



Handle with prayer...

ANiC news

ANiC and ACNA events calendar

Feb 16-18 – ANiC Archdeacons' meeting and training in Toronto

Feb 24 – ACNA Executive Committee meets in Phoenix, AZ

April 7-10 – New Wineskins for Global Mission 2016 [conference](#), Ridgecrest, NC

April 12-14 – Ontario clergy [silent retreat](#) at a [retreat centre](#) near Orangeville

April 16, 9:30am - 1pm – ANiC regional [women's gathering](#), New Song (Port Perry, ON)

May 2-5 – Western clergy retreat, [Malibu retreat centre](#), BC – with Dr Jon Vickery speaking

May 3 – Sanctity of Life Sunday (Canada)

May 12 – [March for Life \(Canada\) 2016](#)

June 14-15 – *God's Word Written*, ANiC apologetics conference, Vancouver, BC

June 16 – *God's Word Written*, ANiC preaching conference, Vancouver, BC

June 20-22 – ACNA Executive & Provincial Council meet in Mt Pleasant, SC

Oct 25-28 – Synod 2016, Church of the Good Shepherd, Vancouver, BC

Anglican Communion Primates' meeting in Canterbury

The just concluded meeting in Canterbury – in which our Primate, Archbishop Foley Beach, was a full participant – took a small step towards restoring godly order and discipline to the Communion – and supplying Anglican blogs and media with an almost endless supply of material for comment. The US Episcopal Church was slapped on the wrist – suspended for three years from representing the Communion on Ecumenical bodies and from voting in internal Anglican Communion meetings – but the Anglican Church of Canada narrowly escaped a similar sanction. See the [fully communiqué](#) from the meeting, particularly Addendum A.

Bishop Charlie Masters, who accompanied Archbishop Beach to Canterbury for the week of meetings, has kept us well informed with both [a report](#) immediately following the gathering and [a further reflection](#) just days ago. Archbishop Foley Beach also wrote [a brief report](#) from Canterbury and gave an [informative interview](#) to Anglican TV and another [excellent interview](#) on Breakpoint. And the GAFCon Primates issued [a statement](#) as well. Themes include: gratitude for our prayer support, a call to continued prayer for the renewal of the Anglican Communion, and disappointment both that the Anglican Church of Canada was not disciplined and that the US Episcopal Church was not so lightly sanctioned.

At the end of the Primates' meeting, Bishop Charlie did a number of media interviews, including this [Austrian TV segment](#), where he makes a cameo appearance at about the 3:45 minute mark. You can also hear him interviewed on NPR radio [here](#). His brief comment begins at 3:15 minutes.

See for more on the Primates' meeting below.

World Missions Sunday in ACNA, February 7

What are you doing to mark World Missions Sunday? The last Sunday after the Epiphany is traditionally designated World Mission Sunday in ACNA. Our Primate, Archbishop Foley Beach, in a letter encouraging churches to highlight world mission projects your church is already involved with or find and showcase a new project. If you'd like to feature ARDFC's [current project](#) in Burundi, you'll find [resources here](#), including links to a liturgy and prayers of the people.

Helping refugees

[Church of the Resurrection](#) (Brandon, MB) and [St Bede's](#) (Kinosota, MB) have join two other Brandon congregations to sponsor a refugee family from Northern Syria who will be arriving in

Brandon in the next few months. Archdeacon Paul Crossland (Resurrection, MB) reports that their contribution financially to this project is almost 10 per cent of the parish's 2015 income and is on top of the church's ongoing financial commitments to a range of other ministries – all of which are over and above tithing.

[New Song \(Port Perry, ON\)](#) is spearheading a [Port Perry-wide coalition](#) of local churches and community members which is sponsoring two Syrian refugee families and actively fundraising.

[Saint Matthew's \(Abbotsford, BC\)](#) is also part of a community group that is sponsoring refugees.

[St Timothy's \(North Vancouver, BC\)](#) and **[Good Samaritan \(St John's, NL\)](#)** are both helping financially. St Timothy's is supporting a local Armenian Orthodox church that is sponsoring 29 Syrian Armenian families.

[St Peter & St Paul's \(Ottawa, ON\)](#) is raising funds to sponsor a Syrian refugee family who are known to some members of the parish.

What is your congregation doing to help refugees (Syrian or other)? [Please let us know!](#)

ARDFC update - Nepal

In 2015, thanks to generous donors, our global aid arm, the Anglican Relief & Development Fund Canada ([ARDFC](#)) sent nearly \$40,000 for relief work in Nepal following last year's earthquakes. Also last year, we contributed \$25,760 for Syrian and Iraqi refugee relief, \$46,680 to provide clean water in South Sudan, and more than \$7000 to help flood victims in Myanmar and South Carolina.

