



### *Handle with prayer...*

#### **ANiC news**

#### **ANiC and ACNA events calendar**

June 19 – ANiC House of Bishops meeting in Vancouver

June 20 – ANiC Archdeacons' meeting in Vancouver

June 22 – ANiC Council meeting in Vancouver

June 22-26 – ACNA [Provincial Assembly meetings](#), including College of Bishops, in Vancouver

June 24 - ACNA worship service at [Good Shepherd](#) (Vancouver, BC)

Aug 21 – Sept 3 – [Mission trip to Thailand](#), sponsored by AMMiC and Good Shepherd

Oct 16-17 – [AMMiC](#)-led conference in Vancouver, BC on Asian immigrant inter-generational issues

Oct 20 – Clergy Day in Vancouver at [Good Shepherd](#)

Oct 21-23 – ANiC synod and workshops in Vancouver at [Good Shepherd](#)

#### **Praying for our bishops and leaders**

May took an unexpected turn for **Bishop Charlie Masters**. He picked up a “bug” returning from London in early May and was down for the count. He had to cancel his commitments for the remainder of the month – including going to the installation of the new Bishop of Sabah (Malaysia) and participating in the Synod of the Diocese of Singapore. ANiC has developed strong relationships with both dioceses – in part through the ministry of Bishop Stephen Leung (Asian and Multicultural Ministries) and in part through the support of ARDFC. Please pray for Bishop Charlie's health to be fully restored.

**Bishop Stephen** had a busy May speaking at conferences in both Vancouver and Boston with Dr Ka Lun Leung, president of the Alliance Bible Seminary in Hong Kong. The Boston meetings included a session for men, a general session of leadership, as well as a revival meeting. While in Boston, Bishop Stephen and Dr Leung were able to meet with the faculty in the [Chinese program](#) at Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary, as well as strengthen relationships with other Chinese church leaders. Last week Bishop Stephen gathered clergy and leaders from Asian & Multicultural Ministries' churches in Richmond, BC for three days of teaching, fellowship and encouragement.

**Bishop Trevor Walters** was visiting church partners in Cuba, the last week of May, together with several leaders from ANiC parishes. We'll try to have an update from him in the next issue.

As you can see from the ANiC calendar above, June is busy for our leaders with **governance meetings** for both ANiC and ACNA. Please pray for our ANiC leaders involved in these sessions, especially for wisdom and for a spirit of humble submission to God's will.

#### **ACNA Provincial Assembly in Vancouver**

ANiC is hosting meetings of ACNA leaders on the University of BC campus from June 22 to 26, Monday-Friday. The Executive Committee meets on Monday; Provincial Council meets Tuesday and Wednesday; and the College of Bishops meets Thursday and Friday.

ANiC's **Church of the Good Shepherd** hosts a service at 6:30pm on Wednesday, June 23. All ANiC members in the Greater Vancouver area are warmly invited to join the ACNA bishops and leaders for this Eucharist. Bishop Stephen, who is rector at Good Shepherd, said the congregation is honoured and excitedly to host this service.

#### **Clergy & spouses invited...**

On the evening of June 25 (Thursday) Regent College is hosting Evening Prayers and a reception for the ACNA College of Bishops. Archbishop Foley Beach is expected to address the topic of

caring for clergy and their families. ANiC clergy and spouses in the area are invited to join the Bishops for this evening at Regent! But you must RSVP [to the ANiC office](#) as soon as possible.

### **Your help is needed as ANiC's year-end approaches**

ANiC's financial year runs July 1 to June 30. This means that we are rapidly approaching that annual crunch time. Over the last two years we have made encouraging progress and erased past deficits. But we still rely on individual gifts to meet 24 per cent of our budget – and that is likely to continue for several more years as our diocese grows and matures.

If you've been meaning to send in a donation, now would be a really good time to support the work of the diocese and help advance ANiC's five ministry priorities. Information on giving to ANiC is [on our website](#). Thank you!

