



Handle with prayer

News – ANiC and AEN

St Matthias (Victoria) becomes 28th ANiC parish

The congregation of St Matthias (Victoria) met Sunday in a Reformed Episcopal Church, Church of Our Lord, to conclude their discernment process with a parish vote. Excluding the few spoilt ballots, the vote was 94.4 per cent in favour of realignment with ANiC. Of the ballots cast, 170 were in favour and ten opposed. Seven ballots were spoilt. See the [news release](#) for details.

Please continue to uphold the people of St Matthias in prayer during this time. Also, please pray for St Matthias' rector the Rev Ron Corcoran as he is now in Ottawa for his mother's funeral.

The [AEC blog](#) has covered the unfolding events at St Matthias and a number of St Matthias parishioners have participated in the online discussions. In [the discussion](#) about the Rev Corcoran's sermon which was so badly misrepresented by the diocese, a number of parishes gave heart-felt tributes to their rector. One recounted how he, for a time, would drive 4 hours each way to attend church at St Matthias. StandFirm also [covered the story](#) and VirtueOnline has a [full report](#).

A [letter to the editor](#) of the Victoria Times Colonist by a St Matthias parishioner was also posted. The letter said: *"The diocese... has made it clear, prior to any vote, that the primary concern of the diocese is not people, but land and wealth... When faced with a choice between obeying a bishop and obeying the Scriptures, a Christian of integrity must choose, like the apostles did, to obey God not man. When Christians of integrity are willing to risk losing parish buildings in which they have invested decades of their time and capital, and are losing pensions and salaries, and memories, there is more at stake than merely wealth and land."*

In a [commentary](#) on the ACoC's treatment of dissident orthodox Anglicans, Walker Morrow says: *"The Anglican Church of Canada has reached the point where its bureaucracy has outlived its compassion."*

The [Anglican Journal](#) quotes Diocese of BC Archdeacon Bruce Bryant-Scott as saying, *"People have made this decision to leave us and... go to **another faith community**."* He added that the clergy *"...while holding licence from the bishop, worked to undermine the authority of the bishop."* When the Journal asked the Archdeacon about the reasons for the defection, he opined that *"there are a significant number of people who have been attracted to these parishes who are not well-grounded in the Anglican tradition."* And added *"The very simple fact that we remain in communion with the diocese of New Westminster is a simple enough affront to these individuals that they just make up their minds that they need to leave."* Parishioners' decision, he said was *"based on misinformation and biased information... almost no opportunity was provided for anybody from outside the parish and in the diocese to give a balanced response."*

Update on the courts

Perhaps it is fitting that the season of Lent should see the beginning of another round of court confrontations. For your prayer support, this is what is on the horizon:

March 11 – Three ANiC parishes in Ontario – St George's (Lowville), Church of the Good Shepherd (St Catharine's) and St Hilda's (Oakville) – are in court in Hamilton. The judge will consider awarding costs for the earlier hearing where the diocese was granted shared use of the church buildings and ordered to share expenses. The diocese wants the parishes to pay the diocese's (excessive) legal fees, despite the fact the time slot the judge awarded them forced the congregations to find (and pay for) alternative Sunday worship space, and they (the diocese) have failed to contribute to the church facilities' expenses for the past year.

April 6 – St Aidan’s (Windsor) will appear in court in London (Ontario). This hearing will determine whether a duplicate “action” filed by the diocese in London should be “stayed” (ordered to cease) so that the prior action filed by ANiC in Windsor (where the church is located) can proceed without the duplication, distraction and unnecessary, added expense of a second action on the same issues. In January, the parish had made a generous offer to the diocese to settle the matter outside of court, but were turned down flat with no explanation and no counter offer. The diocese made it clear they wanted litigation.

May 25 – A three week hearing begins in Vancouver involving St John’s (Shaughnessy), Church of the Good Shepherd (Vancouver), St Matthias and St Luke’s (Vancouver), and St Matthews (Abbotsford). This is the first court hearing to look at the “big trust case” – essentially the ownership issue. The question to be answered is “for whom are the church properties held in trust – the parish or the diocese?” Court cases up to this point have been dealing with questions related to the use of the buildings during the interim, until the “big trust case” is determined.