We just received [a fascinating report](#) from the **Anglican Church in Nepal** that is concerning – because of the continuing suffering in remote mountainous areas – and yet incredibly encouraging. God is building His Church in Nepal in amazing ways! The next step is rebuilding the many, many church buildings destroyed in the earthquake. Do read Dean (of Nepal) Lewis Lew's [report](#), pray for the Church in Nepal, and consider how you might [continue to help](#) the ministry there. And, if you want to know what ministry in Nepal is like for a foreigner, read this Singaporean's [entertaining account](#), complete with video and photos.

God's Word Written: The Truthfulness, Dependability, and Power of the Bible

ANiC's national apologetics and preaching conferences, planned for June 14-15 will be held at Westside Church in Vancouver. ANiC's *Biblically Grounded* ministry priority team, under the leadership of Canon George Sinclair, is organizing this conferences. Watch for more information.

Bishop Stephen's shares his experience on building multicultural churches

ANiC's Bishop Stephen Leung was interviewed for [an article](#) on multiculturalism posted on the Missions Fest Vancouver website. He discusses the need for more people from visible minorities in church leadership, the need for Christians to intentionally foster friendships with people of other ethnic backgrounds, and the importance of enabling new immigrants to worship God in their native language. Churches need a long-term vision of becoming more multicultural; we need to go to ethnic minorities rather than expect them to come to our churches; and in bring the Gospel to ethnic minorities we need to protect their cultural identity.

David Festival, a celebration of Christian worship through the Arts, April 8-10

ANiC's **New Song** (Port Perry, ON) is one of the forces behind [this annual event](#) begun in 2008. This year, Dove Award winner, author, musician, Juno nominee Carolyn Arends is the featured speaker. All sessions take place in Port Perry or Uxbridge. Early bird rates apply through March 8.

Eastern Clergy Silent Retreat, April 12-14

The 2016 Clergy Silent Retreat will be April 12-14 at the [Valley retreat centre](#) near Orangeville – the same venue as last year. And once again, Bishop Charlie will be the retreat leader. The retreat starts on Tuesday, April 12 at 5pm and end on Thursday, April 14 at 11:30am. For more information, [see the flyer](#) and an [information sheet](#) on costs, accommodation and meals.

Ontario regional women's gathering, April 16, New Song, Port Perry

Southern Ontario ANiC women are invited to a regional women's gathering at New Song Anglican Church in Port Perry, ON, April 16, 9:30am - 1pm. The speaker, Pauling Streeter, will focus on spiritual gifts and her experiences in Nepal in the aftermath of the devastating earthquakes. See [the information sheet](#) on the ANiC website for details.

Canadian March for Life

Sitting on the fence about participating in the March for Life this year? Watch [this short video](#) showing the growing power and influence of these Marches for Life held around the world. At the 51 second point you'll briefly spot an Anglicans for Life Canada banner from the March in Ottawa.

To participate with other Anglicans in this year's March on May 12, contact:

In BC – Rich+ and Jenny Roberts

In Alberta – [Dr Nancy Craig](#)

In Ottawa – [The Rev Vicky Hedelius](#)

Or take the initiative and organize Anglicans in your province to participate in your provincial March. [Connect with Vicky+](#) to learn more.

Dimming sight threatens to shut the book on Dr Packer's public ministry

The Gospel Coalition [shares the sad news](#) that the Rev Canon Dr J I Packer now has age-related macular degeneration in both eyes and, as a result, can no longer read or write. You can read an interview with Dr Packer [here](#). He says, in part, "*I don't see how any Christian can be discouraged, because God is in charge – God knows what he's doing, all things work together for good for those are called according to his purpose, and our hope is in Christ.*" *Christianity Today* [has more](#).

Despite this setback, Dr Packer still intends to participate in ANiC's **preaching conference**, *God's Word Written*, in Vancouver on June 16.

Parish and regional news

[Faith Anglican \(Embrun, ON\)](#) – Sadly Faith's pastor, the Rev Neil Stephens has announced his retirement at the end of February.

[St Jude \(Guelph, ON\)](#) – Although still in formation, this aspiring church plant is generating [media coverage](#). The recent newspaper article provides St Jude with nice promotion (but unfortunately gets some of the facts wrong about the relationship of ANiC to the rest of the Anglican world). St Jude was also the subject of an earlier, more accurate [report](#).

[Emmanuel \(Boston, MA\)](#) which just celebrated its first anniversary has [a slide show](#) of highlights.

