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ANGLICAN JOURNAL

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VOL. 151 NO. 10 DECEMBER 2025



PHOTO: LU CHAU

Winged messengers

A stained-glass window, designed by Inuit artist Ningiukulu Teevee for the chapel of Bishop Strachan School in Toronto, depicts a traditional Inuit tale of an encounter between an owl and a raven. National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop Chris Harper, who offered a prayer of dedication at the artwork's unveiling Oct. 20, says God has used traditional stories like these to spread messages of unity and peace. For a report on how Indigenous Anglicans across Canada are blending their traditions into Christian worship, see pp. 6-7.

CoGS approves 'pathways' task force, draw-down from savings to deal with 'cash crunch'



▲ The national church's strategy for change will be made up of three pillars, the primate said.

PHOTO: ADAM FRAISE

Sean Frankling
STAFF WRITER

The Council of General Synod (CoGS) approved key elements of a strategy likely to bring radical change to the church at a special online meeting Oct. 7. These elements included a task force dedicated to pursuing the six "pathways" recommended by a primatial commission along with other groups working on the national office's property, programming and staffing.

At the same meeting CoGS approved a motion to supplement the 2025 budget by drawing up to four per cent—a sum that could come to more than \$1 million—from the unrestricted portion of the Consolidated Trust Fund (CTF) of the General Synod to resolve a cash flow shortfall caused by delayed diocesan payments. It also approved the nomination of Andrea Mann as general secretary. (See "Andrea Mann named new general

secretary" on p. 2 of this issue.)

In introductory remarks, Archbishop Shane Parker, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, said the church's strategy for change would be made up of three pillars. The first would be the pursuit of the pathways, and would be the work of a task force with six subordinate teams. The second would involve making decisions about the property owned and operated by General Synod. A third pillar would be concerned with organizational, programming and staffing changes at the national office, Parker said. Only the first of these pillars currently has an official task force dedicated to it; the latter two are to be handled by officers of General Synod, legal counsel and staff leaders, he said.

The second pillar will concern what Parker referred to as "the 300 Bloor situation, 80 Hayden situation." On June 24, General Synod learned that senior officers of the national church had hired

See PROPERTY, p. 3

Scholars ponder denomination's future after GAFCON pledge to 'reorder' Anglican Communion



▲ Archbishop Laurent Mbanda

PHOTO: GAFCON

Sean Frankling and
Matthew Puddister
STAFF WRITERS

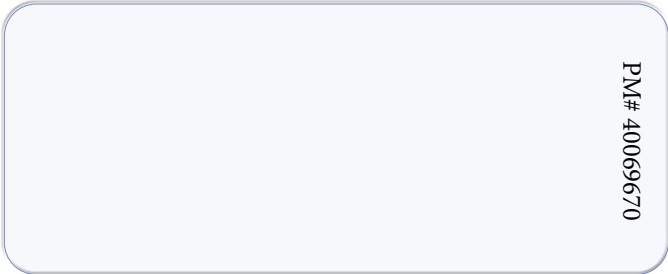
In the wake of the declaration by a coalition of conservative Anglican provinces of its intention to reorder the Anglican Communion around itself rather than Canterbury, two Canadian scholars with years of experience in the global South are taking different views on how much the apparent schism will divide the denomination in theory and in practice.

What both agreed on as this article was being written in late October was that it was not yet clear how many of the

provinces within the Global Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans (GAFCON) would go through with GAFCON chairman and Primate of Rwanda Archbishop Laurent Mbanda's call to sever all ties with the Church of England and its communion. GAFCON's split comes after the election of Bishop Sarah Mullally, whom it considers too theologically liberal, as the first female Archbishop of Canterbury.

The Anglican Communion Office announced Oct. 3 that King Charles III had approved the nomination of Mullally—who has served as bishop of London since 2018 and previously served as bishop of Crediton in the diocese

See GAFCON p. 9



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PEOPLE ▶

Andrea Mann named new general secretary

Will be first female, first lay person ever in role

Matthew Puddister
STAFF WRITER

Council of General Synod (CoGS) has appointed Andrea Mann, the Anglican Church of Canada’s Global Relations director, as the new general secretary of General Synod effective Oct. 13.

Archbishop Shane Parker, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, nominated Mann to the position following the recommendation of a search committee that led the process to find a new general secretary. CoGS passed a motion formally naming Mann the new general secretary at a special meeting on Oct. 7 held over Zoom.

Parker said Mann was the first woman to have ever held the position, and also the first lay person. The general secretary is General Synod’s chief operations officer. Their responsibilities include managing the national church office, organizing meetings of General Synod and CoGS and acting as secretary of both.

The primate said he had known Mann for the better part of 20 years in various professional capacities. Since July 1, Mann had served as acting interim general secretary—working in tandem with Canon (lay) Ian Alexander, the latter serving as interim general secretary. Her tenure as Global Relations director will end Oct. 13, though she will continue to direct the transition of Global Relations



▲ **Andrea Mann began in her new role as general secretary Oct. 13.**
PHOTO: MATTHEW PUDDISTER

ministry until the end of 2025.

“Andrea’s a person of exceptional intelligence,” the primate said. “She is wise and deeply pastoral and faithful. She gives appropriate attention to detail while understanding the larger picture and dynamics ... I am very, very pleased that Andrea allowed her name to stand and delighted that she surfaced as the recommended candidate.”

Mann, who has served as Global Relations director since 1997, thanked CoGS for appointing her general secretary, calling it “a tremendous privilege and a challenge to be sure.”

In an email to the *Anglican Journal*, Mann said she was “deeply honoured to serve the Anglican Church of Canada as

general secretary in this time of critical and exciting change for the ministry of the General Synod.”

She added, “I will seek to build upon strong working relationships with the Council of the North and Sacred Circle, and with councils and networks of the Anglican Communion. All by the mercy and grace of God.”

Archdeacon Alan Perry, Mann’s predecessor in the role, saw his employment as general secretary officially end on Sept. 3 following a three-month leave of absence that began weeks before the June 23-29 meeting of General Synod. CoGS appointed Canon (lay) Ian Alexander as interim general secretary at a special meeting June 4, the day after Perry’s leave of absence began. Church leaders have declined to comment on whether Perry’s departure was related to a lease for shared office space with the United Church of Canada. (See “CoGS approves ‘pathways’ task force, draw-down from savings to deal with ‘cash crunch,’” on p.1 of this issue.)

Before serving as Global Relations director, Mann was a volunteer in mission from 1994 to 1995 with the Church of Ceylon, the Anglican Church in Sri Lanka, as part of the Partnerships Department of the General Synod. In this capacity she worked with Sri Lankan Anglicans toward the ordination of women in the Church of Ceylon. Mann also previously worked as an assistant professor in the Faculty of Humanities and School of Physical Education at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ont. ■



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Property team looking into lease with United Church may eventually ‘shift focus’: Primate

Continued from p. 1

an accounting firm to investigate the approval process for a lease on 300 Bloor St. West, Toronto, signed by former general secretary Archdeacon Alan Perry and chief financial officer Amal Attia without approval from CoGS. The lease was for space for the national office to move into in 2026 after a planned move from its current space at 80 Hayden St. General Synod financial statements estimate that the lease, on a newly redeveloped Toronto property at 300 Bloor St. West, will cost \$8.18 million over five years. Chancellor Canon (lay) Clare Burns said at the time it was unclear whether the lease was legally enforceable or not.