### **And speaking of giving... ARDFC thanks you for your generosity!**

[ARDFC](#) reports, with gratitude to God, that more than \$18,000 has been donated in the past six weeks for **Nepal earthquake relief**. Since last summer, \$44,500 has been given to ease the suffering of **Iraqi and Syrian refugees**. Thanks to the Government of Canada's program of matching donations, a good portion of these emergency aid donations have been doubled.

In addition, work is well underway on ARDFC's current development project – **drilling three water wells** in partnership with the Diocese of Wau in South Sudan. We're heard that drilling is nearing completion on the second well. Fundraising for this project is lagging, however. These wells will make a dramatic difference in the lives of about 20,000 people in surrounding communities – especially for the women and girls who now often walk for hours each day to fetch and carry water home for their families. Please consider [making a gift](#) for this project. Thank you. Photos of the drilling are posted [on the ARDFC website](#).

Also, you might be interested to [learn about the steps](#) ARDF takes to overcome deeply engrained associations between Anglicanism and colonialism as its ministers in Global South countries.

### **New dates for Thailand mission trip**

The mission trip to Thailand led by AMMiC and Good Shepherd (Vancouver) is now August 21 through September 3. The trip is being organized in partnership with the Diocese of Singapore and the Anglican Church in Thailand. It will focus on the Karen refugees along the Thailand border, and will include work with secondary students in a boarding school and visits to remote villages. **ANiC members from across the continent are invited to prayerfully consider joining the team.** Information, including a flyer and an application packet, [is here](#). Application deadline is June 30.

### **Holy Land pilgrimages**

Bishop Trevor Walters is co-leading [a study tour to Israel](#) with fellow ACNA bishop Neil Lebar (Diocese of Gulf Atlantic) on January 18-29. The trip is especially designed for leaders – both clergy and lay. A brochure with full information – including detailed itinerary, pricing and registration form – is [posted here](#). Bishops Trevor and Neil invite you to prayerfully consider this tremendous learning and growth opportunity.

If those dates don't work for you, CMJ Canada also offers [a Shoresh study tour to Israel](#) – November 5-20.

### **ANiC members join tens of thousands at Marches for Life**

Rallied by [Anglicans for Life Canada](#), ANiC members took part in the national and two provincial Marches for Life on May 14.

**Ottawa** - The Rev Vicky Hedelius reports an Anglicans for Life Canada contingent of 60, most wearing highly visible fluorescent green hats and carrying matching signs. If you missed it – or want to relive the memories – a video summary of the events on Parliament Hill is [on YouTube](#). You'll see our founding diocesan **Bishop Don Harvey** addressing the crowd starting at the 2:42 minute

mark. Also, you'll find photos from the National march [on the Anglicans for Life website](#). [LifeSiteNews stated](#) that this annual march is the largest gathering each year on Parliament Hill.

The evening prior to the March, Daniel Gilman, an intern at Church of the Messiah (Ottawa) and a pro-life activist, addressed an Anglicans for Life gather in Ottawa on the topic of "**Weeping with those who Weep**". The Rev Michelle Terwilleger [reports](#) that, in light of the recent Supreme Court decision decriminalizing physician assisted suicide, Daniel suggested we look to how God dealt with His depressed prophet when Elijah wished to end his life. Far from granting Elijah's request, 1 Kings 19 recounts how God provided precisely what Elijah needed both physically and spiritually. Likewise, a Christian response to those wishing to end their lives should be to help relieve the cause of the suffering, listen compassionately, and share the hope of the Gospel. We also have a responsibility as citizens to help shape public policy by writing letters, drafting petitions, and especially meeting face-to-face with MPs.

**Victoria** - 12 ANiC members participated in the BC March for Life led by the Rev Rich & Jenny Roberts. Dr Will Johnston, an active member of St John's Vancouver, was a featured speaker as the marchers gathered on the lawns of the BC Legislature. The event and the speakers, especially Dr Johnston, were excellent. [CHEK news reported](#) that this was BC's largest ever March for Life. Photos of the Victoria event are [posted here](#).

