



Anglican Network in Canada

ANiC Newsletter
23 December 2015

Handle with prayer...

ANiC news

ANiC and ACNA events calendar

Jan 4-8 – ACNA College of Bishops meet in Melbourne, FL

Jan 16 – [Engage workshop](#) (youth ministry), Good Shepherd, Vancouver

Jan 17 – Sanctity of Life Sunday (US)

Jan 21-22 – Anglicans for Life [Summit](#) and March for Life, Washington, DC

Jan 29-31 – [Women's retreat](#) led by Living Water Healing Streams, Ottawa-area

Feb 24 – ACNA Executive Committee meets in Phoenix, AZ

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

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

May 2-5 – Western clergy retreat, Malibu retreat centre, BC – with Dr Jon Vickery speaking

May 3 – Sanctity of Life Sunday (Canada)

May 12 – [March for Life 2016](#)

June 14-15 - National apologetics and teaching conference, Vancouver, BC (Details to come)

June 16 – National preaching conference, Vancouver, BC (Details to come)

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

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



Christmas messages

Bishop Charlie Masters, in his Christmas letter to ANiC members and friends, wrote about the power of the Light of Jesus Christ in overcoming the growing darkness in our world. He concluded:

“Dear friends, the tiny infant in Mary’s womb more than 2000 years ago was and is God’s answer to the darkness. Such a small, vulnerable light! And yet that tiny light defeated the darkness, then and for all eternity. So as we feel the darkness closing in, do not despair. Run to the light, run to Jesus this Christmas. He knows all about the darkness. As we draw closer to the Light, this will be a very good Christmas and New Year.”

Read the full letter [on the ANiC website](#).

Canon Phil Ashey in his [Christmas video](#) also focuses John 1 and the theme of God’s Light coming into the darkness.

Archbishop Foley Beach also [has posted a message](#) which concludes on a similar note: “... God may seem slow in acting, but His timing is always correct. God can turn the awful into a blessing; darkness into light; sorrow into joy; and death into life.”

Bishop Bill Atwood, in his weekly [newsletter article](#) also discusses the growing persecution and darkness. He calls us first to prayer, to “Kingdom acts of kindness and power” – including becoming active politically – and to allowing the use of military force. He concludes, “*May this Christmas encourage you in the midst of a very challenging time. We are surrounded by assaults from many directions, but in the long run, we know that Jesus Christ will be the victor.*”

Year-end giving

As we come to the end of the year, it is a wonderful time to reflect on God’s goodness to us and respond from hearts filled with thanksgiving. As you plan your end-of-the-year giving, please prayerfully consider making the Gospel the central focus of your giving.

Think first of **your church** and consider a generous gift over and above your regular tithe.

Also, please consider the needs of our diocese, **ANiC**, and consider giving to help fuel our ministry priorities and growth. (See the [ANiC website](#) for information.)

And then consider how your giving can help meet desperate needs in our world. The Anglican Relief and Development Fund Canada (**ARDFC**) partners with Global South dioceses – and established Christian agencies – to effectively meet specific and urgent needs around our world. See the [ARDFC website](#) for information.

ANiC office Christmas hours

The ANiC office is closed from Christmas Eve, opening again on January 4.

Youth ministry training in Vancouver; January 1 registration deadline!

The compelling [Engage Initiative](#) of the [Young Anglicans Project](#) was introduced to ANiC at our last synod. If you are involved in youth ministry or want to engage youth for Christ you'll want to learn more about this initiative. And if you are in the Vancouver area, you need to attend this workshop - and forward this email to those in your congregation who are most likely to benefit by the workshop.

This Engage workshop is led by experienced trainers with years of youth ministry experience who are members of the Young Anglicans Project.

Who – Clergy and lay members who are either currently engaged in some form of youth ministry, or are interested in beginning ministry to youth.

When – **Saturday, January 16**, 10am-5pm

Where – [Church of the Good Shepherd](#), 189 West 11th Avenue, Vancouver

What – This workshop is designed to prepare volunteers to engage teenagers in ongoing relationship, centred around reading the Bible together. During the training, participants will be matched with coaches who will provide ongoing support and encouragement in the important role of building the Christian faith of young people.

Cost – No charge (lunch included)

The registration deadline is January 1. You can [register online](#) or contact the Rev Dave Little [by email](#) or by calling 778-986-7041.

Bishops on the go

In 2016, our bishops will be taking much needed **sabbatical leave** in turn. Bishop Stephen will be on sabbatical from January 13 through April 15, returning to fulfill speaking engagements, and then resuming his leave from May 2-31. Bishop Charlie will take sabbatical leave in July and August. And Bishop Trevor will be off from mid-September through mid-December.

Following ACNA College of Bishops meeting January 4-8, **Bishop Charlie** is off to England, January 9-18, accompanying Archbishop Foley Beach who is attending a meeting of Primates called by the Archbishop of Canterbury. He then will be in Washington, DC, January 21-22, for an Anglicans for Life Summit followed by the national March for Life.

Bishop Trevor is leading a workshop on burnout at the ACNA College of Bishops gathering, January 5-7, and a church retreat for Christ Church Plano (Texas), February 5-7.