The property team “may shift its focus when we understand where we are going to be housed moving into the future,” Parker told CoGS. Senior church leaders have so far not responded to questions from the *Journal* on whether the move to 300 Bloor St. West will proceed as planned, or on whether senior national office leaders had yet received the report of the investigators.

Key people working on each of the three pillars will be members of a body Parker called the primate’s council, which will also include the officers of General Synod and the co-chairs of the planning and agenda team with other members to be added as work proceeds.

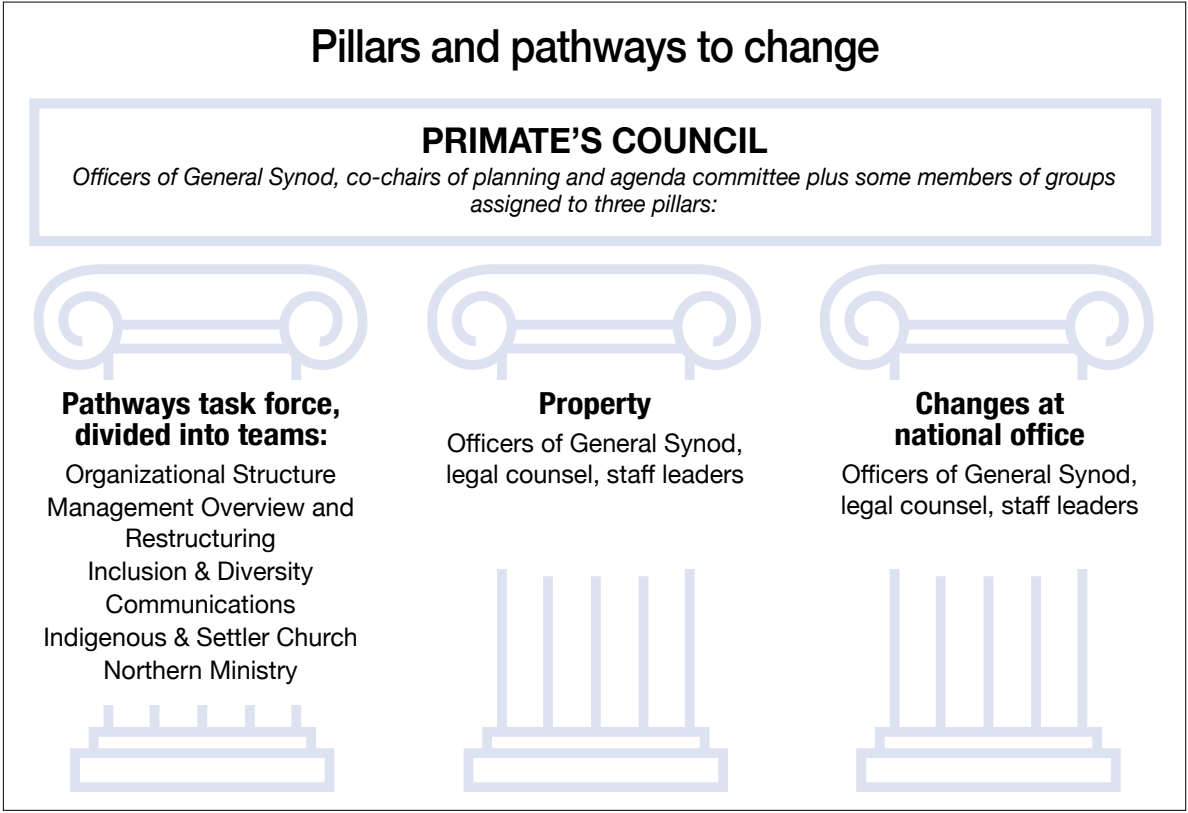
CoGS, the governing body of the Anglican Church of Canada when a full General Synod is not in session, will be frequently consulted throughout this process, he said.

Stephens-Rennie, Marshall to co-chair key task force

CoGS approved terms of reference and a list of 18 members for the first group, called the Transformation Task Force, at the Oct. 7 meeting. That list names as co-chairs Andrew Stephens-Rennie, former member of CoGS for the ecclesiastical province of British Columbia and Yukon, and Canon (lay) Janet Marshall, director of congregational development for the Diocese of Toronto. It includes several members from the primate’s commission which drafted the six pathways for change as well as lay members, clergy and bishops with experience in theology, finance, adaptive leadership, Indigenous relations, marketing and more.

The other members are: lay members Janet Hope, Danika Meredith, Angela Morgan and Dorothy Patterson, clergy the Rev. Jasmine Chandra, Canon Patricia Dorland, Archdeacon Travis Enright, Canon Sarah Kathleen Johnson, the Rev. Clara King, the Rev. Douglas Michael, Canon Jenny Replogle, the Rev. Vincent Solomon, the Rev. Kyle Wagner, Archdeacon Rhonda Waters and Bishops Anna Greenwood-Lee and Rachael Parker. Archbishop Parker, Mann and prolocutor Archdeacon Tanya Phibbs are listed as ex-officio members.

Parker said this task force would create an additional six teams, each devoted to achieving results on one of the six pathways: organization and structure; management overview and restructuring; inclusion and diversity in decision making; communications; partnership with the Indigenous church; and ministry in the North. Any of the



▲ The work to reorganize the church will fall into three main areas, the primate said, with CoGS frequently consulted throughout the process.

INFOGRAPHIC:
SASKIA ROWLEY

church’s committees or task forces already in existence which are relevant to the pathways will be consolidated into the work of the pathways teams, he said, to avoid having multiple groups working in parallel.

The second pillar, on property, is being managed by the officers of General Synod, along with the church’s legal counsel and with advice from David Caulfeild, an architect, engineer and former chief architect of Public Works Canada.

Work concerning Church House programming and staffing is currently under Parker’s own leadership, along with that of General Secretary Andrea Mann and other senior staff members of the national office, he added. The team on the second pathway, management overview and restructuring, will also take a share of this work when it is formed, Parker wrote.

2025 budget to draw up to \$1 million from church’s investments

CoGS also voted to supplement the 2025 budget with additional funds from the church’s investments. Prolocutor Archdeacon Tanya Phibbs told CoGS this was necessary due to a cash flow problem resulting from a delay in regular payments from dioceses as well as remittances for General Synod, held in June, and Sacred Circle, which followed in August.

As a result, she said, Attia recommended CoGS approve the withdrawal of up to four per cent from the CTF—a sum which comes to about \$1.06 million, according to a background note on the resolution—to cover the current shortfall until the dioceses can catch up, instead of the \$350,000 it had already approved in March. Also in March, CoGS had approved four-per-cent withdrawals from the fund each year beginning in 2026 to support the operational budget amid falling revenue, so that the Oct. 7 CoGS vote effectively begins making that annual withdrawal a year early.

General Synod’s budget for 2025, released in November 2024, had pegged total spending for the year at \$10.7 million. The unrestricted portion of the CTF is valued at \$26.56 million. In response to a question from Bishop Susan Bell of the diocese of Niagara, Attia told

CoGS the CTF makes an average of 7.5 per cent per year in investment returns, with last year’s return coming in at more than 12 per cent.

As this issue was being prepared in late October, Attia, in response to a request for an update on the church’s finances, said she had none to give, but added that the Canada Post strike had contributed to delays in payments.

\$500,000 towards new National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation

Later in the meeting, CoGS voted to spend \$500,000 toward constructing a new building to house the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR). The Anglican Church of Canada is one of three denominations the NCTR development team approached to ask for funding in 2024, along with the United Church of Canada and the Presbyterian Church in Canada, said Mann. The three churches agreed to make a joint contribution, without disclosing denominational amounts, she said. She and Attia had recently confirmed the other two partners, the United and Presbyterian churches of Canada, had each committed \$500,000, she added.

