

ANGLICAN JOURNAL

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The May issue of the *Journal*—written in mid-March

COVID-19 concerns had members of St. John the Divine, Maple Ridge, B.C. worshipping in the parish hall and sitting two metres apart March 15. In-person worship was suspended in the diocese two days later.

PHOTO: LAUREL DAHILL, VICAR OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE, MAPLE RIDGE, B.C.



Matthew Townsend
EDITOR

Editorials don't usually appear on the front page of the *Anglican Journal*—but these are unusual times, so here we go.

One of the challenges of producing a print publication, especially a monthly one, relates to timelines. In order for you to receive your copy of the *Anglican Journal* at the start of the month, we have to print it nearly a month before. This, in turn, means most content is finalized at least a week, perhaps two, before

the end of the month. I write this on March 23, for example.

Normally, this progression of deadlines presents itself as an irritation: perhaps a minor detail has changed before we publish, or maybe it looks like we've missed an important piece of news because it came out just after we went to press. Let's take (with apologies to her in advance, for this is merely a good example) Bishop Jane Alexander as a case study. In late January, she announced her intention to tender her resignation in April, effective in July. We couldn't get her news into the March paper due to timing, so we placed it in the April paper—which you've likely yet to receive, as I write this. In March, Alexander publicly announced she would not resign until at least December 31, 2020, due to the pandemic. We may see similar decisions elsewhere.

This is but one example of how difficult it can be to assemble the *Journal* during a period of unprecedented change. Reality changes day by day. Today, the Lambeth Conference of Bishops was postponed until 2021. It is impossible to know what tomorrow will bring. Perhaps by the time you receive this paper, Lambeth will have decided to meet by Zoom. We've not bothered to include news of this in the *Journal*, assuming you've likely heard by now—or that circumstances have changed. We cannot know the future.

With this in mind, we've tried to divide this issue's focus between COVID-19 and our previously planned theme, evangelism and revitalization. And maybe, as some have suggested (including Canon David Harrison via anglicanjournal.com), there's a bit of a link there. My hope is that this blend of content seems worthwhile in your present moment.

As a final note, I have promised to take up, as a matter of exploration, suggestions made about the church's future since publication of our January 2020 issue, themed on church statistics. We had planned to do so in this issue; I am convinced, at this point, that such a discussion would be, at best, off key. Please accept my apologies.

Know that you have been in my prayers during this trying time. May God grant you good health. ■

EDITORIAL LETTER ▶

'Our faith has been growing in this very difficult time'

Chinese ministry finds hope in community, prayer amidst coronavirus outbreak



PHOTO: FOTOMAY/SHUTTERSTOCK

Matt Gardner
STAFF WRITER

Dozens of people in China had been diagnosed with the novel coronavirus—and two had died—when St. George on Yonge, a Toronto parish with a strong Mandarin ministry program, held a special prayer service on the evening of Jan. 17.

At the time, the coronavirus outbreak was largely centred around the Chinese city of Wuhan. The Rev. James Liu, assistant curate at the Cathedral Church

of St. James who oversees much Chinese ministry in the diocese of Toronto and attended the service, says that some Toronto residents suspected all Asian people of being potential carriers of the virus.

When parishioners gathered at St. George, Liu recalls, "We prayed together, 'Now I'm Wuhan as well. You are Wuhan as well.' We held hands together and we prayed and we blessed each other." Some of

See PRAYER, p. 3

'Delightful,' 'a little weird,' or 'downright repellent'? Anglicans talk evangelism



PHOTO: WILLIAM WHITE/UNSPLASH

Tali Folkins
STAFF WRITER

Not all Anglicans are comfortable with evangelism—and yet Anglicans may be uniquely poised to speak the gospel to society today, say some leaders of evangelism in the Canadian church.

"Evangelism tends to be, or was, associated with perhaps a different piety than Anglicans—even with our broad tent—might have embraced a couple of generations ago. But I think the word has

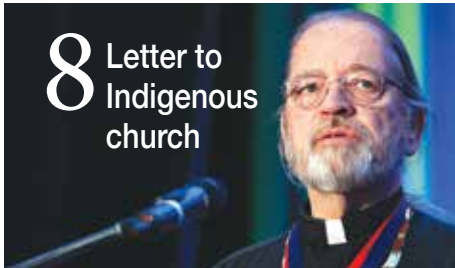
slowly been reclaimed, and we're filling it up with new meaning," says Susan Bell, bishop of the diocese of Niagara and board member of Threshold Ministries, a Saint-John, N.B.-based evangelical organization with Anglican roots.

"I actually think we're in an Anglican moment—full stop—in terms of evangelism."