While on sabbatical, **Bishop Stephen** will be initially in Hong Kong at the Alliance Theological Seminary, writing and teaching; then preaching at his former parish in Macau, January 29-31; preaching at the parish of Archbishop-elect for SE Asia, Moon Hing Ng, then attending his installation at the cathedral, February 20-22; preaching and sharing the work of the AMMiC (Asian and Multicultural Ministries in Canada) at Chinese Anglican Churches in Sydney and Melbourne, Australia, March 18-30; and then back to North America for New Wineskins Mission conference, April 6-9, where he is a workshop speaker, together with his wife Nona and the Rev Shihoko Warren.

You can follow our bishops' itineraries [on the ANiC website](#). Please uphold them in prayer.

Bishop Trevor facilitates high-level meeting seeking reconciliation

ANiC's Bishop Trevor Walters served as facilitator once again for [a meeting](#) between ACNA's leadership and the leaders of the Anglican Mission (formerly Anglican Mission in America – AMiA).

Western clergy retreat May 2-5 at Malibu Club on the rugged and remote BC coast

Clergy and their spouses are invited to enjoy a retreat at Young Life's spectacular [Malibu Camp](#) on Princess Louisa Inlet. You will experience solid teaching together with worship, physical rest, spiritual refreshment, and enriching fellowship. We want to strengthen and encourage one another in our ministry and refocus on our Christ-ordained, Kingdom-advancing mission. This year's teacher is our own Rev Dr **Jon Vickery** (Christ Church, Kelowna). Join Bishop's Trevor and Charlie and many of your fellow clergy for this annual highlight. Mark your calendars and watch for more details!

Synod 2016

Church of Good Shepherd Vancouver was outstanding as host of Synod 2015 – perhaps too good. After investigating alternatives (which proved too pricey), ANiC Council asked Good Shepherd to host Synod next year as well. So, with the Church's kind agreement, Synod 2016 is scheduled for October 25-28 at Good Shepherd Vancouver. The following year, 2017, Synod will return to Ottawa where we will be celebrating both Canada's 150th and ANiC's 10th anniversaries.

Our thanks to everyone who took the time to complete the **post-synod survey** and provide constructive suggestions for how we can make Synod 2016 even better than previous events.

Be sure to mark Sanctity of Life Sunday this year

The third Sunday of January (**17 January 2016**) is Sanctity of Life Sunday for US parishes, while in Canada we celebrate it on the first Sunday of May (**3 May 2016**). On this day, churches celebrate God's gift of life. This is a day for honouring the children lost to abortion in our nation each year, and the parents and grandparents whose lives are forever affected. We also renew our commitment to protecting all human life and at every stage – including those who are elderly, disabled or ill.

Connect with [Anglicans for Life Canada](#) and checkout the [training and resources](#). New resources specifically for Canadians are planned for the New Year. Contact Vicky Hedelius+ for information.

Anglicans for Life Canada Christmas message

In the [Christmas edition](#) of the Anglicans for Life Canada newsletter, National Director Vicky Hedelius+ discusses the Good News of God using an unplanned pregnancy and an unwed mother to fulfil His "promise of salvation to all peoples!" Check out [all the news](#) in the newsletter and join the growing ranks of Christians and churches upholding the Sanctity of Life. Also, consider how you can support [Anglicans for Life Canada](#) as it seeks incorporation.

MissionsFest Vancouver, January 29-31

Vancouver area churches are invited to promote the annual [Vancouver Missions Fest](#) in your congregation. It offers [a terrific program](#) focused on global missions, as well as special music, a popular Christian Film Festival, youth rallies – which gather young people from all over the region to worship, fellowship and have fun together – and even children's activities.

Taste for Life ministry featured

Good Shepherd Vancouver's ministry to Chinese-speaking restaurant workers in Richmond, BC is featured in the latest edition of ACNA's [The Apostle magazine](#) and [on the ACNA website](#).

ANiC community in Guelph, ON set to launch soon

A [forming congregation](#) has been meeting regularly in Guelph under the pastoral leadership of the Rev Zena Attwood. This ANiC community, St Jude, Guelph, meets Sunday mornings at 10:30am for a Bible study followed by Eucharist. With the Anglican Church of Canada [recently closing](#) churches in Guelph, St Jude member D'Arcy Luxton hopes that disenfranchised Anglicans in the area will be encouraged to find a new home in St Jude. A [local media article](#) was most supportive

of St Jude. Anyone interested in learning more about this forming congregation can email stjudequelp@gmail.com or call D'Arcy at 519-846-0483.

Angels from the Realms of Glory

Bishop Donald Harvey has an article in the current [Anglican Planet](#). You can read his thoughts – including a personal childhood experience – related to his favorite carol [here](#). (Scroll down.)

The Israel Video Project

While awaiting a work visa to minister in Atlanta, Georgia, the Rev Jess Cantelon has been commissioned by Bishop Charlie to go to Israel with his family for three months. While there he will prepare weekly five-minute Bible teaching videos based on Torah portions, the ancient Jewish version of our lectionary which Jesus would have followed. These video segments are meant to deepen our faith, highlight the Jewish roots and context of our faith, provide better understanding of the Christian calendar, and ultimately draw us closer to Jesus. As these videos are released, we will be making them widely available. So watch your inbox!

