



Happy Chinese New Year (January 31)!

Handle with prayer

ANiC news

ANiC and ACNA events calendar

February 7-8 – [“Rise up”](#) men's retreat at St Luke's (Pembroke, ON) with the Rev Garth Hunt
February 15 – [Bible-in-a-Day seminar](#), Richmond Faith Fellowship (Richmond, BC)
February 15 – [Bible-in-a-Day seminar](#), Vancouver (UBC), BC
February 16, 3:30pm – The Rev Marty Fraser ordained to the priesthood at [The Way](#) (Stayner ON)
February 20-21 – ANiC Council meets in Vancouver with Archbishop Bob Duncan
February 22-23 – Christ's Church (Oceanside, BC) hosts a conference with +Charlie Masters
February 22 – [Bible-in-a-Day seminar](#), Celebration Church (Barrie, ON)
March 1 – [Bible-in-a-Day seminar](#), Vancouver (UBC), BC, hosted by Sojourn/University Chapel
March 1 – [Liveword women's conference](#), hosted by St John's Vancouver, at Broadway Church
March 2 – Missions Sunday in all ACNA churches
March 9 – Bishop Don will ordain George Cooknell of [Cornerstone \(Samia\)](#) to the diaconate
March 30 – [Christ The King](#) (Toronto, ON) – The Rev Len Finn inducted as rector by Bishop Charlie
April 8-10 – Ontario clergy [silent retreat](#) near Orangeville
April 24-26 – [Women of the Word workshop](#) for women in ministry in Vancouver
May 5-8 – Clergy and spouse retreat, Malibu Camp, BC
May 7 – [Anglicans for Life conference](#), St Peter & St Paul's (Ottawa, ON)
May 8 – [March for Life](#), Ottawa, ON
May 9 – Anglicans for Life [wrap-up and prayer time](#)
May 16-19 – BC A4D chapter [men's weekend](#).
May 29-June 1 – BC A4D chapter [women's weekend](#).
May 31 – "Recovering the Ministry of Blessing" seminar will be held at [New Song \(Port Perry, ON\)](#)
June 25-28 – Anglican Church in North America [Assembly 2014](#) at St Vincent College, Latrobe, PA
November 5-7 – ANiC Synod 2014 in Ottawa, ON

ANiC group launches in London, ON

If you live in the London, ON area, or you know someone who does, you'll be interested in the new work ANiC is launching there. Those interested in meeting together with other faithful Anglicans in London should [email Anita](#).

Our Primate is coming to Vancouver, February 20-21

Archbishop Bob Duncan will meet with ANiC council, bishops and archdeacons, February 20-21.

Time to Build campaign achieves impressive results; work remains

The Venerable Ron Corcoran has provided an interim report on ANiC'S [Time to Build Campaign](#). To date, he has visited 26 parishes across Canada providing teaching on the Biblical principles of stewardship. This teaching has been well received and has encouraged a growing spirit of generosity. Through the 20/20 program – individuals committing to give \$20 per month for 20 months – *Time to Build* has raised almost \$200,000, bringing the total raised to over \$400,000. The campaign goal is to raise \$1 million by November 2014, so there is still work to do.

If your church has not yet invited Archdeacon Ron, now would be a good time to do so! And if you haven't looked into how you can do your part, check out the 20/20 program [on the ANiC website](#). Churches can help by allowing members to channel their donations to *Time to Build* through the church. Members can also donate directly to ANiC using the brochure [on the ANiC website](#).

Bible-in-a-Day seminars offer the *big* picture of God's Word

Four *Bible-in-a-Day* seminars are planned for February and March 2014. If you haven't had an opportunity to attend, consider registering for one of these, or invite the *Bible-in-a-Day* team to offer a seminar in your church or community. You can learn more, register online, or inquire about bringing the seminar to your church on the [Bible-in-a-Day website](#).

February 15 – Richmond, BC – Presented by the Rev Sean Love and the Rev Ben Roberts at Richmond Faith Fellowship, 9am to 3:30pm.

February 15 – Vancouver (UBC), BC - Presented by the Rev Jordan Senner and the Rev Mike Chase at Irving Barber Learning Centre, UBC, 9am to 3:30pm.

February 22 – Barrie, ON – Presented by the Rev Ray David Glenn and Brad Melle at Emmanuel Baptist Church, 9am to 3:30pm.