Dr Barbara Pell welcomed into glory

Barbara Pell, wife of the Rev Dr Archie Pell, rector of [Church of the Resurrection](#) (Hope, BC), died March 9th after a long and courageous battle with cancer. Barbara had brain surgery last spring, but recovered sufficiently to travel to Israel for GAFCon in June. Barbara was a highly-respected and well-loved professor of English at Trinity Western University (TWU). You can read more about her academic accomplishments on the [TWU website](#). Her faith was an inspiration to those who knew her. She was dearly loved and will be deeply missed. Although we rejoice that she suffers no more, our hearts go out to Archie, their children and grandchildren, and their parish family. Please pray for all those who grieve. Funeral arrangements have not been made as yet.

Bishop Malcolm passes the mantle of Archdeacon

With his retirement date approaching, Bishop Malcolm Harding has relinquished his responsibilities as Archdeacon for the Prairies and Bishop Donald Harvey has appointed the Venerable Paul Crossland to assume the role. Archdeacon Crossland is rector of Church of the Redeemer (Brandon, Manitoba) and Church of the Resurrection (Dauphin, Manitoba).

ANiC priest interviewed on TV

Newly ordained priest, the Rev Rhonda Nychka, was featured on 100 Huntley Street, March 4th (program #8275) discussing the her life journey, from an internationally renown ballerina to ministering among the poor at Yonge Street Mission in Toronto. You can [watch it online](#). The interview begins about 37 minutes into the program.

Bishop Don to meet with Primates in April

From **April 14-16**, Bishop Don and the other ACNA/Common Cause Partners lead bishops will be in London (England) to meet with the GAFCon Primates. Please pray for travelling mercies and wisdom to discern the leading of the Holy Spirit.

ANiC parishes in the news:

Victoria Times Colonist – Mar 2 09 – [BC Anglican group may leave parish...](#)

Victoria Times Colonist – Mar 2 09 – [4 resigned, were not ousted](#) (letter to editor from the diocese)

Nanaimo Daily News – Mar 4 09 – [Church divides over gay marriage](#)

VicNews.com – Mar 5 09 – [Congregation faces tough decision](#)

Anglican Planet – Mar 1 09 – [Much to celebrate as congregation purchases leased facility](#) (regarding Church of the Good Shepherd, Vancouver)

Anglican Planet – Mar 1 09 – [Vancouver Island parish leaves ACC](#) (Re Christ’s Church, Oceanside)

Anglican Planet – Mar 1 09 – [Third bishop leaves ACC for Network](#)

News shorts – Anglican Church in North America (ACNA)

ACNA provincial assembly details announced

Archbishop designate Bob Duncan [has provided details](#) of the first provincial assembly for the Anglican Church in North America.

Date: **June 22 – 25**

Place: St Vincent's Cathedral, Bedford, Texas
 Agenda: Worship, presentations on mission, Scripture teaching, addresses by leaders, and business – including consideration of ACNA's provisional constitution, canons and reports from committees and task forces

All are welcome, however, only certified delegates will be able to vote. The apportionment of delegates will be determined after the Common Cause Leadership Council meets, **April 24-25**, to consider all the applications for membership from "dioceses, networks and clusters". Bishop Bob expects that most will "...be represented by their bishop(s), two clergy and two lay persons". However, representation will be proportional based on average Sunday attendance.

ACiC holds a renewal mission on the West Coast

The Reverend Gabe Garcia and the Rev William Beasley will speak March 20 – 22 in North Vancouver, BC, at St Simon's Church (Lions Gate Christian Academy, 420 Seymour River Place, North Vancouver). On Sunday, March 22 at 6:30pm, an interdenominational celebration service with the two visiting ministers will be held at Harvest City Church, 7416 Victoria Drive, Vancouver. For further information contact Elsbeth Turner at elsbethturner@telus.net or 604 929-1613. [See flyer.](#)

News – Canada

Anglican Essentials Calgary hosts clergy retreat

Dates: Thursday, April 30 through Friday, May 1
 Location: Kingsfold Retreat Centre, northwest of Calgary
 Leaders; Rev. Canon Harold Percy
 For more information see [retreat brochure](#), email staugcal@aol.com or call 403-279-3105.