Evangelism has been associated with preaching that has something of a "coercive"

See ANGLICANISM, p. 6

PM# 40069670



8 Letter to Indigenous church

COUNCIL
OF GENERAL
SYNOD ▶

“The reality is that we need a conversation... with the Council of General Synod, with the House of Bishops, with dioceses.”
—Archbishop Linda Nicholls, primate

CoGS mulls changes to diocesan giving

After continued decline, leaders aim for church-wide conversation about trends

Joelle Kidd
STAFF WRITER

As proportional gifts from dioceses to General Synod—voluntary donations that make up nearly 90% of the national organization’s net revenue—enter a third year of decline, Council of General Synod (CoGS) is evaluating the system by which dioceses apportion their income to the national church, aiming to possibly propose changes at the meeting of General Synod in 2022.

General Synod treasurer Hanna Goschy gave a presentation on the church’s proportional giving on the second day of the spring meeting of CoGS, held in Mississauga, Ont., March 13-15.

Goschy gave a quick overview of the history of the current system for proportional giving, which she explained was developed in the 1990s and approved by the meeting of General Synod in 1998, then implemented in 2000. “At that time there was some agreement, an intent, that dioceses were asked to give a common percentage of income to General Synod, and the income would be reported on a consistent and common basis on what’s called the ‘proportional giving form,’” Goschy said. The 1998



▲ Contributions to the national church from the dioceses dropped steeply in the last two years.

CHART: JOURNAL STAFF

synod agreed upon 26%.

While 26% is still the target percentage, Goschy noted that “proportional giving is voluntary...[dioceses] choose how much of a gift they give to General Synod to support its ministries.”

Showing a line graph of the trajectory of proportional giving over the past 25 years, Goschy noted a fairly stable period between 2007 and 2017, followed by a steep drop in 2018 and 2019.

Goschy said that giving had “drifted a bit from what was agreed to 20 years ago,” for

many reasons, including staffing changes, confusion about how the proportional giving form might be filled out, and an erosion of the financial base across the church. In response to a question from the floor, Goschy said the average percentage of diocesan income contributed to General Synod in the 2020 budget was 20%.

The 2020 budget for proportional gifts equals \$7.6 million, which includes a \$300,000 contingency to allow for dioceses that may not meet their proportional giving goals. The 2020 budget, approved at the November 2019 meeting of CoGS, included the contingency.

Total proportional giving in 2019 equaled \$7,814,914; the budgeted amount for that year was \$8,015,420, leaving a shortfall of \$200,506.

In response to the financial presentation, Archbishop Linda Nicholls, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, told CoGS, “The reality is that we need a conversation...with the Council of General Synod, with the House of Bishops, with dioceses.” Citing, among other things, the trends of decreasing giving and attendance in Anglican churches, Nicholls added the conversation would require “transparency and frankness.” ■

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ANGLICAN FOUNDATION OF CANADA

Annual General Meeting

Due to COVID-19, the Board of Directors is working diligently on an alternate plan for its 2020 AGM originally scheduled for May 20 in Edmonton.

We invite you to check the website for an update on the date, time, and how you can participate.

www.anglicanfoundation.org



In Her Honour

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COVID-19 ▶

‘Prayer is still our most powerful weapon’

Continued from p. 1

those present began to cry. Liu describes the scene as deeply moving. “I’m not from Wuhan,” he says. “But at that moment, we were all family. We were all together.”

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is no longer a problem exclusive to China. On March 11, the World Health Organization recognized COVID-19 as a pandemic, one which has now spread around the world. As of March 18, hundreds of thousands had been infected in more than 100 countries and thousands had died.

For people of Chinese background in Canada, the spreading of the virus to North America may feel especially familiar.

“I think to our community, Chinese people...they have been whacked twice,” says the Rev. Morning Wang, assistant curate and associate of Mandarin ministry at St. George on Yonge.

“Initially, they were affected greatly in China and all their relatives—they were so afraid [of] the possible spreading of coronavirus,” she says of the period after the lockdown of Wuhan.

During that time, attendance at Chinese-language services at St. James and St. George on Yonge began to drop. Later, attendance climbed back up again, as public health officials in North America repeatedly said the risk of infection was low.

“That was the impression our parishioners got,” Wang says. “So they gradually came back.... [Now] it’s like every day, there is bad news. If we look at the breaking news, it’s either all about COVID-19 or COVID-19-related. So the attendance dropped significantly again.”

In January, many Chinese residents in Toronto began to wear face masks. Wang recalls someone asking her why Asian people were suddenly wearing them.

Wang reports Chinese people in Toronto experiencing language and gestures from others suggesting that they were “to be avoided.”

“They were wearing face masks as instructed by the Chinese government,” Wang says. “That is a way to protect themselves as well as the rest of people. But they were treated as if they were the source of the plague.”