March 1 – Vancouver (UBC), BC – Presented by the Rev Sean Love and the Rev Geoff Chapman at Sojourn/University Chapel (near UBC), 9am to 3:30pm.

Early [registration](#), including lunch, is \$30.

ACNA Missions Sunday is March 2

Each year, we and the other dioceses in ACNA designate the last Sunday before Lent, Missions Sunday. Please plan to have a focus of missions in church on March 2. If you'd like to emphasize the work of the [Anglican Relief and Development Fund Canada](#), you can get materials through your parish ARDFC ambassador or my [emailing Marilyn Jacobson](#).

Silent retreat in Southern Ontario, April 8-10

Bishop Don Harvey will lead a silent retreat for clergy on April 8 at 5pm until April 10 at 11:30am at a [Christian retreat centre](#) near Orangeville. The theme of the retreat is "*I have chosen you and ordained you*" (John 15: 16); the time will allow reflections on ordained ministry. [See flyer](#) and email [the Rev Barbara Richardson](#) for details on costs and to register.

BC Anglican 4th Day (A4D) events planned

The BC Lower Mainland chapter of Anglican 4th Day is offering both a men's and women's weekend this spring. Both events are at Columbia Bible College, 2940 Clearbrook Road, Abbotsford, BC.

- The men's A4D weekend is on May 16-19. To register, [email Philip Kenny](#).
- The women's A4D weekend is May 29-June 1. To register, [email Wilma Bogle](#).

The BC A4D chapter also holds Ultreyas on the third Friday of each month. Check the A4D page [on the ANiC website](#) for locations.

Liveword conference hosted by St John's Vancouver, March 1

A [Liveword conference](#) will be held on March 1 at Broadway Church in Vancouver. It "*aims to reach women of the Lower Mainland and beyond with biblical expository teaching, for the purpose of helping them grow to maturity in Christ.*" For information and to register, see the [website](#).

Women of the Word workshop for women in ministry in Vancouver, April 24-26

A [Women of the Word workshop](#) will be held on April 24-26 at Regent College and is hosted by St John's Vancouver. It will focus on "...*training women to teach the Bible to other women*" and equip women "...*to live out the truths of the gospel. The workshop is designed for women who serve in regular teaching ministries including large group instructors, small group teachers and women's ministry leaders...*" The workshop is offered by The Charles Simeon Trust. Check it out [here](#).

Anglican Sojourners Fellowship needs your help

Anglican Sojourners Fellowship (ASF) urgently needs help to grow its ministry. ASF is an ANiC outreach ministry to "orphan" Anglicans and others who are isolated from church connections. Its objectives are to restore isolated believers to a sense of belonging in Christian fellowship and to provide them with support and encouragement as disciples of Jesus Christ. They do this through

the provision of a [website](#) and through sponsoring local Fellowship Circles “*wherever two or three are gathered together*”.

You can help by:

- 1) Identifying and referring individuals who might benefit from their fellowship.
- 2) Volunteering with the ASF ministry. Urgent needs are for a **webmaster** and a **prayer coordinator**.
- 3) Encouraging your church to partner with ASF. ASF is looking for partnerships with ANiC churches – perhaps on a regional basis – to assist in this ministry.

Please prayerfully review their [website](#) and email the ASF convenor, [Mark Larratt-Smith](#), for further information.

Toronto-area worship in the arts festival features world-renown Robin Mark

ANiC parish [New Song](#) (Port Perry, ON) is deeply involved in the annual [David Festival](#) – a cross-denominational celebration of arts in worship. This year it will be held on consecutive weekends, with workshops on Saturday March 29 and April 5 and public events on Sunday March 30 and April 6. There will be writing, worship band and choral workshops designed to nurture excellence in the arts in worship, and encourage and equip Christian musicians and artists.

The headliner this year is worship leader, Robin Mark of Belfast, Ireland, who is known for such contemporary hits as “Days of Elijah,” and “Jesus All for Jesus.” Mark has sold over two million albums worldwide and has four international gold discs. He will be joined by Canadian songwriter and female Gospel Musician of the Year Ali Matthews.

All are welcome. Each year, New Song sends its worship bands and choir to the David Festival workshops and they come back retooled, with new ideas and vigor to worship and serve. See a news release [here](#) and registration [here](#). Early bird registration is open until February 14.

ARDFC finishes 2013 strong!