The NCTR archives and communicates the history of residential schools in Canada, which the Anglican, Presbyterian and United churches helped to run. Its website describes the new building as “an international attraction for its cutting-edge work where history and Indigenous cultures come to life” for survivors, family members and other visitors.

That money will be allocated from the four per cent withdrawn from the CTF to supplement the church’s operational budget over the course of the next five years, said Attia.

Finally, CoGS voted to appoint two Anglicans—the Rev. Diane Lee, of the parish of St. Matthew, Oshawa, Ont., and Mann in her capacity as general secretary—to the governing board of the Canadian Council of Churches. There are currently no Anglicans serving on the board, per the background note on the resolution, but as a founding member of the council, the Anglican Church of Canada has the option to appoint up to three of its members to serve on it. ■

ANGLICAN VOICES ▶



“As I recorded bits of the Mass, something unexpected happened. I was attending as a journalist, but suddenly, was moved to tears. I wasn’t sure what it was exactly that made me cry—whether it was the plight of Bethlehem and her people or the sacred nature of the place. My epiphany proved rather impractical as I had to keep switching the recorder off and on due to uncontrollable sobbing.”

Praying for peace and freedom in Bethlehem

By Hadani Ditmars

WHY IS THERE a disconnect between Christians in the West and the birthplace of Christ?

While Muslims everywhere know where Mecca is, many Christians are at a loss to describe Bethlehem as a city in Palestine, let alone one under siege. Many Palestinian Christians feel abandoned by their Western brethren. There is often a jarring dissociation between the place and the biblical ideal—both real and mythic, actual and imagined.

Bethlehem is in the West Bank, almost surrounded by an Israeli wall built in the early 2000s, and like the rest of the West Bank it is still under occupation. Today residents of the birthplace of Christ must pass through metal cages and past Israeli checkpoints en route to and from their menial jobs in Jerusalem, Bethlehem’s sister city only 10 km away. The wall has choked the town—highly dependent on seasonal tourism—economically; tourist access to it is effectively controlled by the Israeli tourist operators granted the licences necessary to bring people in. Residents of Bethlehem live amid three refugee camps and 37 Jewish settlements; living space is further constricted by two bypass roads for Israeli settlers that surround the area. The town’s outlook remains bleak. In 1868, when Episcopal priest the Rev. Phillips Brooks penned “O Little Town of Bethlehem,” it was almost entirely Christian; today due to ongoing political and economic pressures, its Christian population was about ten per cent as of 2017.

The Church of the Nativity—the site of an Israeli siege in 2002—still welcomes the faithful, but since the genocide in Gaza began two years ago, and as emboldened Israeli settlers continue to colonize the West Bank and forcibly displace Palestinians, Christmas has been a rather subdued affair. The giant Christmas tree in Manger Square has remained unlit. In 2023 Lutheran pastor the Rev. Munther Isaac created a nativity scene in his Bethlehem church with the baby Jesus figure lying in rubble.

As I write this in anticipation of Advent, a fragile ceasefire has taken hold, but with ongoing Israel Defense Forces bombing in Gaza and worsening conditions for Palestinians in the West Bank, most Bethlehemites are pessimistic at best.

Sami Awad is the Christian Palestinian executive director of the Holy Land Trust, a non-profit Palestinian peace organization. He hosts a biannual conference called “Christ at the Checkpoint” that asks the question “What would Jesus do?” in the face of ongoing occupation.

He told me, “I would describe the situation today in Bethlehem for both Christians and Muslims as ‘tensely



▲ The infant Jesus lies amid rubble in a nativity scene created by Bethlehem Lutheran pastor the Rev. Munther Isaac.

PHOTO: MUNTHER ISAAC

calm.’ We hear the statements of Israeli politicians when it comes to the West Bank, we see and experience the violence and hatred of the settlers, we see how Israeli soldiers continue to demonize people at checkpoints, and our fear is that it is a matter of time before Israel begins massive incursions and attacks in Bethlehem. Even if not, there is no future we see on the horizon for any just end to the occupation so that we can truly begin to live in peace.”

But in spite of everything, or perhaps because it’s able to contain both the sacred and the sadness of war and occupation, Bethlehem really is a magical place.

On assignment for a CBC Radio documentary on Christians in the Holy Land in 2005/6, I remember spending a gloomy seasonal time in a grotto-like bed and breakfast owned by a once-wealthy hotelier who was slowly going broke, redeemed only by the incredibly moving experience of visiting the Church of St Catherine on Jan. 1, the Solemnity of Mary feast day in the Roman Catholic church.

As I recorded bits of the Mass, something unexpected happened. I was attending as a journalist, but suddenly, was moved to tears. I wasn’t sure what it was exactly that made me cry—whether it was the plight of Bethlehem and her people or the sacred nature of the place. My epiphany proved rather impractical as I had to keep switching the recorder off and on due to uncontrollable sobbing.

I made a silent intercession to Mary for peace and ended up at the nearby

Milk Grotto—where, according to legend, Mary stopped to nurse the baby Jesus as the holy family fled Herod’s murderous rage. I was soon spotted by a friendly American Franciscan who gave me a glass of water and a package of special limestone powder from the grotto—a talisman thought to bestow fertility. Apparently, the Milk Grotto—a site that according to archaeologists was once, like the Church of the Nativity, a Canaanite fertility shrine—was now also, in the 21st century, a pilgrimage site for the childless.

That bag of limestone sustained me through my journey, which included an intoxicating Orthodox Christmas at the Church of the Nativity; here I watched Ethiopians, Russians, Palestinians, and Christians from all corners of the earth praying and speaking in tongues. A few hours later, on my way home, I was strip-searched at Ben Gurion Airport. Happily, a well-timed appearance by the bishop of Kent resulted in the soldier reluctantly letting me go.

This Advent, I pray for the same release for a captive town that has been sending a message of hope to the world for over 2,000 years.

May the birthplace of Christ be free. ■

Hadani Ditmars is the author of *Dancing in the No-Fly Zone: A Woman’s Journey Through Iraq* and a past editor of *New Internationalist*. She is a member of the lay ministry team at Christ Church Cathedral in Vancouver. Her next book, *Between Two Rivers*, is a travelogue of ancient sites in Iraq.

A note from the editor

An opinion piece that ran in the Journal’s November issue, “Three things witchcraft taught me about God,” received some unusually strong reactions from readers. It’s our intention to respond in our January issue.

ARCHBISHOP
SHANE
WRITES ▶



‘God loves to be found in unexpected places’

By Shane Parker

SEVERAL YEARS AGO, I toured through parts of Germany that had been closed to the West when I lived there as a child of NATO in the late 1960s. It was moving to visit the city of Dresden, which had been crushed by bombing in 1945, in what some historians believe was retaliation for the devastating bombing of the city of Coventry, U.K., in 1940. Poignantly, there is a Coventry Cross of Nails inside the reconstructed Frauenkirche (or “Church of Our Lady”) in Dresden, symbolizing the reconciliation that has been achieved over the years since the Second World War.

During a couple of days in Berlin, I visited an art collection of the Berlin State Museums known as the Gemäldegalerie. This compact, interesting gallery holds an internationally famous collection of European paintings.

The gallery is known for its scientific approach to collecting and displaying masterpieces and usually has about 1,000 paintings on display at any one time, including a very large Rembrandt collection. The paintings are grouped in rooms that allow for brief, rich immersions into the work of European masters.

