEO of the Winnipeg Art Gallery-Qaumajuq, heard rumours St. Philip's would be bought and torn down, he and his wife bought the church, restored it and maintained its facades while creating six rental apartments inside.

Coffman sees the interest of community groups in Winnipeg as potentially indicating a shift in public attitudes on the need to preserve historic buildings.

"The trajectory is, I think, headed in the right direction," Coffman says. "That trajectory is not steep enough and was too slow to be of help to St. Anne's in the end. But I think there is some hope in that respect—that there's a growing critical mass of people who realize that we have something special and of value." ■

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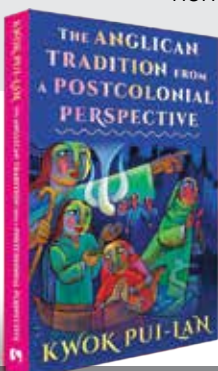
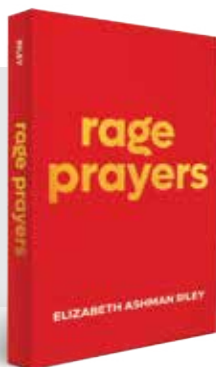
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Commission questions 'colonial' CoN structures

“ We need to have the conversation now so that we can think of creative and sustainable solutions ... People have been avoiding this question for years.

—Archdeacon Monique Stone

Continued from p. 1

commission released this summer, designed to spark discussion on how to solve the church's structural challenges: “It is time to dismantle the colonial foundations of the Council of the North to fully ‘Embrace mutual interdependence with the Indigenous church.’”

Archdeacon Monique Stone, chair of the commission, says this statement is in turn aimed at pushing the church to consider three important questions:

- Is the work of the Council of the North best supported and funded by General Synod or should the church consider alternative arrangements such as funding it directly through the ecclesiastical provinces?
- Are the governing structures of the Council of the North best suited to serve the needs of Anglicans and Indigenous people in Northern Canada given its origins in colonial missionary work?
- How will the answers to the first two questions fit into the emerging format of the Indigenous Anglican church?

The council was formed in the 1970s with a seven-point mandate, including developing a “strategy of mission in the North” and proposing to General Synod the amount of money needed each year by each of its dioceses. But other dioceses across the country have had to allocate more of their resources in recent years to supporting parishes struggling with falling donations or rising maintenance costs, says Stone. This makes it harder for these dioceses to give to General Synod.

“Behind the Hypotheses,” a supplementary document released in early September, points out that funding the Council of the North is the largest item on General Synod's annual budget and asks, “Does this expense accomplish the work needed now to strengthen the proclamation of the gospel?”

While many of the church's Indigenous ministries are in the North, the document says, “the Council of the North's membership is comprised of a majority of non-Indigenous bishops ... In a colonial pattern, the bishops make financial decisions regarding the disbursement of funds collected nationally to fund ministries in Northern regions of Canada.”

Stone emphasizes that this and the other hypotheses are intentionally phrased to be provocative and spark debate. The way the national church's finances are headed right now, she says, the current model will become unsustainable unless the church addresses these questions now.

“We need to have the conversation now so that we can think of creative and sustainable solutions,” she says. “The primate's commission's role in putting this hypothesis together is to draw out the fact that people have been avoiding this question for years.” Heated debate, controversy and even irritation with the commission itself were reactions to the hypothesis that she was prepared for and expecting to see, she adds.

Bishop Isaiah Larry Beardy is suffragan bishop for the Northern Manitoba Area Mission in the Indigenous Spiritual Ministry of Mishamikoweesh, which receives funding through the Council of the North. He says the funding from Southern Canada has never been enough to support his ministry area's needs. The vast majority of clergy in the North are



▲ Children walk their bicycles toward St. Matthew's Church, Kingfisher Lake First Nation, Ont. in the Indigenous Spiritual Ministry of Mishamikoweesh, a Council of the North diocese.

PHOTO: ANGLICAN VIDEO

“ It's a financial matter that we're trying to cloak in other terms.

—Bishop David Lehmann

non-stipendiary, he points out, meaning they receive no salary for their work. The churches he is responsible for, he says, need \$2 million for upkeep and infrastructure alone. But rather than worry about funding from the South, he says, Indigenous ministries in the North should look for opportunities to create revenue so they can stand on their own. For example, he suggests, the church could try starting a business to bottle fresh water from Canada's North, sell it and use the proceeds to fund ministry.

Wheeler-Dame and Lehmann take a different view of the first hypothesis. Both told the *Journal* they questioned the commission's ability to comment on matters affecting the church in Northern Canada since most of its members are from more urbanized dioceses in Southern Canada. Wheeler-Dame says she's profoundly dissatisfied with the lack of Northern Indigenous Anglicans on the commission.

“We are settler people making decisions or making assumptions and recommendations for things we know nothing about. I would not go into one of my [diocese's] First Nations communities and tell them how they should do things ... and yet this is exactly what's happening through these hypotheses because it comes across as a decision. ‘Dear, we'll fix this for you.’ It's a colonial attitude.”