**Edmonton** - Dr Nancy Craig from Christ the King (Edmonton) reports 11 Anglicans among the 3100 marchers in Alberta capital. This was the first year Anglicans for Life members marched in Edmonton and they were warmly welcomed by other marchers.

**Next year's March for Life is 12 May 2016.** Mark your calendar now!

### Parish and regional news

[Sojourn Church \(Vancouver, BC\)](#) is featured in a [short Vimeo video](#) which tells the story of this young church plant which is the product of inter-denominational cooperation.

[St James \(Lennoxville, QC\)](#) – The Rev Jesse Cantelon reports that St James has grown. *"We are so encouraged that church membership has approached a hundred people and Sunday attendance now reaches over 75."*

[St Matthias & St Luke's \(Vancouver, BC\)](#) has an attractive new website. [Check it out!](#)

[Emmanuel \(Boston, MA\)](#) – Evangelistic meetings co-sponsored by Emmanuel earlier in May drew more than 170 people. Speaker Agnes Chiang shared her testimony of the transforming power of the Gospel. 22 attendees came forward at the end to indicate their decision to follow Jesus Christ. Praise God! Please pray with Emmanuel that each one will be loved, taught and disciplined into the fullness of Christ. Photos are [on the ANiC website](#).

[Ascension \(Langley, BC\)](#) reports with gratitude to God that its building fund received a \$30,000 gift – which was such an encouragement to them. Please pray with the people of Ascension that God will bring in both the funds and committed members needed to proceed with a church building.

[St George's \(Burlington, ON\)](#) is launching St George's School of Public Theology this fall under the leadership of Dr Craig Bartholomew.

[Grace Anglican \(Calgary, AB\)](#) is saying good-bye to its assistant priest. The Rev Ruthy Lillington, her husband Peter, who founded the AEC blog in 2007, and their children are moving back to Bristol, England where Ruthy will be children's minister at Christ Church, Clifton.

**ANiC's ministry project in Guelph, ON** got great coverage from an [online reporter](#) recently:

*"I met recently with the Reverend Zena Attwood, a minister of the Anglican Network in Canada (ANiC). ANiC, she explains, is trying to stem this Anglican hemorrhage by establishing churches ... ANiC is a member of the conservative Anglican Church in North America, that reckons about a thousand parishes in Canada and the USA and is enthusiastically planting more. Ms Attwood says she's creating a core group to start such a parish in Guelph. The group meets on Sunday*

mornings for Bible discussion and Eucharist. Ms Attwood invites inquiries at 519 846 0454 or [zena.attwood@gmail.com](mailto:zena.attwood@gmail.com). Mr D'Arcy Luxton is an alternative contact at 519 846 0483 or [darcy.luxton@gmail.com](mailto:darcy.luxton@gmail.com).

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

### **Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) news**

#### **New ACNA magazine available online**

The Easter and Pentecost edition of *The Apostle*, our Province's magazine, is [posted online](#). One article on "[Next steps to a new Prayer Book](#)" makes the following points:

- Baptism and confirmation rites will be sent to the June meeting of the College of Bishops for adoption as working texts for the Anglican Church in North America.
- The Liturgy and Common Worship Task Force has been reorganized to broaden the scope of projects and to strengthen communication with the College of Bishops. The reorganization includes a new Bishops Review Panel and five sub-committees: Calendar, Collects and Lectionaries, Episcopal Offices, Offices of the Hours and Special Liturgies, Pastoral Offices, and Psalter and Music.
- The Task Force's first priority is the production of all the necessary Prayer Book texts. Then the Task Force will turn to revisions of those working texts in light of the scores of comments received at [liturgytaskforce@anglicanchurch.net](mailto:liturgytaskforce@anglicanchurch.net).
- You can learn more about this Task Force [on the ACNA website](#).

#### **Wrecking ball to destroy former home of thriving ACNA parish**

In what has become a familiar story, the former church building of ACNA's St James (Newport Beach, CA) is being sold by the US Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles to a developer for a reported \$15-million. The courts awarded the building to TEC, which claimed it was needed for local Episcopalians, in 2013. Canon Phil Ashby [reminisces](#) about growing up in the vibrant St James congregation. And in his weekly [Anglican Perspective video](#), Canon Ashby reports on the reaction to the news and the gracious response from the rector of ACNA's St James who reports that the congregation is being led by God to a new property.

