



Handle with prayer

ANiC news

ANiC and ACNA events calendar

May 27-July 7 – Bishop Abraham Nhial (Diocese of Aweil) ministers to AMMiC Sudanese churches
June 7 – Ordination of Deacon Robert Cummins to the priesthood, [Holy Trinity](#) (Marlborough, MA)
June 7, 9:30-1pm – ANiC Regional Women's Gathering, [New Song](#), Port Perry, ON
June 8, 3pm – Service & dinner at [Good Shepherd](#) (Vancouver) honouring Bishop Abraham Nhial
June 11, 10am – Clergy meeting and Eucharist at [Good Shepherd](#) Vancouver with Bishop Nhial
June 15 – Ordination of Josev Biggar as deacon at [St George's](#) (Burlington, ON)
June 15 – Ordination of Deacon Marilyn Flower as priest at [St Stephen the Martyr](#) (St John's, NL)
June 19-22 – ACNA [College of Bishops meets](#) in LaTrobe, PA to elect our next Primate
June 21 – [Bible-in-a-Day](#) seminar at [St Timothy's](#) (North Vancouver, BC)
June 24 – ACNA [Provincial Council meets](#) in LaTrobe, PA
June 25-28 – Anglican Church in North America [Assembly 2014](#) at St Vincent College, Latrobe, PA
June 28-July 1 - [Good Shepherd](#) (Vancouver) summer conference, including AMMiC church plants
November 5-7 – ANiC Synod 2014 in Ottawa, ON
May 14, 2015 – March for Life 2015 in Ottawa

Bishops request prayer

ACNA Primate election – All of us are asked to join in praying fervently for the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) College of Bishops as they begin meeting June 19 in Pennsylvania to prayerfully discern our next Primate and successor to Archbishop Bob Duncan. Churches and individuals are asked to include prayer for this election in daily and weekly worship. You can download both intercessions and an official litany and collect [from the ACNA website](#).

ANiC Diocesan transition – On Sunday June 29, Bishop Don Harvey, our founding diocesan, will transfer the spiritual authority as diocesan bishop from himself to Bishop Charlie Masters. Bishop Charlie was elected to succeed Bishop Don in November 2012. The transfer will form a small part of the morning worship service at [St Hilda's](#) (Oakville, ON). Bishop Charlie's official installation service will be held November 6 at [St Peter & St Paul's](#) in Ottawa as part of Synod 2014. Please be in prayer for both bishops at this time of transition. ANiC churches are particularly encouraged to include prayer for Bishop Charlie and Bishop Don as part of worship services on June 29th.

Fire displaces ANiC congregation

The building in which [St Brigid of Kildare](#) (Medway, MA) has been meeting [was heavily damaged](#) by a fire that began late on May 11. While insurance will cover much of St Brigid's lost property, the congregation has had to relocate temporarily. The Rev Dr Terrence McGillicuddy writes, "*When you work so hard to get a church plant off the ground and there is a fire that destroys such beautiful sacred space, it is heart breaking... Please tell everyone that the gates of hell will not prevail against us and we will never give up!*" Do pray for Father Terrence and the people of St Brigid's. May they know God's encouragement, peace and joy.

ANiC hosts Bishop Nhial of South Sudan

Bishop Abraham Nhial (Atweil, South Sudan) has arrived in Vancouver. He will be in Canada for more than five weeks, at the invitation of ANiC's Asian and Multicultural Ministries (AMMiC). He will minister to Sudanese and South Sudanese Christian communities across Canada, encouraging, training, mentoring, teaching and preaching. After the first two weeks in the Greater Vancouver

area, Bishop Nhial will head east to Calgary, Regina and Toronto to continue his ministry. Please pray particularly for the Bishop Nhial and the South Sudanese community during this time.

Everyone in the Vancouver area is invited to welcome and hear Bishop Nhial at a public service on Sunday, **June 8** at 3pm. The service, with dinner reception to follow, is at [Good Shepherd](#) (189 W 11 Ave, Vancouver). Also, clergy are warmly encouraged to participate in a clergy meeting and Eucharist on **June 11** at 10am also at Good Shepherd Vancouver.

Ordinations

On June 1, the **Rev Billy Gaines**, who has been serving an internship at [St Peter's Fireside](#) (Vancouver, BC), was ordained a deacon and commissioned for church planting ministry in Spokane, Washington under the ACNA Diocese of Cascadia. That same day, the **Rev Iris Cardy** of [Living Hope](#) (Scarborough, ON) was ordained a deacon as well.