In an email to the *Journal*, Nicholls said the commission's members were selected with the help of a group of officers of General Synod, including an Indigenous member, and of the House of Bishops, including both Indigenous and non-Indigenous bishops. Leadership discussed the importance of consulting Indigenous leaders with the national Indigenous archbishop, she said, “while recognizing that at the time of formation of the commission itself, the Indigenous leadership was focused fully on development of the Sacred Circle.

“Though the commission does not have an Indigenous member it is committed to consultation with Indigenous leaders in its work,” she added.

Lehmann, meanwhile, says he's concerned that the hypothesis will only lead to conversations about cutting more funding to the council, this time dressing

the debate in language of the palatable social justice language of the moment.

“Having this as the first of the hypotheses I find particularly offensive, actually. It's a financial matter that we're trying to cloak in other terms,” he says.

General Synod's annual grant to the council, which held steady at \$2.15 million from 2016 to 2023, was reduced to \$2.05 million in 2024, and the commission's “Beyond the Hypotheses” document alludes to “planned modest reductions over the coming years.”

Meanwhile, the relationship of the Northern dioceses with the emerging Indigenous church is a source of concern in both of their dioceses, the bishops say.

National Indigenous Archbishop Chris Harper says he's glad to see the hypothesis use the language of “mutual interdependence” between the Anglican Church of Canada and its Indigenous-led counterpart. While he is sensitive to the increasing financial strain on General Synod, he says he also agrees with the Council of the North members that adding Indigenous voices to the commission now would be a good step to ensure they have the chance to steer the process toward a fair outcome. He can see advantages to a provincial model of funding for the North, including deeper involvement from more voices at the provincial and metropolitan level instead of one national voice. But at the same time, many voices often disagree, he says, meaning the advantage of the national model is organizational unity.

By contrast, Beardy says a robust consultation process at the grassroots level is more important than having an Indigenous member on the commission. He's skeptical that having an Indigenous member would guarantee any serious consideration of their perspective.

“I've been a token before,” he says.

The *Journal* sought comment from several other Indigenous leaders in the church but some declined comment and others had not replied as of press time.

The commission, which has been meeting since the fall of 2023, is discussing the hypotheses with Anglicans across the country and plans to present the results of these discussions with General Synod next June. ■

BRIDGES ▶



A daunting new role—and a welcoming church

By Anne Germond

IN THIS SEASON of giving thanks, I write my first words to you in my new role as your acting primate with heartfelt gratitude for the gift the Anglican Church of Canada has been to me for close to 40 years—and with profound thanks for the dedication, Christ-centred leadership and commitment of our 14th primate, Archbishop Linda Nicholls, who recently retired.

I arrived in Canada a stranger and a foreigner without much hope of finding work in my occupation as a teacher. Aside from the love of family and friends, the one certainty in my new homeland was my faith and the familiarity of the liturgy of the Anglican church. When I stepped (with some trepidation) into St. Thomas the Apostle in Ottawa on a bitterly cold January day in 1987, I realized my fears were unfounded. I experienced an immediate sense of belonging through the Eucharist and in the warmth of the welcome offered—a parishioner even helped us furnish our tiny apartment. I knew I had come home and that all would be well.

The journey from then until now has not always been straight or easy. There have been mountaintop moments, days of desert wanderings and a good chunk of



▲ Germond holds a child in this photo taken during her early days in Sudbury.

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

time in the valleys of darkness and despair. But through it all I have experienced God's faithfulness and the abiding presence of Jesus in word and sacrament and in the community of faithful companions given to me along the way. I have tried to return the welcome that has been given to me by making inclusivity and hospitality hallmarks of my ministry.

On the eve of my consecration as bishop of Algoma in 2017, I received a letter from then-primate Archbishop Fred Hiltz. He knew how overwhelming the call to be a bishop could be, Hiltz wrote, but he said he took heart in advice given by Archbishop Howard Clark, primate of the Anglican

Church of Canada from 1959 to 1971, to Ted Scott on his election as bishop of Kootenay in 1971: "Any call from God is a frightening and glorious experience and always there is a note of mystery. We know little about the ways in which prayer works, but we know it works. We know equally little about the economy of grace, yet I am sure grace is abounding. Just put your trust in God and go ahead with the work. You will find yourself marvelously and wondrously equipped for your task."

This new call to be acting primate, even though it is just to bridge the gap until next summer's General Synod, is daunting. But over the years I have experienced the hand of grace as it has been extended to me, and seen first-hand how prayer does really work. I know I do not go alone into this new role, for our church is filled with Spirit-filled, gifted individuals who are immersed in the church's work and eager to help.

Let us continue to embrace this church with its amazing gift of hospitality, where over and over again we are invited to the Lord's table to, in the words of the American Presbyterian theologian Eugene Peterson, "eat and drink our Lord's life in the company of his friends." ■

Archbishop Anne Germond is the acting primate of the Anglican Church of Canada.

