

The Anglican Church of Canada

Update for the Anglican Peace and Justice Network

The Anglican Church of Canada offers these updates since meeting with the APJN in September 2007 in the Great Lakes area of Africa:

Issues of Concern

The Economy. As a close neighbour of the USA, a major trade partner, Canada has been greatly affected by the deepening economic downturn. The current unemployment rate is over 8%, the highest since 1982. Anxiety about the economy ranks high as a concern for Canadian Anglicans who have felt its repercussions locally and at the national church, which had to cut 7 full time positions in 2008, and is bracing for more cuts and staff layoffs in the months ahead.

The Environment. The oil (bitumen) sands of Alberta are a controversial symbol of economic growth to some, environmental threat to others, with mixed benefits to Indigenous communities and migrant workers. In May 2009, KAIROS, an ecumenical partner of the Anglican Church of Canada, will be sending a delegation of church leaders to consult with corporations, environmentalists, Indigenous leaders, workers and church members, to listen and learn, and to engage in discussion about matters of peace, justice, sustainability, and the integrity of creation.

<http://www.uccedm.org/EventsDocs/KAIROS%20Church%20Leaders%20Delegation.pdf>

Truth and Reconciliation. On June 1, 2008 three commissioners were appointed to a Truth and Reconciliation Commission by the Government of Canada, mandated to create an historical account of the Indian Residential Schools in Canada, to help people heal from that dark chapter of our history, and to encourage reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in Canada. The work of the TRC has been stalled by personnel and bureaucratic problems for over a year but is expected to be back on the rails by June 2009. http://www.trc-cvr.ca/index_e.html

Mining and Resource Extraction. Canadian mining companies carry out much of their activity in Aboriginal communities within Canada and in other parts of the globe where the Anglican Church of Canada has partner relationships: Philippines, Congo, Tanzania, Latin America and the Caribbean. The impact of these activities on water, environment, democratic processes, human rights and community health pose grave threats to our partners' territories and homelands. Many Canadian Anglicans have investments through Canada Pension, church pensions, or personal portfolios and are being mobilized to raise questions and concerns. <http://www.miningwatch.ca/>

Poverty Reduction; Housing and Homelessness. In March, some Anglican Bishops participated in a prayer vigil for the poor people of Ontario and for members of Parliament who were to vote on a provincial budget. The Anglican Church of Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada joined together in a successful advocacy initiative calling on the Government of Canada to designate "stimulus" dollars for affordable housing for Canada's people of low income.

<http://www.toronto.anglican.ca/index.asp?navid=78&fid3=1064&layid=18&fid>

Cause to Celebrate

Remembering the Children. From March 1-5, 2008 the Most Rev. Fred Hiltz, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, and the Rt. Rev. Mark MacDonald, National Indigenous Anglican Bishop, along with the Moderators of the Presbyterian and United Churches, local Roman Catholic bishops and clergy, representatives of Indian Residential School survivor societies, and regional chiefs, participated in a Church and Aboriginal Leaders' tour. Large ceremonial gatherings took place in Ottawa, Vancouver,

Saskatoon, and Winnipeg to herald the launch of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and to model reconciliation between people and institutions involved in residential schools.

<http://www.rememberingthechildren.ca/>

Millennium Development Goals Walk of Witness. On September 25, 2008 the Anglican Primate and Lutheran National Bishop, accompanied by bishops from Toronto, Ottawa, and Kingston, Ontario led a walk through the streets of downtown Ottawa to highlight the Millennium Development Goals and bring attention to the gathering of world leaders at the United Nations on that day to renew commitment to meeting the “MDGs”. More than 60 people participated in the ceremonial walk, punctuated by prayer, song, and symbolic stations.

<http://www.anglicanjournal.com/issues/2008/134/nov/09/article/the-poor-can-wait-no-longer-says-primate-at-walk-of-witness-1/>

Closer Relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. During the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada and the National Convention on the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada in June 2007, both churches came together for a joint day of worship and study celebrating six years of Full Communion, focusing on the theme of Water. Since then the two churches have begun to consult about how they might work more closely together on issues of public witness toward greater institutional solidarity.

Justice Camps. The Anglican Church of Canada has partnered with the Primate’s World Relief and Development Fund and with sister churches in Canada, national and local, to organize a series of justice camps – week long intergenerational events that aim to train, transform, inspire, equip, and challenge participants, from 18 to 81 years of age, to learn about and act on issues of concern. Camps have been held on the theme of Food (Winnipeg 2005), Advocacy (Ottawa 2006), and the Environment (Victoria 2007). The next one will take place in Halifax, Nova Scotia this June on the theme of Poverty and Finding Abundance. We are hopeful that there will be some participation from global Anglican partners.

<http://www.justicecamp.ca/>

ACC-14: Proposal for a Sixth Mark of Mission. The Council of General Synod approved a motion at its November 2007 meeting recommending

that the Anglican Consultative Council consider adding a Sixth Mark of Mission to its current list, that relates to peace, conflict transformation, and reconciliation.

Many Anglicans around the world have identified that God is calling the Anglican Church to the work of peace, conflict transformation and reconciliation. We are aware of such work being undertaken by the Anglican Church in Southern Sudan, Rwanda, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lanka, Myanmar (Burma), Korea, Jerusalem/Palestine, Canada, Northern Uganda, and have learned most recently that the Solomon Islands is launching its own Truth and Reconciliation process.

The Anglican Peace and Justice Network meeting in September 2007 in Rwanda and Burundi lifted up the work of peace, conflict transformation and reconciliation as critical for the whole Anglican Communion.

Participants at the TEAM Conference in South Africa in March 2007 noted that effective work on the Millennium Development Goals is impossible in situations of war and serious unresolved conflict.

The Anglican Church of Canada recommends that the Anglican Consultative Council decide for itself the wording to describe the suggested 6th Mark of Mission.