On June 7, **Deacon Robert Cummins** will be ordained to the priesthood at [Holy Trinity](#) (Marlborough, MA).

On June 15, **Josev Biggar** will be ordained a deacon at [St George's](#) (Burlington, ON). And at [St Stephen the Martyr](#) (St John's, NL), **Deacon Marilyn Flower** will be ordained to the priesthood.

Please pray for each of these in their new ministries and for the Gaines family as they embark on church planting in Spokane.

ANiC priest appointed to pastor a parish in Cairo, Egypt

The Rev Dr Mike Dobson has been appointed by Presiding Bishop Mouneer Anis (Diocese of Egypt) to serve as priest-in-charge of the English-speaking congregation at St John the Baptist Church in Maadi, Cairo. In order to take up this post, the Dobsons need to raise financial support so their daughter can attend an English-speaking school in Cairo. If you have a heart for Egypt and would like to join with the Dobsons in this new ministry as a prayer supporter and/or financial partner, [please email](#) Mike+. For more information [see a letter](#) from Presiding Bishop Anis. Do pray for the Dobsons in this step of faith.

Bishop Greg & Sylvia Venables attacked

On Sunday, May 25 Bishop Greg Venables and his wife Sylvia were attacked when they arrived home from church and were confronted by burglars. Sylvia was thrown to the ground and tied up while Bishop Greg was severely beaten. The thieves left with virtually everything of value they could find. You can read an [fascinating article](#) by Bishop Bill Atwood on the Venables and the robbery. Bishop Don Harvey, on behalf of ANiC, has written and spoken with Bishop Greg and assured him of our prayers and willingness to help in any way we can.

Cuba update

Bishop Trevor Walters, the Rev Barclay Mayo and several ANiC parishioners recently traveled to Cuba with Bishop Charles and Claudia Dorrington of the Reformed Episcopal Church [Diocese of Western Canada and Alaska and the Mission District of Cuba](#) – a sister diocese in the Anglican Church in North America. They were joined in Cuba by Bishop Miguel Uchoa of the Diocese of Recife, Brazil and together the three bishops consecrated a new bishop for the Reformed Episcopal Mission District of Cuba – Bishop Raul William Suarez. The consecration had been approved by the Primate of the Global Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans and a letter of approval sent to ACNA's Primate Archbishop Bob Duncan.

Bishop Charles Dorrington reports that The Reformed Episcopal Church of Cuba spans the country from one end to the other, a distance of over 1200 kms. It now has a leadership of 22 – a bishop, two presbyters, ten deacons, seven lay readers, a deaconess and a missionary – who minister to 900 members in 23 locations. The churches range in size from four to 159. See Bishop Dorrington's [full report](#) on the ANiC website.

Several ANiC congregations have entered into partnerships with Cuban churches. As little as \$100/month will provide the salary for a Cuban pastor and care for other church needs. If your congregation would like to be part of God's work in Cuba, please [contact Barclay+](#).

Did you know?

That the ANiC website has a number of [communication resources](#) for parishes – including website templates, templates for promotion items and even parish logos? You will also find ANiC logos for your use – but ONLY as long as these are used appropriately. So consult this [very brief guide](#) to learn the dos and don'ts.

Promoting your parish with a bookmark

Are you looking for a nice, inexpensive give-away that you could use to promote your parish or plant? You'll find a [template bookmark](#) on our website which can be adapted for your church.

Job openings

[Saint Matthew's](#) (Abbotsford, BC) is looking for a part-time **Director of Music Ministry**. This paid position is for 10 hour per week. For a job description [email Saint Matthew](#) or call (604) 853-6746.

[St George's \(Burlington, ON\)](#) is looking for a full-time **Child & Youth Minister**. A [job description](#) is posted on the church website.