#### **ACNA church responds to flooding in Texas**

An ACNA church in Austin, Texas [is responding](#) to recent flooding in Texas. The church works with more than 100 churches in its community to meet the emotional, physical and spiritual needs of those affected by disasters.

### **Global Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans and Anglican Communion news**

#### **GAFCon's Chairman says crisis in Communion due to failure to call to repentance**

Archbishop Eliud Wabukala (Kenya), [in his Pentecost letter](#) to members of the Global Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans, focuses on the activity of the Holy Spirit. He writes:

*"One of the great lessons of the East African Revival was that a genuine movement of the Spirit will impress on our hearts that the Scriptures really are the inspired and authoritative Word of God. We cannot separate the Spirit from the Spirit-inspired Scriptures. The gift of the Holy Spirit is given to enable Christians to grow in biblical holiness and to equip them with gifts to build up the church in a hostile world. It is therefore a tragedy when Christian leaders whose minds have been captured by the spirit of the age commend the values of the world to the Church and claim they are led by the Spirit of God.*

*... On the day of Pentecost, Peter's preaching makes clear that the gift of the Holy Spirit is given to those who repent, but the continuing crisis of the Anglican Communion has come about through a failure to call to repentance those who are systematically grieving the Holy Spirit by claiming that what Scripture calls sexual immorality is in fact new truth revealed by the Spirit....*

*So let us who live by the Spirit also walk by the Spirit and be rich in the fruit of the Spirit for the glory of God, the renewal of his Church and the blessing of the world.*



## Anglican Communion news briefs

The [Anglican News Service reports](#) that a small group of Anglican Communion leaders met in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in mid-May as part of the Anglican Church of Canada-organized Companion Dioceses initiative which pairs western bishops with Global South bishops. A thrust of the meetings was broadening the relationships beyond the bishops to include full dioceses. The [Anglican Journal reports](#) that this would mean, "...opportunities for clergy and youth exchanges and international theological student internships."

### International news in brief

#### Canada

- [LifeSiteNews reports](#) that "*The Attorney General of Canada has intervened on Trinity Western University's behalf in its legal dispute with the Law Society of Upper Canada over TWU's proposed law school.*" The Hon Peter MacKay told the Law Society "...that in its efforts to prevent future discrimination against homosexuals it is itself discriminating now against a whole class of people—evangelical Christians who would like to attend TWU's law school and practice law in Ontario." Meanwhile a writer [in the Huffington Post](#), who describes herself as an atheist, suggests that Canada's legal profession is acting exactly as did the Nazis in 1933 when Germany passed a law barring Jews from becoming lawyers.
- [CTV reports](#) that "*The Christian Medical and Dental Society of Canada is asking the Ontario Superior Court to overturn a College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario policy on professional obligations and human rights.*" This policy would force doctors to act against their conscience by referring patients for abortions or assisted suicide.
- A [National Post article](#) outlines how we got to the point where it is now government policy and socially acceptable to teach grade 3 students – against their parent's wishes – that they might be males trapped in female bodies or vice versa.
- Bishop Dennis Drainville of the Anglican Church of Canada's Diocese of Quebec is seeking election as Bishop of Montreal in order to join the two dioceses. [VirtueOnline reports](#) that the 720,000 km Diocese of Quebec has about 3000 on parish rolls, while the Diocese of Montreal has almost 11,000 on parish rolls.