Praise the Lord! 2013 was a great year for the [Anglican Relief and Development Fund Canada](#) thanks to the generosity of our churches and individual donors. Not only were we able to send the last installment to the Diocese of Recife (Brazil) to fund construction of a training centre, but we ended the year with a surplus, allowing us to kick start the next project.

In 2013, you also gave more than \$20,000 towards emergency relief in the Philippines following the typhoon disaster and more than \$10,000 to help in the aftermath of the floods in southern Alberta. Thank you!

Watch for information on our next project in the next newsletter.

J I Packer featured in the current edition of *Faith Today*

ANiC member, Canon Dr J I Packer is featured in the current issue of [Faith Today](#) in an article on his most recent book which focuses on strength in weakness. You can read the magazine [online](#). Or, if you buy a print subscription before February 28, you will also receive a free copy of Dr Packer’s book, *Weakness is the Way*.

ANiC at Missions Fest Vancouver

Our participation in Missions Fest allowed us to give out ANiC materials and perhaps address perceptions about Anglicanism. You can [see photos](#) of our display on ANiC’s Facebook page.

We gave out bookmarks (with prayers on one side and ANiC information on the other), parish flyers, [ANiC fact sheets](#), an [AMMiC brochure](#), [Faith Today](#), [Anglican Agenda series books](#), and [ARDFC](#) material. We also invited people to complete a short, fun quiz on Anglicanism, then enter for a chance to win two of J I Packer’s books. See how well you do on [the quiz!](#)

Dr J I Packer attracted quite a crowd when he signed books at our booth for over an hour. His ministry has certainly benefitted many. Former students and those who credited his books with

having a transformational effect on their lives all came by and many asked to have a photo taken with him. Incidentally, if you want to see the books that have most influenced Dr Packer, [see here](#).

AMMiC mini-conference, a time of encouragement

Last week, ANiC's [Asian and Multicultural Ministries in Canada](#) (AMMiC) clergy and leaders met in Richmond, BC for fellowship, encouragement and learning. In addition to reports from each of the AMMiC churches, the gathering heard about future church plants – one in Toronto among the South Asian community and one in Boston, launched in concert with the ACNA Diocese of New England, for the Chinese community.

Bishop Stephen also reported that two Anglican Communion bishops will be visiting this year to minister to their respective expatriate communities: Bishop Azad Marshall (Iran) & Abraham Nhial (Awiel, Sudan). Bishop Nhial, who was a speaker at ANiC's 2013 Vancouver assembly, will be here for June and July ministering to Sudanese communities across Canada.

Bishop Charlie Masters discussed the concept of ANiC moving to multiple dioceses. He also recounted his time at Church of Christ the Redeemer (Multicultural) in Toronto on December 22 with no electricity due to a winter storm. And yet one man prayed to receive Christ and has now asked to be baptized.

Canon William Beasley of the [Greenhouse Movement](#) spoke on cross-cultural mission and church planting models – and served as an inspiration and catalyst for the AMMiC church plants. He and Bishop Stephen listened to the church planters reports, then identified and encouraged them to seize new opportunities, and affirmed them in their ministries.

As future church leaders, three [Artizo](#) students also were involved. Photos of the conference are on the AMMiC Facebook site [here](#) and [here](#).

Bishop Charlie and Canadian contingent at Washington, DC March for Life

Although numbers were down markedly from previous year's totals of 400,000-650,000 participants, the winter storms and frigid weather didn't deter our four-person Canadian contingent at the recent March for Life in Washington, DC. Bishop Charlie Masters was one of a number of ACNA bishops there despite cancelled flights. Read more about the March [here](#).

ANiC members weren't the only Canadians down for the March. [See here](#). You can read more about the March for Life [here](#). Photos from the Washington march are on the [ACNA Facebook page](#). Another march [was held](#) in San Francisco on January 27, attracting record crowds of 50,000-60,000 – including another ACNA contingent. See a You Tube video [here](#).

Our chance comes May 8 with the March for Life in Ottawa preceded by the Anglicans for Life one-day conference. Learn more [here](#) and get involved!

Re-evangelizing a postmodern culture – January 31 lecture in Toronto

On January 31, [Christ The King](#) (Toronto, ON) is hosting a special evening with the Rev Dr Peter Moore, Dean and President Emeritus of Trinity School for Ministry in Ambridge, PA and former rector of Little Trinity Church in Toronto. Dr Moore's talk, *Apologetics in a Postmodern Culture*, will focus on how Christians can effectively share the Gospel today. All are welcome to attend this special evening. See the flyer [here](#).