ARDFC news

More than \$23,000 has been raised to date for ARDFC's Syrian Refugee Relief appeal and is being sent to MCC, our partner working with refugees in the Middle East. Thank you! Please also remember our development project in Burundi. To date, only \$2645 has been received for this project. More information is [on the ARDFC website](#).

Anglican Communion Alliance conference audio now online

Because the recent conference of the Anglican Communion Alliance (ACA) was held in Toronto at the same time as ANiC's synod many in ANiC who might otherwise have attended were not able to go. However, the ACA has now posted audio from its well-received *Desiring the Kingdom Conference* – specifically the four sessions by Dr James K A Smith – [on its website](#). Topics are:

"You Are What You Love: Worship as the Heart of Discipleship"

"You Might Not Love What You Think: Learning to Read 'Secular' Liturgies"

"The Spirit Meets You Where You Are: Historic Worship for a Postmodern Age"

"What Story Are You In? Why Form Matters"

The *Anglican Planet* also [a full report](#) on the conference and [an interview](#) with Dr Smith.

Parish and regional news

[St Matthias and St Luke's \(Vancouver, BC\)](#) - A choir comprised of parishioners from St Matthias and St Luke's and St Timothy's (North Vancouver) together with several from Bethlehem Lutheran Church were able to carol and share the Good News of Jesus' birth at Oakridge Shopping Centre on December 18. This is an annual tradition for St Matthias and St Luke's. Zenia Cheng reports that *"It was a wonderful event. We read the Christmas story from the Bible and invited the audience to sing along favourite carols with us. Many gathered to hear us and sing along with us."* You can see photos on the [church Facebook page](#).

[St James \(Lennoxville, QC\)](#) – In their Christmas letter, the Rev Jess and Erica Cantelon write: *"Our transition out of St James Lennoxville brought with it a range of emotions, but now only joy. We are so happy to see Mat and Grace Court doing such a spectacular job. The church is hoppin', the Sunday school has been divided into three classes, and they are moving to a new worship space in January that has more room for the kids... All who contributed prayer and funding to the planting of St James, I wish you could see the fruit of your labour. It is amazing. I am so grateful to the Lord for his faithfulness and for providing Mat, the perfect leader for this next chapter."*

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

Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) news

Reconciliation meetings continue

Leaders from the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) and The Anglican Mission (formerly the AMiA) recently met in Atlanta, Georgia, to take steps towards personal reconciliation. This was the second meeting, both facilitated by ANiC's Bishop Trevor Walters. You can read the statement from that meeting [on the ACNA website](#) and Archbishop Foley Beach's comments and call for all of us to, similarly, examine our hearts and broken relationships and actively work for reconciliation. He concludes: *"I have been encouraged by the fruit of our discussions with the leaders of the Anglican Mission and hope our example can serve to motivate you to reach out to those with whom you need to be reconciled. While we have no idea where these discussions will lead, we do know that Jesus is pleased when relationships can be healed. This is true in one's personal and professional relationships as well."*

Anglican Church of South Sudan and the Sudan formally recognizes ACNA

Following its November 25-28 meeting, the House of Bishops of the Anglican Province of South Sudan and the Sudan, [announced](#) it has formally recognized the ACNA and encouraged closer relations with us. The Sudanese House of Bishops also recommended that their Provincial Synod sever relations with the US Episcopal Church and any other province or diocese that approves the blessing of same sex relationships. In addition, the bishops encouraged Sudanese "diaspora congregations" – comprised of people originally from the Church of South Sudan and the Sudan – to realign with ACNA wherever possible.

Anglican Immigrant Initiative

You can read [a personal account](#) of the work of the [Anglican Immigrant Initiative](#) which plans to start immigrant legal aid clinics around the US and Canada *"as a way of showing the welcome of Christ to the many strangers among us, and building congregations for the over 40 million immigrants living in our country"*. Learn more [on the ACNA website](#).

Anglicans helped birth Israel

[An article on the ACNA website](#) tells the story of how Anglicans, including William Wilberforce, helped bring about what eventually became today's Israel. The ministry which began in 1809 is now CMJ, an ACNA ministry partner. Its three-fold focus is evangelism, education and encouragement. In Canada, CMJ is led by the Rev Sharon Hayton. CMJ is interested in partnering with ACNA congregations located in or near neighbourhoods with significant numbers of Jewish people, and in equipping these parishes to share Messiah Jesus with Jewish friends and neighbours. CMJ also is ready to visit parishes wishing to better understand the Jewish roots of Christianity. Learn more [here](#) and visit the [CMJ-Canada website](#).

Loose offering supports ARDF

A [church profile](#) on the ACNA website explains how and why Christ Church (Vienna, Virginia) gives all "loose" offerings to the Anglican Relief and Development Fund (ARDF). The church believes this policy helps new-comers feel comfortable participating in giving and helps the church reach its outreach role of giving 20 per cent of its income.

Anglicans for Life Summit 2016 in Falls Church, Virginia, January 21

"You are invited to join with your fellow Anglicans in strategizing, motivating, and mobilizing our Church for life-based outreach. The Summit will have great teaching, testimonies, and opportunities to network around both beginning and end-of-life issues." Guest speakers include John Stonestreet, president of the Chuck Colson Center, and other pro-life ministry leaders. Learn more and register online [here](#).