[Emmaus \(Montreal, QC\)](#) – CBC TV ran a heart-warming story featuring a big-hearted homeless man in Montreal who is a frequent guest and friend of the [Open Door](#), a drop-in centre ministry run by Emmaus.. Do see what this man did to make the news. In that situation, how do I respond?

Got parish news? Let the rest of us know about it! [Email Marilyn.](#)

Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) news

Should the ACNA apply for official membership in the Anglican Communion?

While the Anglican Church in North America is fully recognized by the largest Provinces in the Anglican Communion and Archbishop Foley Beach is a member of both the GAFCon Primates' Council and, more recently, the Global South, the official structures of the Anglican Communion have not extended membership to the ACNA. Archbishop Foley Beach, [in his interview](#) with Anglican TV, reveals that ACNA membership was discussed by the Primates and ACNA was invited to apply to the Anglican Consultative Council for official membership in the Communion. But should we? Archbishop Beach notes that this is something we need to pray about.

Calling songwriters

ACNA's *United Adoration* Midwest [Songwriting Retreat](#) is in Fort Wayne, IN on April 15-16.

Anglicans march in Washington, DC

Archbishop Foley Beach speaking at Morning Prayer prior to the March for Life talks about the greatest moral issue of our time - 57 million babies killed by abortion in the US since it was legalized. He began [his meditation](#) saying “*We must not keep silent.... We must continue to knock on the door of the unrighteous judge and demand change... We are sacrificing our children to the gods of convenience, materialism and sex. It's become a multimillion dollar business... We are inflicting pain on not just the murdered baby but on the mother and father as well...The emotional trauma takes years to heal, if ever...*” He went on to show from Scripture that God is intimately involved in the creation of each new child in its mother’s womb. We are created in God’s image; “*life is sacred... each life has been created by God for a kingdom purpose and a divine destiny*”.

Several **ANiC members** went to Washington, DC for the Anglicans for Life Summit and the March for Life the following day. The Rev Vicky Hedelius, director of Anglicans for Life Canada reports that the Summit was excellent; the videos, including video of Archbishop Foley Beach and keynote speaker John Stonestreet, [are posted on YouTube](#) courtesy of Anglican TV. Full reports on the event – which included speakers addressing life issues from all angles – are posted on [Anglican Ink](#) and the [Juicy Ecumenist](#).

Unfortunately, due to the forecast of a **powerful blizzard** descending on Washington, the Canadian contingent had to leave before participating in the March. Vicky+ says that the Canadians “*were encouraged and are excited to see and hear how God’s Holy Spirit is moving His church!*”

Thousands who heading home after the March were stuck on the highway for more than 24 hours – including Anglicans for Life president, Georgette Forney, and her team who spent 28 hours stuck in snow and traffic on the road. *Life Site News*, however, [reports](#) that the severe storm was what finally forced the media to provide coverage of the March albeit grudging as stranded busloads of students returning from the March held mass in the snow, shoveled out fellow travelers and shared their food.

Mere Anglicanism

An annual highlight for Anglicans in North America is [the Mere Anglicanism conference](#), organized by the Diocese of South Carolina. This year’s stellar conference, at the end of January, focused on Islam and Christianity. You can read the highlights in this [very helpful summary](#) by Jeffery Walton or in a two-part summary by Alan Haley – [part 1](#) and [part 2](#).

Global Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans and Anglican Communion news

Primates meeting – news round-up

In addition to sanctioning the US Episcopal Church, the Primates’ [agreed](#) to a proposal to call a Lambeth Conference (of all bishops throughout the Communion) in 2020, as well as further Primates meetings in 2017 and 2019.

Even before the January 15th news conference at the close of the Primates meeting in Canterbury – [recorded by Anglican TV](#) – the spin had begun. Was Archbishop Foley Beach a participant with full vote, or merely an observer? Archbishop Beach [clearly states](#) that, while not an official member of the Anglican Communion, he was a full participant in the meeting with voting privileges. Were the measures taken against TEC discipline or mere consequences? Did this meeting of Primates have the authority to impose sanctions on TEC or does that authority belong to the Anglican Consultative Council, a more TEC-friendly body? And would Archbishop Welby follow through on the decisions of the meeting? Some GAFCon Primates [are wary](#) and will be watching closely.