Parish news

[Christ the Redeemer \(Multicultural\) Toronto, ON](#) is celebrating its first anniversary on Saturday, March 1 with a lunch celebration at Century Palace Chinese restaurant, 398 Ferrier St, Toronto. All are welcome. Tickets are \$25 per person. Email [the Rev Melvin Tai](#). Also, Christ the Redeemer is celebrating Chinese Lunar New Year with a traditional night of dumpling wrapping and eating.

[Good Shepherd \(Vancouver, BC\)](#) is marking the Chinese New Year with a traditional potluck Chinese breakfast on Sunday February 2 to which parishioners are encouraged to invite friends.

Christ The King (Toronto, ON) - [The Rev Len Finn](#) will be inducted as the new rector of Christ The King by the Rt Rev Charlie Masters on March 30. Current rector, the Rev Jonathan Wong, is returning to Singapore in June. Len+ is now serving as assistant priest at Christ The King.

Celebration Church (Barrie, ON) – [See photos](#) of the Rev Buzz Onayemi's ordination as deacon.

St Peter & St Paul's (Ottawa, ON) is offering an fascinating Sunday morning course, [Listening to Dead Saints](#). It studies six influential Christians who left their mark on history, asking how their lives can encourage and challenge us today. The course explores the lives of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, C S Lewis, Augustine of Hippo, Blaise Pascal, John Jewel and William Wilberforce.

Cornerstone Anglican Church (Sarnia, ON) has a mission team in the Dominican Republic this week working under The Samaritan Foundation which provides "...housing and infrastructure for the poorest of the poor".

Immanuel (Vancouver, BC) has an engaging [new website](#).

Holy Trinity Filipino (Edmonton, AB) has launched its first website www.ancholytrinity.ca

Be sure to email your parish news to [Marilyn Jacobson](#).

Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) news

ACNA delivers much anticipated Catechism

"To Be a Christian: AN Anglican Catechism" is now available on the ACNA website. The Rev Canon Dr J I Packer led the task force which developed this "unique and powerful resource for helping inquirers come to an understanding of the Christian faith and for helping disciples deepen their relationship with God." Learn more about it and download it from the [ACNA website](#).

Primate's insight from House of Bishop's meeting

The January 13th *Anglican Unscripted* [video newsmagazine](#) includes an interesting interview with Archbishop Bob Duncan in which he discusses the catechism just approved, the work completed on the Prayer Book, how his successor will be selected, and the work of the Theological Task Force on Holy Orders which is looking at the sensitive issue of women's ordination.

He also discusses his recent health issues and the greatest challenges facing the next Primate – which he said were 1) the "*reformation of behaviour*", to use Canon David Short's terminology, and 2) the full integration of the Province from what was once a federation into a fully united Church.

Archbishop Bob concluded by asking our prayer for the continued unity and mission of the Church, for faithfulness, for the effective roll-out of the catechism, for the church planting thrust, for discipling of people within ACNA, and for the emergence of God's choice for ACNA's next Primate.

Bishop Julian Dobbs to lead ACNA's CANA dioceses

Bishop Julian Dobbs [has been appointed](#) to provide oversight and leadership to the Convocation of Anglicans in North America (CANA). CANA is a founding member of the ACNA as well as being a missionary initiative of the Church of Nigeria. It comprises two of the 29 diocese in ACNA. Bishop Dobbs is familiar to many in ANiC as he was a speaker at one of our synods.

ACNA clergyman appointed to serve as one of Canterbury Cathedral's 6 preachers

The Archbishop of Canterbury [has appointed](#) the Rev Dr Tory Baucum, rector of ACNA's Truro Church in Fairfax, Virginia, as one of the six preachers of Canterbury Cathedral. The institution of the College of Six Preachers was created by Archbishop Thomas Cranmer in 1541. These six serve 5-year renewable terms and preach occasionally at Canterbury Cathedral. ACNA's Archbishop Bob Duncan [called this appointment](#) "*historically significant*".

"Thankful for our Canadian friends"

Bishop David Anderson, writing in the American Anglican Council newsletter, offers [a tribute](#) to the roll Canadians have played, and continue to play, in the formation and life of the ACNA.