FEATHER AND SAGE ▶



On giving thanks for Christ-centred community

By Chris Harper

FEATHER (Prayer): Creator God, we the children of your creation lift the prayer feather of Thanksgiving. In this season that you have so freely gifted, we give thanks for gifts seen and unseen. Grant us openness of heart and mind to know you are ever with and before us in all things. Forgive us that we have turned so far inward that we do not see your grace and mercy, that we do not see with clarity the love that you have for all creation. Fill us with your peace that we might seek to be peace and walk in peace, bless us that we might be a blessing to all and may your light and Spirit be with us in all our journeys. This we pray in the name of the one who is peace, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen,

SAGE (Offering): "For this very reason, you must make every effort to support your faith with goodness." (2 Peter 1:5)

As a community we step into a new month and look back on an eventful summer. We have been blessed with



PHOTO: NETRUN78

family gatherings and holidays, but there have also been challenges; many have been touched by wildfires and have lost so much, and difficulties have joined our steps through life and faith. I have heard from and visited places where much was lost and pains were felt deeply—but I've also heard that the church has stood as a beacon of hope and source of strength for so many. For this I lift a feather of prayer in thanksgiving, as this is what the church was meant to be in moments like these.

As I write this, I'm looking at an aerial photo of a small countryside church in the middle of a field, surrounded by headstones of loved ones long passed—a place where death and the future life of hope and promise come together with the people of the present who pray and are held up in prayer. Golden fields of wheat wave in the cool autumn breeze; the well-worn driveway and gravel parking lot tell of summer services and potlucks on the front lawn. This is a community that through faith, love and hope gathers from many corners of the land, and it makes me

give thanks for the memory of the small country churches I have served.

What does the image of church in your mind's eye suggest to you? Is it a place of community in Christ, seeking truth and peace in the Word (yes, even in the midst of difficult scriptural passages), and a place of welcome and true inclusion where love and understanding abound?

The church can mean so much or so little to all of us, as is evident in this time and age, but if we keep Christ at the centre of all things, it can't help but be a place of beauty, peace, life and promise. So support your church with your prayers and being. May the light of Christ bless you and your families in this season of Thanksgiving, and may your hearts be open to see grace and mercy before you as you are blessed to be a blessing to others this day and always. ■

Archbishop Chris Harper is national Indigenous archbishop of the Anglican Church of Canada.

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The Anglican East NL team, captained by Bishop Sam Rose, exceeded its goal of \$5,000 in support of a variety of youth ministries.

4th Say Yes! to Kids Campaign Raises \$130,000

The Anglican Foundation of Canada's (AFC) 4th annual *Say Yes! to Kids* (SYTK) campaign was a great success, with 33 fundraising teams in 22 dioceses having raised more than \$130,000. Nearly half of the SYTK teams reached or surpassed their goals, and the remaining half achieved between 50% and 80% of their targets.

"*Say Yes! to Kids* is a hopeful and ambitious program that aligns with AFC's vision to increase community connectedness and fund transformational ministry across Canada," says Dr. Scott Brubacher, Executive Director. "On an almost weekly basis, AFC receives another impact story of how SYTK initiatives have revitalized ministry and created new opportunities to engage youth and young adults with mentors, their peers, and the church."

Brubacher says he was impressed this year by the level of engagement from dioceses who are actively involved in camping ministry, some with as many as three summer camps. "We had 10 dioceses rallied around 16 camps, and most were raising funds for bursaries to sponsor campers to have an 'unplugged and unforgettable' summer in God's creation. It was wonderful to get a big-picture view of camping ministry across the Anglican Church of Canada."

New to the 2024 campaign was a *Say Yes! to Kids* Sunday liturgy, which served as a spiritual focal point for campaign teams and other churches across Canada who simply wanted to support the SYTK movement.

Archbishop Anne Germond, Acting Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, welcomed the liturgy. "I was so pleased to have such a comprehensive, user-friendly liturgical resource to recommend to parishes."

"I especially loved the Prayers of the People and the litany inviting us to hear God calling us to new forms of ministry with children and youth and the suggestions for involvement of children and youth in the liturgy."

The Most Rev. Anne Germond
Acting Primate, Anglican Church of Canada

Since 2021, the SYTK movement has raised over \$700,000 for youth-focused ministry and outreach across the Anglican Church of Canada. In addition to the local beneficiaries, these combined efforts have also provided \$40,000 in funding for national Indigenous youth programs. ✦



The Diocese of the Arctic exceeded its campaign goal of \$3,500 for the Teens Encounter Christ program.



Dr. Scott Brubacher

Message from the Executive Director

Community ministries are a challenge and blessing in the church. Planting seeds and not knowing if they will bear fruit is an exercise of faith. At the Anglican Foundation of Canada (AFC), when we challenge Canadian Anglicans to *imagine more*, we are asking the church to take risks: to trust a new parishioner with a brilliant but novel idea, to recruit volunteers who may be passionate yet untrained, to balance creative tensions with community partners, and to serve as bridge-builders with fellow parishioners where old and new ways of doing things often collide.

And yet, community ministry—serving as the hands and feet of Christ in the world and taking risks along the way—is precisely what our faith calls us to do.