Transforming ministry

[Read the story](#) of ministry in the poor, largely Mexican-immigrant town of Guadalupe, Arizona and how God challenged one man to quite his high-level corporate job to pursue work with the local people to transform Guadalupe to the glory of God.

The Apostle magazine available

The latest edition of ACNA's *The Apostle* magazine, which focuses on multicultural ministry, is now available online [as a pdf](#).

Global Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans and Anglican Communion news

January's meeting of the Primates – January 11-16

Thinking of the upcoming Primates meeting called by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Canon Phil Ashey [imagines](#) what the currently dysfunctional Anglican Communion would be like if members were to adopt the "*mind of Christ*" (Phil 2). Meanwhile, the Anglican Church of Canada's (ACoC) Primate, Archbishop Fred Hiltz, in an *Anglican Journal* [article](#), discusses his planned private meeting with the Archbishop of Canterbury (earlier in December), and expresses his concern about the conduct of the Primates' meeting and the role ACNA Primate Archbishop Foley Beach will play. A subsequent *Anglican Journal* [article](#) downplays the importance of the meeting, saying it is "*not a decision-making body*", and [another](#) offers a primer on the institutional structures of the Anglican Communion as well as some history of tensions.

Writing in the [American Anglican Council newsletter](#), Canon Phil Ashey reflects on Archbishop Hiltz's comments and the past actions of the Anglican Church of Canada which have helped create the current discord in the Anglican Communion. He then discusses the recently released report of the ACoC's Commission on the Marriage Canon which "...presents only three possibilities for the General Synod, none of which affirms a Biblically faithful understanding of marriage and human sexuality". Finally, Canon Ashey highly commends a [17-page critique](#) of the ACoC's report by Dr Martin Davie for the Church of England Evangelical Council.

The Rev Charles Raven [recalls](#) a **2001 report, *To Mend the Net***, produced by Archbishops Drexel Gomez and Maurice Sinclair, which clearly outlined eight steps to restore godly order to the Anglican Communion. Unfortunately, this document was swept under the rug and the Communion allowed to unravel. He concludes:

"The wisdom of 'To Mend the Net' with its careful listening and measured discipline, is the recognition that what we have in common, what makes us a Communion, is not merely affection through historical affinity, but the reality of being reconciled to God through hearing the Word of God and responding in repentance and faith. So it is faithfulness to that Word which must govern our relationships with each other and where there has been unfaithfulness, there should also be repentance.

"For the Primates of GAFCON and the Anglican Global South, the breakdown of authority and discipline in the Anglican Communion is at the heart of our difficulties. The most important question about January's meeting in Canterbury is not how the sexuality issue can be managed (it is now very clear that it cannot be resolved), but whether Canterbury can mend the net and reinvent itself as the focus of a truly conciliar Communion which orders its life under the authority of Scripture. If not, such leadership will no doubt emerge elsewhere within the Communion."

GAFCon states [on its website](#): "*The choice before the Primates as they gather in Canterbury is whether they will recognize this reality and take the difficult but necessary action to restore the bible to its central place in the life of the Communion, or whether they will accept a merely cosmetic solution which will see it increasingly taken captive by the dominant secular culture of the West.*"

GAFCon chair **Archbishop Eliud Wabukala** [writes](#), "*This is a courageous initiative and the GAFCON Primates will attend in the hope that Archbishop Welby will, like them, stand firm to guard the gospel we love, knowing that we cannot rewrite the Bible to suit the spirit of a secular age.*" He also dismisses the solution Canterbury seems to be promoting that the Communion devolve to simply be Provinces (national Churches) in relationship with Canterbury, saying: "*This is not historic Anglicanism; the See of Canterbury is honoured and respected as the Mother Church of the Communion, but the unity of the Communion does not depend upon the Archbishop of Canterbury.*"

Rather, it depends upon the various provinces being... committed to the faith as it has been received... affection for Canterbury is no substitute."

[Writing to GAFCon clergy](#), Archbishop Wabukala **asks for prayer**: "...that the Communion will emerge from its current crisis repentant, renewed and restored for its global mission of proclaiming the gospel... This is the hope... of the GAFCON Primates as they approach this gathering. So please do stand with us... by calling your people to urgent prayer and practical support."

[The GAFCon website](#) provides information on why this meeting will be decisive and what is at stake. We are asked to respond in three ways:

- 1) **Encourage** - Write the GAFCon Primates to thank them and assure them of your prayer and support (Email: ackenya.archoffice@gmail.com)
- 2) **Pray** – [Sign-up](#) to receive prayer updates
- 3) **Give** – There is a financial cost and GAFCon [needs our support](#)

Canterbury hints at Saudi Arabia's role in radicalizing terrorists

The Economist [reports](#) that, speaking in England's House of Lords, Archbishop Justin Welby supporting Britain's role in the war against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, but said, "Our bombing action plays into the expectation of ISIL (Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant) and other jihadist groups in the region, springing from their apocalyptic theology. The totality of our actions must subvert that false narrative...If we act only against ISIL...and only in the way proposed so far, we will strengthen their resolve, increase their recruitment and encourage their sympathisers. Without a far more comprehensive approach we confirm their dreadful belief that what they are doing is the will of God. There must be a global theological and ideological component, not just one in this country, to what we are doing...And it must include challenging Saudi Arabia and Qatar, whose own promotion of a particular brand of Islamic theology has provided a source from which ISIL have drawn a false legitimisation. It must also show clear support for global mainstream Muslim and other religious leaders." You can read his full speech to the House of Lords [here](#).