Parish and regional news

Ontario regional women's gathering – Women are invited to come together in Port Perry on June 7 for a morning of teaching, worship, fellowship, fun and food. [New Song Anglican Church](#) is hosting a session, from 9:30am to 1pm, on "*Inner Truth – Healthy Community*", led with Karen Stiller. The \$10 cost includes lunch. Please register by May 27 by [emailing Susan Gilbert](#) with the number in your group and any special dietary needs - or call Chris at the church office at 905-982-2064. The church address is 14460 Simcoe Street, Port Perry (north of Toronto). You are encouraged to bring a non-perishable item for the local food bank. [See flyer.](#)

[Church of All Nations \(Japanese\) Vancouver](#) has taken church *planting* to a new level. New Eden, All Nation's gardening ministry, is in its second season with a massive garden in Langley. See photos of the bi-weekly garden planting and tending parties [on the church website.](#)

[Good Shepherd \(South Asian\) Calgary](#) has moved from meeting in a home with lay leaders to having a priest and now moving into rented facilities. The new location is #8 - 4821 West Wings Drive, NE Calgary (at Olde Tyme Baptist Church). Sunday services are held at 1:15pm. The move came just in time for the congregation's first anniversary celebration on May 24. [See more here.](#)

[Living Hope \(Scarborough, ON\)](#) is sad to see its long-time rector, the Rev Andy Leroux, retiring on June 8. The Rev Robin Guinness is ably serving as priest-in-charge. A farewell service is planned for Sunday, June 8 at 10:30am. You can send your well-wishes to Andy+ care of the church. For more information, please email office@LivingHopeChristianChurch.ca. Please to continue to pray for Andy+ and the people of Living Hope.

[New Song \(Port Perry, ON\)](#) –A Bach cantata will be presented in the 10am service on June 8.

[St Peter's Fireside \(Vancouver, BC\)](#) has [posted a video](#) about its small groups. Have a look and be encouraged by the large number of worshipping young adults.

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

Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) news

June is a big month for our Province

New Primate to be elected... We are all [asked to pray](#) for God's wisdom as the ACNA College of Bishops meets June 19-20 to elect a successor to Archbishop Bob Duncan. The StandFirm blog has [begun a thread](#) for those wishing to comment on the election.

The **Provincial Council meeting** is on June 24. The [ACNA website](#) has a list of delegates from each diocese. ANiC's delegates are: Bishop Don Harvey, Canon Tom Carman and Claus Lenk.

Then the **Provincial Assembly** is June 25-28 in LaTrobe, PA. If you haven't registered yet, there is still time. See [the ACNA website](#) for more details. The [line-up of speakers](#) is stellar. And the Assembly offers a wonderful time to worship and fellowship as we gather together from across the continent. Additionally, there is a parallel teen conference.

Read about what God is doing in and through ACNA churches

St Timothy Anglican Mission (Burlington, VT) – This five-year-old plant has grown, in part, through trained lay preachers and the faithful ministry of “tent planters”. A key focus of the church is encouraging members to be actively engaged in serving the community outside the church context. The pastor believes that *“healthy church planting is about slow growth that often happens in a bivocational, “tent making” expression. Though this work takes long years of perseverance, in the end, it is growth that is good and lasting.”* Read about St Timothy's on the [ACNA website](#).

All Saints (Springfield, MO) moved into its new \$7-million building, modeled after a 15th century English structure, with all the modern conveniences, of course. Read the story [on VirtueOnline](#).

City Church (Charleston, SC), located in the city's downtown is reaching the young transient community which are largely unchurched, de-churched, broken and/or homeless. The church – which has grown to 500 in four years – offers love and acceptance as people are introduced to Christ and His transformational power. Learn [on the ACNA website](#) how the people of City Church come alongside homeless people and help them experience transformation through challenges and relational and functional support. City Church is now planting new churches in the area.

St Gabriel's Anglican Church (Springdale, AR) is the site of a Rachel Memorial plaque – a pro-life memorial. The [ACNA article states](#), *“The plaque is the first pro-life memorial in northwest Arkansas, and the first of its kind for the organization [[Rachel Memorial Foundation](#)], which has been seeking spaces to dedicate as memorial gardens to unborn children. It reads: “In Remembrance. Between the years of 1973 and 2013, over 20,000 souls were lost to abortion in Washington County, Arkansas. Each of these children is lost to the world, but known to God.” Below this is Jeremiah 1:5 – “Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you.”*

St Peter's (Tallahassee, FL) – 450 members of St Peter's walked six miles in procession to their new church building – a \$12-million, 30,000-square-foot, Gothic cathedral – which has been under construction for two years. St Peter's started eight years ago with 700 parishioners who left a TEC congregation and now has grown to 1700. [VirtueOnline](#) provides more details.