Yet there were also stories at this time which underscored how much of an



▲ **The Rev. James Liu, assistant curate at the Cathedral Church of St. James, leads a YouTube-based Scripture meditation.**

PHOTO: YOUTUBE CHANNEL OF CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. JAMES

impact the church’s Chinese ministry has had.

Liu recalls one member of the St. James choir whose hometown is Wuhan. The woman had planned to fly back to China Jan. 19 to celebrate Chinese New Year with family. The congregation held a small party beforehand to say goodbye. “We cried a lot,” Liu says.

The next day, the choir member said to the church that she would not be returning to Wuhan after all, but would stay so she could be baptized into the Anglican church during Holy Week—returning to Wuhan only after her baptism.

“The only reason she stayed is because [of] the church, our fellowship,” Liu says.

After Chinese New Year, many people from China flew back to Canada and immediately went into self-quarantine for two weeks. A number were Anglican parishioners in Toronto.

“Through all that time, we prayed as a collective community,” Wang says. “We prayed for people in China and here, and we brought all the updates to people.”

One parishioner was on the phone with her husband in China, who was preparing to fly to Canada. Unbeknownst to them at the time, the plane he took would be the very last Air Canada flight back from China.

When her husband expressed concern about staying in a hotel near the airport, Wang says, the parishioner told him not to worry: “Father James and Mother Morning are praying for you. Our whole church is

praying for you. I don’t know how you’re going to handle it, but I believe in Jesus and he’s going to take care of you. Just go.”

After arriving in Canada, her husband spent three weeks in quarantine. Upon being cleared, he came into church and thanked the congregation for praying for his family.

“She brought her faith into her husband’s life,” Wang says.

“Our ministry is still a mission-based ministry, which means we share the gospel [with these parishioners],” she adds. “Their faith is still very tender, very new. During this [outbreak], they have experienced God’s faithfulness. Our faith has been growing in this very difficult time.”

While the number of new COVID-19 cases was on the decline in China at the time this article was being written, it was expanding rapidly in Canada.

Anglicans wondering how to pray might take guidance from Chinese members of their church. At the peak of the outbreak in Wuhan, Chinese parishioners in Toronto experienced negative emotions such as anger and fear. To take their minds in another direction, Liu and Wang led purposefully designed prayer meetings that used prayer books and biblical texts such as Psalm 91.

“My personal suggestion is, open the prayer book...in your home, and reflect on it,” Liu says.

In this moment, Wang says, “prayer is still our most powerful weapon.” ■

“Our ministry is still a mission-based ministry, which means we share the gospel [with these parishioners]. Their faith is still very tender, very new. During this [outbreak], they have experienced God’s faithfulness. Our faith has been growing in this very difficult time.”

—Rev. Morning Wang, assistant curate and associate of Mandarin ministry at St. George on Yonge

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PHOTO: SONY PICTURES ENTERTAINMENT

‘Go and do likewise’

THE REV. PETER ELLIOTT

A review of *A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood*, the Tom Hanks movie about the Rev. Fred Rogers

<https://bit.ly/2V4hWMH>



PHOTO: SASKIA ROWLEY

‘It’s like a rolling high tide that’s coming’

JOELLE KIDD/STAFF WRITER

Indigenous communities, many of which are distant from hospitals, brace for the arrival of COVID-19

<https://bit.ly/2wEeO1R>



PHOTO: CHAT KAREN STUDIO/SHUTTERSTOCK

‘Nothing can stop us all being in prayer’

TALI FOLKINS/STAFF WRITER

Thy Kingdom Come 2020 resources include prayers for people practicing social distancing

<https://bit.ly/2xC5DPi>



PHOTO: PARACLETE PRESS

‘We need to be re-evangelized’

TALI FOLKINS/STAFF WRITER

U.S. neo-monastic Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove talks about religion and power, St. Benedict and preaching the gospel from the margins

<https://bit.ly/2QXN92K>

SINGING
WITH JOY ▶



Evangelism needs no magic words

—only the language of the heart

By Linda Nicholls

THE 1990S were designated the Decade of Evangelism by the Lambeth Conference of 1988. The Anglican Communion was called to share the Good News of the gospel in every context. My memory of that time as a parish priest recalls the challenge of inviting Anglicans to move past the deep privacy of their faith into public sharing. We had assumed that our children would grow up into the church, and that was sufficient. Evangelism was counter-cultural to our deeply personal, private way of living the faith, and the “e” word was heard with trepidation, or even distaste and rejection. It conjured up images of TV evangelists or street preachers whose practices we certainly did not want to emulate. Most of the Decade of Evangelism seemed to be spent changing this prejudiced attitude toward evangelism rather than actually doing it!

