

# ANGLICAN JOURNAL

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PHOTO: SEAN FRANKLING

## Activist deacon's trespassing charge dropped

**Canon Michael Van Dusen, accompanied by Sister Mary Ellen Francoeur, a Roman Catholic nun and fellow climate activist, stands in front of Toronto's St. Lawrence Market courthouse before appearing in court Dec. 23 on a trespassing charge.**

**Van Dusen, a vocational deacon at Toronto's Church of St. Aidan, was one of nine interfaith climate activists arrested**

**during a sit-in climate protest at a downtown Toronto branch of the Royal Bank of Canada April 9, 2024. Crown attorneys withdrew the charge against Van Dusen minutes after this photo was taken.**

**Van Dusen later told the Journal he intended to continue protesting RBC's fossil fuel investments. "This was not an event," he said. "This is a campaign."**

## Primate urges Carney to implement universal basic income

**Matthew Puddister**

STAFF WRITER

Archbishop Shane Parker, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, has called on the federal government to implement a Universal Basic Income (UBI) "in alignment with the living wage for all Canadians."

In an open letter on behalf of the Anglican Church of Canada to Prime Minister Mark Carney and Finance Minister François-Philippe Champagne published Dec. 4, the primate highlighted UBI research and advocacy in Canada and other countries that he said showed its "potential economic and social value." He cited a pilot project in Ontario that showed improved physical and mental health as well as financial benefits to UBI recipients. In a time when Canadians are struggling with a "growing affordability crisis, including escalating housing insecurity and unprecedented increases in food bank usage," a UBI, he said, would boost their



PHOTO: JULIA K2

financial security and advance equity.

"It represents a positive nation-building policy for today and tomorrow and is consistent with the transformational agenda of your government," the letter states. "It has found support across party lines and in communities across this country. I pray you will make the implementation of a UBI a high priority."

The primate's call for a UBI reflects Resolution C004, one of a number of motions that were on the agenda for last summer's General Synod but, for lack of time, were referred to the Council of the General Synod (CoGS) instead. CoGS subsequently voted in favour of the

resolution at its November 2025 meeting. C004 directs the primate to write to the federal government to call for a UBI in line with the living wage.

The living wage is the minimum income necessary for a worker to meet basic needs such as food and housing, as distinct from the minimum wage, which is the lowest wage an employer can legally pay their employees.

Parker said the content of the letter was also informed by a similar letter 41 bishops from the Anglican Church of Canada and Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada sent in 2020 to the then prime minister, deputy prime minister and finance minister. The earlier letter called on Canada to implement a guaranteed basic income (GBI)—a system involving payments only to lower-income people—citing other programs such as the Canada Emergency Response Benefit that the government launched in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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## National office seeks exit from United Church lease

**Property, budget, restructuring dominate November CoGS meeting**

**Sean Frankling**

STAFF WRITER

The Anglican Church of Canada is pulling out of a plan, years in the making, to share national office space with two other denominations—one of which is now also reconsidering the arrangement.

On Nov. 27, Canon (lay) Clare Burns, then-chancellor of General Synod, told the Council of the General Synod (CoGS) that a law firm contracted by the Anglican Church of Canada was in negotiations with the United Church of Canada on the former's exit from the deal. Signed in April 2024, it would have seen the national office move into space shared with the United Church of Canada and the Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCC) in property rented from the United Church.

Meanwhile, in a Dec. 12 update, the PCC announced its Assembly Council was "guiding a process of reviewing the PCC's options," as the Anglican Church of Canada's withdrawal from the lease meant that "important factors in the originally proposed ecumenical project have changed significantly."

The plan goes back to at least November 2020, when CoGS approved a non-binding memorandum of understanding exploring options on "sharing space with ecumenical partners." Burns announced at General Synod in June that former general secretary Archdeacon Alan Perry and chief financial officer Amal Attia had signed the lease for 300 Bloor St. West without consulting CoGS.

Anglican Church of Canada financial statements peg the cost of the lease at \$8.18 million for the first five years of tenancy. The United Church's executive officer of finance has said the cost would have been lower than this figure, and that the lease would have offered below-market rates.

Because negotiations about the terms of exiting the lease were ongoing, Burns told CoGS Nov. 27 she could share few other details about how the process was going or

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# 2026 budget shifts funds to support church shake-up

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when it would be complete. However, she confirmed it was moving in a positive way.