After slogging through the many layers of Berlin’s often troubled history, I found the Gemäldegalerie a welcome, beautiful space to trace brushstrokes that had rendered remarkable illustrations of life and belief through the ages.

Even though the gallery is small and well-designed (definitely scientific), the



▲ *Die Geburt Christi*, painted in 1513, holds a lesson for us about light and Christmas, the author writes.

PHOTO: SHANE PARKER

dozens of masterpieces made it difficult to focus. However, the painting that accompanies this column caught my full attention.

It is called *Die Geburt Christi* (“The Nativity”) and it was painted by Albrecht Altdorfer in 1513. It depicts a dream-like scene, with the Holy Family sheltering in a derelict stable, three angels singing joyfully above them, another three holding the cloth that cradles the infant

Jesus, and another off to the left in a cloud of light, presumably announcing the birth to shepherds.

We see old Joseph, trying to shield the flame of his candle so it won’t blow out, failing to grasp that everything around him, from the shoots of grass to the leaves of the tree, and even the night sky, is being warmly illuminated by the aura of the Christ Child, which outshines all earthly light.

Can you see yourself in Joseph, nursing a little candle of faith, trying to prevent the winds of troubling things from blowing it out and darkening your spirit? As though it’s up to you to keep your light shining?

Christmas reminds us that faith is a gift from God and not something we have to manufacture for ourselves. Instead of looking to our own small capacity to brighten the darkness of our hearts, Christmas tells us that God gives light to the world, and that God places that light right inside our hearts. So remember to look to the Christ Child to discover or strengthen your faith: it is God’s gift to you.

Try to keep things simple during Christmastide, because God loves to be found in unexpected places, away from perfect things and inflated expectations. Go to wherever the light God placed in your heart begins to glow within you, calling you to give of yourself in ways that warmly illuminate the lives of others. ■

Archbishop Shane Parker is the primate of the Anglican Church of Canada.

FEATHER
AND SAGE ▶



Let’s not hide the true Christmas gift

By Chris Harper

FEATHER: Creator God, we the children of your creation lift our thanksgiving for your wondrous hand in making all things new through the signs of the season. We thank you for the beauty in the blanketing snow, and the cold air which causes us to draw close to our loved ones. We especially thank you for your faithfulness and provision in the true gift of the season, in your Son our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in whom was revealed the truth and light of your love and peace to all nations. Open our hearts to accept your will and provision; open our eyes to see your true light, even in the darkness of this world. Grant us by your grace this day that we might play a small part in your message of hope, peace, joy and love, bless us to be a blessing to all in our journey, this day and all days. This we pray in the name of Jesus the Christ. Amen.

SAGE: December is an amazing month wherein we gaze through the frosted glass of the past year; we also lift our eyes to the hope and promise of the new life to come. As the snows blanket and cover all with the sleepiness and beauty of the season, and the dark hours lengthen, we collectively yearn for the new seasons promised over the horizon of time. The true gift of the season and moment is to know the depth of God’s love to all through His Son the Christ—a Saviour who came in humility, innocence and glory to be recognized only by the open and seeking; a Saviour who came in obedience and peace to shake the foundations of the world and upset the balance of power and structure. There’s definitely a contrast there—and in the season and month before us, too, when the cold causes us to seek warmth, when the frozen beauty of the snow covers the reality of life

beneath, and when there are worldly gifts that have nothing to do with the one true gift of the season in Christ.

The true gift is before us all. Do we share it with a small invitation to those around us to join us at one of the many beautiful services that will be happening this month in the church, or do we hide it away, as a blanket of snow covers the reality of life beneath, hiding truth and revealing only the surface? The gift of Christmas was meant to be shared and celebrated; the church was meant to rejoice in the new life revealed, and to tell of the love, promise, and gift given to all through the one true light of God, Jesus Christ our Lord.

A blessed Christmas and peace to all. ■

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

ANGLICAN JOURNAL

First published as the *Dominion Churchman* in 1875, *The Anglican Journal* is the national newspaper of the Anglican Church of Canada.

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PUBLISHER:

General Synod, Anglican Church of Canada
The Anglican Journal is published monthly (with the exception of July and August) and is mailed separately or with one of 15 diocesan or regional sections. We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada for our publishing activities.

EDITORIAL POLICY:

Since 2019, the *Anglican Journal* has been tasked by General Synod with producing content of “the highest standards of journalistic responsibility, accuracy, fairness, accountability and transparency” that is “fact-based, fact-checked and in-depth, tackling important issues, asking and answering difficult questions.” General Synod, as publisher, respects and defends its journalistic integrity. While General Synod retains the right to intervene in stories which have the potential to bring the church into disrepute, it expects to exercise that right rarely, if ever; in cases of unresolvable conflict or disagreement, General Synod has the right to order changes, but the changes so ordered must be publicly noted in the *Journal*. The policies and practices that govern the *Journal* can be found in full online, at bit.ly/41HfG5Q.

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ADVERTISING DEADLINE:

20th day of the 2nd month preceding publication date. Acceptance of advertising does not imply endorsement by the *Anglican Journal* or the Anglican Church of Canada. Indexed in the Canadian Magazine Index, Canadian Periodical Index and online in the Canadian Business & Current Affairs Database. Printed in Toronto, ON by KT Web Printing.
PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT NO. 40069670

SUBSCRIPTION RATE:

\$10 a year in Canada (1 per issue), \$17 in U.S. and overseas. Excepting these inserts: Niagara Anglican \$15; Perspective (Ottawa) \$15 suggested donation; Huron Church News \$15 a year in Canada, \$23 U.S. & overseas; Diocesan Times (NS & PEI) \$15; Anglican Life (Nfld) \$15, Nfld & Labrador \$20 outside Nfld, \$25 in U.S. and overseas.

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ISSN-0847-978X

CIRCULATION: 35,000

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INDIGENOUS
CHURCH ►'These
are
sacred
gifts'How Indigenous Anglicans are incorporating
their traditions into Christian worship▲ Archdeacon
Travis EnrightPHOTO:
MATTHEW PUDDISTER**Matthew Puddister**
STAFF WRITER

Archdeacon Travis Enright was raised Roman Catholic, then Anglican, and attended an Anglican seminary. But he says he feels most connected to Jesus in the sweat lodge—a traditional site of spiritual ceremonies, healing and prayer for many Indigenous peoples.

In his own spiritual journey as a young man, Enright—rector of St. Mary's Anglican Church in Highlands in Edmonton, and a member of James Smith Cree Nation who is of both Cree and Irish background—sought to rediscover his Cree heritage and to reconcile Indigenous traditions with Christianity.

His Cree mother “tried really hard to hide her Cree-ness to the point where she did not want me to learn Cree,” he recalls. “She did not want me to go to ceremony, any of these things that she thought that would diminish me as a person.” Meanwhile, when Enright travelled to Ireland, he realized despite being one-quarter Irish, he could not pass as white.

“I knew that I was functionally and historically different than the vast majority of the white people who I went to school with,” Enright says. “That made me want to find my identity.” He listened to stories from Cree elders. “These stories were our education,” he says. “Built into those stories was a high level of spiritual contact and spiritual inspiration.”

Indigenous Anglicans are still early in the process of incorporating cultural traditions into their practice of Christianity, National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop Chris Harper says—and views of Indigenous Christian identity and what practices are appropriate vary greatly across Canada.