ACNA Diocese of San Joaquin trial concludes

Canon lawyer Alan Haley provides [an update](#) of the court case involving ACNA's Diocese of San Joaquin, as well as a nice summary of the arguments and tactics of both sides in the dispute. Following the exchange of further written briefs, the case should be decided by mid-June.

Anglican Communion

English archbishops' selective memory draws quick, incisive responses

In [a letter](#) to the Primates of the Anglican Communion and the presidents of both Nigeria and Uganda, **Archbishops Justin Welby and John Sentamu** condemn "*victimization or diminishment of human beings whose affections happen to be ordered towards people of the same sex*". They reference the Primates' commitment in the 2005 Dromantine Communique to "*pastoral support and care of homosexual people*".

In an [incisive response](#), the **Archbishop of Uganda, Stanley Ntagali**, recounts the Ugandan Church's work to improve the government's legislation and ensure that the "*Church is a safe place for individuals who are confused about their sexuality or struggling with sexual brokenness to seek help and healing*". He then reminds the English archbishops that "*the teaching of the Anglican Communion from the 1998 Lambeth Conference, from Resolution 1.10, still stands. It states that 'homosexual practice is incompatible with Scripture,' and the conference 'cannot advise the legitimising or blessing of same sex unions nor ordaining those involved in same gender unions.'*"

"It was the Episcopal Church USA (TEC) and the Anglican Church of Canada's violations of Lambeth 1.10 which caused the Church of Uganda to break communion with those Provinces more than ten years ago. We sincerely hope the Archbishops and governing bodies of the Church of England will step back from the path they have set themselves on so the Church of Uganda will be able to maintain communion with our own Mother Church."

Archbishop Ntagali concludes by reminding his English counterparts of the 2007 Primates Communique from Dar es Salaam which stated that there were "*consequences for the full participation of the Church in the life of the Communion*" for Provinces which allow same-sex blessings or bishops in same-sex relationships. So, he warns the Archbishop of Canterbury against inviting leaders from provinces violating these commitments to the next Primates Meeting or to the Lambeth Conference (in 2018).

In an [equally forceful letter](#), GAFCon chairman **Archbishop Eliud Wabukala** (Kenya) refreshes the English Archbishops' memories and says, "*... The good advice of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York would carry much more weight if they were able to affirm that they hold, personally, as well as in virtue of their office, to the collegial mind of the Anglican Communion. At the moment I fear that we cannot be sure. Regrettably, their intervention has served to encourage those who want to normalize homosexual lifestyles in Africa and has fuelled prejudice against African Anglicans. We are committed to biblical sexual morality and to biblical pastoral care...*"

GAFCon Chairman admonished Church of England bishops

In a [pastoral letter](#) to the Global Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans Archbishop Eliud Wabukala (Kenya) encourages us to "*devote ourselves to the... make disciples of all nations...*" Referring to the Church of England Piling Report and that House of Bishops' decision to engage in another "*conversion process*" on the matter of blessing same-sex relations, he saying, "*There is urgency about the gospel... We cannot therefore allow our time and energy to be sapped by debating that which God has already clearly revealed in the Scriptures... it is difficult to believe that the bishop's indecision at this stage is due to lack of information or biblical reflection. The underlying problem is whether or not there is a willingness to accept the bible for what it really is, the Word of God... [The proposed] dialogue only spreads confusion and opens the door to a false gospel because the Scriptures no longer function in any meaningful way as a test of what is true and false.*"

Why not join the Global Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans now? [Sign up online](#).

The Biblical way to handle disagreement

Canon Phil Ashley [responds](#) to an article published by the Anglican Communion news office which prescribed “*facilitated conversations*” as the Biblical way to handle any and all disagreements. Canon Ashley, CEO of the American Anglican Council, easily discredits this argument. Citing early church history, he notes that disputes over the core tenets of the Gospel were ultimately resolved by weighing arguments against the teaching of God’s Word.

Unfortunately, he notes, the Anglican Communion has adopted the “... *the new religion of reconciliation: facilitated conversations (Indaba) that can have only two possible results: eventual acceptance of the innovations, or a never-ending process of facilitated conversations, until all resistance is vanquished.*”

International news in brief

Canada – The Government of Canada [is reported](#) to have cancelled a state visit by Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan to Canada because of Nigeria’s new homosexuality law.

The Supreme Court [has agreed](#) to revisit the issue of assisted suicide.