Parker said a team tasked with resolving questions about the church's property would be working out how to make best use of its current office at 80 Hayden St., known as Church House. These changes will include consolidation of office space as well as potentially opening new revenue streams by, for example, renting part of the space out to a commercial enterprise, he said.

"The vision would be for Church House to self-fund as much as possible," said Parker.

## 'Challenging and emotional times' at Church House

General secretary Andrea Mann described Church House as being "in a state of heightened awareness" as decisions about restructuring in the wake of General Synod's approval of the "Pathways" document, calling for reorganization in the church, take shape. "Some of us, maybe many of us, are openly relieved and excited, eager to contribute and hopeful of a positive transformation," she said. "Others are quietly anxious, concerned about their livelihoods, about the loss of friends and community and meaningful work." All shared a desire to be informed and included in the transformation work, Mann said.

"These are also difficult, challenging and emotional times," Mann said, adding that staff numbers will continue to reduce. "These decisions are necessary in this time ... But a foundation is being prepared—a foundation for what comes next, a foundation for the transformation upon us and before us."

During two sessions of its four-day meeting, CoGS held table group discussions on the restructuring work, during which Church House staff—including the *Anglican Journal*—were asked to leave the room.

Ordinarily, asking non-members to leave the room would entail a vote for CoGS to hold an in-camera session. According to church canons, CoGS meetings are to be governed by the rules of order and procedure of General Synod, which say General Synod holds its meetings in public or private "at its own discretion." The canons do not explicitly give the primate authority to make this decision alone. However, Parker told the *Journal*, the private session was only an informal discussion, not an official decision-making session of CoGS. The request for staff to step outside was intended to spare them any stress that might come from frank discussions of possible ongoing staffing changes.

Meanwhile, several Church House staff members have resigned, retired or otherwise moved on from their positions with the church. These include Lisa Barry, senior producer for Anglican Video; Krista Pura, program associate for Indigenous Ministries; Rob Murphy, Church House's facilities assistant; Sheilagh McGlynn, animator for youth ministries; and Andrea Mann, who left her former position as Global Relations director when named general secretary in October. Reached by the *Anglican Journal*, Parker did not comment on which if any of these vacancies were likely to be refilled.

"While we cannot speak to specific staff positions, the staff complement



PHOTO: SASKIA ROWLEY

**Young members of CoGS gather for a photo after a session on plans for a national youth council. L-R: Noah Skinner, Paige Keller, Gia Love, Sally Smith, Zach Groves.**



▲ L-R: Mary McKay, Rosie Jane Tailfeathers and Murray Still take a break from discussion of the church's strategy for change at CoGS.

PHOTO: SASKIA ROWLEY

at Church House will continue to evolve as the national church undergoes the transformational change process," he said in a prepared statement.

## 2026 budget reallocates resources for pathways work

The church's 2026 budget provides for this restructuring by making cuts to line items across the board, saving money where possible and redirecting it to parts of the national office which are involved in the six pathways themselves. An exception is the annual grant to the Council of the North, which will remain steady for several years, reversing a 2023 decision.

The church's investments posted a gain of about \$2.5 million in 2025—the result of an active but unpredictable market. Gains of this kind may not be repeatable in future years, said Archdeacon Tanya Phibbs, chair of the church's financial management committee. Most of this income is in the church's Consolidated Trust Fund—much of which, in turn, either has restrictions on its use or is money being managed by General Synod on behalf of dioceses and parishes. Typically, General Synod reinvests revenue of this kind into the market, meaning it is not available as cash to cover expenses.

The budget, which CoGS approved, is \$621,632 smaller than 2025's budget. Phibbs said its cuts to programming and its investment in the pathways reflected a dual need: to reduce spending to cope with falling revenues, and to commit resources to transforming the church into a leaner organization for the long term. It forecasts the church's revenue at about \$10,186,212 and its total expenses at \$10,184,940, for an excess of revenue over expenses of \$1,272. Among the departments receiving

the largest cuts are Global Relations, Indigenous Ministries, and Faith, Worship and Ministry. The *Anglican Journal* is budgeted for a modest reduction.