#### United States

- Dr George Sumner, principal of Wycliffe College, [was elected](#) bishop of the US Episcopal Church's (TEC) Diocese of Dallas. His consecration is scheduled for November 14, assuming his election received the consent of the majority of TEC bishops and standing committees.
- A [controversy arose](#) in the Diocese of Central Florida when two men who were married to each other asked for their son to be baptized in the cathedral. When the dean of the cathedral hesitated, the bishop, under pressure consented. The controversy centres on the meaning of infant baptism and whether baptizing the child of parents who are not and do not intend to live in conformity to Christ's teaching. Both sides present their case on the [179 edition of Anglican Unscripted](#). The Anglican Communion Institute also [weighs in](#).
- In [a detailed analysis](#), canon lawyer Alan Haley calculates that "*The Episcopal Church (USA) has spent, and further committed (in its adopted budgets) to spend, a total of \$42,675,466 on suing fellow Christians in the civil and ecclesiastical courts over the first eighteen years of this century. When one adds in the estimated additional amounts spent by individual dioceses on such litigation, the total amount exceeds Sixty Million Dollars.*"
- The US House of Representatives [passed](#) a bill that bans, in most cases, abortions after 20 weeks gestation. To become law, the bill still must pass the Senate and then be signed by the president who has said he will veto the bill.
- As cases mount of Christian small business people being dragged into court over refusal to contribute their talents to same-sex wedding celebrations, [Samaritan's Purse has established](#) a

fund specifically to support persecuted Christians in the US. In recent months, florists, bakeries, pizzerias, photographers have faced protracted court cases, heavy fines and loss of businesses.

The popular online site which helps with crowd funding, GoFundMe, [shut down](#) a fundraising campaign for one such couple, necessitating alternative fundraising mechanisms. Samaritan's Purse president Franklin Graham said, "*I believe it's going to get worse... we are losing our religious freedom and we're losing it a little bit day by day.*"

Baronelle Stutzman, a 30-year florist in Richmond, Washington, is a well-known example of such persecution. She compellingly writes about her experiences and her convictions [in the Washington Post](#).

- ACNA's Bishop Julian Dobbs [discovered](#), when he met with State Department officials to plead for Assyrian Christians threatened with genocide by the Islamic State, that it is US government policy to reject refugees who are persecuted because of their Christian faith.

### England

- Rod Thomas, Bishop-elect of Maidstone, [believes](#) up to 10 per cent of the Church of England – 300 congregations – would not accept the ministry of women bishops.
- The Church of England's investment portfolio is going nicely, [writes Ruth Gledhill](#). It has "*...achieved growth on its investments far above inflation, meaning it has enough funds to finance ambitious plans for expansion... Church Commissioners have more than made up the disastrous losses of the late 1980s and 1990s and that here is enough cash to pay for the growth vision of the Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby.*"
- A Pew Research analysis of the UK [found that](#) "*...if current trends continue, the proportion of the population identifying themselves as Christians will fall from 64% in 2010 to 45% by 2050, while the proportion of Muslims will rise from 5% to 11%. The proportion of the population claiming no religion in the UK - the "unaffiliated" - will also rise significantly, from 28% to 39%... Pew's research also suggests there are likely to be more Muslims than Christians in the world by 2070, with Islam's share of global population equalling that of Christianity at just above 30% each by 2050.*"
- The [Christian Post reports](#) that a CoE vicar who himself is in a same-sex civil union, has put forward a motion to general synod that "*...would allow for a liturgical celebration of an individual's identity following gender transition, much like a baptism, and would include a renaming ceremony.*"
- [The Telegraph reports](#) that, among the files US commandos found in Osama bin Laden's possession at the time of his death was one titled "Profiles of the bishops in the Church of England". However, it is not clear why bin Laden was interested in them.

**Scotland** – [The Telegraph reports](#) that the Presbyterian Church of Scotland's general assembly has adopted a theologically incoherent position on sexuality and marriage. "*Under plans agreed by the General Assembly, which is meeting in Edinburgh, congregations will be able to invite people in civil partnerships to become their minister without formally changing the Church of Scotland's traditional teaching on sexuality and marriage. Instead, those congregations will be able to "opt out" of that aspect of the Church's teaching. The Assembly will discuss whether a similar approach could be applied for same-sex marriage as civil partnerships later this week.*" Some now see this as a model that could be followed by the Church of England.

**Australia** – The new Dean of Sydney is the Rev Kanishka Raffel. He is the "*first person from a non-European background to hold the position*" [reports the diocese](#).