“From coast to coast to coast, we have such a diversity of understanding about what is traditional ... Indigenous or local practice,” Harper says. “Trying to fit that ... into the Christian [context] has been one of the biggest tasks and challenges that we’ve had.”

▲ A smudging
ceremony during
worship at
General Synod in
2025PHOTO:
ANGLICAN VIDEO

A continued factor, Harper says, is the legacy of the residential school system, “which basically said everything that we practiced ... the way we thought theologically, spiritually was wrong and was evil.” The resulting mentality in which “anything Indigenous is wrong” persists in some Indigenous communities, he says.

“At the same time, those reserves that have incorporated a little bit of Indigenous traditional teachings and [practices] have found that it has helped their sense of identity,” he adds.

Where some Indigenous people “absolutely reject anything Indigenous,” Harper says, others “have gone the other way to the other extreme. They’re totally traditional and want nothing to do with Christianity. So we are an incredibly complex, broken, wonderfully diverse community of peoples within the church and outside the church.”

“We’re still very much early in the morning of change, if you will, for faith and faith development, especially Christian spirituality for Indigenous Peoples,” the national Indigenous archbishop says.

He recalls that it was only 15 years ago when he first smelled sweetgrass, sage, seed and tobacco being burned as sacred herbs in a smudging ceremony—a traditional practice among many Indigenous peoples—inside a church. The experience of listening to an honour song—a type of song showing respect traditional among some Indigenous cultures—within a Christian context was profoundly moving for Harper.

“The first time I heard an honour song being sung inside the church, I cried, because I never thought I would ever hear or see that,” he says.

Christ transcends cultures: Enright

Enright—who as chair of governance for the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples (ACIP) is tasked with creating Indigenous forms of representation within ACIP and Sacred Circle—sees

a long-term trend among Indigenous Anglicans towards greater inclusion of their own traditions in worship and liturgy.

Sacred Circle’s founding documents, The Covenant and Our Way of Life, envision the living out of Indigenous traditions in harmony with Anglican Christianity. The Covenant stresses that Indigenous Anglicans “initially experienced God through our own languages, cultures and worldview.” It continues, “By and large, there is a strong correspondence between our traditional spiritualities and biblical theology, with our Creator being the God and Living Christ of the Bible.” Sacred Circle’s nine guiding principles include respecting “the spiritual traditions, values, and customs of our many peoples.”

Our Way of Life also ties together Indigenous cultures with governance of the Indigenous church. Sacred Circle—the national gathering of Indigenous Anglicans—will, it says, “be guided by Indigenous values, accords/rules, customs or procedures, found in the circle of gathering, smudging, or greeting as well as the oral traditions handed down in our stories, art, ceremonies, and the music of the Peoples. This is where Indigenous law is found, and it is our spiritual governance.”

When he attended seminary, Enright wondered if Indigenous traditions and Christianity clashed, but concluded they did not. “Jesus Christ is lord of the world, not just lord of the cathedrals in Europe,” he says.

In Cree creation myths he finds parallels to Jesus. The coming of the second person of the Trinity, he says, is “not something that can be tied down to one cultural experience.”

At the Aug. 4-10 meeting of Sacred Circle, Enright proposed changes to the election and representation process for ACIP and Sacred Circle, which have until now been based on the Anglican Church of Canada’s four ecclesiastical provinces. Enright instead suggested 12 regional



PHOTOS: HELEN DUNN AND DAVID MOUL

Left: An ambo fall, or pulpit hanging, at St. Clement’s Church Anglican Church in North Vancouver, BC, made by Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh diaconal postulant Jenn Ashton; right, cedar brushing at St. Hilda’s Anglican Church in Sechelt, B.C.

“council fires” based on historic and current Indigenous linguistic and cultural habitation patterns and natural land and water boundaries. Enright says the ways Indigenous Anglicans across Canada incorporate their traditional practices into Christianity follow broad trends in different regions.

Practices vary among Indigenous Peoples across the country

The Rev. Sheila Cook, an ACIP member and priest at St. Columba’s Anglican Church and Christ Church in Alert Bay, B.C., says liturgies vary in context. “You have to know your setting and hold your people where and as they are,” Cook says. “I am Cree and smudging is a part of my ancestral teachings ... I would not try to impose those teachings within a Coastal Indigenous setting on a Sunday worship.” Cook herself was ordained with a smudging ceremony in September 2022 at Christ Church Cathedral in Victoria.

When blessing a house, Cook will ask residents if they want a smudge or water blessing. “Setting, context, and the people need to be consulted and held in this ongoing walk of reconciliation,” she says. “Curated liturgy is a huge part of that reconciliation walk.”

Jenn Ashton, a Coast Salish author and member of the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (also known as Squamish) First Nation in B.C., serves as Indigenous cultural sensitivity leader at St. Clement’s Anglican Church in North Vancouver. She notes that one church in her area does cedar brushing every Maundy Thursday—a traditional practice that uses cedar boughs to promote healing. Her own church, she adds, is one of many that has written its own land acknowledgement, and currently uses the Indigenous Catechist Training Manual, a document published through the Office of the National Indigenous

Anglican Archbishop that summarizes basic principles of Christianity from an Indigenous perspective.

Enright believes denominational identity is particularly important to Indigenous Christians in the Prairies. In Edmonton, many Indigenous people might identify themselves as Catholic even before saying they’re Christian, he says. For First Nations Christians in the Prairies, Enright says, it’s important that “the liturgy is still Catholic or Anglican, but the surroundings around it are very Indigenous.”

At St. Faith’s Anglican Church in Edmonton, where Enright serves as rector, 90 per cent of the liturgy is in English. At the same time, he says, “We smudge and we’ve changed the liturgy to be as Cree-inspired as we possibly can.”

Joseph René de Meulles, district captain of Fort Edmonton Métis District 9 and a delegate at August’s meeting of Sacred Circle, says there tend to be few specifically Métis cultural practices in Christian worship.

Opinions vary among Métis regarding the incorporation of First Nations traditions such as smudging into Christian worship, De Meulles says. He personally observes First Nations ceremonies because his mother was Cree. “I honour my mother by participating in that,” he says. But being baptized and raised Roman Catholic, he also wears a cross to honour his parents and that spirituality.

“There are Métis people that believe that when you observe the more traditional [First Nations] approaches, the Cree side, the smudge, that that’s not spiritually our tradition,” De Meulles says.

The Rev. Catherine Askew—an ACIP member, Ontario-based military chaplain to the Canadian Armed Forces, and member of Moose Factory Cree Nation—notes that a translation of the *Book of Common Prayer* into Moose Cree has been

in use in northern Ontario Indigenous communities for nearly 150 years. She cites other Indigenous practices in worship such as inclusion of drums and using smudge rather than incense.

“Part of Indigenous spirituality that is giving life in those communities is about Indigenous people having self-determination in liturgy,” Askew says.

Her own grandmother was from the community of Waskaganish on the Quebec shores of the James Bay coast, where the first sailing ship from the Hudson’s Bay Company landed in Canada more than 350 years ago. “You can imagine the impact that colonial presence has had on the communities up in those trading areas,” Askew says. “The practices that existed 350 years ago are just not present anymore.”

Traditional practices are more prevalent, she says, in the Indigenous Spiritual Ministry of Mishamikoweesh, which encompasses parts of northern Ontario and Manitoba.

Indigenous Anglicans in Mishamikoweesh are “holding culture camps,” Askew says. “They’re going out onto the land and teaching in the [traditional] language. They’re raising up elders and recognizing in their own way that these people are the spiritual leaders of the Anglican church in that area.

