



Anglican Network in Canada

Message from the Moderator

4 May 2008

My dear Fellow ANiC Members,

Once again we have come through some very eventful weeks. Our recently completed conference was a highlight, I believe, for all who attended. It was a joy to welcome our Primate and express our appreciation for his bold intervention on our behalf. We were blessed by his ministry to us and his biblically-based messages as he challenged us to choose faithfulness and obedience to Christ, to not be deterred by persecution, and to “get on with it”.

The conference also had a strong focus on Bible teaching, evangelism, discipleship and youth. We so much appreciated Dr Chris Sugden’s talk on evangelism in our post-modern culture, Bishop Albert Vun (Sabah, Malaysia) who shared his diocese’s focus on discipleship and evangelism, Bishop Bill Atwood’s practical approach to growing in godliness, and the Rev David Short’s exposition of 1 Corinthians 15, the passage which inspired the conference theme of “Compelled by Christ’s love”. If you haven’t yet ordered the conference DVD set, I urge you to do this so you too can be blessed by this tremendous Bible-based teaching.

In a moving service of celebration and commissioning, we officially presented ANiC clergy with their licences and commissioned parish leadership and staff. It also was my joy to announce that the appointments I first spoke about in November 2007 were now effective:

Bishop Malcolm, Bishop Suffragan
The Venerable Charlie Masters, Archdeacon
The Venerable Trevor Walters, territorial Archdeacon (West)
The Venerable Desiree Stedman, territorial Archdeacon (Central)
Cheryl Chang, Chancellor
The Rev George Sinclair, Vice-Chair

Prior to and following the conference, I had the joy of performing episcopal acts in Vancouver. On April 20th, it was my privilege to confirm 26 adults at Church of the Good Shepherd. Then on April 27th, at St John’s (Shaughnessy), the Rev Dr Ken Deeks was ordained to the priesthood and the Rev Jim Salladin to the diaconate in a joint ordination service with the Anglican Coalition in Canada. Today I again have the joy of ordaining a priest, the Rev Karen Bergenstein, at St Alban’s, Ottawa. And more ordinations are planned within the next month.

With our leadership now in place and with 15 parishes, 32 priests, four deacons and two bishops, I believe we are now ready, God willing, to “get on with it”. In fact, we tentatively have targeted November 13-15 as the dates for our first synod in Ottawa.

As we “get on with it”, we are very conscious of God’s goodness. We are seeing growing support across Canada and more ANiC church plants are forming. Expect more news in the months ahead. Recently, we were encouraged by the Diocese of Athabasca’s synod extending a hand of fellowship when it declared it was in communion with ANiC.

But we are also very aware that some dioceses clearly do not want to be in communion. Just last week, the Diocese of Niagara filed their Statement of Claim in the action they first brought in February to evict our congregations (formerly in that diocese) and take over their church

buildings. These attacks are very personal, as they are suing the wardens and clergy of our three southern Ontario parishes. We still await the judge's decision from the March 20th hearing where we sought an interlocutory injunction to keep possession of the properties while the issues of ownership are being sorted out. Similarly, the Diocese of British Columbia continues its legal attack on St Mary's. On Wednesday, May 7, St Mary's legal representatives will be in court again, defending the right of the people of St Mary's to continue meeting and ministering in their church building while the issue of who owns the building is being determined.

As you know, I wrote the Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada and the House of Bishops requesting a high level meeting to explore possibilities for amicable discussions regarding parish properties, rather than continue court proceedings. The disappointing response demonstrated there is no desire to negotiate and every intention to continue litigation.

Please be in prayer for our parishioners, parish leadership and clergy who are under attack. Also, please pray for the Common Cause Partnership meeting in Pittsburg next week at which the Venerable Charlie Masters and I will participate. Finally, I urge you to pray for GAFCON – the Global Anglican Futures Conference in Jerusalem in late June. My prayer is that GAFCON will be a milestone meeting for orthodox, biblically faithful Anglicans world-wide and mark a “getting on” with the mission of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Our primate told us at our conference that we should not be surprised by suffering and persecution. Let our response be the same as that of the Apostle Paul who “counted it all joy” and chose to rejoice.

In the Joy of our Lord,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a plus sign followed by the name 'Arnold' in a cursive script.

Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. But let him ask in faith...

James 1: 2-6a ESV

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:4-7