TEC and TEC-leaning media advance the view that the Primates acted beyond their authority. This fascinating *Church Times* [article](#), for example, states, “*The ACC is due to meet in Zambia in April. Two US members, the Bishop of Connecticut, the Rt Revd Ian Douglas, and the Revd Gay Clark Jennings, have confirmed that they will attend.*” It quotes ‘experts’ saying the Primates were out of line in disciplining TEC and also quotes TEC bishops advocating that TEC “*turn the other cheek*” and not use its financial clout to retaliate. The Bishop of Nevada even suggests the sanctions were

not about theology or moral practice but were a power play. He says, “*It is actually a protest arising out of a sense of powerlessness, a legacy of Western imperialism.*”

Primates elect a Standing Committee

On Friday of the Primates meeting, after several GAFCon Primates, acting on principle since the Primates of the US Episcopal Church and the Anglican Church of Canada continuing in the meeting, the Primates elected their standing committee. *Anglican Ink* [reports](#) that the members are:

- Archbishop Philip Freier from Australia for the Asia-Pacific region
- Archbishop John Holder from the Caribbean for the Americas
- Archbishop Thabo Makoba from South Africa for Africa
- Archbishop Richard Clarke from Ireland for Europe
- Archbishop Mouneer Anis from Egypt and the Middle East for Asia

Neo-colonialism

Writing in the American Anglican Council newsletter, Robert Lundy [discusses](#) comments made by the Anglican Consultative Council Secretary General, Archbishop Josiah Fearon, at the concluding news conference of the Primates meeting in Canterbury. In response to a question, he spoke against outsiders – powerful governments and international agencies – trying to impose the west’s pro-LGBTI morality, something that is foreign and culturally unacceptable in most African countries.

Standardizing Easter dates

At the Primates meeting news conference, Archbishop Justin Welby mentioned that the Primates of the Anglican Communion have agreed to support moves by the Coptic Pope to unify and fix the date of Easter. [This article](#) provides background on the variability of the date and the differences between eastern and western churches in setting the date for Easter, which this year lands on March 27 for us and on May 1 for eastern churches. Canon George Conger, [writing in Anglican Ink](#), is sceptical that a unified date will be achieved in the near future because of the Russian Orthodox Church’s position. VirtueOnline [reports](#) that Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali supports a common date for Easter, but not a fixed date as that would delink Easter from the Jewish Passover, to which Easter is closely connected both theologically and historically.

International news in brief

Canada

Primates meeting – When asked in the post-Primates’ Meeting news conference what the Anglican Communion’s response would be to the Anglican Church of Canada (ACoC) if its General Synod embraced same-sex marriage this July, the Archbishop of Canterbury was noncommittal, saying “... *we’ll cross that bridge when we get to it*”. However it was clear that the state of affairs in the ACoC had been a topic of discussion among the Primates. This Anglican Journal article [provides some history](#) of past attempts to sanction the ACoC.

ACoC Archbishop Fred Hiltz, writing at the conclusion of the Primates’ meeting [said](#), “*I was deeply mindful that our Church will deal with the first reading of a proposed change of a similar kind in our canon on marriage at General Synod in July 2016. There is no doubt in my mind that the action of the Primates’ meeting will weigh into our deliberations.*” In a [subsequent statement](#), he wrote, “*I am especially mindful of the pain the LGBTQ community within our Church is feeling. I am very sorry. I acknowledge their frustration and that of their supporters in being made to feel like the sacrificial offering on the altar of the Church’s unity.*” He also alluded to criticism he has received for the perception he didn’t stand in solidarity with TEC and accept the same consequences, but said that to do so would overstep his authority.

Archbishop Hiltz is schedule to preach at a Queer Eucharist at [St John’s](#) West Toronto on February 16 where he is expected to report on the Primates meeting and answer questions.

Bishop David Torraville, ACoC Diocese of Central Newfoundland [has announced](#) his retirement:

Anglican-Orthodox collaboration - “A new Master of Divinity program at Trinity College, Toronto, is helping to prepare students for ordained or lay ministry in the Orthodox Church.” The ACoC Diocese of Toronto [reports](#) that this will allow, for the first time, Eastern Orthodox students to pursue their studies in Canada.

Euthanasia – The Supreme Court [has given](#) the federal government only a four month extension to develop legislation governing assisted suicide and euthanasia.

The *Ottawa Citizen* [reports](#) that pro-life advocates are concerned that the new government has failed to release a report it received some time ago by the panel of experts appointed by the previous government to study assisted suicide. However, the current government has set up its own panel, which is seen to be “stacked” with “right to die” advocates, and [begun hearings](#).

Life Site News [reports](#) that a Quebec regional health agency has announced the province’s first legal euthanization of a patient in a health facility. The federal government [has clearly given](#) Quebec the green light to begin assisted suicides and euthanizations under the provinces’ recently passed legislation even though it contravenes the existing Criminal Code of Canada.