Canadian Aboriginal Anglicans to consider a new province

Canadian Aboriginal Anglicans meeting in Port Elgin (Ontario), August 9-15, [will consider](#) a proposed new ecclesiastical province for the aboriginal community across the country.

Anglican Planet interviews Bishop Patrick Yu

In a revealing Anglican Planet interview, Bishop Patrick Yu, often considered to be the conservative among the Toronto bishops, declares his support for a plan put forward by Bishop Colin Johnson and the other Toronto bishops to implement same-sex blessings in the diocese without even seeking the approval of synod. Read the [whole interview](#).

See also the [Anglican Planet story](#) detailing the Toronto bishop's plan for implementing same sex blessings and reaction of conservative priests in the diocese. It says in part:

The moratorium on same-sex blessings requested by Lambeth last July, the House of Bishops last November and the Primates' Meeting in Alexandria this February would seem to lie in shambles in Canada. Currently seven jurisdictions in the ACC have voted for SSBs: Huron, Montreal, New Westminster, Niagara, Ottawa, Rupert's Land and the Parishes of the Central Interior (formerly the Diocese of Cariboo). However, Toronto is the first jurisdiction to propose such blessings without even a synod vote.

Diocese of Ottawa

The Diocese of Ottawa has announced that it will proceed with same-sex blessings. The diocese is developing a liturgy for use in one parish, rationalizing that it was simply a continuation of its "discernment process". In a diocesan news release, which surprisingly is not posted to the diocese's website, they said "...moving forward in the spirit of experiential discernment will allow parishes and congregations to observe and learn; allowing the Church to be better informed moving forward in preparation of next steps at General Synod 2010." See the [National Post story](#), the [Living Church story](#), [Anglican Samizdat's analysis](#) and the diocese's [Crosstalk newspaper](#).

Bishop Bird meets the Archbishop of Canterbury

The [Anglican Journal reports](#) that Bishop Bird (Niagara) met recently with the Archbishop of Canterbury to brief him on plans to implement same sex blessings in Niagara and on litigation in the diocese. The following is also part of the Journal's report:

Bishop Bird said that he gave Archbishop Williams "a full account of our dealings with dissenting parishes and the court proceedings we have been involved in." He said that he shared "our experience of the incredible contribution that gay and lesbian people have made and continue to make in every aspect of our church's life and witness, and expressed the overwhelming desire on the part of two synods to move forward with the blessings of committed same-sex relationships for couples who have been civilly married."

... Bishop Bird said Archbishop Williams thanked him "for such a full and detailed report and he indicated how important this opportunity was for him to hear from me personally."

Anglican Church of Canada gets an earful

The Anglican Church of Canada [has invited](#) members to provide feedback in a campaign called "Dream the church Vision 2019". So far, they may not like what they are hearing. A number of the responses contain complaints about the relativism and abandonment of traditional teaching and liturgies. (With thanks to the Anglican Samizdat)

Letters of interest in the Anglican Journal

Dear editor,

Mr. Perry's letter (January Journal) caught my attention. He says, "Mr. Harvey has relinquished his ministry and therefore ought no longer to be referred to by a clerical title. He is, for all practical purposes, a lay person." Not so. Once a priest, always a priest. The fact that one may decide not to exercise the office is quite irrelevant.

G.A. Ruskell, Goderich, Ont.

Dear editor,

I find it disappointing to read that fellow Anglican Boyce H. Rice has suggested that our primate "quieten" individuals and groups that do not share his opinion. I would like to suggest that there be more reasoned theological debate on the issue of same-sex blessings. I have done what I consider to be my due diligence and have yet to find anywhere in scripture where it is appropriate to bless a sin. But then, I'm not a theologian.