Yet evangelism is essential to Christian life and practice. The word simply means “good news.” If the early disciples had not shared the good news they had learned from Jesus and the power of the resurrection, we would not be a people of faith today. Peter and the other disciples simply began to tell their story—what they had experienced and what it meant (Acts 2 and 3). Evangelism is the practice of telling what we know and have experienced of the love and grace of God through Jesus Christ. There is no “right” or “only” way



▲ There's no “right” or “only” way to evangelize—only the way that's true to you.

PHOTO: SMOLAW/
SHUTTERSTOCK

to do that—only the way that is true to you: telling the story of how you have met God and been changed by your encounter with God's forgiveness and love. There are no magic words you must use—only the language of your heart. The most powerful testimonies of faith are one person telling another where they have found hope and life!

During Lent one year I invited parishioners to offer a testimony of faith from their lives. The stories we heard were powerful moments of encounter with God and God's love and grace. They were received with an attentiveness that my sermons rarely held and I am sure they were remembered long after.

I recently had occasion to revisit the story of the lives of John and Charles Wesley. We remember them in our calendar as Anglican priests who founded what became the Methodist church through their preaching and teaching. They were passionate about the need to combine the gifts of the sacramental tradition of

the church with intentional discipleship through reading scripture, prayer and mutual fellowship combined with action for justice. John Wesley preached wherever he could—often outdoors to those on the fringes of society. Charles wrote poetry and hymns that resonate in our hearts to this day. They knew the power of telling God's story! They were, of course, discomforting to other clergy and often crossed traditional boundaries, seeming too enthusiastic. Yet hundreds were drawn to hear their testimony and find life and hope. Their work revived faith for many.

Our baptismal covenant is clear: “Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?” We have responded at our baptism and at every renewal of those vows, “I will, with God's help.” Evangelism—telling the Good News—is not optional. How will you tell your story? ■

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

WALKING
TOGETHER ▶



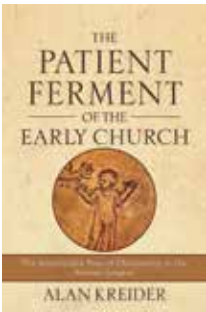
Pandemics and evangelism: The martyrs of the plague of Alexandria

By Mark MacDonald

“Many who had healed others fell victims themselves. The best of our brethren have been taken from us in this manner: some were priests, some were deacons and some laity of great worth. This death, with the faith that accompanied it, appeared to be little inferior to martyrdom itself.”

—St. Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria

IN HIS BOOK, *The Patient Ferment of the Early Church: The Improbable Rise of Christianity in the Roman Empire* (Baker, 2016), Alan Kreider tries to understand why Christianity grew so much in a period when there was no public evangelism and the liturgies were completely off-limits to outsiders—no seeker services here. Kreider, a brilliant scholar and a holy man who died in 2017, says that a significant part of the answer has to do with pandemics.



▲ Kreider's book links pandemics and the growth of Christianity.

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

The martyrs of the Plague of Alexandria (AD 261) are an example of what Kreider was talking about. In a time of vicious and deadly persecution, Christians came out of hiding to tend the sick, care for the dying and bury the dead. As all others fled, they were seen, at great risk from persecution and infection, going in the opposite direction. It was this that was the compelling argument for the faith. The witness was twofold: extraordinary compassion, even for those who were persecuting them; and a fearless attitude towards death, even in the face of a horrific and excruciating fatal illness. This kind of faith and practice was something people wanted to have; something people wanted to be.

As we face a pandemic, we rightly work to protect our members and the larger society, especially the vulnerable. Many, from what I can see, are doing all that they can to connect with people in ways that are safe. We fall into line, as we should, with all

the safe practices. I am not arguing for us to march in and become points of spreading infection. What I am arguing for is a way to connect this to the heart of faith, what we say we believe, and who we are, in Christ. Do we meet these events with a compassion and fearlessness schooled by our daily encounter with God?

We are to be a people of Spirit; a people of faith, hope and love. Our imagination is to be overwhelmed with the life, death, resurrection and second coming of Christ. This story is to shape us in ways that unveil its meaning in our encounter with fear, isolation and suffering. That, more than anything else we could say or show, is a real contribution to our faith, our world and the path that Jesus is leading us on towards the World to Come. ■

Archbishop Mark MacDonald is national Indigenous archbishop of the Anglican Church of Canada.

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REFLECTION ▶

Where is God?

By Linda Nicholls

THE MOST challenging question for any person of faith is “Where is God in the midst of suffering?” It is the question that is on the lips of many today as we look at the devastation being wrought by COVID-19. It is the question that haunted Americans after September 11, 2001. It was the question that was shouted during the Holocaust of World War II. It is the question on the lips of family members facing an agonizing death from cancer or the slow diminishment of Alzheimer’s disease. Where is God when we are hurting, uncertain and in pain?