United States – The US Episcopal Church [failed yet again](#) in its attempts to maneuver around an earlier South Carolina court decision. As a result, the state court case will proceed to trial in July. A spokesman for the now independent Diocese of South Carolina responded, “*Sadly, all the legal shenanigans simply add to the tens of millions of dollars the denomination has spent on legal bills aimed at bullying disaffected members to remain with TEC.*” Kendall Harman comments, “*TEC has historically used the courts to punish parishes and dioceses who disagree with the denomination’s shifting theology. The group has spent more than \$22 million on legal efforts to seize individual church property and evict parishioners.*”

The Anglican Journal [reports](#) that Anglican Church of Canada and the US Episcopal Church will share the services of the Rev Canon Dr Isaac Kawuki Mukasa, who will serve as their Africa relations officer.

England – [Commenting](#) on the decision by the Church of England’s House of Bishops to engage in “*facilitated conversations*” about same-sex blessings, Canon Phil Ashley concludes, “*Culture changes. God’s word never changes... It is a tragedy that TEC and the Anglican Church of Canada have decided to “indaba” themselves to death rather than speak prophetically and lovingly to Western culture with the transforming love of Jesus Christ. It is an even greater tragedy that the bishops of the Church of England should now propose to join them in projecting confusion and error through “facilitated conversations” across the Anglican Communion.*” You can read the House of Bishops’ statement [here](#). Meanwhile the former Archbishop of Canterbury Lord Carey [is warning](#) the bishops of the Church of England about “*dancing to the world’s agenda*”.

South Sudan – The *New York Times* [reports](#) that “*What began as a political contest... has turned into a full-scale communal conflict, pitting the country’s two main ethnic groups, the Dinka and the Nuer, against each other.*” Although a ceasefire is reported to now be in effect some fighting continues. [Reports](#) estimate the dead at more than 1000 and the displaced in excess of 500,000. Refugee camps are over-flowing.

Yet, in the midst of this ethnic conflict, Bishop Grant LeMarquand [reports](#) that the church is alive and well in the refugee camps. On a recent trip to a refugee camp he led a inter-tribal service for 800 followed by baptisms. He writes, “*I caught a glimpse of the kingdom at this service. Although a large part of the fighting in South Sudan is ethnically-based violence, this church had made a decision. They would worship together in spite of ethnic and language differences. So we sang and prayed in Anuak, Nuer, Dinka and Murle...*”

As part of his tour of Anglican Communion countries, Archbishop Justin Welby was in South Sudan on January 30 where he commended the church [saying](#), “*The South Sudanese Church is an*

example to us all in its consistent speaking with one voice for peace, for unity and to an ending to the violence so horrifically perpetrated against so many people.”

Nigeria – On Sunday, January 26, Boko Haram Islamists [are reported](#) to have killed at least 30 church-goers in Chakawa by locking the church doors before slitting people’s throats. In a separate attack, they bombed and burned the village of Kawori, killing another 52 villagers.

West Africa – The Primate of the Anglican Church of West Africa, Archbishop Solomon Tilewa Johnson [died suddenly](#) of a suspected heart attack at age 59. Archbishop Tilewa was at GAFCon in Kenya last October and was well-liked and respected in the Communion. ACNA’s Bishop Bill Atwood concluded [his article](#) – largely devoted to the recent March for Life – with a humorous personal story about Archbishop Tilewa, the “*tallest bishop*” given to “*infectious laughter*”.

Central African Republic – International Christian Concern [reports](#) “...at least one million people, about a fifth of the population, have been displaced by violence in Central African Republic.”

India – Persecution of Christians in India seems to be spreading. International Christian Concern [reports](#) that another pastor was stabbed and beaten to death by suspected Hindu radicals in the state of Andhra Pradesh. While Christians demonstrating for justice in this case were arrested, the authorities seem uninterested in arresting the murders.

Middle East – The legacy of the “Arab Spring” and western intervention in the Middle East is the “*near-annihilation of the world’s most ancient communities of Christians*”, according to a [The Week report](#) on a new short Kindle book, [The Silence of Our Friends](#) by Ed West. “*Throughout the Middle East the pattern is the same. Christians are murdered in mob violence or by militant groups. Their churches are bombed, their shops destroyed, and their homes looted. Laws are passed making them second-class citizens, and the majority of them eventually leave...*” and all due to the “*clueless and callous behavior of Western governments...* A Christian shopkeeper in Ma'loula summed it up in a quote to the BBC: “*Tell the EU and the Americans that we sent you Saint Paul 2,000 years ago to take you from the darkness, and you sent us terrorists to kill us*”... Western policy has helped shape this grim fate for Middle Eastern Christians — and Western silence allows it to continue.”