At AFC, we know what it takes for community ministries to flourish. Now in our 67th year supporting ministry and mission across the Anglican Church of Canada, AFC has become a vital partner in equipping the church for transformational ministry, expanding the resources available to create an ecosystem where outreach can thrive.

Whether it's funding a food bank, seniors' outreach, campus ministry, or youth drop-in program, AFC is committed to supporting churches that are reaching beyond their walls, growing a more compassionate and sustainable church in the process.

To that end, last November AFC's Board of Directors launched a new Community Ministries Fund with a capital investment of \$2 Million. We are nearing the one-year anniversary of the establishment of this fund and can already see these seeds bearing fruit. By continuing to grow this fund, we hope to ease the financial burden on those parishes who courageously engage in the challenge and blessing of this mission field.

We hope you will be inspired by the community ministry stories in this *Foundation in Focus* feature. It's important to remember that the greatest benefit of AFC membership is knowing that you are helping to ensure that those who accept the call to *imagine more* will not labour alone or in vain.

Your membership donation is a demonstration of your support for fellow Anglicans engaged in community ministry from coast to coast to coast. May we continue this faith journey together, helping one another to plant seeds that will bear good fruit in the years to come. ✦

Camp Huron Raises \$25,000 for Bursaries in Say Yes! to Kids Team Effort

“As the summer drew near, I was very grateful to know that we had surpassed our \$20,000 fundraising goal for camper bursaries in this year’s Say Yes! to Kids campaign,” says the Rev. Canon Gerry Adam, Director, Camp Huron. “It was wonderful and quite encouraging to know that our camp ministry had so much love and support from across the diocese.”

Like many diocesan camps, Adam says that Camp Huron has continued to feel some of the pandemic fallout. “It was timely to partner with AFC this year and reignite parishes and camp supporters in not only celebrating the beauty of our camp but reminding people that Camp Huron has a long history of reducing financial barriers to attending camp, but the demand grows every year.”

Located in historic Bayfield, Ontario, Camp Huron provides an overnight summer camp community where children and youth gather to enjoy fun activities and make lifelong friendships. The Say Yes! to Camp Huron campaign raised a total of \$25,000, with \$10,000 coming from the Diocese of Huron Anglican Church Women (ACW).

Left: Diocese of Brandon youth enjoying the fall “Survival Weekend” at Camp AMC, located in Riding Mountain National Park, MB.

“2024 proved to be an exceptional partnership between AFC, the Diocese of Huron, Camp Huron, and the Diocesan ACW,” says Diane Dance, AFC’s Diocesan Representative for Huron. “Huron Anglicans have given generously to Say Yes! to Kids since it began in 2021, and I am so pleased that this was our best year ever—and that we were the top fundraising team nationwide!”

Camp Huron was one of 16 diocesan camps represented in SYTK 2024. “It was very exciting to learn more about all the camps,” says Michelle Hauser, AFC’s Development and Communications Officer, “and to see how meaningfully involved Canadian Anglicans are in this summer ministry.” ✦

Top Right: Trust and teamwork are part of the adventure at Camp Huron in Bayfield, ON, where the development of the next generation of leaders starts early.

Right: A young camper receives a helping hand while learning the ropes at Canterbury Hills Camp, Dundas, ON, in the Diocese of Niagara.

“Our Diocesan ACW has been a major supporter of both Say Yes! to Kids and Camp Huron. Many of our members have fond memories of sending our own children there. We were thrilled to have the capacity to make such an impactful gift.”

Pam Walters
Diocesan ACW President

Bottom Left: The St. Michael’s Youth Conference—one of three camps in the Diocese of Fredericton—supports prayer, study, and recreation at McKee’s Mills, NB.

Centre: A summer of “active, unplugged and unforgettable fun” leaves youth leaders starry-eyed at Camp OAC, Kelowna, BC, in the Diocese of Kootenay.

Expanding Community Connections in Gibsons, BC

It is hard to imagine a poverty “crisis” on British Columbia’s Sunshine Coast, but that is the word many experts and community advocates use when describing the situation in Gibsons, a community of about 15,000 people, where researchers estimate that one in five children live in poverty.

This does not come as a surprise to Wendy Francis, Vicar’s Warden at the Parish of St. Aidan & St. Bartholomew in the Diocese of New Westminster. The parish received a \$9,000 grant from AFC in 2023 to expand a three-pronged outreach ministry that includes a monthly food bank, hot lunch, and a nightly cold weather emergency shelter.



Hot lunches at St. Bart’s in Gibsons, BC, are a truly magical experience where organizers say, “the positive energy is palpable.”

“We see increasing need in Gibsons and want to do our part to grow and enhance the supports to people who are vulnerable, food insecure, and living without adequate shelter,” says Francis. “With the support of a part-time

Outreach Program Liaison, St. Bart’s is able to provide additional services that are a logical expansion of our food and shelter offerings, which are now essential components of social programming in our community.”

Since 2010, approximately \$500,000 in grants have been awarded in support of food security and poverty reduction programs. “These kinds of outreach programs are so widespread in the Anglican Church of Canada,” says Michelle Hauser, AFC’s Development and Communications Officer.