The budget of the primate's office is set to increase from 2025's \$476,826 to \$533,544 and the general secretary's office from \$906,631 to \$1,932,174. This money will be used in part for paying employees who operate under these people, said Phibbs, and the substantial increase for the office of the general secretary is due to the budgeting for the work of the pathways under that office, she said. Currently, about 66 per cent of the church's revenue comes from proportional giving from the dioceses, a share which will not be sustainable for them in the long term, said Phibbs.

The grant to the Council of the North, usually the largest single item on the church's budget, goes to support ministry in dioceses in northern Canada. The church will maintain the council's grant at \$1.95 million through 2028, Phibbs told CoGS. The financial management committee made this decision partly because the council had asked for the grant to remain stable through the work on the pathways; this request also received support from the House of Bishops, said Phibbs. The move reverses a decision mentioned in a November 2024 document submitted to CoGS, in which General Synod officers and managers agreed to reduce the council's funding by \$100,000 every year, beginning in 2024 until its annual apportionment was equal to 25 per cent of diocesan contributions to the national church.

## Youth council

CoGS members also approved a resolution to create terms of reference for a new national youth council to be drafted by Mann and a task force to be convened. Mann promised the task force drafting the terms of reference would include youth and young adult members of General Synod and from elsewhere in the church, beginning with the youth members present at CoGS. Later in the meeting, CoGS voted to appoint Paige Keller, youth member from the ecclesiastical province of Ontario, as the chair of the task force.

Zach Groves, a lay member of CoGS from the ecclesiastical province of British Columbia and Yukon and one of the youth members of June's General Synod, said he hoped the creation of a

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# CoGS decries Christian nationalism as 'distortion' of gospel



▲ **George Cadman, elected chancellor of General Synod Nov. 27.**

PHOTO: COURTESY OF BOUGHTON LAW

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national council would help reach youth across the country, and facilitate their participation in the decision-making and work of the Anglican Church of Canada as a whole. Numerous members of CoGS added their support to the motion.

### Statement on Christian nationalism

In response to a motion forwarded from June's General Synod gathering, CoGS approved a statement of the church's opposition to the political movement of Christian nationalism. It defines Christian nationalism in Canada as an ideology "which seeks to merge Christian and Canadian identities, conflating them and distorting both Christian faith and Canada's parliamentary democracy." It can provide cover for discrimination against marginalized groups and demand privilege for Christians at the cost of others, it says, both of which are at odds with the Baptismal Covenant's call to "seek and serve Christ in all persons and love our neighbours as ourselves." It denounces the movement as a "distortion" of the gospel and a threat to democracy.

The mover of the original General Synod resolution, the Rev. Lucia Lloyd, told the *Anglican Journal* her desire to



**Chief financial officer Amal Attia talks with newly elected treasurer Beng Wee at CoGS.**

PHOTO: SASKIA ROWLEY

have the church repudiate the ideology came from her own experiences as an American citizen. Lloyd moved to Canada after being disturbed by the amount of support the Trump administration had received from Christians for its divisive rhetoric and discriminatory policies, she said.

### New chancellor, treasurer elected

CoGS elected two new officers of General Synod Nov. 27, chancellor

George Cadman and treasurer Beng Wee. Both were elected by unanimous votes.

Cadman has served as chancellor of the diocese of New Westminster since 1988 and received an Anglican Award of Merit in 2023 in recognition of his service in that role, defending the diocese against lawsuits and negotiating financial compensation for historic sexual abuse of Japanese Canadians by Anglican priest Gordon Nakayama, who died in 1995. He is a litigator at Boughton Law, a Vancouver-based firm, and a member of the Parish of St. Agnes in North Vancouver. Cadman succeeds Canon (lay) Clare Burns, who submitted her resignation from the role of chancellor effective Dec. 31, 2025.

Wee takes the role of treasurer, while former treasurer Amal Attia remains chief financial officer; previously Attia had served in both roles. The treasurer is an officer of General Synod; the chief financial officer is not.