The Ontario College of Physicians and Surgeons has ratified a policy that forces doctors to partner in assisted suicide. *Life Site News* [reports](#), “The policy mandates that doctors administer euthanasia or assisted suicide... for patients enduring “suffering that is intolerable” from a “grievous and irremediable medical condition,” who are mentally competent adults and willingly request it. But for doctors with a conscientious objection... the policy requires they “effectively refer” patients to other doctors they know will deliver the fatal procedure or assistance.”

The British Columbia College of Physicians and Surgeons’ [recently released](#) draft guidelines for assisted suicide and euthanasia does not require doctors to perform the procedures when this violates their conscience, nor to refer patients. However they are required to “advise patients that other physicians may be available to see them” and adding that they must “offer assistance and must not abandon the patient.” However, doctors remain concerned. *Life Site News* [quotes](#) Vancouver Dr Will Johnston, the head of the British Columbia branch of the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition, who maintains that “...assisted suicide and euthanasia “are not even health care.” Johnston said that if “society believes people have a right to [physician-assisted death], then society should provide for its delivery outside the health system. We [doctors] shouldn’t have anything to do with them. The only profession that comes close to providing something like this is that of the hangman.”

What you can do – Canadians concerned about assisted suicide and euthanasia are asked urgently to review and [sign an anti-euthanasia declaration](#). The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada – of which ANiC is a member – needs 10,000 signatures by February 6 to show legislators that there is nation-wide support for limits to euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide and better protection for vulnerable Canadians as well as improve palliative care.

Also you can learn more by [registering for a free webinar](#), on February 17, which will both explore the issue and discuss what congregations can do to help protect life.

As a friend of ANiC wrote, “the ‘right to die’ opens the door to ‘the right to kill’, to dispose of the vulnerable, the disadvantaged, disabled, sick and elderly who are considered a burden on society and on health care resources – and even elderly parents or spouses whose wealth someone is eager to obtain. Canada needs to have just laws in place to strictly regulate this.” *Life News* [reports](#) that Belgium has descended the “slippery slope” to the point that an estimated 1000 patients each year are euthanized without their consent.

Alberta – The Alberta government [has released](#) new [guidelines](#) for mandatory transgender policies in all schools in the province. The guidelines eliminate referring to parents as Mother or Father, decree that students be able dress as they choose and be able to play for sports teams based on their preferred “gender identity and expression”. They demand teachers refer to a student by

whatever name or pronoun – including newly created pronouns – that student chooses; and parents [do not have the right](#) to information on their child’s sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. School records are not to identify students as male or female. And students should be allowed to use whichever gender washroom or change room they wish.

The Roman Catholic bishops and most RC school boards [are fighting back](#). Parents opposing the legislation [are organizing](#) but are on the receiving end of vitriolic [media coverage](#).

Ontario – Parents in Ontario are concerned about a sex-education program being implemented this year. To learn more, watch [Context with Lorna Dueck](#).

To help parents learn more, then effectively communicate with the school and with their child, an organization known as PEACE [has developed material](#) and a series of six weekly webinars beginning on Tuesday evening February 9. If you are a parent, grandparent or clergy member in Ontario, please become informed and, if possible, [register for the webinars](#). Also, do your part to ensure others are informed. Let’s be actively and positively engaged in our children’s education.

United States

Primates’ sanctions – Virtually every bishop and leader in the **US Episcopal Church’s** (TEC) has issued a statement following the Primates’ decision. These have ranged from petulance to sadness to thinly veiled racism, but most indicated that there would be no change of course for TEC. The exceptions, of course, are the few remaining orthodox bishops in TEC. *Virtue Online* [has compiled](#) summaries of many of these statements. Full statements can be found on [Anglican Ink’s website](#). You can listen to TEC Presiding Bishop Michael Curry express his disappointment in a [short video](#).

Abortion - After [being passed](#) by both the Senate and Congress, a bill to defund Planned Parenthood [was unceremoniously vetoed](#) by President Barack Obama in early January.

Astonishingly, a Houston grand jury [has shot the messenger](#) rather than the perpetrator by indicting undercover journalists working to expose Planned Parenthood’s illegal sale of aborted babies’ organs and body parts. In the few days since this decision, [evidence has come to light](#) of egregious conflict of interest and bias in the District Attorney’s office which prosecuted the case.

Cuba

There [are reports](#) of a crackdown on churches across denominations in Cuba, with the government declaring some denominations illegal and expropriating the property of others.

England

Just published Church of England (CoE) [statistics for 2014](#) show that almost one million people were in services each week – continuing an annual one per cent decline. Weekly, the CoE saw approximately 1000 weddings, 2000 baptisms (about 12 per cent of births) and 3000 funerals (about 31 per cent of deaths). These statistics, however, mask pockets of growth and renewal.