In supporting this military action, Archbishop Welby said it satisfied the criteria of "just war". The commentators at Anglican Unscripted discuss just war theory on the [current video edition](#).

Diocese of Recife, "da bom"

ACNA's Bishop Bill Atwood, who also serves as GAFCon Ambassador [writes](#) of his recent visit to the Diocese of Recife for its diocesan synod, a multiple ordination serving and the diocese's week-long "extravaganza of worship, teaching and fellowship". The Diocese of Recife's is now under the directly jurisdiction of the GAFCon Primates since it was chased out of the liberal Episcopal Church of Brazil. Despite recently losing a number of church properties in legal decisions, the diocese is growing rapidly. Bishop Atwood discusses some of the innovative outreaches in the diocese and concludes, "Bishop Miguel [Uchoa] and the diocese continue to help bring people to faith in Jesus Christ, disciple them, and deploy them into what I think might well be the most full Gospel expression of any Anglican Diocese in the world."

Archbishop of Canterbury interview draws praise and concern

In [an interview](#) with *The Spectator*, Archbishop Justin Welby's responses were generally laudable. However, his response to one question cleverly designed to determine where he stood on the presenting issue in the Communion – homosexual relationships – is causing concern among evangelicals. Julian Mann, [writing in Virtue Online](#) expresses concern that Archbishop Welby clearly declined to call same-sex relationships contrary to Bible teaching and even allowed that he would accommodate a request for a prayer of blessing.

GAFCon chairman's Christmas message

In [his monthly letter](#), Archbishop Eliud Wabukala (Kenya) commends the courage of the Church of Sudan and South Sudan, challenges us to witness in word and deed that Jesus is Lord, and exhorts us to pray for Christians who are persecuted and killed for the faith.

International news in brief

Canada

Euthanasia – The federal government [has asked](#) the Supreme Court of Canada for a six-month extension to respond with new legislation to the Court's February decision throwing out existing legislative prohibitions on physician-assisted suicide. The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada's Bruce Clemenger [outlines four options](#) for the federal government in responding to the legislative void created by the Supreme Court ruling, including doing nothing or even re-asserting the ban on assisted suicide.

LifeSiteNews [reports](#) that the Quebec Superior Court overturned Quebec's law legalizing euthanasia just a week before it was to go into effect on December 10. However, the province [appealed](#) and on December 22, the Quebec Court of Appeal ("Appeal Court") [overturned](#) the initial decision of the Quebec Superior Court. The Appeal Court held that the Quebec law was valid and within the jurisdiction of the Legislature of Quebec. Accordingly, the Appeal Court ruled that the initial suspension of the law was incorrect and, therefore, the Quebec law was immediately in effect. This means that **physician-assisted suicide is now fully legal in the Province of Quebec**.

A spokesman for those opposing the Quebec law stated that, in his view, one of the reasons why the Appeal Court reversed the initial decision was because the Federal Attorney-General, speaking on behalf of the Federal Government in the case, reversed the position taken by the previous federal government and now argued in favour of upholding the Quebec law. The previous federal government argued that killing people is a criminal code matter and therefore falls under federal jurisdiction. The Quebec government argued that euthanasia and assisted suicide is merely an extension of health care which is a provincial responsibility.

[It is reported](#) that this "*is the only law in the world which attempts to coerce physicians and palliative programs into providing euthanasia*". There is the possibility that those opposing the Quebec law may seek Leave to Appeal the decision of the Appeal Court to the Supreme Court of Canada. Please pray for our nation!

The **Christian Medical and Dental Society** asks for our help in defending health care providers' rights to not participate in life-ending procedures to which they are conscientiously opposed. Health care providers' rights are under serious threat in several provinces already. You can learn more about the threat and a possible solution on their website MoralConvictions.ca. Then, using the website's links, connect with key federal and provincial officials who are currently making decisions that will affect both health care legislation and health care professionals' rights to act based on their moral convictions.

The BC Supreme Court [has overturned](#) the BC Law Society's decision last year to not accept **Trinity Western University's Law School** graduates because of the school's Community Covenant which is based on Christian morality. The Chief Justice wrote that "*the evidence in this case and the relevant precedents conclusively establish that the decision [by the BC Law Society] does infringe [TWU's] Charter right to freedom of religion*".

Virtue Online [reports](#) that the **Anglican Church of Canada's** (ACoC) Diocese of Huron is closing two historic churches, one in London and the other in Windsor. However the diocese's plan to demolish the Windsor church buildings and redevelop the property seems to be running into some opposition. Similarly the Diocese of Niagara [is facing community resistance](#) to its plan to sell church property for redevelopment.