Wee was trained as an accountant in Cheshire, United Kingdom, and has worked in Malaysia, Hong Kong and New York, spending much of his career in accounting and management positions for the publishing company Dow Jones. He is a member of the parish of St. Paul's Bloor Street in Toronto. ■

## Enright, Askew to chair Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples

**Sean Frankling**  
STAFF WRITER

The Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples (ACIP), which governs the Indigenous Anglican church between meetings of its larger body, Sacred Circle, elected two new co-chairs Nov. 27: Archdeacon Travis Enright of the diocese of Edmonton and the Rev. Catherine Askew of the Anglican Military Ordinariate. National Indigenous Archbishop Chris Harper told the Council of the General Synod (CoGS), meeting Nov. 27-30 in Mississauga, Ont., that the two would begin representing ACIP at the next meeting of CoGS in March 2026.

Enright is the archdeacon for Indigenous ministries in the diocese of Edmonton and a member of the James Smith Cree Nation in Saskatchewan. He serves as a parish priest at St. Faith's Anglican Church in Edmonton. His use of both traditional Anglican and traditional Indigenous expressions of worship there has been covered by the *Anglican Journal*, the *Globe and Mail* and the *Edmonton Journal*.

In a 2009 *Anglican Journal* story, Askew said she had felt drawn to be a military chaplain as far back as the early 1990s and finally sent in her application to become one on Sept. 11, 2001. She was deployed to a support base in Afghanistan for six months during operations by American, Canadian and British forces there.



PHOTOS: DIOCESE OF EDMONTON; CONTRIBUTED  
**Archdeacon Travis Enright, left, and the Rev. Catherine Askew were voted ACIP co-chairs Nov. 27.**

Askew is a member of the Moose Factory Cree Nation. She has served as an instructor at the Canadian Forces Chaplain School at CFB Borden and as canon advisor on diversity and inclusion for the Bishop's Executive Council of the Anglican Military Ordinariate.

Harper also thanked outgoing ACIP co-chairs Canon Murray Still and Rosie Jane Tailfeathers, whom he described as a brother and sister to him.

Harper also announced Still and Tailfeathers would continue serving ACIP in the newly formed positions of standing elders. The standing elders are members of the Indigenous church with ACIP experience who will work closely with the presiding elder of Sacred Circle, otherwise known as the National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop, he said. Their purpose is to retain and dispense the wisdom and memory of the Indigenous church's history, the reasons its structures take the forms they do and the intentions behind the work it is carrying forward, said Harper. The exact shape of the positions is still being worked out, he added. ■

**Lent with Alongside Hope**

## Taking the Wild Paths of Peace



### What would it mean to discover a path of peace amidst chaos, with Jesus as our guide?

*Wild Paths of Peace*, written by Martha Jarvis, explores the unexpected hope of peacemaking at times of conflict in the world and in our personal lives. As the Anglican Communion's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Jarvis works to create partnerships between churches and UN teams as they respond to conflict, climate change and forced movement of people. Jarvis has also facilitated church-led peacemaking in South Sudan and Mozambique. Throughout it all, she's seen nothing that compares to the power of people coming back together after conflict, and ultimately, coming back to faith through Jesus.

Learn more and subscribe to receive daily messages at [alongsidehope.org/Lent2026](http://alongsidehope.org/Lent2026).

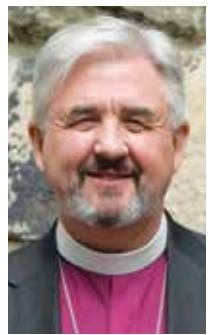


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## ARCHBISHOP SHANE WRITES ▶



# Pushing forward on the trail of spiritual discipline

By Shane Parker

I RECENTLY WENT to a Habitat for Humanity ReStore on Belfast Road in Ottawa to donate some items (and to check out the used tools). The store is in an industrial building which used to house the automotive machine shop I worked in for the better part of two years in the late 1970s. Whenever I am there my mind floods with memories as I look at the various doorways and loading bays, recalling the bustle of the shop and the colourful characters I worked with.

I left high school with a dismal grade point average. After enrolling to study forestry up north at the Sault College of Applied Arts and Technology and then switching after the first week into a commercial art program, I went through a difficult period of finding my way. I had been much affected by trauma related to the untimely death of my father and the instabilities that ensued. These conspired to persuade me that I would not amount to much. (It is so important to notice changes in the appearance and behaviour of children and young people, and to take the risk of asking if everything is okay.)

After a couple of months, I dropped out of college and made my way back to Ottawa. I was in a deepening mental health crisis (not something that was spoken of in those days). By the grace of God and the kindness of others, I held together and eventually found myself a job at the machine shop on Belfast Road.