In my years of pastoral ministry, I have faced the despair of suffering with no answers. I have sat with parents who have just lost a child to a tragic accident, from illness or even before its birth. I have prayed with someone whose spouse committed suicide and those facing imminent death, fearing pain. Now we face the radical uncertainty of an illness that can strike unexpectedly with deadly force, shutting down our workplaces, schools and social gathering places—while moving so swiftly that our responses may not yet be enough.

Where is God? Part of our question arises because we trust God and we expect God to be with us at all times, in all circumstances. We also expect that our relationship is a transactional one. We assume that if God loves us (and God does!) and is with us—and that if we are doing what we thought was faithful—then God owes it to us to protect us. We carry an often-unconscious belief that we deserve and have earned God’s protection—from everything. When that does not happen, we feel abandoned.

This is the question that is woven through the Book of Job in the Hebrew scriptures. Does God cause suffering? Is suffering punishment for sin? Does God abandon us? Is suffering our own fault? All of these questions are threaded through the story of Job, who longs for understanding of “Why?”. Job’s friends try to help him see the answers they think are sufficient, none of which satisfy Job. At the end we encounter Job needing to recognize God’s power and “otherness” as Creator; Job’s recognition of the limits of humanity and



▲ Job speaking to his wife as depicted by George de La Tour

PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS/THE YORCK PROJECT

his self-righteousness (that he cannot know everything); and finally Job’s faith that even in final submission to God and the mystery of suffering, he ultimately trusts God.

In John 17 Jesus prayed, “Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.” But this is not a protection from the world. It is focused on the relationship with God, protecting that intimacy Jesus knew with God to be always available. It certainly was not a protection from the effects of sin and pain which led Jesus to death on the cross. It is the power that is stronger than death itself that raised Jesus to life and promises us the same possibility of life that walks in and through death, not around it. It is that reality that St. Paul claims in Romans 8:38-39:

“I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor things present nor things to come nor power nor height nor depth nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.”

And knows in his life in 2 Corinthians 4:7-10:

“But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this

extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies.”

Our world is a paradoxical combination of incredible beauty and devastating suffering, some of which is caused by human activity, and some of which is part of the nature of creation. We have been granted the capacity to learn about and understand much of the interrelationships, but we are not in control, much as we might wish to be. We are affected by the decisions made by others nearby and around the globe politically, economically, climatically and socially. We are affected by the ongoing cycles and systems of our planet that include natural disasters. We face the choices of drunk drivers and the impact of tornadoes and floods. Suffering is part of life. No one can live in this world without being touched by it, and some, inexplicably, suffer far more than others.

Where is God? We have not been abandoned. God is here in the very midst of joys and sorrows of daily life, moment by moment available to any and all who know the world as the place within which God makes known the transformative possibilities of grace, mercy and love. We are not guaranteed protection from the effects of living in this world. We are given the gift of a relationship with God that allows us to experience and share the possibility that loving and forgiving one another, caring for one another in community and facing suffering together in the certainty that nothing can separate us from that love and grace—that these all give us hope and endurance for today and tomorrow. And that is enough to produce communities that can celebrate with joy in the midst of suffering, can care for each other with extraordinary sacrificial love and be salt for the earth and lights on the hill.

Where is God? God is in our midst in each person that reaches out to a neighbour in quarantine to pick up groceries; in the parishes finding new ways to keep feeding the hungry and homeless; in the health-care workers choosing to risk their lives to care for others; in the small kindnesses offered each day, one to another; in the recognition that we will survive this crisis by working together for the good of all people.

Where is God? God is here—in and with you and me. Thanks be to God! ■

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

Being church—and building faith—in a time of pandemic

Perspectives from Anglicans in Canada, from anglicanjournal.com and beyond. For the *Journal's* special coverage on COVID-19, visit anglicanjournal.com/covid19



PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

The grace of being stuck

CANON MARTHA TATARNIC

“We must, as people of faith, remind one another to look expectantly for how God is going to use us as instruments of love even if we’re sick or quarantined.”

<https://bit.ly/2UhtYz>



PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

The end of church as we know it? (And I feel fine?)

THE REV. KYLE WAGNER

“Will the landscape of the church be radically different, when we reunite? In my mind, there’s no question.”

<https://bit.ly/33L8YHM>



PHOTO: WYCLIFFE COLLEGE

Should we live stream worship? Maybe not.

THE REV. EPHRAIM RADNER

“We cannot, nor should we, seek to give the impression that life ‘goes on as normal.’ It never did, after all.”

<https://bit.ly/2UiFj5H>



PHOTO: MATTHEW TOWNSEND

How to build a prayer corner—and bring the communion of saints home

KATE CRANE

“I bring my tears and worries, and Christ soaks them up. I leave unburdened.”