An *Economist* [article](#), worth reading, notes the **growth of evangelicalism** in the Church of England. “*The share of evangelicals in the Church of England rose from 26% to 34% between 1989 and 2005, says Peter Brierley, a church demographer, and could now be nearly 50%.*” However, the article is careful to note that the CoE style of evangelicalism differs from that in North America and elsewhere. “*They are less focused on creationism and abortion and less right-wing politically.*”

A *Telegraph* [article](#) details numerous cases of anonymous complaints destroying reputations and lives. The author includes **Bishop George Bell** among those whose reputations have been destroyed. Verdicts are rendered without the accused or the public having knowledge of the evidence or the accuser.

In his “*A Church of England perspective on Anglican arguments for same sex-marriage*”, Martin Davie [examines](#) the actions and documentation related to “**same-sex marriage**” from the US Episcopal Church, the Anglican Church of Canada and the Scottish Episcopal Church. He finds the theological arguments put forward by all three Churches to be deeply flawed. Rather than using

Scripture as a starting point, he found these Churches chose to “...start instead from a belief that same-sex relationships are something that we ought to support. They then take selected pieces of the biblical material out of context as the basis for a theological argument in favour of seeing such relationships as capable of being marriages.” He draws a number of conclusions for both the Church of England and the Anglican Communion.

“One of the key problems facing the Anglican Communion at the moment is that churches in the West in particular no longer see themselves as answerable to the communion as a whole and see it as quite acceptable to re-define something as important as the Christian view of marriage on a unilateral basis. This needs to stop in favour of a willingness to abide by theological decisions arrived at after proper Communion wide debate and discussion and taken with due regard to the impact of any decisions on relations with other Christian churches.

“The fourth challenge is to be willing to call the Scottish Episcopal Church, The Episcopal Church and the Anglican Church of Canada to account for what they propose. If they persist in developing the heretical approach to marriage put forward in these reports and going ahead with solemnizing same sex ‘marriages’ then they need to be subject to discipline by other church of the Communion, the Church of England included...

“Adopting a policy of ‘good disagreement’ which does not call these churches to account, but which agrees to live with difference over the issue of marriage is ultimately not a loving approach to the churches concerned because it does not confront them with their need to repent of their error and return to an acceptance of biblical truth. It also blurs the witness of the Anglican Communion to a watching world that desperately needs to hear a clear Christian voice recalling it to a traditional view of marriage.”

CoE's the Rev **Giles Fraser**, priest at St Mary's Newington has [an opinion piece](#) in *The Guardian* that implies Jesus' mother was not a virgin and he was illegitimate. He says the “cult of Mary's virginity... damaged the basics of Christian philosophy by persuading too many that sex is dirty...” He followed that with [an article](#) which opines that “equal marriage” is the inevitable next step in the CoE's “reformation”. In the article he tells of a same-sex couple's wedding in a London church. Although he implies it was a CoE church, he does not state it. Writing during the Primates' meeting in Canterbury the Rev Fraser says that what the Primates decide is meaningless. What matters is what happens on the ground. And “...in pews across England, Scotland, Wales, Canada, Brazil, Korea, Japan and the US, the movement towards marriage equality is inexorable... Whatever the prince bishops of Uganda and Nigeria think, they fundamentally misunderstand English Christianity if they believe they can bully us into their own reading of scripture.”

A poll commissioned by CoE supporters of **same-sex marriage**, purported to show that more CoE members support same-sex marriage than oppose it. The Revs Ian Paul and Peter Ould [expose the flawed](#) methodology. Peter+, who is both a CoE priest and a professional statistician, concludes that the “...questionnaire tells us absolutely nothing about the opinion of the Anglicans who sit in the pews week after week... The opinion poll is just a puff piece to support a political agenda...”

The Rev David Ould [reports](#), “On Sunday 14 February the parish of St Chrysostom's in the Diocese of Manchester will host the controversial “**Trans Jesus**” play “The Gospel According to Jesus, Queen of Heaven” which portrays Jesus as a transsexual ... The play has aroused understandable protest since its debut in 2009 as it seeks to actively rewrite Christian belief.”

Ireland

Reform Ireland [chastised](#) the bishops of the church for providing an institutional unity rationale, rather than a doctrinal argument in [a letter](#) to clergy issued in late December outlining the Church's policies in light of new state legislation allowing same sex marriage.

Israel

Israel Today [reported](#) in late December that a group of more than 25 orthodox Jewish rabbis issued a statement “calling for a renewed look at Jesus, Christians and the New Testament faith.”