The structure and routine provided by that job, the camaraderie of the people I worked with and the process of learning how to operate various machines and specialized tools—first restoring brake drums, disks, and pads, and then



PHOTO: SHANE PARKER

rebuilding clutches—calmed my troubled mind and created space for a sense of purpose to take root.

That sense of purpose led me to develop my interest in cross-country skiing. I became extremely fit, running and skiing for hours at a time, and weight training in a gym for \$2 a session. I would often run home from work, with soot in my hair and blackened hands. My first big life accomplishment was to qualify as a Nordic ski instructor and teach adult classes in a City of Ottawa winter program. The next big accomplishment was to complete the 160-km Canadian Ski Marathon in February 1978.

Those years taught me a lot and enabled me to heal from things which had compromised the person God had made me to be. (It is so important to

help children, young people and adults to know that bad things do not need to define who you are and who God made you to be.)

Skiing the marathon contained a key spiritual lesson. You can't just say you are a marathoner: to ski 160 km over often-challenging terrain, in highly variable weather and trail conditions—knowing the clock won't stop and wait for you, so you must keep moving no matter what—requires discipline, focus and practice.

The First Great Commandment, to “love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength,” speaks directly to this spiritual lesson: while the grace of God will see each of us through our journey on earth, Christ-like faithfulness requires discipline, focus and practice.

Living faithfully doesn't just happen. You can't be a person of prayer if you don't pray; you can't say you love your neighbour if you aren't showing love in meaningful ways. You can't trust God with your life if your sense of security depends on material things. You can't heal unless you get into a place where you can heal.

The season of Lent begins in February. Try to attend an Ash Wednesday service and listen well to the exhortation to observe a Holy Lent by “self-examination, penitence, prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, and by reading and meditating on the word of God.” Take these words to heart and let them affect you; and then, with discipline, focus, and practice, do your best to live faithfully as your journey continues. ■

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

## FEATHER AND SAGE ▶



## May the drumbeat of your heart be a celebration of life

By Chris Harper

**FEATHER:** Creator God, we give you thanks for this new day and all days. We ask that you forgive our failures to heed your word and call, grant us your spirit of peace and guide us to walk in humility and with an open heart. Walk with us this day and bless us to be a blessing to all in our shared journey of life and faith. This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

**SAGE:** Signs and symbols have always been relevant to our identity as children of creation. Flags, crosses, rings, regalia—these offer to all a mark of identity. I'd like to offer some reflections

on an Indigenous symbol that likewise helps bring peoples and nations into unity.

The drum has been a common symbol and instrument through the ages and nations. It's a simple instrument, yet it conveys the voices of peoples in all their complexity in story and song.

Indigenous circles of community have hand drums, the small drum of individuality. With these drums we sing our personal songs and join with others in circles of round dance songs, bringing the many together in voice and heartbeat. The great ground drum used in pow wows is the great voice of Mother Earth, creation's heartbeat, resounding and drawing everyone to sing and dance as one in the Creator's blessing—

the blessing of a shared heartbeat.

Whether with the hand drum or ground drum, our songs go out in celebration of and unity with peoples and nationhood. Our heartbeat, the gifted drum of the Creator, is our song of life and faith, the song and beat we build and write each new day to the glory of God. It will be our unifying song and beat that we will all sing before the Creator. So today, sing your song, add to the great circle of creation and celebration. May the drumbeat of your heart be one of peace, faith and unity and a celebration of life this day. Go in peace. ■

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

## LETTERS ▶

## Can an ecumenical spirit heal the Anglican Communion?

It concerns me when I read news articles about the collapse of the global Anglican Communion. I still remember the intense pain and fractured relationships that resulted when some clergy, parishioners and bishops decided to leave and begin the Anglican Network in Canada, recently renamed the Anglican Diocese of Canada, in 2005.

The Oct. 16 announcement by GAFCON, “The future has arrived,” is a manifesto disfellowshipping itself from Canterbury and Lambeth which can lead to even more pain. Certainly, as a communion we can focus on the transformation of lives

that results from the Kingdom of God while graciously allowing for a diverse theological spectrum. Isn't this the common ground upon which the communion was originally founded?