“It is unique to that area. That training model and ordination model is something that they have decided is right for their people. It is not something that would’ve been allowed coming out of the residential schools. But it is most definitely Anglican.”

When it comes to practicing Indigenous traditions, Askew cites beadwork as a vital spiritual exercise. “For me, it’s connecting with the teachings of my grandmothers and keeping connected with them,” Askew says.

“There are many Indigenous churches where you will go in and you won’t see

quilted banners or altar frontals that are done with silk,” she says. “You may see an altar frontal made of moose hide with beadwork on it. Again, those are cultural skills that they tried to erase. So to revive them within a church setting is saying that these are sacred gifts; these are things that give us life and definition.”

The *Journal* tried to contact Indigenous Anglicans from the diocese of the Arctic for this article, including members of ACIP and current and former bishops, but did not receive any responses.

On Oct. 20, Harper gave a dedicatory prayer at a ceremony unveiling a new stained-glass installation in the chapel of Bishop Strachan School in Toronto, designed by Inuit artist Ningiukulu Teevee. The original drawing by Teevee portrays the Inuit legend of the Owl and the Raven, a folk tale that explains why owls are white and ravens are black as the result of a disagreement between the two birds.

Reflecting on the story’s significance, Harper finds a Christian theme within this traditional Inuit tale: of God using messengers to spread a message of unity and peace.

Young people finding identity through traditions

Enright says generations of Indigenous people have struggled in their spiritual identities because of the erosion by colonizers of their traditional identities, cultures, languages, and spiritual beliefs. Indigenous youth today continue to suffer from intergenerational trauma and racism. “They’ve never had an opportunity to have an authentic journeying of their own spiritual identity,” Enright says.

He says his hope is that through the regional council fires, “these young people [find] some spiritual vocabulary, spiritual liturgies, spiritual ceremonies so that they can have some way of using the sacred to cope with [trauma] ... Drugs, alcohol, suicide are real things for young Indigenous people and they don’t have the spiritual tools to even combat them.”

Among both Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people, Harper finds a growing desire for a sense of identity that often manifests itself in rediscovering older cultural traditions.

“Young people across the board, whether you’re Indigenous or not, are more inquisitive ... They want to find something that actually speaks to them and that moves them in their thinking and in their heart,” Harper says.

The national Indigenous archbishop points to reports of a resurgence of interest among young people in Gregorian chant, or use of the *Book of Common Prayer* (BCP). Roman Catholic publications such as *The Catholic Weekly* in recent years have described young people embracing Gregorian chant. U.K. magazine *The Spectator* reported in 2023 that millennials were leading a revival in use of the BCP within the Church of England.

“That speaks volumes as to how things are transitioning and changing, and where we as a people are starting to find value, especially the young people, [who] are finding value in ritual,” Harper says.

“A lot of people, especially the older people, were told through residential school, ‘Don’t do that’ ... All young people, whether you’re Indigenous or not, are finding identity. They’re finding their voice and something that is unique and speaks to them.” ■

REGIONAL
NEWS ▶

Arctic diocese could lose cathedral, bishop says

Parish struggling to pay tax, insurance costs for iconic church

Sean Frankling
STAFF WRITER

Parishioners at St. Jude's Cathedral in Iqaluit are in danger of losing their place of worship if the congregation and the diocese of the Arctic cannot find solutions to several pressing financial problems, says Bishop Alexander Pryor. An outstanding tax bill with the City of Iqaluit, rising insurance rates, high operational costs and the by-now familiar problem of congregational decline—each exacerbated by the unique challenges of life in Northern Canada—have combined to threaten the parish's ownership of the cathedral.

"I think we are at the point right now where if something doesn't change with the finances, we could end up losing the building," he says.

St. Jude's is the cathedral church of the diocese of the Arctic. The original building, designed by architect Ron Thom in the 1970s to resemble an igloo and built by volunteers, was severely damaged by arson in 2005. The parish demolished what was left and rebuilt the structure to match its original appearance with the help of fundraising by parishioners and donations from across Canada, the United States and Europe. It took until 2012 to finish rebuilding the cathedral and until 2018 to finish paying off the costs of the construction.

The City of Iqaluit has now warned the parish St. Jude's could end up on a list of properties for auction over an overdue property tax bill, Pryor says. The bill was accrued under a city bylaw which came into effect in 2023 requiring religious institutions to pay tax on land used for places of worship. Former Iqaluit mayor Kenny Bell originally announced the bylaw in 2021, in response to an announcement that ground-penetrating radar had shown potential unmarked burial sites near a Saskatchewan residential school. "The Catholic church needs to apologize. And I think this is the only way we can make them," Bell was quoted as saying in a CBC News piece at the time.

The *Anglican Journal* contacted David Amborski, founding director of the Centre for Urban Research and Land Development at Toronto Metropolitan University, who said he was not aware of any precedent in Canada for Iqaluit's removal of the tax exemption for places of worship.

The parish applied for and eventually received a 75 per cent exemption from the tax. But the diocese still owes \$63,620 on behalf of the congregation across the short time the bylaw was in effect, says Pryor, which it simply cannot afford to pay. That number includes about \$29,000 owed on the cathedral property for the year 2023 and \$14,600 for 2024 as well as the taxes the parish was already paying on the land for its soup kitchen and ministry centre, says Pryor. He adds that the diocese and parish have since successfully lobbied the city, making the case that the value added by religious spaces far outweighs the tax revenue from their properties. In response, the city added a



▲ Built in the 1970s to resemble an igloo, St. Jude's Cathedral was severely damaged by arson in 2005 and rebuilt by 2012.

PHOTO: ALEXANDER PRYOR

method by which churches could apply every year for a full exemption to the tax.

But the exemption does not apply retroactively, Pryor says, and the city does not have the authority to cancel a past tax debt, leaving St. Jude's bill outstanding. The authority to cancel the tax debt rests with Nunavut's territorial legislature. This remedy is accessible only through a lengthy and complicated process, he says. As this issue was going to print, the legislature was just finishing the territorial election cycle, which had legislators on the campaign trail until late October. Pryor said he hoped the new government would be willing to consider cancelling the debt.

Reached by the *Journal*, a spokesman for the City of Iqaluit declined an interview, but provided the statement, "The City of Iqaluit applies its property taxation policies in accordance with territorial legislation and local by-laws, including the Property Tax Exemption By-law (No. 1001). We continue to work with all property owners to support compliance and ensure fair and transparent administration of the process." Several other religious organizations appear on Iqaluit's property tax arrears list.

The largest cost facing the cathedral is an annual \$188,000 insurance bill, which covers what it would cost to rebuild the cathedral, with its unique design in the shape of an igloo. Aside from the normally higher prices in Northern Canada, where everything from building materials to milk comes with additional shipping, fuel and logistics costs, insurance rates on churches in the North have risen dramatically, says Pryor. A series of church burnings has raised the risks of insuring religious buildings. In 2024, CBC reported that 33 churches had burned down in Canada, 24 of them due to arson, since the 2021 announcement of potential residential school grave sites.

The parish plans to convert its insurance policy to cover a functional replacement instead of a full rebuild.

That would mean building a more basic worship space in the place of the current building in case it is destroyed or seriously damaged, says Pryor. The goal, he says, is to ensure the congregation has a building to worship in and an insurance bill it can afford to pay.