Christ Church Telugu (Phoenix, AZ) – A priest originally from the Church of South India has been working since 2011 to plant a church for the Telugu (a prominent Indian language group), meeting people online and in Indian restaurants and grocery stores. The growing congregation now offers Telugu, English and Hindi services and has a vision for similar ministries across ACNA to ethnic immigrant communities from the Indian subcontinent. Read more on the [ACNA website](#).

The Village Church (Vinings, GA) includes simplicity among its values. An [Anglican 1000 article](#) notes, *“Village's fourth value of “simplicity” can be seen in the community as the worship steers away from big, loud, and entertaining – and rather is grounded in the richness of what is older, solid and substantial. Curt and Jonathan say... people are less and less drawn to the former, and are instead seeking out the latter. Through the very simple Anglican Word and Sacrament, people are being connected to something “historical, global, and transformational.” It is very important to Village Church to run away from the “performance” mindset, and instead invite congregants to participate, not consume.”*

Legal updates

Diocese of San Joaquin – A judge in the Fresno Superior Court [has issued a tentative decision](#) in favour of the US Episcopal Church (TEC), awarding all diocesan monies, property and other assets

to TEC on the basis of TEC's argument that even dioceses may not leave the national body with their assets. Alan Haley who served on the ACNA diocese's legal team [has compiled](#) some compelling questions for the judge to consider before releasing his final decision. You can read [the letter](#) the ACNA's Bishop Eric Menees wrote this diocese in which he calls on the diocese to pray, even to thank God "...for those disappointments and failures that lead us to acknowledge our dependence on you alone." In a [second letter](#) to the diocese he says that he has met with the provisional bishop of TEC's recently created rival diocese and that the meeting was "warm and cordial" and both sides now would take time to consider options. A [Fresno Bee article](#) provides good insight.

Diocese of Fort Worth – The judge rejected further delays proposed by TEC and [set a hearing date](#) of December 17 for the conclusion of this dragged-out case.

More ACNA news nuggets...

- Retired TEC diocesan (Springfield, 1992-2010) **Bishop Peter Beckwith** has been welcomed as assisting bishop in the ACNA Diocese of the Great Lakes.
- If you didn't make it to an **Anglican 1000** event (yet), you can still benefit by [listening to the speakers](#) at recent gathering in Atlanta...
- The latest edition of our Province's magazine – **The Apostle** – is now available [online as a pdf](#).
- Trinity School for Ministry in Pittsburgh [is partnering](#) with the Ridley Institute, a ministry of St Andrew's Church in Mt Pleasant, SC. The partnership will allow students to take classes through the Ridley Institute towards a Master of Arts in Religion degree at Trinity. Classes will be offered in Mt Pleasant and online by Trinity's faculty.
- [ACNA reports](#) that "*Forty-one [ACNA] bishops, including Archbishop Robert Duncan...have signed on to a Pledge of Solidarity & Call to Action on behalf of Christians and Other Small Religious Communities in Egypt, Iraq, and Syria.*"

Anglican Communion news

Can those who started the conflict promote peace – without repentance?

Meeting for the fifth time since Lambeth 2008, the "Consultation of Anglican Bishops in Dialogue" is designed "... to help heal divisions over issues around human sexuality within the Anglican Communion", [according to the Anglican Journal](#). These meetings, which were initiated and organized by the Anglican Church of Canada (ACoC), involve a number of ACoC bishops, several US Episcopal Church bishops as well as 15 bishops from African jurisdictions.

Writing on the [Anglican Mainstream blog](#), Andrew Symes, comments on the rich irony of these bishops meeting to pursue reconciliation when a number of the North America bishops involved were responsible for – and have not repented of – creating that very division which wreaked havoc in the Anglican Communion. Not only did these cause the theologically based divisions, they also used the courts to punish and harass departing Biblically faithful congregations.

A [World Magazine article](#) suggests that such trendy but endless "conversions" on moral issues are today's version of "everyone did what was right in his own eyes."

International news in brief

Canada

- The Anglican Mission in the Americas Canada is holding its annual Christian Ashram (retreat) in BC on July 25-27 in Abbotsford. The theme is "Embracing the Jericho Road". For speakers and registration details, [see the website](#) or [email the Rev Ed Hird](#).
- The Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador, in synod, is [reported by a local radio station](#) to have voted unanimously to "open the conversation on gay marriage". The bishop called the passing of this motion a "high point of Synod". Oddly, the diocese's [own website](#) seems to provide no information whatsoever on the synod or its decision.