Ecumenical dialogue and cooperation focus on what we can do together in Jesus's name. Similarly, is the way past the impasse declared by GAFCON ecumenical cooperation within the Anglican Communion itself—owning our doctrinal biases, triggers, and sore points so that deep listening can happen?

Perhaps a renewed spirit of

cooperation will enable Anglicans globally to set aside sore points for the great vision wherein the blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who are ill and marginalized are included, we listen deeply, new life unfolds and the good news is proclaimed to the poor.

**The Rev. Donald Shields**  
Church of St. Thomas  
Brooklin, Ont.

### Let's be louder with our love for trans people

The world is a better place because of our transgender friends and neighbours. Yet their

rights are under attack. Lies and disinformation abound and many voices spew hatred.

The haters are loud. Yet those of us who claim to carry good news are too often silent.

Now is the time to speak—not with proselytizing, but bold public declarations of love and solidarity: on church signs, diocesan papers, websites, even billboards.

Silence is not neutral. It serves Empire and betrays the least of these.

Let's be louder with love.

**Rob Goetze**  
Parish of Christ Church, Edmonton

*The Anglican Journal welcomes letters to the editor.*

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

GUEST  
COLUMN ▶

# Monasteries offer 'warmth of peace' to a frozen age

By Greg Kennedy

**I**N THE MONASTIC tradition, hospitality and peacemaking have long been cellmates. Back in the sixth century, St. Benedict specified in his Rule, seminal to Christian monasticism, that “as soon as a guest is announced, let the Superior or the brethren meet him (*sic*) with all charitable service. And first of all let them pray together, and then exchange the kiss of peace.” Welcome, prayer, peace: the paradigmatic Benedictine progression.

History credits monasteries for carrying classical thought, art and culture through the violent, chaotic years following the collapse of the Roman Empire. Internally ordered and disciplined, these communities of scholars, craftspeople and scribes reproduced ancient texts, preserving them in Europe’s largest libraries. Without these committed centres of learning, an irreparable rupture in the inheritance of knowledge would have left the West intellectually impoverished, perhaps permanently.

Universities eventually replaced abbeys as bastions of scholarship, education and archival activity. Monasteries went on to shrink in number, influence and strength. Irish monks may well have saved civilization in the early Middle Ages, as scholar Thomas Cahill argued in his 1995 book, but no one’s writing books to contend that they’re *still* doing so.

I offer not yet a book, but this article in support of that idea. I’ve come to think that monasteries, and their contemporary offshoots, retreat houses, in fact are working on a civilizational scale—not in the traffic of the intellect, but rather in the realm of spiritual experience. As places that preserve silence, reflection, patience and compassion—all essential ingredients for peace—they may well, anonymously, be pulling us through these latter-day Dark Ages.

Iconic modern monastic Thomas Merton hints at this when he writes, “St. Benedict’s true contribution to European civilization is not that his monks were pioneers and builders and scholars and guardians of the classical tradition. These were only insignificant by-products.” More importantly, Benedictine monasteries “kept alive the central warmth of peace and unity among men (*sic*) in a world that seemed to be wrestling with the ice of death.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Merton, *The Waters of Siloe*, Garden City Books, 1951, p. 6

**Daunted, if not downtrodden, by the unique modern blend of corrosives—alienation from nature, social isolation, addictive technology, political polarization and widening economic inequality, to name a few—people need the refuge of retreat houses today just as much as scholars needed monastery libraries in the Middle Ages.**



▲ **A young woman rests near the 11th-century Benedictine abbey in Tyniec, Poland.**

PHOTO: B. BARON

Even with the steady rise in global temperatures (2024 was the first year to reach the notorious average of 1.5 °C warmer than pre-industrial levels—bad news, say climatologists), our world seems very much to be “wrestling with the ice of death.” This makes the warmth of peace all the more crucial to our social survival. For those with eyes to see and skin to feel, pockets of such warmth can be found in activist circles, artistic communities, charitable organizations, churches. They are perhaps most consciously tended in monasteries and retreat houses.

As intentional repositories of welcome, prayer and peace, these places safeguard the conditions for genuine spiritual experience. People here enter spaciousness and silence to explore who they are and what they truly believe. Of course, the sacred concentrates itself no more in these areas than elsewhere; they do, however, make it their explicit work to offer hospitality to the searching, thirsty, yearning parts of us that intuit livelier solid ground beneath the deadening daily grind.