Dr Martin Davie of the Church of England Evangelical Council has prepared a well-crafted [17-page critique](#) of 'This Holy Estate' the **Report of the Commission on the Marriage Canon** of the Anglican Church of Canada.

ACoC's Archbishop **Fred Hiltz** and his Principle Private Secretary the Ven Paul Fehely were robbed at gun point while in Brazil, the *Anglican Journal* [reports](#).

Bishop **William Anderson** of the ACoC Diocese of Caledonia [has announced](#) he will retire next fall

United States

The **US Episcopal Church's** (TEC) recent released statistics for 2014 shows average Sunday attendance across the Church to be just over 600,000. The Institute on Religion and Democracy provides a [full analysis](#).

According to a derisive [local news report](#), the newly installed **Bishop George Sumner**, is continuing his predecessor's policy of refusing same-sex marriages in the Diocese of Dallas.

Jeffrey Walton [reports](#) that "*Three top officials with the Episcopal Church have been suspended by Presiding Bishop Michael Curry*" – including Bishop Stacy Sauls, TEC's chief operating officer – for unspecified "*misconduct in carrying out their duties*". Presiding Bishop Curry was recently [in hospital](#) for treatment of a subdural hematoma.

Alan Haley details two serious disputes in TEC between the diocese and a member church – including the astonishing case of **St James the Great in Newport Beach**, California where litigation between the Diocese of Los Angeles, Bishop Jon Bruno, a parish donor and the church (which is still part of TEC) has reached epic proportions.

In connection with the **San Bernardino mass killing**, Mollie Hemingway [discusses](#) the irrational and alarming media backlash against prayer.

A **Wheaton College** professor [was recently suspended](#) for proclaiming that Christians and Muslims worship the same God. Pastor Thabiti Anyabwile, [writing on the Gospel Coalition website](#), examines the claim the Christianity and Islam worship the same God, concluding that the differences are radical and lead to wildly different ethics. He writes, "*Arguing that Christians and Muslims worship the same God is often well-intended. But... this confusion is dangerous.*"

England

A report by **Britain's Commission on Religion and Belief in Public Life** advocates for more secularism, more religious diversity, and a reduced role for the Church of England. The *National Post* [summarized](#) the report as saying "*Britain is no longer a Christian country and should stop acting as if it is*". It "*calls for public life to be systematically de-Christianized... giving more official influence to non-religious voices and those of non-Christian faiths.*"

Recommendations by the commission, which included among its members the former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams, included:

- The number of Church of England bishops in the Lords should be reduced, making way for the appointments of imams, rabbis and other Christian and non-Christian clerics
- Acts of worship in school assemblies should be abolished and replaced with times for reflection
- The coronation service of the next monarch ought to include other faiths.

Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali [responded](#) by saying that only Christianity, not secularism, can save Europe from the threat of radical Islam.

In [its response](#), the **Church of England** defended church schools and concluded, "*it is important to remember that most public opinion is strongly opposed to the marginalisation of Christianity.*"

Andrew Symes, [writing on the Anglican Mainstream blog](#), wonders how long the Church of England will remain the established church.

Anglican Ink [reports](#) that **Prince Charles**, speaking at an Advent reception for Christians from the Middle East, said, "*Christian communities in various parts of the Middle East are being deliberately targeted by fanatical Islamist militants intent on dividing communities which have lived alongside one another for centuries...[threatening the] very existence of Christianity in the land of its birth*".

Australia

The **Diocese of Tasmania** [has elect](#) as its next bishop the chairman of the Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans (Australia), the Ven Dr Richard Condie.

The Supreme Court [has ruled](#) that the **Diocese of Bathurst** is responsible for repaying a \$14-million debt to the Commonwealth Bank.

Syria

An Anglican priest [has initiated](#) an “Ambassadors for Peace” educational program for Syrian young people designed to help them rise above despair and learn tools of empowerment – then work in their own communities to “*encourage understanding and renewed trust between the faiths*”.

Iran

Although one Christian pastor, Farshid Fathi, [was just released](#) after five years in prison for his faith, about 100 other Christians are believed to be imprisoned for their faith. *Anglican Ink* [reports](#) that Fathi’s wife and children immigrated to Canada in 2013.

Egypt

International Christian Concern [reports](#) that two more Egyptian Coptic Christians, brothers, were executed in early November by Islamic militants in Libya where they had gone two years ago seeking employment because they couldn’t find work in Egypt. The report states that many Christians are trapped in Libya, unable to find a safe way home to Egypt. And Christians in Egypt face discrimination and violence and lack of employment opportunities.

Nigeria

The *World Watch Monitor* carries a [harrowing account](#) of a woman held captive by **Boko Haram** Islamic terrorists who survived the ordeal. The article starkly portrays the genocide of Christians in Northern Nigeria. Do pray for Nigerian Christians.

The Nigerian government plans to close **refugee camps** which currently house 150,000 people who have fled the Islamist terrorist violence in northern Nigeria, saying that it is safe for the refugees to return home. *Reuters* [reports](#) that “*The army has this year recaptured much of the territory seized by Boko Haram in its six-year campaign to carve out an Islamic state in the northeast, but the militants have since struck back with a surge of deadly raids and suicide bombings. Most people living in camps want to return home but are worried about the threat of attacks and lack confidence in the military’s ability to protect them...*” The economy, farm lands, schools, churches and even homes in the north have been destroyed, leaving little with which the returnees, who have no money, can start rebuilding their lives.