Bill Dunsmore, Vernon, B.C.

Canada – in the news

Toronto Star – Mar 8 09 – [A bishop and his campaign for the poor](#)

Anglican Planet – Mar 1 09 - [Trial date set](#) (Regarding the Vancouver-area ANiC parishes)

News shorts – United States

In the US media

Washington Post – Mar 7 09 – [Va.'s departing Episcopal bishop on Church changes](#)

Institute on Religion & Democracy – Feb 20 09 – [...the "feminine divine" at National Cathedral](#)

News shorts – International

"Pastoral Visitors" appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury meet

A team of pastoral visitors, created in response to the recommendations of the Windsor Continuation Group report presented at the Primates' meeting in February, [held their first meeting](#). They were briefed by a variety of organizations, including representatives of the Anglican Covenant design committee, the Windsor Continuation Group, the Episcopal Church, and the Anglican Church of Canada. Seemingly, no one representing Anglican Church in North America was invited to participate.

Commenting on the "pastoral visitors" in the Church of England Newspaper (CEN), the Rev Phil Ashy, COO for the American Anglican Council [said](#), "We have no confidence that the process is going anywhere... Until and unless they meet and talk with the people who actually have these grievances the whole process lacks integrity." Referencing the irony, Bishop Jack Iker told CEN,

“...it’s always comforting to know that others meet to talk about you, while avoiding talking to you.” The CEN article concludes: *“No funds have been appropriated for the programme at this time from the budget of the ACC, and the pastoral visitors, like the ill-fated Panel of Reference, have the authority only to recommend solutions to the divisions of doctrine and discipline within the Anglican Communion.”*

The Anglican Planet provides [more background](#) from the Primates meeting where the idea of “pastoral visitors” was discussed.

Death of the Communion?

The Rev John Richardson (also known in blogging circles as “The Ugley Vicar”) [writes](#) that, in his assessment, *“the Anglican Communion [is] irrevocably broken”*, citing the recent Primates meeting, ongoing legal action in North America and the unabated march of the sexuality agenda. He says, *“Eventually, and inevitably, TEC and the Anglican Church in Canada will resume ‘business as usual’ on the sexuality agenda. Indeed in my own view the Canadians are currently ahead of the Americans in this regard... The real question for us in [Great Britain] is what will happen here, and specifically what will happen in England. It is clear that Wales and Scotland are already realigning theologically with TEC/Canada. There are many who hope and expect that England will do the same... We are no longer looking to ‘save the Communion’. It is lost. The urgent question is whether we can save ourselves.”*

Sudan

The Primates of Sudan and Uganda [have appealed](#) to international leaders to intervene in the conflict in East Africa and bring an end to the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) 20 year reign of terror in South Sudan, Uganda, the Congo and the Central African Republic. They also are asking for aid for the thousands who have been displaced, had their homes and fields burned, and seen family members horribly murdered. Specifically, [they requested](#):

1. Diplomatic pressure on the LRA leaders, the leaders of Sudan, Uganda and Congo, and the UN peacekeeping missions in Sudan and Congo to do more to bring an end to the brutal attacks on unarmed civilians by the LRA, which have resulted in thousands of refugees and displaced people since December.
2. More international assistance for the relief effort in supporting these displaced people – most of whom are now dependent on church organizations.

Compounding the crisis, the president of the Sudan, Omar al Bashir, [has responded](#) to the International Criminal Court issuing a warrant for his arrest on war crimes, by kicking out aid organizations from the Sudan

Zimbabwe

The bishops of the Anglican Province of Central Africa have [cautiously welcomed](#) the formation of a new coalition government in Zimbabwe. However they express concern about the continued imprisonment of political and human rights activists. Their statement also warns that current corruption, patronage, selfishness and regionalism can only be overcome by dedication to the rule of law, respect for human rights and good governance. They request continued prayer.

The Archbishop of Cape Town [is urging](#) the international community to aid Zimbabwe, despite antipathy toward President Mugabe, because the recently formed coalition government is the only hope for the country.