For a decade in a renowned retreat house, I gave spiritual direction to scores of retreatants from seemingly opposite ends of the religious spectrum. Parishioners faithful to their congregation’s liturgical worship would supplement this communal form of prayer with annual retreats conducted in stillness and interiority. On the other hand, many people stultified by institutional religion’s constraints would retreat to the nakedness of presence alive in a group of strangers knit together by a shared, open solitude stronger than creeds and dogmas. Both sets of guests, the classic Christian and the recovering

Christian (plus a multitude outside either camp), found welcome and comfort at the retreat house.

Scions of Benedictine hospitality, retreat centres grew out of the monastic ministry of keeping guest houses accessible to lay people. Not called to perpetual reclusion, guests would benefit from inhabiting briefly the irenic pace and prayerfulness endemic to the monastery. Daunted, if not downtrodden, by the unique modern blend of corrosives—alienation from nature; social isolation; addictive technology; political polarization; widening economic inequality, to name a few—people need the refuge of retreat houses today just as much as scholars needed monastery libraries in the Middle Ages. At the very same time, in direct opposition to this need, Christian retreat houses continue to be shuttered.

This gives mutuality to the necessity. We all, albeit unbeknownst to most, would greatly benefit from retreating into the fostered quiet of monasteries and retreat houses. The latter, for their part, can’t survive without retreatants. The tranquility these places cultivate lives in the community, even if ephemeral, of seekers who welcome each other into an uncommon communion constructed out of practiced prayerfulness, not to be confused with stiff piety. Please consider going on retreat for the sake of lasting peace.

**Greg Kennedy** is the newest member of the Guest House team with the Sisterhood of St. John the Divine. He runs retreats and gives spiritual direction in their newly renovated facilities. You can reach Greg at [spiritualdirection@ssjd.ca](mailto:spiritualdirection@ssjd.ca).

## ANGLICAN JOURNAL

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### EDITORIAL POLICY:

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Renison provides spiritual and faith support to students and the community through the Chaplaincy and the work of the Chaplain who ministers to all Renison students to help meet their spiritual needs throughout their academic careers. The Renison Institute of Ministry (RIM) continues to evolve in response to the needs of lay theological education. Stay tuned for future developments with RIM.

To learn more about Renison University College visit [renison.ca](http://renison.ca).

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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](http://www.wycliffecollege.ca) or contact [admissions@wycliffe.utoronto.ca](mailto:admissions@wycliffe.utoronto.ca) for program information.

**[The Ontario pilot project] showed a very positive effect ... not only for recipients, but also for the community in which they live—because of course, if people get 2000 bucks, then they spend 2000 bucks, and typically in a local environment."**

— Retired bishop Geoffrey Woodcroft

# UBI 'subsidy to capital,' professor says

Continued from p. 1

Retired bishop Geoffrey Woodcroft, one of the key organizers of the 2020 letter, praised Parker's letter and its reference to the Ontario Basic Income Pilot Project, which provided GBI to 4,000 people in Ontario starting in October 2017. The project followed recommendations by Hugh Segal, chief of staff to two Progressive Conservative politicians, former Ontario premier Bill Davis and former prime minister Brian Mulroney. Implemented by a Liberal government, it was cancelled in August 2018 by the Progressive Conservative government of Doug Ford, with participants receiving their final payments in March 2019.

The Ontario pilot project, Woodcroft said, "showed a very positive effect ... not only for recipients, but also for the community in which they live—because of course, if people get 2000 bucks, then they spend 2000 bucks, and typically in a local environment."

It's "absolutely the right territory to be in," he said, since it shows Carney successes of UBI through what was originally a Progressive Conservative initiative—making it a "reasonably easy sell" politically, Woodcroft said.

Woodcroft also pointed to positive results he said came from the Manitoba Basic Annual Income Experiment, or Mincome, in the 1970s funded jointly by the provincial and federal governments.

## Anglican scholar raises concerns

The Rev. Jane Barter, professor of religion and culture at the University of Winnipeg and an Anglican priest in the diocese of Rupert's Land, co-wrote an article for the United Church of Canada magazine *Broadview* in response to the 2020 letter, criticizing UBI as an individualized policy solution that risked exacerbating inequality.