**Ireland** – The Vatican [has said](#) that the recent referendum endorsing same-sex marriage was a "*defeat for humanity*". The pope's secretary of state went on to say that the church needs to

recommit to evangelizing the culture. [VirtueOnline reports](#) that, while one Church of Ireland bishop openly endorsed the “yes” side of the referendum, dozens of clergy and church organizations opposed him, some calling him to repent. [Reportedly](#), the “juggernaut of gay activism” and American funding descended on Ireland to promote the “yes” vote. One US billionaire alone is reported to have contributed \$24-million. The writer concludes, “*Sadly, the tried and true tactics of bullying, intimidation, media bombardment, aggressive activism, and massive U.S. funding won another victory for the gay revolution.*”

**South Sudan** – The *Anglican Communion News Service* [reports](#) that fighting has escalated in parts of South Sudan, particularly in Unity State. Since many have fled to safer areas and with May being prime planting season, it is likely that there will be insufficient crops and up to 6.4 million will need humanitarian aid this year. The South Sudan Council of Churches [is calling](#) for peace and drawing attention to the increasing lawlessness, violence and recruitment of child soldiers. They write “*We challenge the military and political leaders of all sides, most of whom call themselves Christians: why are you not listening to the voice of your church leaders...?*”

### Sudan

- [Morning Star News reports](#) that three years of aerial bombardment by Sudan of its own people in the contested state of South Kordofan has killed 3500 and appears to be part of the Islamic government’s concerted efforts to cleanse the country to Christians. The bombing has targeted hospitals and orphanages and other civilian targets.
- Two Christian pastors are in prison and likely face death sentences. They were secretly arrested months ago by Sudan’s Islamist Security Services. The American Center for Law and Justice is asking for support for [its petition](#).

**Egypt** – The [Catholic News Agency reports](#) that violence against Christians in Egypt has escalated despite the president's assurances of religious tolerance. Where once Christians and Muslims lived together in peace, now Christians’ homes and shops are being attacked by mobs of their Muslim neighbours. Trumped up charges of blasphemy are on the rise and

**Eritrea** is one of the most viciously anti-Christian countries in the world, with violations of religious freedom is “*systematic, egregious and ongoing*”. International Christian Concern [estimates](#) that as many as 3000 Eritrean Christians are secretly detained without trial in inhuman conditions.

**West Africa** – [NPR reports](#) that “*More than 360 African health workers died of Ebola this year... They were doctors, nurses, midwives, lab technicians. They didn't have the proper protective equipment. As they tried to save the lives of others, they sacrificed their own. The loss is tremendous. Liberia, for example, a nation of 4.3 million, had only about 50 doctors before the Ebola outbreak. The country has reportedly lost four of them to the epidemic.*”

**Congo** – [Anglican Ink reports](#) that “*The Archbishop of the Congo has distanced his province from the illicit consecration of two bishops in Florida*” in which several of his own bishops were involved. The newly consecrated bishops are with the Anglican Society for Mission & Apostolic Works (ASMAW) – more commonly known as AMiA.

*“On 2 May 2015, the Most Rev Emmanuel Kolini, the former primate of Rwanda, and the Most Rev Yong Ping Chung, the former primate of South East Asia, the Rt Rev Charles Murphy, the former leader of the AMiA assisted by three Congolese bishops, a Tanzanian bishop and a Ghanaian bishop consecrated the Rev Gerry Schnackenberg and the Rev Carl Buffington as “Bishop Emissaries” for the Congolese diocese of Boga and the Tanzanian diocese of Kibondo.*

*“Archbishop Isingoma wrote to the Congolese church saying the consecrations did not have the sanction of the church’s House of Bishops. “We do not recognize them as legitimate bishops.*

*“...the primate of the Anglican Church of the Congo, the Most Rev Henri Isingoma, Bishop of Kinshasa told Anglican Ink he had sought “in vain” to dissuade Archbishop Kolini from proceeding with the consecrations. He also accused Archbishop Kolini of “manipulating three*

*Congolese bishops” who had given him “their loyalty” in exchange “for the financial support... from AMIA.”*

The [Anglican Unscripted commentators](#) discuss the crisis caused by AMiA and provide context.