New primate elected

The Anglican Church of Melanesia [has elected](#) a new Archbishop, the Rt Rev David Vunagi, who currently is currently Bishop of the Diocese of Temotu in the Solomon Islands.

In the international media

Church of England Newspaper – Mar 6 09 – [Dr Williams plans to attend US General Convention...](#)

Soul food

Worth reading

With the recent "election" of a bishop in the Episcopal Church who is reported to hold Buddhist "lay ordination", it's a good time to learn about Buddhism and its inherent incompatibility with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

- [Evidence to Believe](#) examines Buddhist beliefs from a Christian viewpoint.
- Dr Chik Kaw Tan, a Church of England synod delegate, has written [an essay](#), "Can one be Christian and Buddhist at the same time?", in response to the election of The Rev Kevin Theew Forrester as Bishop of Northern Michigan. He says, "*We, in choosing little ingredients from here and there in the supermarket of faiths and philosophies, only find that we have chosen to be our own god.*" You can also see Dr Tan's [testimony](#) of coming to Christ from Buddhist folk religion.

Believing in God is good for you

The Globe & Mail [reports](#) that researchers at the Universities of Toronto and York have found "*reduced stress and anxiety among test subjects who consider themselves to be religious, compared with non-believers.*"

Resources

GAFCON Bible studies now available as podcasts - Audio and notes for the Lenten "The Way of the Cross" Bible studies can be downloaded from: www.wayofthecross.co.uk. The podcast uses original audio from Bible exposition at the GAFCON conference as well as additional material. The "Way of the Cross," is a 6-part Bible study that opens up the Biblical story of salvation and is accompanied by questions which help to relate current issues to Biblical truth. The studies are:

1. Genesis 12 - The Promise of God - Archbishop Justice Akrofi
2. Exodus 24 - The Presence of God - Canon David Short
3. 2 Samuel 7 - The King of God - Revd Vaughan Roberts
4. Luke 24 - The Son of God - Bishop Michael Fape
5. Revelation 21 - The Throne of God - Archbishop Datuk Yong Ping Chung
6. Jude - The Authority of God - Bishop Wallace Benn

Just for laughs

1) A little child in church for the first time watched as the ushers passed the offering plates. When they neared the pew where he sat, the youngster loudly proclaimed: "Don't pay for me Daddy; I'm under five."

2) After a church service on Sunday morning, a young boy suddenly announced to his mother, "Mom, I've decided to become a minister when I grow up." "That's OK with us, but what made you decide that?" "Well," said the little boy, "I have to go to church on Sunday anyway, and I figure it will be more fun to stand up and yell, than to sit and listen."

Please pray...

For **the Rev Dr Archie Pell**, rector of Church of the Resurrection, who is grieving the death of his dear wife, Barbara. Also pray for their children – Lisa and James – as well as grandchildren and parish family.

For **new ANiC congregations and fledgling church plants**. May they seek and know the Lord's wisdom and experience His blessing on their congregations.

For wisdom as ANiC seeks to find more effective ways of ministering to and encouraging "**Orphaned Anglicans**" who have no orthodox Anglican church in their community.

For **congregations involved in court proceedings** and disputes. Pray for wisdom, courage and peace for the congregations. Pray particularly for the **judges and lawyers** involved. Pray for the **leadership of the dioceses** pursuing ANiC parishes in court. Pray that the Author of Truth, Love and Justice would bless them with a deeper insight into the riches found in Christ Jesus our Lord.

For the **needed money to support the legal defence** of ANiC congregations. Pray for upcoming court hearings – especially the **March 11th** hearing involving ANiC parishes in southern Ontario – that could dramatically affect their legal costs.

For our **national, provincial and civic leaders** as well as for **our nation**. May God be pleased to grant repentance and cause a revival to sweep our land.

And now a word from our sponsor

*May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us, Selah
that your way may be known on earth, your saving power among all nations.*

Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you!

*Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations
upon earth. Selah*

Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you!

*The earth has yielded its increase; God, our God, shall bless us.
God shall bless us; let all the ends of the earth fear him!*

Psalm 67 (ESV)