“From north to south, east to west, rural and urban, Canadian Anglicans are not shying away from serving the hungry, the hurting, and those experiencing homelessness.”

Michelle Hauser

AFC, Development and Communications Officer

Hauser says that as these programs grow, and as the level of training they need to provide to volunteers to do this kind of outreach work increases, she expects AFC will see more applications to support this kind of program expansion.

“Like the program in Gibsons, churches across Canada are increasing both their compassion and their expertise: prioritizing dignity of choice, increasing community collaborations, and providing robust volunteer recruitment and training programs.” ✦

Supporting Adults with Cognitive Impairment and their Caregivers

If you ask the Rt. Rev. Stephen London, Bishop of Edmonton, to talk about what’s new in his diocese, you are going to hear about community ministry—and you are likely to hear about music.

Since 2020, more than one third of AFC grants to the Diocese of Edmonton have supported innovative community ministries, which has included three music-related projects. The most recent of these, the Music Mends Minds (MMM) program at St. George’s Anglican Church in Edmonton, received a grant of \$5,000 from AFC in 2024. MMM is a program of Rotary International, with chapters in the United States and Canada. Trained music leaders engage people with cognitive impairment and their caregivers in the universal language of music.

“The MMM participants explore everything from Elvis to Ed Sullivan,” says London, “and share all the stories and memories that arise from familiar songs.”



Familiar tunes and lyrics spark joy for music therapy participants at St. George’s Anglican Church, Edmonton, AB.

“The program at St. George’s is a wonderful example of how we can explore innovative uses for churches, in addition to traditional Sunday morning worship.”

The Rt. Rev. Stephen London
Bishop of Edmonton

“St. George’s is small and aging, but we have a huge amount of spirit,” says the Rev. Madeleine Urion, Incumbent. “We’ve been recognizing

more and more that, rather than to start our own groups, our call as the church is to help groups that are already formed to flourish.”

Bishop London says partnerships like the one between MMM and St. George’s are central to community ministries. “So often people come to me with creative ideas that have come out of the relationships they have developed. And those relationships lead to pilot projects, which in turn form part of the ‘knock-on effect’ of community ministry, where the action of each new ministry invariably triggers other new ideas and initiatives.”

London says that even if what we might think of as success is not readily apparent, “the knock-on effect kicks in, and we are led to other unexplored territory on the mission field.” When it comes to funding these ministry projects, London says AFC is increasingly viewed by people in his diocese as a key partner. “More times than not, AFC says yes.” ✦



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Calgary and Ottawa: Leaders in Campus Ministry



The Rev. Michael Garner dons his apron and extends a generous heart for hospitality to University of Ottawa students through a new campus meal program.

Separated by more than 3,000 km, the university campus ministries happening in the Dioceses of Calgary and Ottawa share a great deal of common ground. Both are championed by Anglican priests who possess a deep understanding of the realities of

student poverty and loneliness, the skills to work in a multi-faith chaplaincy setting, and hearts for hospitality that never fail to motivate community and parish volunteers to join them in reaching out.

After nearly 30 years as ecumenical Chaplain to four educational institutions—the Universities of Calgary and Lethbridge, as well as Lethbridge College and Medicine Hat College—the Rev. Canon Erin Phillips says her focus is to “build bridges and make connections.”

Central to the chaplaincy’s bridge-building efforts is the Kerber Friendship Program, supported by an AFC grant of \$7,500 in 2021, named in honour of Yvonne and Dick Kerber who helped set the program in motion.

In our nation’s capital, the Rev. Michael Garner, Rector of St. Albans Anglican Church and member of the Multi-Faith Chaplaincy team at the University of Ottawa, is working with members of his congregation to establish a regular campus meal program at residences that have been identified as having high rates of food insecurity.

“It’s hard for people to imagine that a university student can go hungry,” says Garner, who describes himself as having “the heart of an Italian grandmother.” Indeed, Garner’s love for cooking, coupled with his knowledge of the realities of student poverty, helped to kickstart the campus meals program for which St. Albans received a \$5,000 grant from AFC in 2023. The St. Albans crew hopes to expand the frequency of the meal program for the 2024-2025 academic year.

Whether helping international students who are homesick, mobilizing community volunteers to provide hospitality, or responding to the realities of student poverty, these campus ministries represent some of the most impactful young adult outreach in the Anglican Church of Canada today. ✦

What began as an informal matching of community volunteers to isolated students who couldn’t go home for holidays has blossomed into a thriving program that supports the physical and spiritual well-being of hundreds of students.

Say Yes! to Kids Connects Anglican Donors to Indigenous Youth Leadership

This past May, the Sandy-Salteaux Spiritual Centre in Beausejour, Manitoba, was home to the second *Sacred Beginnings* gathering, which brought together a dozen youth from Indigenous communities in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. The event was supported in part by a \$15,000 grant from AFC, representing the national proceeds of the 2023 *Say Yes! to Kids* (SYTK) campaign.