<https://bit.ly/3bF22iv>

IN 1876, Mary Sumner founded Mothers' Union to support Christian family life. The movement is now in 83 countries and numbers over 4 million members. At this time of crisis, we are all praying around the world for the support, hope, strength and courage that Jesus Christ offers to us.

canadianmothersunion.ca

CLASSIFIEDS

BOOK

I Left My Heart in Guyana
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Anglicanism knows evangelism

Continued from p. 1

feel, such as that practiced by some TV evangelists in the past, Bell says. But Anglicans in recent decades have been making evangelism their own—and offering the gospel to people, rather than imposing it on them. This, she says, is the spirit in which Jesus preaches in the gospels—inviting people to “come and see.” (John 1:39)

And Anglicanism is better able to speak to secular culture than this more aggressive form of evangelizing, she contends, because Anglicanism is a “holistic” way of living out faith—one that involves a wide range of elements: intellect, tradition, worship that engages the emotions and a concern for social justice outside the walls of the church.

John Bowen, retired director of the Institute of Evangelism at the University of Toronto’s Wycliffe College, and author of *Evangelism for “Normal” People* (2002), agrees that evangelism doesn’t always sit easy with Anglicans. Just as is the case with—for example—incense, he says, “for some it is normal and delightful, for other it’s different but a little weird, and for some it’s downright repellent.”

In recent history, Bowen notes, evangelism is something that Anglican leaders have felt it necessary to urge the flock to undertake.

“You may remember that the 1990s were declared by the Anglican Communion to be a ‘Decade of Evangelism,’” he says. “The simple fact of creating such a thing tells you Anglican leaders around the world (a) thought evangelism was important, but (b) it’s not happening enough. So there’s a tension right there.”

Today, he says, “a minority of churches in the Anglican Church of Canada practice any intentional form of evangelism.”

Bowen says the negative view many Canadian Anglicans have of evangelism is partly traceable to the fact that few “Jesus-like” evangelists are in the public eye here; Canadians typically seem to associate evangelism with street corner preachers and TV evangelists, he says.

And yet there’s a long history of effective Anglican evangelism. Among its highlights, says Bowen: the preaching of 18th-century Anglican priest John Wesley, many of whose followers eventually formed the Methodist church, though he himself remained in the Church of England; and the work of Anglican missionaries over the centuries around the world. From his own experience, Bowen cites the evangelism he witnessed as a student at Oxford, by gifted Church of England preachers such as John Stott, David Watson and others.

The Rev. Tim Chesterton, rector at St. Margaret’s Anglican Church, Edmonton and another member of the board of Threshold Ministries, says many Anglicans are “scared” of evangelism, partly because of its association with fundamentalism and charlatans. But Chesterton, who founded and runs a program in lay evangelism for the diocese of Edmonton, says there’s another reason: Anglicans tend to be on the introverted side.

“Denominations tend to appeal to people of a certain temperament, and I think in Canada Anglicanism tends to appeal to people who are more intuitive and introverted.... And I think when somebody tells us that we need to share the gospel with other people, we assume that we’re being asked to go up to total strangers on the street and ask them if they’ve been saved. Or that we’re going to be asked to hit people over the head with our religion.”

Chesterton says Anglicans ought to look at our temperament as a God-given gift, and evangelize accordingly. For introverts, this is likely to mean evangelizing in the context of existing, trusting relationships.

A challenge of evangelizing today, Bell says, is that Christians in Canada face a secular society in which discussion of religion is expected to be private, not public. Anglican evangelists, she says, need to be sensitive to this—and sensitive to concerns they may encounter about the forms the church’s mission has taken in its colonial past—“the ways that we have imposed not only a version of the

gospel, but also a version of culture on top of other cultures.”

Evangelizing, it seems, must involve spreading the Christian good news in one way or another—the word actually comes from the ancient Greek *euangelion*, or good news (*angelion* in turn derives from the Greek *angelein*, “to announce,” and is related to the word *angelos*, or “messenger”—from which we get the English word “angel.”) But, what, exactly, is the good news? Chesterton says another challenge facing would-be Anglican evangelists is confusion about this—which in his view necessarily involves the concept of God giving his Son out of love to humankind, for our salvation.

“It’s kind of interesting to ask people, ‘What do you think the central Christian message is?’” he says. “It’s usually some variant on ‘love thy neighbor,’ and those kinds of things—which are good advice, but not good news.... Good news to me is about God’s love, which is expressed in sending Jesus to live and die, and rise again for us so that we can be reconciled to God.”

And it’s important, if Anglicans are to evangelize, that they themselves have internalized this good news, Bowen says.

“I have a suspicion that if we discovered, or rediscovered, what the Good News of Jesus is, and experienced it as good news in our own lives, evangelism would happen naturally,” he says.