Meanwhile, the church is facing all the regular costs that come with operating in the North, including heating and electricity bills which totalled \$145,000 and \$13,000 respectively in 2024, says Pryor. The church is often used for two or three funerals per week on short notice when bodies are flown back from medical treatment or examination in Ottawa. Because it takes the building a long time to heat up, staff have a choice between keeping the building at an operational temperature all week long or having mourners shivering in the Arctic cold.

St. Jude's is also experiencing an ongoing decline in congregation size, especially at its English-language services as retiring parishioners move south. All of these factors have resulted in the parish regularly running deficits in its budget, and the parish now owes roughly \$160,000 to the diocese, says Pryor.

The diocese and the cathedral are entering a period of discernment looking for solutions both to expand the church's membership and to lower its costs, he says. Those include evangelism and outreach efforts, says Pryor, but also possible staffing changes at the cathedral, which until recently had a full-time dean, an associate priest, a part-time ministry worker and a full-time parish administrator. Former dean the Rev. Chris Dow has moved away to become chaplain at Wycliffe College in Toronto and former part-time priest Bishop Ann Martha Keenainak has become a suffragan bishop, but even without their salaries to pay, the cathedral is still struggling, Pryor says. ■

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GAFCON statement formalizes split, scholar says

Continued from p. 1

of Exeter—as the next Archbishop of Canterbury. Mullally will be installed as the Church of England’s senior bishop in March 2026 in a service at Canterbury Cathedral.

GAFCON was formed in 2008 in protest of the growing acceptance of same-sex relationships, blessings and marriages among some member provinces of the Anglican Communion, which GAFCON leaders consider unbiblical. Many bishops in GAFCON have boycotted the Lambeth Conferences and other communion meetings for years. Some had already stripped references to communion with Canterbury or the Church of England from their constitutions. In 2023, the organization announced it no longer recognized then-Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, over his support of a Church of England vote in favour of same-sex blessings.

Mbanda released a statement Oct. 3 accusing the Church of England of abandoning “global Anglicans” by announcing Mullally as the new Archbishop of Canterbury. GAFCON provinces could not accept her because most of them supported a male-only episcopacy and strongly disagreed with her endorsement of blessing same-sex couples, he said.

On Oct. 16, Mbanda declared that GAFCON had resolved to “reorder the Anglican Communion,” reject the instruments of communion, end all participation in meetings called by the Archbishop of Canterbury and encourage its members to remove any remaining references to communion with Canterbury or the Church of England. It would also form a council of primates, he wrote, which would elect a chairman to be considered “first amongst equals,” the traditional role of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Mbanda’s communique does not call this move a schism. Rather, it says, “As has been the case from the very beginning, **we have not left the Anglican Communion** [emphasis his]; we are the Anglican Communion.”

Announcement ‘makes it that much harder to come back’

The Rev. Ephraim Radner is a retired professor of theology at the University of Toronto’s Wycliffe College and a former missionary with experience in Burundi and Haiti. He says the new declaration changes little when it comes to the regular practice of GAFCON’s member bishops and provinces. For decades now, its member churches, including those of Nigeria, Uganda, Rwanda have already boycotted meetings of the communion. But Mbanda’s message does make an important change by effectively formalizing a separate set of leadership structures, says Radner. Formalizing that difference adds new barriers to any future effort to reconcile the split in the global Anglican community, he says. It makes it more difficult for Anglicans who have been participants in GAFCON but have maintained some ties to the original Communion to keep their lines of engagement open, he says. While progressive Western Anglicans have been similarly reducing their efforts to engage with GAFCON in practice, the addition of official alternative structures makes



▲ **Archbishop of Canterbury-designate Sarah Mullally speaks at Canterbury Cathedral shortly after being named to the position Oct. 3, 2025.**

PHOTO: NEIL TURNER
FOR LAMBETH PALACE

GAFCON’s move an official schism, in Radner’s opinion.

“It makes it that much harder to come back. We have 2,000 years of track record of formal church divisions and none of them get resolved or reconciled quickly [...] Ultimately, division weakens the church. It always has. It has never strengthened it.”

Structures don’t provide a basis for reconciliation, he adds—only human charity, prayer, listening and arguing can do that.

The Rev. Jesse Zink is the principal of Montreal Diocesan Theological College and has travelled, worshiped and liaised widely among provinces of the Anglican Communion including Nigeria, Rwanda, South Sudan, South Africa and England. Zink says this experience has shown him there is a difference between what bishops and primates proclaim and what ordinary Anglicans believe when it comes to communion abroad. The Anglican Communion is a wide and deep network of relationships among Christians, he says, not just a set of documents or leadership structures. It is more than the typical voices that get reported, which tend to be male, English-speaking bishops, he adds.

“Of course the Anglican Church is an episcopal-led tradition, but in none of our churches can bishops just sit around and decide whether or not they want to be in the Anglican Communion,” he says. They can offer guidance, but in GAFCON provinces just as in Canada, both synods and individuals may feel and vote differently. His own school has just admitted several students from Rwanda, he says, which illustrates that at least some people remain willing to form ties across the divide.

“What the Archbishop of Rwanda seems to suggest is that your opinion about who you should be in relationship with turns on whether or not you agree on a relatively narrow set of issues,” Zink says. “[But] it has often been my experience that there are people who say, ‘Look, we might disagree on topic X, but that’s not going to stand in the way of us having some form of Christian relationship.’”

Both Zink and Radner say much depends on how many provinces, bishops and individuals choose to go along with this new vision for GAFCON.

“There are individual bishops all over the place in these provinces related to GAFCON that have varying degrees of desire to be formally separate,” says

Radner. “I’ve met them.” This is one thing that may cause tension in GAFCON in years to come, he says. Often branches of the church that split once continue to split again.

“It’s the Protestant dynamic of vociferousness. When you’re always protesting, it’s in your blood,” he says. “It’s hard to stop it.”

In response to Mbanda’s declaration, Archbishop Shane Parker, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, and the church’s four metropolitans released a joint statement reaffirming the Canadian church’s communion with the Church of England and its commitment to the four Instruments of Communion: the Lambeth Conference, the Anglican Consultative Council, the Primates’ Meeting and the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Mullally ‘timely and inspired’ choice: primate

Earlier that month, Parker called Bishop of London Sarah Mullally’s appointment as the 106th Archbishop of Canterbury a “timely and inspired” choice for the primate of the Church of England and symbolic head of the worldwide Anglican Communion.

“Her public comments about a number of matters reflect balance and careful consideration of the need to acknowledge differences, with a view to maintaining unity rather than feeding division.”

The previous archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, resigned on Nov. 12, 2024 after an investigation determined that he failed to inform police after becoming aware of physical and sexual abuse by the late John Smyth, a high-profile lawyer and volunteer at Christian summer camps.

Before her ordination in 2001, Mullally worked as a nurse, specializing in caring for cancer patients. From 1999 to 2004 she served as chief nursing officer for England, the government’s most senior advisor on nursing issues—at 37, she was the youngest person to ever hold the role—as well as the National Health Service’s director of patient experience for England.

Since 2024, Mullally has served as chair of the board of trustees for Christian Aid, an ecumenical relief and development charity that includes 41 Christian denominations in the United Kingdom and Ireland. She has also served on the Church of England’s National Safeguarding Steering Group, which oversees how the church protects children and vulnerable people from abuse within the church.

In a message to the Anglican Communion, Mullally said she looked forward to working alongside her fellow primates and bishops, learning from each province and joining the Anglican Consultative Council when it meets in 2026.

“Globally and locally, there is much to discourage and divide us. Yet in these times, we are called to bear with one another in love, extending grace and standing as witnesses to Christ’s reconciling power.”