However, the statement acknowledged that Christians and Jews are “*partners with significant theological differences*”. Pray for the Jewish people.

Syria

The Telegraph [reports](#) that more than 55,000 Syrians were killed in 2015 casualties of the chaotic war – many of them Christians targeted for their faith. More than ¼ million people have perished since the war began and another 4 million have fled and are now refugees. *CNN* [reports](#) that others are dying from starvation, trapped in their besieged towns and cut off from food supplies.

Tenuous peace talks [have begun](#) in Geneva.

A trained battalion of about 50 Christian women [is reported](#) to be defending their homeland and engage Islamic State fighters.

Iraq

Christian Today [reports](#) that “All churches have been destroyed” and teachers are forced to teach children extremist Islamic State doctrine including death to infidels. Recently more than 30 teachers were “arrested for refusing to follow the jihadist education syllabus”. Life in Islamic State controlled areas is horrendous according to Canon Andrew White.

Canon White [indicates](#) that, as one result of the intense persecution in the Middle East, “...*denominational lines have begun to disappear and... people not identify themselves simply as Christians.*”

The UN [estimates](#) that 3500 people, mostly women and children are currently enslaved by the Islamic State in Iraq alone.

Islamic State continues its campaign of destroying all vestiges Christianity with [satellite images](#) showing the destruction of the 1400-year-old St Elijah's Monastery of Mosul.

Islamic State - Do you want to better understand the Islamic State (ISIS or ISIL), its history, strategy, ideology, doomsday motivation and leadership – as well as why young people are leaving their comfortable lives to join its ranks? Tim Challies [recommends two books](#).

A [website has been created](#) that takes you through 30 days of prayer for the Islamic State.

Iran

Although Iran [has released](#) from prison Pastor Saeed Abedini and several other US citizens, it [continues to arrest](#) Christians simply for meeting to worship.

India

Eric Metaxas [reports](#) that six states in India now have enacted laws effectively banning conversion from Hinduism to Christianity. Christians [are increasingly being arrested](#) for violated these laws.

Nigeria

The killing and destruction by Boko Haram has almost become monotonous, with only [occasional media coverage](#) in the west. And yet hundreds [have been murdered](#) in attacks in just the last few weeks. For the millions of refugees [forced from their homes](#) in northern Nigeria, homelessness and hunger are their lot. The [UN estimates](#) that more than one million children have been forced out of school. Hundreds of churches have been destroyed and more than 2000 schools have been closed. Only God can bring peace to Nigeria's deeply rooted, multifaceted problems. Please pray!

Burkina Faso

World Watch Monitor [reports](#) that “Six of the 29 people killed by Islamist militants in Burkina Faso [in mid-January] were on a humanitarian trip prompted by their Christian faith, while a seventh was a US missionary who, with his wife, had been running an orphanage and women's refuge in the West African country since 2011.” Four of the six aid workers were Canadians from Quebec. In a separate incident, an elderly Australian missionary doctor and his wife were kidnapped by Islamic terrorists from the remote village where they'd worked for 40 years. Dr Elliot is [reported](#) to

have performed “as many as 150 surgeries a month” in the 120-bed medical clinic they had built and in which he was the only doctor.

Central African Republic

There are [reports](#) that “...the Lord’s Resistance Army, a rebel force that killed more than 100,000 people in northern Uganda in the 1980s and ’90s, is rising up again”, this time in the Central African Republic and Congo. “For more than 20 years, the rebel force abducted and turned children into child soldiers and sex slaves, while murdering, mutilating and abducting villagers.”

South Africa

Archbishop Thabo Makgoba, responding to pressure, [has told Anglican Ink](#) that his Church is considering its response to the same-sex marriage of the Rev Canon Mpho Tutu “...the youngest daughter of former Cape Town archbishop and Nobel Peace Prize laureate, Desmond Tutu... in a civil ceremony in the Netherlands.” Canon Tutu is a priest in the US Episcopal Church. The “Anglican Church of Southern Africa... does not permit its clergy to enter into same-sex marriages.”

Nepal

The Deanery of Nepal, which is part of the Diocese of Singapore, [reports](#) that people in rural areas decimated by the earthquakes last year are still in make-shift shelters and tents, suffering from lack of food, warmth and healthcare. However, God has been moving in a mighty way and hundreds have come to Christ, growing the Church. The deanery is now beginning work on rebuilding church structures destroyed by the quakes, in addition to providing medical aid, food and blankets.

Philippines

Islamist extremists who have pledged allegiance to the Islamic State are behind increasing violence against Christians in the Philippines. Barnabas Fund [reports](#) that on Christmas Eve alone... nine Christians were murdered as 200 Islamist gunmen raided villages in Mindanao.”