It’s also important they be mindful of their motive for evangelizing, Chesterton says—that it not be concern for a church facing numeric or financial decline, however concerning that may be.

“The problem with that [motive], of course, is that it’s not about the individual’s needs for a relationship with God through Jesus—it’s about the church’s need to grow and survive, and get funds. It’s very self-serving, so it’s the opposite of sharing good news.

“We’re not really in this for ourselves.... I think it’s really important for our evangelism to be motivated by love.” ■

June 2020 Bible Readings

DAY	READING	DAY	READING	DAY	READING
<input type="checkbox"/> 01	Exodus 34:10-35	<input type="checkbox"/> 11	Acts 11:19-30	<input type="checkbox"/> 21	Proverbs 4:1-13
<input type="checkbox"/> 02	Daniel 3:16-30	<input type="checkbox"/> 12	Acts 13:1-12	<input type="checkbox"/> 22	Genesis 22:1-19
<input type="checkbox"/> 03	Genesis 1:1-2:4a	<input type="checkbox"/> 13	Psalms 100:1–101:6	<input type="checkbox"/> 23	Psalms 62:1-12
<input type="checkbox"/> 04	Psalms 8:1-9	<input type="checkbox"/> 14	Hosea 6:1–7:2	<input type="checkbox"/> 24	Luke 1:57-80
<input type="checkbox"/> 05	2 Corinthians 13:1-13	<input type="checkbox"/> 15	Psalms 86:1-17	<input type="checkbox"/> 25	Jeremiah 28:1-17
<input type="checkbox"/> 06	Deuteronomy 4:15-40	<input type="checkbox"/> 16	Romans 6:1-14	<input type="checkbox"/> 26	Psalms 89:1-18
<input type="checkbox"/> 07	Ezekiel 43:1-9	<input type="checkbox"/> 17	Jeremiah 20:1-18	<input type="checkbox"/> 27	Romans 6:15-23
<input type="checkbox"/> 08	Romans 1:1-17	<input type="checkbox"/> 18	Matthew 10:32-42	<input type="checkbox"/> 28	2 Timothy 3:10-4:5
<input type="checkbox"/> 09	Matthew 9:18-38	<input type="checkbox"/> 19	Acts 13:13-35	<input type="checkbox"/> 29	2 Timothy 4:6-22
<input type="checkbox"/> 10	Acts 11:1-18	<input type="checkbox"/> 20	Acts 13:36-52	<input type="checkbox"/> 30	Song of Songs 2:8-17

COUNCIL
OF GENERAL
SYNOD ▶



Got ideas on what the church should be doing?

Now you can have your say

Tali Folkins
STAFF WRITER

Members of the Anglican Church of Canada who would like to help shape the church's next strategic plan can now submit their views online, Council of General Synod (CoGS) heard Friday, March 13.

The Rev. Monique Stone, a member of the team planning the

strategy to replace Vision 2019, which has guided the church since 2010, told CoGS that a website for the next strategic plan had been created. Members of the church, she said, are invited to visit the website, and, if they wish, complete a brief online survey. The survey asks, among other things, what respondents believe the national church's mission should be; how it and Indigenous ministry can "add capacity" to their diocese or parish; and what their hope is for the strategic plan.

The website, which includes

general information about the strategic planning process, can be reached at: <https://www.anglican.ca/changingchurch>. To access the survey, users click the "Listening to You" link partway down the page, then click "Complete our online survey;" or go directly to: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/achangingchurch>. Church members are also welcome to submit their views to the planning team directly by email, at changingchurch@national.anglican.ca.

The working group, Stone said,

had also begun a review of Vision 2019, asking for feedback from Archbishop Fred Hiltz, retired primate of the Anglican Church of Canada; Peter Elliott, retired dean of Christ Church Cathedral in the diocese of New Westminster and chair of the Vision 2019 task force, and other church leaders.

The plan is to be presented to General Synod when it next meets in the summer of 2022, to serve as the church's strategic plan for the following two triennia or three-year periods, until 2028. ■