At Canterbury Cathedral on Oct. 3, Mullally said that “in an age that craves certainty and tribalism, Anglicanism offers something quieter but stronger.” ■

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SAINT PAUL UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF THEOLOGY

Would you like to deepen your understanding of your faith and discover fresh ways of bringing it to bear on the questions and challenges of life? The Faculty of Theology at Saint Paul University has been preparing Anglicans for lay and professional ministry for over forty years. Students pursue practical ministry experience in the Anglican tradition in a rich ecumenical and bilingual educational context, beautifully situated in the national capital region. The Faculty of Theology offers a variety of programs: BA, MTS, MDiv, MA, and PhD. Courses are offered online and in person. For more information, please contact Dr. Sarah Kathleen Johnson at Saint Paul University, 223 Main Street, Ottawa, ON K1S 1C4 sarah.kathleen.johnson@ustpaul.ca

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

The Faculty of Divinity is an ecumenical community of theological education located at the heart of a leading university and theological consortium, rooted in the Anglican tradition’s embrace of diversity and social engagement. Seeking to serve students by deepening knowledge, encouraging hope, and practising love, Trinity prepares Christian leaders to participate in God’s mission to the world. The college offers professional and graduate level programs that prepare students to engage with the needs of contemporary churches and society. We enjoy particular expertise in historical and contemporary liturgy, church history, ethics and theology, Anglican and Eastern Orthodox studies, philosophy of religion, and congregational studies. We offer 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

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WYCLIFFE COLLEGE

at the University of Toronto is an evangelical graduate school of theology which provides high quality education. Rooted in the Anglican tradition, the College has a long history of fostering spiritual formation and academic excellence since its founding in 1877. Understanding the Bible as the Word of God written, Wycliffe posits the theological interpretation of Scripture as central to the identity and work of the College. As a founding member of the Toronto School of Theology, Wycliffe offers conjoint degrees with the University of Toronto at both the master’s and doctoral levels, as well as certificate programs. With Master of Divinity (MDiv), Master in Theological Studies (MTS), Doctor of Ministry (DMin), Master of Theology (ThM), Master of Arts in Theological Studies (MA), and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) programs, the College aims to equip students who graduate from its programs for readiness in leadership for Christ’s Church and a variety of vocational settings globally. Certificate programs are also offered in Theological Studies and Anglican Studies. Learn more at www.wycliffecollege.ca or contact admissions@wycliffe.utoronto.ca for program information.

Ecclesiastical province of Ontario drafts misconduct policy

Sean Frankling
 STAFF WRITER

By year's end, the ecclesiastical province of Ontario may have a new misconduct policy to cover the conduct of staff, clergy and bishops when they are doing work or holding meetings at the provincial level.

Most of the time, these people are working in their diocesan capacities, says Alex Pierson, executive officer of the province, who also serves as the financial officer of the diocese of Ontario. As a result, the province has so far depended on diocesan or national misconduct policies to cover any incidents of harassment or sexual misconduct that might arise. However, the province's ongoing work on safe church policy made it clear that there was a serious gap in safe church policy at the provincial level, he says, and the province put together a task force to draft a new policy.

The new draft policy outlines procedures and principles for how the province will investigate alleged cases of misconduct. It names due process, presumption of innocence confidentiality, adherence to gospel values and pastoral care as guiding principles. Among the new elements it lays out is the power of the metropolitan of the province to initiate an investigation without necessarily receiving a complaint if they believe there is good reason to suspect misconduct has occurred. It also creates the position of canon pastor at the provincial level, a role appointed by the metropolitan and charged with investigating misconduct, administering the province's canons and policy and making recommendations to the metropolitan on how to proceed.

The province solicited feedback from bishops, clergy and parishioners in its constituent dioceses on the draft policy until Oct. 10, says Pierson, as well as from the dioceses' own canon pastors and chancellors. By the deadline, the task force had received comments on the wording of some passages which will be considered and possibly worked into the final draft, he adds. The next step is for the final draft to be presented to a special meeting of Ontario's executive council in early December. If approved there, it will go into effect.

Pierson says an investigation may be necessary even in some cases when a sexual relationship between staff is consensual, such as when there is an uneven power dynamic between those involved. In such cases, privacy cannot be used as a reason not to investigate, he says. But any investigation that does result must still comply with high standards of confidentiality, he says, ensuring the outcome of an investigation is public without broadcasting all the complainants'



FILE PHOTO

A final draft of the policy is to be presented to a special meeting of Ontario's executive council for approval in early December, says provincial executive officer Alex Pierson.

and respondents' related personal information. It may be necessary to more explicitly define the distinction between what is private, what is grounds for investigation and what information will be released publicly for the final draft, he says.

The ecclesiastical province of Ontario covers a similar area to the civil province, with the addition of some land in northern Quebec. ■

CLASSIFIEDS



An English Country Utopian Garden

As a young child, Professor Greg Claeys, born in Paris in 1953, created his own little country with mountains, cities and oceans. He was the king and he ruled kindly. He called it Utopia, a land where everything ran smoothly and people all got along.

He grew up to write about Utopia and its opposite called Dystopia, which is something we see in some countries where wars dominate and nothing works out. His attendance at McGill University and the encouragement of his group of enlightened followers, pushed him towards his environmentalist tendencies to become the greatest of speakers in Europe and wrote on anything and everything. His concern for the planet grew and he saw where we might be heading as a world.

He returned in his mind to a Utopian ideal and spoke at Ted talks and taught in several countries as China, Britain and North American Universities. He became a British subject. He felt that the habit of taking over other countries was not the way to go and didn't help much in global environmentalism. He spoke to students of what was coming up and encouraged them to wake up. They are the future after all. To order his colourful biography, please contact Mary Shepherd at (514) 487-0126 or at marymathilda@hotmail.com.

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January BIBLE READINGS

DAY READING

- | | | |
|--------------------------|----|-----------------------|
| ☐ | 1 | Isaiah 11 |
| ☐ | 2 | Romans 15:1-13 |
| ☐ | 3 | 2 Kings 1:1-8 |
| ☐ | 4 | Isaiah 40:1-20 |
| ☐ | 5 | Matthew 3:1-12 |
| ☐ | 6 | Leviticus 19:1-19 |
| ☐ | 7 | Ezekiel 34:11-31 |
| ☐ | 8 | James 1 |
| ☐ | 9 | James 2 |
| ☐ | 10 | James 3 |
| ☐ | 11 | James 4 |
| ☐ | 12 | James 5 |
| ☐ | 13 | Isaiah 35 |
| ☐ | 14 | Matthew 11:1-15 |
| ☐ | 15 | Micah 1 |
| ☐ | 16 | Micah 2 |
| ☐ | 17 | Micah 3 |
| ☐ | 18 | Micah 4:8-5:9 |
| ☐ | 19 | Micah 5:10-6:16 |
| ☐ | 20 | Micah 7 |
| ☐ | 21 | Matthew 1:18-25 |
| ☐ | 22 | Titus 1:1-2:5 |
| ☐ | 23 | Titus 2:6-3:15 |
| ☐ | 24 | Luke 2:1-20 |
| ☐ | 25 | Isaiah 62 |
| ☐ | 26 | Acts 6 |
| ☐ | 27 | John 21:20-25 |
| ☐ | 28 | Hebrews 2 |
| ☐ | 29 | Psalms 148 |
| ☐ | 30 | 1 Chronicles 29:10-30 |
| ☐ | 31 | Numbers 6:22-27 |

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