A resurgent separatist movement in **Biafra**, in south-east Nigeria, has caused Archbishop Nicholas Okoh [to condemn](#) the violent protests and appeal for “*peace, justice, equity and cordial co-existence*”.

A *World Watch Monitor* [article](#) focuses on the parents of **Chibok girls** and the trauma they have endured. It notes that, since Boko Haram kidnapped the girls from their school in April 2014, 18 parents have died from stress-related conditions.

Kenya

All Africa [reports](#) that, in welcoming the **Pope** to Kenya, Archbishop Eliud Wabukala told him that Africa “*is at a spiritual crossroads. We have many nominal Christians, but not as many committed ones. We are threatened by what you yourself have described as ‘ideological colonialism’ of these secularist lifestyles. So it is my prayer that all our churches will work together in proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, to kindle the hearts and minds of all believers anew.*”

The General Synod of the Anglican Church of Kenya [reaffirmed](#) that it is **not in communion** with the US Episcopal Church (TEC) and resolved that “*The Anglican Church of Kenya supports the Global South and the arms of the Anglican Communion to exclude TEC from all activities in the Communion as a measure of discipline.*”

Sudan and South Sudan

VirtueOnline [reports](#) that “Bishops of the 43 dioceses of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan and the Sudan meeting under the leadership of the Most Rev. Daniel Deng Bul **severed ties with the US Episcopal Church** for approving liturgical marriage, changing church canons and allowing trial liturgies, arguing that such innovations are not in conformity with the Scriptures. They further announced they would now recognize the Anglican Church in North America.” The House of Bishops’ statement also said, “We realize that there are South Sudanese diaspora congregations that are originally from ECSS&S and are currently under TEC dioceses and Provinces which support same sex relations. We encourage such congregations that are in the US to join the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) parishes where they exist.” The main thrust of the [bishops’ statement](#) dealt with the desperate need for peace, calling on leaders to work for peace and for church members to be peacemakers.

Human Rights Watch [reports](#) that Jordan is **deporting Sudanese asylum seekers**.

More **Christian pastors have been arrested** in Sudan. While no reason has been given for these arrests, both pastors have publicly objected to the government’s demolition of church buildings without prior warning. Both pastors are reported to be from the Nuba Mountain region of South Kordofan state. The *Morning Star News* [reports](#) that “Sudan ranked sixth on... *Open Doors’ 2015 World Watch List of 50 countries where Christians face most persecution...*”

Uganda

Canon Chris Sugden offers a [thorough review](#) of and background for Uganda’s much maligned legislation on aggravated homosexuality. He discusses how western media has willfully misrepresented the legislation, how UN agencies and western-backed liberals provoked this legislation by surreptitiously indoctrinating children, the importance of Uganda’s history, and how the Church in Uganda has actively worked behind the scenes to moderate the legislation.

Ethiopia

Drought has decimated harvest in Ethiopia, and the UN [is warning](#) that more than 15 million people are at risk and in need of food aid almost immediately.

Burundi

An armed gang attacked St Mark’s Church in Ngagara, Burundi leaving a child dead and others injured. Violence has plagued Burundi since disputed elections were held in July. The Anglican Communion News Service [reports](#) that “Anglicans make up around 10 per cent of Burundi’s nine-million population. The Anglican presence began in the 1930s through the work of CMS and grew rapidly as a result of the East African Revival. The Province... contains seven dioceses, and is active in the work of peace and reconciliation, advocacy, education, health, literacy and financial education, and community development.” ARDFC’s [current project](#) is located in Burundi and is focused on helping subsistence farmers escape poverty and food insecurity.

A *Church Times* [article](#) fears that Burundi is on the **verge of genocide** as political leaders have been fanning the flames of deeply rooted ethnic hatred between Hutus vs Tutsis because of similar ethnic-based atrocities in 1972 and 1993. The UN is being urged to deploy peacekeepers quickly. Hundreds have already been killed and more than 200,000 have fled to neighbouring countries.

India

The *Anglican Communion News Service* [reports](#) that “The Church of South India (CSI) Synod has launched an emergency response to assist the victims of severe flooding in Chennai. So far, at least 280 people have been killed as a result of the floods in the southern Indian city, which is also known as madras, and the wider Tamil Nadu state.”

Pakistan

A *Daily Times* [article](#) explores what it is like to be a Christian in Pakistan, being treated as an untouchable, denied justice and opportunity, living in ghettos, and under constant threat of violence.

Nepal

Asia News [reports](#) that Nepalese face a bleak winter due to a trade embargo imposed by India. India imposed the unofficial embargo after Nepal's government passed a secular constitution in September in defiance of pressure from India where a Hindu nationalist government is in power. The embargo has resulted in a drastic drop in imports and exports, including fuel, for the land-locked country, resulted in unnecessary added misery for a people already devastated by earthquakes earlier this year.