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COVID-19 ▶

To the Indigenous churches and disciples across the Land

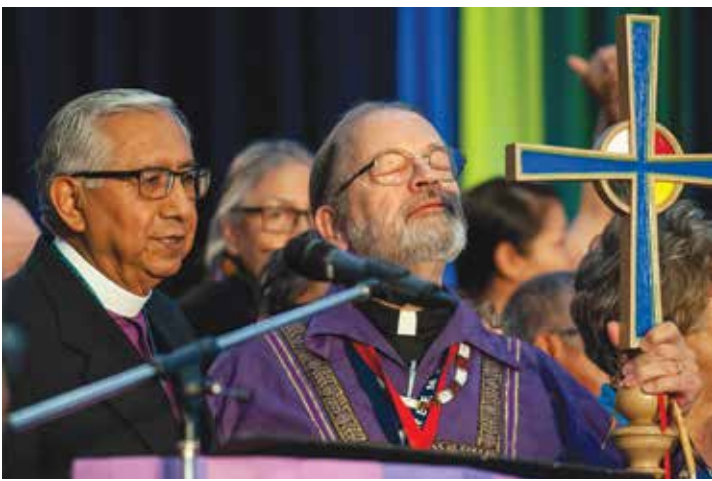
Dear Relatives,

AS WE BEGIN Holy Week, I am writing as your National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop to help us all to live the life of Christ in this time of pandemic crisis. I know that many of you are in lockdown and all of us are taking care to not receive or pass on the virus. Having spoken to many of our leaders and elders across the Land, I am also aware that many church services have been stopped or limited in the number who can be involved. Many of our elders have spoken of times like this in the past. We have also heard of dreams and prophecies regarding the event we are facing now. In all cases, the word we are hearing from God is to pray, to stay together in the communion of the Spirit and the practice of our faith, and to protect life. We are convinced that God has a way to Resurrection for us in this time. We will follow Jesus in that way.

To act in unity and communion, I would like to ask you to help me and all of us in these ways:

1. Seek and Trust God. This is the most important thing of all. In the midst of many pressing, urgent, and dangerous demands, some people forget the priority of Spirit in this life. In my experience, the elders never forget that. Jesus teaches us that we must seek first the power, love, and grace of the World to Come, the Kingdom of God, and all other things will follow in a good way.

2. Protect Life. Already, we are hearing of communities that are dealing with this virus. If it breaks out in others, it will be devastating. I have consulted with our Indigenous elders, Indigenous bishops and clergy, and other leaders over the past few weeks. We have all concluded that, for the sake of the elders and other vulnerable ones, we must implement action that will keep people safe. In different dioceses you may have different guidelines—some have said worship only in groups less than 10,



▲ **“Wherever two or three are gathered—many in their families during this crisis, some on the phone and others on the internet—we should put the Gospel daily before us, placing it in that Sacred Circle where Jesus promised he would meet us if we would gather in his Name.”**

PHOTO: MILOS TOSIC

some only in groups of five or less, some restrict it completely—and you must all restrict your gatherings to what is safe and what your leaders advise. The most painful aspect of this is funerals, as we have heard from all discussions. The consensus is absolutely clear, however, that we must limit our funerals to small groups of immediate family at the graveside, celebrating our memorials later, when it is safe. With this consensus, I must ask you, as the National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop, acting with the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous House of Bishops Leadership Circle, to put these safeguards in place as you undertake our usual and constant spiritual care for those passing from this life to the next and for the loved ones they leave behind.

3. Be Disciples. In the past few years, we have felt an urgent call to put the Gospel in the centre of the Sacred Circle of our life in family, church, and Creation. This has prepared us to meet this challenge and to move forward in our faith and in our community with each other. Wherever two or three are gathered—many in their families during this crisis, some on the phone and others on the internet—we should put the Gospel daily before us,

placing it in that Sacred Circle where Jesus promised he would meet us if we would gather in his Name. Many of you are using Gospel Based Discipleship with great impact in these days, as I am. Let this be our lifestyle.

4. Pray for Creation and Humanity. Scripture and our elders tell us that prayer is something that has a powerful impact on Creation. In fact, Creation and all of humanity depend on it. Our prayer, our ceremonies, our services do something in the universe and, as Jesus showed us when he broke the bread and shared the cup, Holy Communion or the Eucharist is a part of the reconciliation of heaven and earth. It brings the New Creation here, as we wait for its full coming in the World to Come. Elders are going out on the Land to pray; our clergy, lay readers, and church leaders must say their daily prayers, joining with them. With the approval of your bishop, meet in safe numbers—often only your family—and, as many of you have already said you are doing, say the prayers and ceremonies of the church. Plead with God, intercede through Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit, for the Land and the People. Now is an hour to step forward in love for all of our people and all of Creation.

Many of you have joined me in dedicating and consecrating our Lenten fast to a healing of the Land. In these last days of our Lenten Fast, the Holy Week and Holy Walk to the Cross and Resurrection, I will be joining you all in the fast, in putting the Gospel in the centre of our Sacred Circle, and in the daily Eucharist. I ask you to walk with me and all our peoples. We will know, this is absolutely sure, the power that raised Jesus from the dead. The God who showed power by becoming weak will show power in pandemic.

Blessings,

The Most Rev. Mark MacDonald
National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop

As for you, brothers and sisters, never tire of doing what is good.

— 2 Thessalonians 3:13



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