**Nigeria** – *Morning Star News* [reports](#) that, despite losing ground to army in recent months, Boko Haram is still engaging in frequent “hit and run” assaults, with suicide bombings, guns and machete attacks, primarily targeting Christians. One denomination reports nearly 1700 church buildings destroyed and about 700,000 church members displaced since Boko Haram’s violence began in 2009. *Vice News*, [in a photo essay](#), shows Boko Haram fighters captured by the army; most teenagers and boys who had been kidnapped from schools and forcibly conscripted.

The *Washington Post* [reports](#) that Boko Haram is now turning children – especially young girls – into suicide bombers. UNICEF says there have been 27 suicide bombings already this year in NE Nigeria – more than in all of last year. In most cases, the explosives were worn by women and girls.

As a result of the devastation caused by the Boko Haram, large areas of northern Nigeria [now face](#) famine conditions even though the Islamic terror organization has been pushed back. Crops were not planted, infrastructure and farming equipment was destroyed, and the fields are littered with landmines. The Red Cross [has declared](#) that “*The humanitarian situation in north east Nigeria is one of the worst in the world... About 1.5 million people have been displaced by the Boko Haram conflict.*” The area will take decades to recover since schools are closed and there is little education, many are suffering from trauma and crops and infrastructure has been devastated.

**Burundi** – The *Anglican News Service* [reports](#) that recent violence and political unrest in Burundi has caused nearly 90,000 to flee to neighbouring countries, while many more are internally displaced. Anglican churches in Burundi, Congo and Tanzania are assisting these refugees.

**Thailand** – International Christian Concern [reports](#) that Pakistani Christians refugees, fleeing persecution in their homeland, are being treated as virtual criminals in Thailand and imprisoned in squalid Immigration Detention Centres.

**Yemen** – The Anglican Bishop of Cyprus and the Gulf, Bishop Michael Lewis, [is reporting](#) that conditions in Yemen are terrible with hundreds killed and thousands more wounded. The buildings housing Christ Church and its associated clinic Ras Morbat have been damaged by the sustained shelling but all staff members are reported to be safe so far. The *Washington Post* [reports](#) that the conflict and the relationships among the combatants are complex. It is more than a simple proxy war between Saudi Arabia-backed Sunni Muslim and Iran-backed Shi’ite rebels. The greatest fear is that al-Qaeda will emerge the victor.

**Iraq & Syria** – Eric Metaxas [writes](#) that “*What’s happening to our brothers and sisters in Iraq and Syria is nothing short of a Christian holocaust. Thousands and thousands of Christian men, women, and children are being beheaded, crucified, raped, and sold into slavery by ISIS.*” Christianity began in the Middle East and has flourished there for 2000 years, but now these ancient Christians communities are being wiped out. Refugees trying to survive in the squalid camps “*once had houses, cars, children in college...*” Now they are bewildered by the world’s indifference. We are asked to pray and work to generate “*...the political will for western leaders to intervene*”.

[Another report](#) stated that more than 120,000 people – many Christians – have been chased from the Plain of Nineveh, their ancient homeland into Kurdistan. The only Christians remaining are held as hostages. Similarly in Syria, ISIS has systematically killed, kidnapped, raped, and enslaved. It has also sought to erase all evidence of Christian and Assyrian heritage by destroying churches and other ancient sites.

On May 20, ISIS (Islamic State) forces captured the ancient town of Palmyra in Syrian. [CTV News states](#), “The ruins at Palmyra are one of the world’s most renowned historic sites and there were fears the extremists would destroy them as they did major archaeological sites in Iraq.” Just days



earlier, ISIS captured the strategic Iraqi city of Ramadi, just 100 km west of Baghdad, causing tens of thousands to flee and killing hundreds who could escape. The BBC provides an [in-depth report](#).

**India** – Persecution of Christians is growing under the current Hindu nationalist government which came to power one year ago. [Christian Today reports](#) numerous attacks on churches, pastors and ministries – including a centre for disabled children – in early May.