This was the second significant grant to a national Indigenous youth initiative from *Say Yes! to Kids*. “When combined with the \$25,000 grant resulting from the 2022 campaign, which sponsored Indigenous youth to attend CLAY 2023, *Say Yes! to Kids* has provided \$40,000 in funding for national Indigenous youth programs. In fact, every donor to SYTK is part of this story because of the unique partnership fundraising approach,” says Dr. Scott Brubacher, Executive Director, AFC.

“It is certainly our hope that the 2024 campaign will prove similarly impactful, and that AFC’s national youth-centred campaign can continue to fund the priorities of Indigenous youth within



The second Sacred Beginnings gathering brought together an inter-generational delegation from Indigenous communities in Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

the Anglican Church of Canada.” Brubacher says that it was heartening to see St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church, Peterborough, choose *Sacred Beginnings* as the beneficiary of their 2024 SYTK team effort, which raised more than \$5,000.

“Be it at *Sacred Beginnings*, CLAY, or other event, when these youth gather, they network and share teachings and songs, laugh, and grow in faith and Identity,” says the Most Rev.

Chris Harper, National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop, and Presiding Elder of Sacred Circle. “These meetings include new experiences, challenges and blessings for those who attend.”

Archbishop Harper says he is grateful for the financial support and encouragement that grants from the *Say Yes! to Kids* program have provided to Indigenous youth.

“These events have opened the doors for our Indigenous youth to participate in wider faith programs where they might have never been able to join and celebrate with other youth of their age groups.”

The Most Rev. Chris Harper
National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop
Presiding Elder of Sacred Circle

The next *Sacred Beginnings* gathering is tentatively scheduled for 2026. Organizers hope they will be held every two years thereafter. ✦



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DIACONATE ▶

Deacons eye new role as emissaries in ‘fractured world’

“The lack of consistency in understanding and practice across dioceses in Canada ... led to the push to put something in writing.”

—The Rev. Lisa Chisholm-Smith

Matthew Puddister
STAFF WRITER

Deacons in the Anglican Church of Canada will present a draft theological statement on the diaconate to Council of General Synod (CoGS) this November as they seek to redefine their role in a changing world. CoGS will offer feedback and then vote at its March meeting on sending the statement to General Synod 2025, where diaconal ministry is set to be a major topic of discussion, says Dean Emerita Ansley Tucker, director of deacons in the Anglican diocese of Islands and Inlets (also known as the diocese of British Columbia).

The presentation to CoGS will come a few months after the latest national conference of Anglican Deacons Canada (ADC), the national association of Anglican deacons, which took place June 13-16 at the Sorrento Centre in B.C., and its first in-person national gathering since before the pandemic. Among other things, the conference saw deacons offer feedback on the theological statement.

Speaking to CoGS on May 31, Tucker noted that the national office’s department of Faith, Worship and Ministry is planning to bring a set of revised ordinals to General Synod, including a revised ordination rite for deacons. Deacons are developing the theological statement, Tucker said, to understand and define what the diaconate is in part so that the revised ordinal reflects their theology.

The theme of the June ADC conference, “Beacons of Hope in a Messy World,” underscored how deacons are viewing their role at a time of widespread societal crisis, including climate change and growing poverty in Canada.

The impetus for the theological statement came after a national survey of deacons in December 2022, says ADC president the Rev. Lisa Chisholm-Smith.

“One of the biggest things that deacons said that is hard for them is just the lack of consistency in understanding and practice across dioceses in Canada,” she told the *Journal*. “That’s what led to the push to put something in writing that’s clear enough to be meaningful and substantial, but also spacious enough to allow for the varying context.”

The draft theological statement contends that “the recovery of a robust diaconate promises renewed relevance for the Church in a fractured world.” Traditionally, it says, the work of Christians ordained as deacons has been to “bring the light of Christ where there is darkness,” recognize and respond to injustice and need, organize and distribute resources to remedy them, and bring the “brokenness and hunger of the world to the attention of the faithful for prayer and healing.”

As the western church increasingly overlapped with mainstream society, the draft says, the focus of diaconal ministry began to shift inward to the church’s internal needs. Deacons today, however, operate in a different environment.

In more recent times, according to the statement, “we have experienced global shifts towards secularity, changes in societal values, and diversity in religious belief and practice, along with a growing distrust in institutional religion, and a reduction in the Church’s reach and influence.” It identifies in these changes both an opportunity and urgent need for the church to renew its mission outside its own doors.



▲ Deacons worship at the ADC national conference.

PHOTO: KEN GRAY

The conference also looked at the role of deacons in turning “thoughts and prayers” for social and ecological justice into meaningful action. Chisholm-Smith cited the words of Archbishop Linda Nicholls, then-primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, who delivered a homily.

“Increasingly, the role of a deacon is being understood also to be an advocate and to be, as the primate said, a thorn in the side of the church—to constantly be reminding it to not become internally focused, but to continue to seek and work for the just and compassionate world that God desires,” Chisholm-Smith said.

In the Indigenous church, the potential

of diaconal ministry has sometimes been overlooked, National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop Chris Harper, who took part in a roundtable discussion at the conference, told the *Journal*. Because of the restrictions on what deacons can do—unlike priests, for example, deacons cannot consecrate the elements for Holy Communion—communities often prefer parish priests to deacons, and the role is often seen only as a stepping-stone to the priesthood, he said.