Speaking to the *Anglican Journal*, she said she had a similar response to Parker's 2025 letter. Barter agreed with its premise, however, noting, "This is a period of incredible precarity economically. People cannot afford their groceries. People cannot afford their rent. They cannot afford to support their families."

"From a socialist perspective, the problem with UBI is not the intention," Barter said. "We appreciate the intention to put more money in the hands of workers and of people who are in need. It's the architecture that's



**By giving individuals cash to navigate a fundamentally unjust market, we risk strengthening the very actors who profit from scarcity.**

—The Rev. Jane Barter

the problem. By giving individuals cash to navigate a fundamentally unjust market, we risk strengthening the very actors who profit from scarcity, such as landlords, such as grocers, such as pharmaceutical companies and so on."

Without effective rent control, Barter said, landlords would respond to implementation of a UBI by simply increasing rent.

"It becomes a subsidy to capital," she said. "Without strong price controls ... UBI can simply flow upward to those who own the essential goods."

She said many advocates of UBI "are not people of goodwill and faith like the primate, but they're people like Elon Musk and Mark Zuckerberg ... UBI becomes a tool for them to gain more control and more capture over our society."

As an alternative, Barter favoured programs such as those that Zohran Mamdani, New York City mayor-elect as this article was being written in mid-December, campaigned on, including free public transit; subsidized and socialized housing with rent controls; strong public utilities and direct public employment. Barter also called for socialized childcare and tuition-free education.

In addition to emphasizing collective ownership rather than individual purchasing power, she said, such policies would be resistant to inflation, unlike UBI.

"The church does have a history of looking at socialist responses to these questions," Barter said. "It has been a champion of Medicare. It did work for cooperatives."

She described church advocacy for UBI as adopting a "neoliberal frame" and "capitulating to the dominant voices within society," representing in her view "a concerning drift to the right, rather than any kind of prophetic calling."

Woodcroft said he did not think Barter was wrong or see her objections to UBI as criticisms. "I see them as exactly the type of outcome we want," he said. "But what is actually doable right now makes more sense given the precarious nature of economics and politics in North America and indeed globally."

A bill calling on Canada's minister of finance to plan for a GBI for anyone in Canada over the age of 17, introduced in May 2025 by Senator Kim Pate, passed its second reading in the Senate Nov. 6. ■



PHOTO: ANGLICAN VIDEO

## Laverne Jacobs mourned

Matthew Puddister  
STAFF WRITER

Canon Laverne Jacobs, who died Dec. 11 at the age of 83, is being remembered as a trailblazing leader of Indigenous ministries in both the Anglican and United churches.

Jacobs served as native ministries coordinator for the Anglican Church of Canada and later as the United Church of Canada's first native ministries coordinator.

One of 21 signatories of the 1994 Covenant in which Indigenous Anglicans called for a self-determining community within the Anglican Church of Canada, Jacobs played a leading role in national gatherings that compelled the church to grapple with its role in the residential school system.

"He was an icon," National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop Chris Harper said of Jacobs. "He was there at the very beginning just to see the Indigenous ministries from its lift off and from its very onset and concept ... He was that landmark that everybody saw." ■

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## March BIBLE READINGS

### DAY READING

- 01 Matthew 17:14-27
- 02 Numbers 21:1-9
- 03 John 3:1-17
- 04 Psalm 128
- 05 1 Chronicles 17:1-15
- 06 Exodus 16:9-21
- 07 Exodus 16:22-35
- 08 Exodus 17
- 09 Exodus 20:1-17
- 10 Psalm 81
- 11 John 4:1-20
- 12 John 4:21-41
- 13 John 4:42-54
- 14 I Corinth. 10:1-13
- 15 John 9
- 16 Psalm 146

### DAY READING

- 17 Isaiah 42:14-21
- 18 Revelation 4
- 19 Ezekiel 33:10-16
- 20 Psalm 130
- 21 Ezekiel 37:1-14
- 22 Matthew 22:1-33
- 23 1 Kings 17:17-24
- 24 2 Kings 4:18-37
- 25 Isaiah 7:10-14\*
- 26 Philippians 1:1-11
- 27 Philippians 1:12-20
- 28 Philippians 1:21-30
- 29 Matthew 26:1-30
- 30 Matthew 26:31-56
- 31 Matthew 26:57-75

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Blessings,

*+Chris L Harper*

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

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