- The Diocese of Fredericton of the Anglican Church of Canada (ACoC) [has a newly elected](#) coadjutor bishop, Archdeacon David Edwards.
- The Anglican Church of Canada's Diocese of the Arctic has reached an agreement allowing it to restructure the debt from constructing St Jude's Cathedral. The [Anglican Journal reports](#) that Bishop David Parsons "is *urging every Anglican in his diocese to give an additional \$20 a week for the next year and a half so that it can pay off its remaining \$1.9 million debt from the construction of St. Jude's Cathedral by 2015.*" Recent donations reduced the outstanding debt from \$2.5 million.
- The leader of one of Canada's opposition parties first declared that pro-life candidates should not bother seeking nomination in his party, and then [refused to condemn](#) sex-selective abortions.
- The newly elected Quebec government [has re-introduced](#) the bill to legalize euthanasia, fast-tracking it to the stage it was at prior to the election. The culture of death, disguised in language of compassion, is taking hold in Canada. Legislation is anticipated soon at the federal level. The battle is being waged to sway public opinion toward euthanasia. You can get involved; [see LifeSiteNews for suggestions](#).
- 2014 is the [Evangelical Fellowship of Canada](#) – of which ANiC is a member – is marking 50 years of gathering Evangelicals together for more effective ministry and bringing Biblical truths to the courts and Parliament Hill. This year also marks its 50th intervention in Canada's courts. Not only is that figure a landmark, but it points to the acceleration in the number of court cases that threaten religious freedom and challenge the values Canada was founded upon.
- Father Raymond de Souza, the National Post's excellent columnist, [writes](#) that the National March for Life in Ottawa is the "largest annual demonstration on Parliament Hill attracting tens of thousands" and the marchers have become noticeably younger in recent years.

England

- All 44 dioceses in the Church of England [have voted](#) in favor of the current draft legislation to enable women to be bishops. A vote in General Synod is expected in July.
- A [Church Times article](#) looks at the lasting impact of the 1954 Billy Graham crusade in London on the Church of England (CoE). And a [Christianity Today article](#) looks at how "Fresh Expressions" – atypical church plants – is at least partially reversing the decline in church attendance in the CoE.
- Concerns [are being raised](#) within the Church of England that information and correspondence that is considered to be unhelpful to the same-sex agenda is being screened by Lambeth staff to prevent it reaching Archbishop Justin Welby.
- The CoE House of Bishops [have voted](#) to make membership in or support of two political parties – the British National Party (BNP) or the National Front (NF) – a disciplinary offence for clergy.

New Zealand – Now that the synod of the Anglican Church in New Zealand [has approved](#) same sex blessings, the exodus is beginning. The [New Zealand Herald reports](#) that the Rev Charlie Hughes of St Michael's in Henderson has left and a good number of parishioners are expected to follow.

Egypt – Presiding Bishop Mouneer Anis [writes](#) that he believes the election of "...*President Al Sisi is the right choice at this time because Egypt needs a president who can reestablish the security of the country*". The vast majority of voters supported Al Sisi, the military leader who overthrew former president Mohammed Morsi leader of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Sudan – A Christian woman married to a US citizen [has been sentenced](#) to be beaten – with 100 lashes - and then hung for refusing to recant her faith. Her toddler is with her in prison where she just gave birth to her second child while in prison. Some media are now reporting that she will be freed, while others quote government officials denying this.

[The Independent reports](#) that one-time Archbishop of Canterbury Lord Carey has called on British Muslim leaders to condemn this atrocity and support the right to convert from Islam to other religions. He is quoted saying, *“Isn’t there something fundamentally wrong with Islam at its core that it cannot allow people to change their religion? ... It is accepted doctrine in Islam [that] you don’t convert and if you do the penalty may be death... I want to hear Muslim leaders say ‘we allow Muslims to become Christians if they wish to’.”*

ACNA’s Bishop Bill Atwood, in [an excellent article](#), concludes by encouraging us to take action to speak out about this outrage. He provides contact information for those in the US voice their protests. In Canada you can email the [Sudanese embassy in Ottawa](#) at sudanembassy-canada@rogers.com. The embassy’s phone numbers are: 613 235-4000 and 613 235-4999.