However, the diaconate can be more achievable than the priesthood for many due to the education demands of the latter, Harper said. While priests must have an M. Div from a theological school, deacons may have other forms of education such as a master of theological studies. Promoting the diaconate and explaining the value that deacons bring to the church could benefit Indigenous ministry, he said.

Chisholm-Smith said ADC officially became a registered charity after the conference, and the deacons hope its new status will encourage people to donate. It will also allow ADC to directly apply for grants. At the 2024 conference, because ADC was not yet a registered charity, both the Sorrento Centre and Anglican diocese of Kootenay had to apply for a grant from the Anglican Foundation of Canada on ADC’s behalf. ■



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CONNECTING ▶

Black Anglican group holds first conference

Association to push for more participation, representation of Black people in church

It was like a breath of fresh air to hear stories and to see what representation looks like.

—Jacqueline Daley

Matthew Puddister
STAFF WRITER

Moving forward in its goal of strengthening Black participation and representation within the Anglican Church of Canada, the association Black Anglicans of Canada (BIAC) held its first national conference Aug. 14-17 at St. John's College, University of Manitoba, in Winnipeg.

BIAC vice chair the Rev. Jacqueline Daley said about 30 lay and clergy members from across the country—including representatives from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC)—attended the Disrupt, Heal, Lead Conference 2024. The event marked the first time BIAC, Canada's national organization of Black Anglicans, has formally gathered in person since its establishment in July 2018.

"It was just beautiful to connect with people," Daley said. "It was like a breath of fresh air to hear stories and to see what representation looks like."

The Rev. Wilson Akinwale, national president and board chair of BIAC, said Disrupt, Heal, Lead was an opportunity to discuss how Black Anglicans could make their voices heard within the church. Organizers noted the conference took place at the end of the International Decade for People of African Descent from 2015 to 2024, as proclaimed by the United Nations.

While future BIAC meetings will have a greater focus on business matters—including potentially creating a document to inspire action on Black representation and empowerment at different levels of the church—the main focus of the August conference, Akinwale said, was to bring Black Anglicans together in person "to inspire our spiritual transformation as people of African descent ... to live out our faith boldly regardless of who we are or where we come from, and to create an enduring legacy for future generations of Black Anglicans and Lutherans."

The gathering featured a panel



▲ L-R: Uzoma Asagwara, Manitoba's minister of health, seniors and long-term care, meets with Black Anglicans of Canada (BIAC) vice-chair the Rev. Jacqueline Daley and Canon Donald Butler at BIAC's first national conference.

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

discussion on the life and ministry of the late Rev. Romney Moseley. Born in Barbados, Moseley earned a PhD in religion and society from Harvard and served as an associate professor of divinity at the University of Toronto's Trinity College. Moseley wrote a report submitted to General Synod in June 1992 that went on to serve as the basis for the Anglican Church of Canada's policy on multiculturalism.

Two years after his death that same year, Moseley's report was published as *No Longer Strangers: Ministry in a Multicultural Society*. Daley said Moseley highlighted the issues of representation, participation, empowerment and belonging that inform the mission of BIAC.

Participants at Disrupt, Heal, Lead heard from a range of speakers. The Rev. Michael Blair, general secretary of the United Church of Canada, shared his experience as an openly gay church leader

during a session on diversity, equity and inclusion in the church. Participants also heard from the Rev. Ali Tote, recently elected as the first Black bishop of the ELCIC's Eastern Synod.

Daley highlighted to the *Journal* conference remarks by Uzoma Asagwara, Manitoba's minister of health, seniors and long-term care. Raised Anglican, Asagwara is one of the first Black MLAs in Manitoba history and its first non-binary MLA. Daley called Asagwara an inspiring figure, "rooted in the church, born and bred, raised up and is now holding one of the highest offices in the land as a non-binary person of African descent," describing Asagwara as "an image of what representation looks like."

BIAC arose partly out of a 2017 service in Toronto to raise funds for relief efforts after a hurricane swept through the eastern Caribbean. Encouraged by the success of this event, organizers began to talk about how they could work together for racial justice, and BIAC was formed a year later. Among its goals is to give life to the Anglican Church of Canada's Charter for Racial Justice, approved by General Synod in 2007, which commits the church, among other things, "to support and participate in the world-wide struggle for racial justice in church and society, as advocates and activists."

In her first primatial address to CoGS in November 2019, then-primate Archbishop Linda Nicholls said she hoped the church would deepen its commitment to the charter. Nicholls said she'd seen discrimination against racialized people in the church. "I've seen the pain amongst clergy of colour who are very clear when I ask them, 'Have you been a victim of racism in our church?' and every one of them nods," she told CoGS.

While BIAC receives support from General Synod's Ministry Investment Fund, Akinwale said the organization strives to be more self-sufficient in financing its operations. To that end, Disrupt, Heal, Lead included a gala and fundraising dinner.