**Pakistan** – In another incident of abuse of blasphemy laws, Christians in Lahore recently came under attack after a man was accused of burning pages of the Koran. The [Catholic Herald reports](#) that a mob attacked homes of Christians as well as a church building. The police responded by arresting several dozen Christians. International Christian Concern [reports](#) that the government of Pakistan will soon introduce to parliament draft legislation to curb abuse of the blasphemy law.

### Resources for ministry

**Billy Graham vs Karl Barth** – This interesting [Sydney Anglican post](#) recounts a meeting between these two prominent men, their different views on evangelism, and Barth's reaction to a Billy Graham crusade in Barth's community.

**Job #1 for pastors** is pursuing personal holiness. A [Gospel Coalition article](#) concludes, "...*nothing is more essential to your effectiveness than personal holiness—dependence upon the Lord, living in His grace, passionately pursuing His person and truth, and laboring for His glory.*"

**Youth** – Apologetics Canada provides a [helpful summary](#) of a major Canadian study on "Hemorrhaging Faith: Why & When Canadian Young Adults Are Leaving, Staying & Returning to the Church". The conclusions include: "discipleship begins at home"; young adults long for community and especially strong cross-generational relationships and mentorship; and the church needs to address tough topics.

**The art of preaching** – The Gospel Coalition [provides](#) 10 ways to make sermons interesting.

**Immigrants** – The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada recommends a helpful new guide, [available online](#) at no charge, for churches working with and supporting new immigrants and refugees.

**Productive church business meetings** – A pastor and former managements consultant [explains how to change](#) church meetings from black holes of wasted time into engines that propel the ministry.

**Church website mistakes** – Quick, check you church website for this most common mistake. Is your website newcomer friendly? Look at your website through the eyes of someone who has never been to your church – or to church period. Most newcomers will visit the website long before they step foot in the door of the church. What impression does your website give an "outsider"? Would they take the next step and visit the church in person? Having visited your website would an "outsider" sense that the church is friendly? Would they find what you believe? Are key bits of information easily found – such as church address, email/phone number and service time(s)?

**Declining Christianity** – Bishop Bill Atwood [describes](#) the factors that have caused the decline in Christianity in North America... and prescribes how to counter that.

**Church demographics** – A recent poll shows an eight per cent drop over eight years in self-identifying Christians in the US and a growth in those claiming no religious affiliation. However, those who "moved" from Christianity to "nones" were nominal Christians, [says Ed Stetzer](#), who found that identifying as Christian has become a cultural liability. "*Christianity isn't dying... the statistics about Christians in America are simply starting to show a clearer picture of what American Christianity is becoming—less nominal, more defined, and more outside of the mainstream of American culture.*" Bishop Bill Atwood [discusses factors](#) driving the numbers.

**Growing churches** – Canon Phil Ashley [points out](#) research that found that "...the churches that have actually grown in North America from 2007-2014 are those that have embraced an uncompromising, Biblical definition of marriage (one man, one woman, for life)... even though

America is less Christian than it used to be and even though American Christians are facing incredible pressure to conform to the culture, the most conservative, Evangelical Protestant churches... actually increased their membership by a combined total of 2 million!

**Scholarships** – Regent College has [a scholarship fund](#) which provides up to \$10,000/year for those in full-time vocational ministry who are pursuing or refreshing studies in Biblical languages.

### Resources for Christian living

**39 Articles** – In his continuing series of short videos expounding on the 39 Articles, Canon Phil Ashby addresses Article 20, on The Authority of the Church. See [part 1](#) and [part 2](#).

### Soul food

### Just for laughs



### Thoughts

*"I believe in Christianity as I believe that the Sun has risen, not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else."* ~ C S Lewis

*"Every Christian should be conservative and radical; conservative in preserving the faith and radical in applying it."* ~John Stott

### And now a Word from our Sponsor

*Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it. Brothers, pray for us. Greet all the brothers with a holy kiss. I put you under oath before the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.*

1 Thessalonians 5:23-28 ESV