South Sudan

- In a [six-minute video](#), Archbishop Justin Welby who recently visited South Sudan, comments on the ongoing violence in the country. He calls us to pray fervently: *“We must be battering at the gates at heaven in prayer – remorseless, unceasing prayer. As we pray our minds and hearts are shaped by the wisdom and power of the Spirit of God. And as we pray we engage with God in the struggle against human evil.”* He also noted the role of Anglicans – in this case Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul – in negotiating peace between feuding parties. The [Church of England Newspaper reports](#) that the warring parties signed a cease fire agreement on May 9 in talked that included Archbishop Deng Bul. The tribal conflict has killed thousands and driven half a million from their homes.
- [Anglican Ink reports](#) that 132 children abducted by the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), have been freed by African Union peacekeeping troops in the Sudan. The LRA has been terrorizing South Sudan, northern Uganda and Central African Republic, for more than two decades. There were rumours that the LRA and the South Sudan rebel forces under former Vice-President Riek Machar were negotiating an alliance.

Nigeria

- Although the abduction of 230, mostly Christian, girls has faded from the media spotlight, in Nigeria Archbishop Nicholas Okoh [has declared](#) a time of prayer and fasting and [has urged](#) the country’s president not to negotiate with the Boko Haram. The wife of a state governor [is calling](#) Nigerians to genuinely repent, saying that God wanted them to return to Him in true faith.

A chilling [Fox News report](#) shows that this kidnapping is not an isolated incident. Kidnappings of girls and boys by Islamists are common. More than 9000 kidnappings, most child abductions, occur annually in sub-Saharan Africa, the majority in Nigeria. The boys are forced to become fighters, while the girls are sold or used as prostitutes to bring in money for their kidnappers.

Meanwhile Boko Haram [continues to attack](#) villages and slaughter with seeming immunity. [Reuters reports](#) 29 farm workers attacked and killed. The [Daily Times of Nigeria reports](#) on bombs planted in the city of Jos. While two bombs exploded in a busy market killing more than 100, there are reported to be six more bombs planted in the city that have not yet exploded.

- A story on [NBC News tells](#) of a Nigerian father, Adamu, who was beaten in his home and shot point blank by Boko Haram when he refused to renounce his Christian faith. Astonishingly he survived. The article reads:

“Then they asked me whether I would convert to Islam and when I refused they asked whether I was prepared to die as a Christian. My wife was crying but I could not deny Christ. I felt powerful, unafraid, I don’t know why.”

Before he could refuse a second time, a bullet pierced his neck.

“I fell on the ground,” Adamu said. “They thought I was dead because they stomped on me twice and shouted ‘Allahu Akbar’ or ‘God is great.’”

Adamu mustered the strength to talk to his wife before slipping out of consciousness.

“She was crying so many tears,” he said. “Neither of us thought I would survive so I told her that to live in this world was to live for Christ. I told her to look after our son and herself.”

- The *Nigerian Tribune* reports that a four-story Anglican primary school building collapsed on June 2 while under construction in Odo-akpu, Onitsha. 15 workers are feared to have died.

Burundi – The [Anglican Communion News Service reports](#) that the Anglican Church in Burundi, one of the five poorest countries in the world, is planning to build a university which they hope will both improve the education level in the country and promote inter-tribal peace after years of tribal-based civil war. The Burundi Christian University (BCU) will open in September, offering theology courses. Other disciplines will be added as funds, facilities and instructors become available.

Iraq – In [a feature](#) on Canon Andrew White, “the Vicar of Baghdad”, *The Living Church* quotes him saying “*Nominal Christianity’ does not exist in Iraq.*” You can listen to a fascinating [½ hour interview](#) with Canon Andrew White on *Breakpoint*.

Myanmar – [Anglican Ink reports](#) that 70 representatives from church aid agencies – including ARDF – met in Myanmar in February to discuss opportunities for local development. The Anglican Church in Myanmar has worked closely with ARDF – and ARDF Canada – in various aid projects in recent years but with a change in the political climate in the country, opportunities are growing.

Pakistan – Archbishop Justin Welby was recently in Pakistan meeting with the Church of Pakistan. The *Anglican Communication News Service reports* that he called Christians in Pakistan “*a people under siege*” and urged that churches be protected. During his two-day visit, he heard about the daily persecution and threats endured by the 3.6 million Pakistani Christians. In what has become a common occurrence, the [Pakistan Christian Post reports](#) that another young Christian girl was kidnapped and gang raped. Police and the courts offer little justice.