Akinwale said BIAC is looking forward to its next conference and weighing whether to hold the event annually or once every three years. ■

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November BIBLE READINGS

DAY READING

- 1 Romans 3:1-18
- 2 Romans 3:19-31
- 3 Mark 12:1-17
- 4 Mark 12:18-34
- 5 Hebrews 8
- 6 Hebrews 9:1-15
- 7 Hebrews 9:16-28
- 8 1 Kings 17:1-14
- 9 1 Kings 17:15-24
- 10 Mark 12:35-44
- 11 Hosea 2:14-23
- 12 Psalm 127
- 13 1 Samuel 1:1-18
- 14 1 Samuel 1:19-28
- 15 1 Samuel 2:1-11

DAY READING

- 16 Mark 13:1-13
- 17 Daniel 12
- 18 Daniel 7:1-14
- 19 Daniel 7:15-28
- 20 2 Samuel 23:1-7
- 21 Psalm 132
- 22 Revelation 1:1-11
- 23 Revelation 1:12-20
- 24 Zechariah 12
- 25 Jeremiah 33:9-23
- 26 Psalm 9
- 27 Psalm 10
- 28 Psalms 11-12
- 29 Mark 13:14-31
- 30 Matthew 4:12-22

SOURCE: CANADIAN BIBLE SOCIETY. USED WITH PERMISSION.

Michael Creal remembered for ‘prescient’ commitment to social justice

Sean Frankling
STAFF WRITER

The Rev. Michael Creal, a priest in the Anglican Church of Canada, refugee activist and professor at York University, died Aug. 23 at the age of 97. Creal had been named to the Order of Canada in June in recognition of his lifelong efforts on behalf of refugees.

The Rev. Bill Whitla, a friend and colleague of Creal for the last 50 years, describes him as brilliant and compassionate. From a missions trip at the University of New Brunswick in the 1960s to their shared time at Holy Trinity Church in Toronto where they housed draft dodgers and held dances for gay Torontonians in the 1970s, Whitla says, Creal was prescient in the issues he devoted his life to—an early adopter and driver of now-widespread trends in social justice.

Sometimes that meant clashing with both church and state, Whitla says. Creal was the subject of several investigations by the diocese of Toronto’s board of inquiry and—when it came to his



PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

Creal was named to the Order of Canada in June 2024.

work with refugees—the secular authorities. “This [work] doesn’t earn you a lot of brownie points with the law or with the people who are trying to establish coherent immigration policy. But it does a lot for the people who are ... being victimized,” he says.

Creal was a founder of the Sanctuary Coalition, which advocates for refugees whose claims have been denied. Whitla says the coalition also has a history of providing safe

houses for refugees to live in, preventing them from being deported while the coalition worked on their cases. This practice was not always popular with law enforcement, says Whitla, but Creal persevered.

Creal took his advocacy for refugees as well as a host of other social justice causes with him to his work for the department of humanities at York University, where he worked starting in the 1960s as a professor, and in positions including head of the division of humanities and founder of the school’s Centre for Refugee Studies.

Even when, Whitla says, the diocese of Toronto harshly criticized and investigated his work in the 1970s, ’80s and ’90s, “Michael sailed through those, bringing a measure of peace and decorum and good humour—and an effort to hear the weight of the argument that’s on the other side and see how it could be put into palatable terms for all sides to hear and relate to.

“That’s the mark of a peacemaker.” ■

Anglican elder care specialist and advocate named to Order of Canada

Sean Frankling
STAFF WRITER

Dr. Kenneth Rockwood, a specialist in frailty and geriatric care and a lifelong Anglican, was appointed to the Order of Canada in June for his work in advancing the field of elder care.

Rockwood is the senior medical director for the Frailty and Elder Care Network at Nova Scotia Health, the province’s health-care authority, and teaches geriatric medicine at Dalhousie. He is best known for his creation of the Clinical Frailty Scale and the Frailty Index—tools which provide a new approach for doctors treating elderly patients—and for his advocacy for policy change in the field of elder care.

Rockwood’s grandfather was the Rev. Gordon Templeton, a passionate evangelical Anglican preacher whose bombastic style Rockwood says has influenced the way he advocates for better geriatric care.

“In me, that preaching gene is fully expressed,” he says.

Rockwood says his faith has taught him to see the face of God in everyone he meets. This, he adds, has guided his compassion for patients he is helping to heal—and for those who are not likely to get better.



PHOTO: DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY

Rockwood has spent his career advancing geriatric medical care.

Doctors today often focus on identifying and treating patients’ problems one at a time, Rockwood says, but caring for older adults requires a more broad-based approach—something the tools and treatment strategies he developed are meant to address.

Without an approach to elder care tailored to the unique needs of older patients, he fears, Canada’s health-care system will be overburdened as the population continues to age, and some policymakers may draw the wrong conclusions.

“If we don’t do better, we’re going to lose Medicare, that’s my fear,” he says. “People will see a public system that appears not to be working ... but that remedy would be exactly wrong.” ■

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. —COLOSSIANS 3:15

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—The Most Rev. Linda Nicholls



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