But there are things we can and must do: “*Western countries should make clear that our friendship, cooperation, aid, and help depends on: 1) Religious freedom, which includes the right to change or leave religions; 2) A secular law that treats all people the same. That was not the case in Mubarak’s Egypt, which the U.S. helped to prop up with \$500 million a year. That is not the case in Iraq, which under U.S. control instigated sharia into its constitution. That shouldn’t be acceptable. In 2022, Qatar will host the World Cup, a country where death for apostasy is still on the statute books. Why aren’t we all boycotting it?*”

Egypt – Egyptians went to the polls in mid-January to vote on a new constitution – one which would provide more protection to Christians – but International Christian Concern [reports](#) that Muslim Brotherhood members actively prevented Coptic Christians in some communities from exercising their democratic rights through violence and intimidation.

[A report](#) in *Aljazeera* provides some background on the situation in Egypt and especially good insight into the important role played by the comparatively tiny Anglican Church and Presiding Bishop Mouneer Anis in building bridges between Muslims and Christians.

Bishop Mouneer, on January 25, [wrote](#) asking for prayer. He said, “*As the Egyptian people were preparing for the celebration of the 3rd anniversary of the 25 January 2011 Revolution, and rejoicing after the passing of the new Constitution, the Islamists (Muslim Brotherhood and other groups) threatened that they would demonstrate, yet again, in protest of the removal of former President Mursi. This morning Egypt woke up hearing the news of several bombs in Cairo; 12 people were killed and dozens injured... The day before, six police were shot dead by a group of terrorists at a check-point in Upper Egypt... My hope and prayer is that the international community would stand*

in solidarity with the current Egyptian Government in its fight against terrorism. I know that most countries have condemned these bombings, but condemnation needs to be accompanied by more practical actions. Please continue to pray for our beloved country Egypt."

Burma – International Christian Concern [reports](#) that the Burmese military continues to use rape and vicious sexual assault as a weapon in its war against Christian ethnic minority groups – especially the Kachin and Shan.

Resources

Ministry resources

Ministry Leadership Day – On Friday, March 21, Heritage College & Seminary (Cambridge, ON) is [offering a conference](#) with the theme: *Worship That Transforms Through Preaching and Music*.

Keeping young people in church – A Church of England [research study](#) found that much of the decline in attendance was due to young people walking away from church. The crucial ages at which this tends to occur are in the early teen years and early 20s. The research also found:

"... that 1.4 per cent of those aged 20 to 24 attend a C of E church once a month or more often. The percentage rises in every subsequent age-group, to 13.8 per cent in those aged 80 and above...."

"Factors "strongly associated" with growth in churches of any size, place, or context included good leadership, a clear purpose, and "being intentional in prioritising growth"..."

The researcher noted that *"The churches that are not doing so well are those that have just stagnated in worship and activity, and have not really tried to reflect very much."* He warned that, for some, the change needed to reverse decline would be painful.

"If you think about it, an awful lot of people who go week in week out do not have strong incentives to change," he said. "They are probably content with the way things are, and, from their point of view, bringing in lots of new people could actually be somewhat destructive. New people might want worship to be done in a different way . . . or might be seen as taking responsibility away from those that currently hold it. I don't think anybody is going to say deliberately, 'I don't want my church to grow', but I don't think on a conscious level they are quite aware of their own disposition to change."

Soul food

Just for laughs

It was Super Bowl Sunday and the time for the collection of tithes and offerings was approaching.

The minister, a true sports enthusiast, reached into his pocket, took out a quarter, flipped it into the air, glanced at it as it landed, then in typical referee fashion joyfully announced: "The ushers have elected to receive!"

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Thoughts

Christian love is not the victim of our emotions but the servant of our will. ~ John Stott

Love is not maximum emotion. Love is maximum commitment. ~ Sinclair Ferguson

And now a Word from our Sponsor

Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength!

Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; bring an offering and come before him!

Worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness; tremble before him, all the earth;

yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved.

Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice, and let them say among the nations, "The Lord reigns!"