Philippines – [Anglican Ink reports](#) that Bishop Renato Abibico of Northern Luzon has been elected the Primate of the Episcopal Church in the Philippines.

Ecumenism – The [Huffington Post reports](#) that Pope Francis and Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople Bartholomew I have agreed to take the first step toward healing the “centuries-old schism between the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches”. They plan to hold a gathering in Nicaea, now known as Iznik (Turkey), in 2025 to mark the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea (325). The gathering is intended to also help support Christians in the Middle East.

Resources

Resources for ministry

Music ministry – [An article](#) by a worship leader provide excellent advice and a strong caution on the danger of slipping into a performance culture. A [second article](#) offers four keys to moving from a performance orientation to true worship.

Expositional preaching – Tim Challies [offers advice](#) on faithfully preaching a text that involves one triangle, three corners and four “T”s.

Resources for Christian living

39 Articles – Canon Phil Ashey’s video series on the 39 Articles continues with a four-part look at Article 9, “Original sin”. These short videos can be seen here: [video 1](#), [video 2](#), [video 3](#) & [video 4](#).

Reaching Muslims – A [Faith Today article](#) discusses how Christians can befriend Muslims, and how churches can better minister to believers from Muslim backgrounds.

Incomprehensible – A [visual post](#) on the web comic Adam4d site offers a mind-boggling glimpse into the vastness of God’s creation.

Marriage, weddings and Biblical morality

- **Grace under fire** – This Church of England vicar stands strong and articulately defends Christian teaching on sexuality in an intense [seven-minute BBC interview](#).

- **Encouraging news about marriage** – Based on eight years of research, Harvard trained social researcher Shaunti Feldhahn has found that 50 per cent of all marriages do NOT end in divorce. In fact “72 per cent of those who have ever been married are still married to their first spouse”. Divorce rates are dropping and “most marriages last a lifetime” – and are happy! The second myth her research debunks is that the divorce rate in the church is the same as in society in general. In fact, reviewing a range of studies, she found that “regular church attendance lowers the divorce rate anywhere from 25-50 per cent, depending on the study you look at”. As it turns out, “divorce isn’t the greatest threat to marriage. Discouragement is.” You can read the rest of her findings [here](#).
- **Vaughan Roberts** – You can hear [an excellent series](#) by the Rev Vaughan Roberts, rector of St Ebbe’s Church, Oxford the themes of marriage, gender, sexuality and singleness.
- **Christ-centred weddings** – A new book is said to be a “must read” for anyone planning a wedding. In commending [A Christ-Centered Wedding](#), Tim Challies says, “in too many [weddings], even among Christians, Christ is shoved to the margins”; the ceremony is self-focused rather than Christ-focused.
- **Why it is a divisive issue** - A [short article](#) succinctly outlines why we can’t agree to disagree on the issue of blessing of homosexual behaviour and still be faithful to the Gospel.
- **Southern Baptists face decision** – Heading into its annual assembly, the Southern Baptist Convention is faced with a clergyman and his congregation which are defying the denominations historic teaching on marriage and sexual expression. Dr Albert Mohler, President of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, [provides the background](#) and says that every church and every denomination will be faced with the issue sooner or later and there is no middle way. You can talk endlessly but ultimately must decide.

Soul food

Just for laughs

There’s a man trying to cross the street. As he steps off the curb a car comes screaming around the corner and heads straight for him. The man walks faster, trying to hurry across the street, but the car changes lanes and is still coming at him.

So the guy turns around to go back, but the car changes lanes again and is still coming at him. By now, the car is so close and the man so scared that he just freezes and stops in the middle of the road. The car gets real close, then swerves at the last possible moment and screeches to a halt right next him.

The driver rolls down the window. The driver is a squirrel. The squirrel says to the man says, "See, it's not as easy as it looks, is it?"

www.mikeysFunnies.com

Thoughts

Some wish to live within the sound of a chapel bell. I want to run a rescue shop within a yard of Hell. ~ C T Studd

We talk of the second coming; half the world has never heard of the first. ~ Oswald J Smith

And now a Word from our Sponsor

Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

Colossians 1:28-29 ESV