Indonesia

Indonesia is the world's largest Muslim nation. International Christian Concerns [reports](#) that, since 2008, more than 1000 churches have been forcibly closed, many church buildings demolished, and others prevented from being built. Muslim imams are reported to have ordered the torching of church buildings and instigated violent attacks on Christians.

North Korea

A Canadian pastor who has been held in North Korea since February [has been sentence](#) to hard labour for life. With his sentencing, Canadian foreign affairs officials hope to be allowed to visit the 60-year-old pastor and perhaps even secure his release.

Islam

A Christian Today [article](#) assembles evidence that “**We are living in midst of the greatest turning of Muslims to Christ in history**”. The article notes that the challenge for the western church is to be part of this movement, both locally and globally, through “*reaching out to Muslim neighbours, and being prepared to take the gospel to unreached communities aboard. In order for this to happen... Christians need to stop fearing Muslims... While fear may be a natural response to the stream of stories about the violence of groups such as Islamic State... that is not what our birth right is as followers of Christ. Christ is all about taking what man intends for evil and turning it to good. And that's not a natural response... prayer is the only way we can get to that.*”

An Anglican priest working in Iraq has written [a powerful article](#) which helps us begin to understand Islam and radical Muslims; think wisely about our response to Middle East refugees; and most importantly how, as Christians, we are called to respond to Islam. *USA Today* carries a [strongly worded article](#) that asking why the Obama administration refuses to call the persecution of Christians in the Syria and Iraq “genocide”.

Another *Christian Today* [article](#) quotes Canon Andrew White suggesting that recent Islamist inspired terrorist attacks mark the start of a **third world war**, saying that the problem is bigger than one organization, the Islamic State, it is the “*rapid rise of radical Islamic extremism throughout the world*”. He calls for Christians, Jews and moderate Muslims to unite in fighting the extremism and explains that some of his most important partners in caring for Christian Iraqis refugees in Kurdistan are Muslim.

Refugees

The *Anglican Communion News Service* [reports](#) that “*A coalition of Protestant and Catholic organizations have reached an agreement with the Italian government to **provide safe passage for refugees** from North Africa and the Middle East; in an attempt to by-pass the dangerous Mediterranean crossings organised by people smugglers, which has led to the deaths of around 3,700 migrants so far in 2015.*”

A National Post [article](#) states, “*Canadians are bending over backwards to donate money, clothes, furniture, time, apartments and more to ensure the 25,000 Syrian refugees headed this way in the coming months understand that we — as a nation — care... But there are **refugees from places other than Syria** — 26,000 or so that arrive annually, without fanfare or an official welcome... But nobody talks about them.*” One person speculates that this is because, “*Africans are poorer and less-educated, generally. And they are non-white and compared to the Syrians — the Syrians are white, educated and middle-class. Besides, the Africans aren't pounding on Germany's door.*”

Resources for ministry

Leaders gone bad – How do once orthodox, now heretical leaders, go wrong? Where does moral failure begin? Tim Challies [reflects](#) on these questions.

Church planting – Darryl Dash has assembled some great tips in [10 Church Planting Proverbs](#).

Productivity – Two [highly recommended](#) new books designed to improve our productivity are both written from a Christian perspective.

Excellent preaching – Lexham Press has just releases and heavily discounted [a bundle of books](#), including two by our ANiC Synod keynote speakers, the Rev Dr **Craig Bartholomew**.

Resources for ministry Christian living

39 Articles – Canon Phil Ashey [discusses](#) Article 24 “*Of speaking in the Congregation in such a tongue as the people understandth*” in another short video installment in this continuing series.

Star of Bethlehem... or was it a comet? A new book makes a rather convincing case that the star followed by the wise men was actually a comet. Read [a review here](#).

What kind of Christmas are you? A compelling [3½ minute video](#) presents four kinds of Christmas and asks which best represents you. It would work well in services or as an evangelistic tool. To download the video [go here](#), then right click and select “save as”.

Twelve Days of Christmas – Learn the [real meaning](#) behind this seemingly nonsensical carol.

Three kings – Read [a thoughtful article](#) on the tradition of “three kings” in Matthew 2.

The other St Nicholas – The Rev **Roger Revell**, writing on the [St Peter's Fireside blog](#), tells the story of another Nicholas and his little-known work saving hundreds of Jewish children during WW2.

Fun church kids' Christmas movie – You'll enjoy [this short, creative video](#) which tells the Christmas story in a most original – and hilarious – fashion. (Thanks, Jim Carriere+.)

New Year's resolutions – Tim Challies [offers advice](#) to help us make and keep wise resolutions through prayer and planning.

Protecting your family online – Tim Challies [highly commends](#) a technical means of protecting your family from insidious pornography online.

Star Wars, Paganism and Christianity – Ligonier Ministries offers a [thought-provoking article](#) on the worldview presented in the popular Star Wars series and how it relates to the biblical worldview. And [another article](#) (spoiler alert!) finds seven spiritual themes in the movie, but ignores the macro-level worldview promoted.

Soul food

Just for fun

Good King Wenceslas called Domino's to order a pizza and was asked, “Do you want your usual? Deep pan, crisp and even?”

Thought

"God would never permit any evil if he could not bring good out of evil." ~ Thomas Watson

And now a Word from our Sponsor

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:5-11 ESV