Indonesia

Although Indonesia is the world’s largest Muslim nation and Christians are actively persecuted, the Church is growing according to a [CBN article](#).

China

Persecution in China [seems to have expanded](#) to the national level. Days ago the pastor of the country’s largest officially recognized church was arrested for his criticism of campaign to tear down crosses from churches. In the province of Zhejiang more than [1500 crosses have been torn down](#). Numerous other pastors and human rights lawyers have been taken into custody, many held in so-called black jails, unregistered detention centres at unknown locations.

Persecution

North Korea [was named once again](#) by Open Doors, a persecution watchdog agency, as the worst country for persecution of Christians. About 70,000 Christians are thought to be imprisoned in labour camps there. The annual survey found that more than 7000 Christians were killed last year for their faith. The agency’s president noted a rapid rise in persecution saying, “*The persecution of Christians is getting worse in every region in which we work – and it’s getting worse fast.*” For the list and map of the 50 top countries for persecution see [here](#).

Resources for ministry

Church planting conference – A high-powered church planting conference is coming to Vancouver, **March 2-3**. The [Multiply Conference](#) is sponsored by ANiC-affiliate, [C2C Network](#). Learn more [here](#).

Apologetics conferences – In addition to ANiC’s *God’s Word Written* apologetics conference June 14-15 in Vancouver, Apologetics Canada is holding its excellent annual apologetics conferences in [Abbotsford, March 4-5](#), and simultaneously in [Toronto and Barrie, ON, April 22-23](#). [Apologetics Canada](#) also offers helpful video and print materials.

Ontario ministry leadership day - [Heritage College & Seminary](#) (Cambridge, ON) is offering a [ministry leadership day](#), "While Shepherds Watch Their Flocks: *Life and Leadership in the Church Today*", on Thursday, **March 10**. The speaker is award winning author, Dr Tim Laniak from Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary.

Ministering to the sick and dying – Pastor Kevin DeYoung offers [10 things to keep in mind](#).

Wise advice for pastors – A pastor offers [48 nuggets of wisdom](#) on various areas of pastoral ministry. Be sure to read #48.

Will visitors return? This post [suggests five things](#) that visitors are most concerned about in terms of the church facilities.

Clergy wellness – An Evangelical Fellowship of Canada webinar is [now available online](#). It includes ideas of how to balance demands in a busy pastor's life and how churches can better care for their pastors. A [Gospel Coalition blog](#) also discusses three areas pastors need to attend to in order to avoid ministry burn out: Rest, Boundaries, and Margin.

Engaging kids in worship – Read how to [make \(traditional\) worship kid-friendly](#).

Christianity Explored – This evangelism course developed by the Rev Rico Tice (All Souls', Langham Place) has been translated into 20 languages and is run in more than 80 countries. Now, a version of the course [has been completed](#) this past year by more than 20,000 prisoners in 103 prisons in 11 countries. May God continue to powerfully use this course to transform lives!

Biblically grounded – A [5½-minute video](#) directed at children – and available for free online for only a short time – beautifully shows Jesus throughout the pages of Scripture. See it! Show it! A similar [2-minute video](#) is also available for adults. Both videos are from [The Gospel Project](#) – which bills itself as "*Christ-centered chronological Bible study for all ages*" and offers three-year Bible study plans – for children, youth and adults – which take participants through the Bible.

Vancouver – An [in-depth article](#) in *The Christian Century* explores ministry in the hard soil of Vancouver, profiling a number of churches. It concludes "*If Vancouver shows us the secular city of the future, these institutions show us ways that the church can still have a powerful witness. Stony soil requires more creative gardeners.*"

Soul food

Just for fun

At Sunday School Johnny learned how God created everything, including human beings. He was fascinated by the account of how Eve was created from one of Adam's ribs. Later that week Johnny's mother noticed him lying down as though he were ill, and she asked, "Darling, what's the matter?" Little Johnny replied earnestly, "I have a pain in my side. I think I'm going to have a wife."

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Thoughts

"If you believe what you like in the gospels, and reject what you don't like, it is not the gospel you believe, but yourself." ~ St Augustine of Hippo (*Sermons*)

"If your god never disagrees with you, you might just be worshiping an idealized version of yourself." ~ Tim Keller

And now a Word from our Sponsor

"I tell you, my friends, do not fear those who kill the body, and after that have nothing more that they can do. But I will warn you whom to fear: fear him who, after he has killed, has authority to cast into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him! Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God. Why, even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not; you are of more value than many sparrows."

Luke 12:4-7 ESV