

The Presidential Address  
General Synod 2016  
Richmond Hill, Ontario

*Bless this holy meeting. Make it, O God, a base for holiness and hospitality, Make it a base for grace and generosity, Make it a base for peace and unity, Make it a base for mission and ministry Through Jesus Christ our Lord and in the power of the Holy Spirit”*  
(Adapted Prayer for Lambeth Conference 1998)

---

From all over this great country we have gathered to be the 41st Session of the General Synod of our beloved Church. We come from dioceses that are largely urban and ones that are largely rural—some nestled in great mountain ranges, some spread across prairies, some surrounded by the sea and some sprawling across vast expanses of the North. We come from a variety of historical and cultural contexts. We come as First Peoples and as Settlers, deeply aware of the need to reset our relationships in the mutual respect to which the Creator calls us. We come together mindful of the diversity of theological perspectives for which our Anglican Tradition is known. We come ever mindful of the unity with which we confess “one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all.” (Ephesians 4:5-6).

We come together to worship and work, the thread through this Synod being that magnificent and daunting call of God, “You are my witnesses”. It is uttered by the prophet Isaiah in a time of hope for return from exile for the people of Israel. Jesus uses the same image as he sends his apostles into the world with the gospel of love and life for all. This call is both inviting and instructive. Inherent in it is our obedience to Christ, and his charge that we bear witness to his love, a love so generous as to be extravagant, a love so gracious as to be radically inclusive, a love so sacrificial as to spend itself on the cross, a love so splendid as to reveal itself in Resurrection and in making all things new.

I am glad we are here and I know you are too. If we are to be absolutely honest with one another, we will acknowledge that we have arrived with a mix of feelings—delight, angst and yearning.

Allow me to say something about each from the perspective of what it is to be Church—to be the Body of Christ.

First—The Delight.

With you I am much heartened by the commitment of our church to have its work and witness in the world continually shaped by the Marks of Mission – preaching the good news, nurturing people for life long discipleship, tending the poor and vulnerable, building a just society, and caring for the earth. These Marks of Mission are the very template for a number of initiatives in parish renewal, the primary reference point for many diocesan strategic planning processes, and the very back-drop for the program priorities of our General Synod.

Across our Church, people were pleased to know that the Primates of the member Churches of the Anglican Communion spoke with absolute clarity on the subject of evangelism at their January meeting in Canterbury. “We affirm together” they declared “that the Church of Jesus Christ lives to bear witness to the transforming love of God in the power of the Spirit throughout the world. It is clear God’s world has never been in greater need of this resurrection love and we long to make it known. We commit ourselves through evangelism to proclaim the person and work of Jesus Christ, unceasingly and authentically, inviting all to embrace the beauty and joy of the Gospel”.

I carried this message home and I’m glad to see the vigour with which it has been received.

Across the Anglican Communion there is much renewal in our commitment to intentional and life-long discipleship. In fact, the recent meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council in Lusaka received a major report on this topic. Here are some excerpts from the introduction:

“Discipleship can never be about a single aspect about of our lives...it is about the whole of our lives...intentionally following Jesus Christ places demands on individuals, family relationships, the way we handle money, our attitude towards work and leisure, our political choices and our care of the environment and much more.”

In the Foreword, Archbishop Ng Moon Hing writes, “A narrow pietistic attachment to Jesus, whether individualistic or ecclesial, was never what God intended and it will not serve us well today”. Our discipleship does not separate us from the world; it immerses us in it. Hing says, “To follow Jesus of Nazareth into his cosmic reign is simply challenging, the most beautiful, the most costly, the most rewarding journey we could ever choose to begin”.

In the spirit of intentional discipleship, there is in our Church an amazing enthusiasm and energy for renewing liturgy, for examining and refreshing our rites for Christian initiation. Record

numbers of people from a growing number of Anglican dioceses and Lutheran synods have participated in National Worship Conferences, National Gatherings for Vital and Healthy Parishes, National Youth Gatherings and for initiatives that help our churches give with grace and generosity to support mission initiatives that are local, national and global. All of these events serve in their own way to help us more effectively live out that ancient call, that great commission, “You are my witnesses”.

Across this country I see so many ways by which the Church is making such a difference in the lives of the poor—from hot breakfasts for kids before school to help with homework after school, from soup kitchens to community meals, from out-of-the cold to out-of-the heat programs, and from the conversion of parish halls to overnight shelters with breakfast to-go. All of these ministries are a wonderful witness to the compassion and mercy of Christ, a faithful response to that ancient call, that great commission, “You are my witnesses”.

Our ongoing work with the ELCIC in addressing homelessness and affordable housing is evidence of our commitment to the fullness of diakonia in that we not only care for the homeless, but indeed endeavour to get at the root causes and to effect public policy that addresses them.

Like many of you, I am heartened by the response of Canadian Anglicans to the massive wild fires in Northern Saskatchewan last summer and in Fort McMurray this spring. Over \$100,000 has been given to PWRDF to assist with recovery efforts in Fort McMurray. How wonderful to see the neighbouring dioceses of Edmonton hosting in one of its city churches a gathering for people displaced by fires. Here is a partnership that is a fine reflection of our commitment to this ancient call, this great commission, “You are my witnesses”.

Across our Church there has been an extraordinary response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis. Numerous are the stories of parishes working hard to raise the necessary funds to sponsor a family. Many have partnered with other churches, synagogues, mosques or social agencies in this effort. Numerous are the stories of arrivals of the refugees at two, three, and four in the morning with lots of people on hand to welcome them to their new home and an opportunity for a new life, free of oppression and the chaos of war.

Numerous are the stories of teams of people helping them to set up house, to accompany them in getting oriented to local transportation systems, access to English Second Language programs, vocational training and employment opportunities and healthcare services. One of the learnings in all of this is that many refugees are suffering with post-traumatic stress disorder resulting from the trauma they have experienced in risky escapes by sea and in over-crowded conditions in holding areas and camps as they await processing of their applications for sponsorship. Sadly a

large preponderance of women and girls has suffered horrific sexual abuse. An important part of helping them settle here is ensuring access to good counselling services.

We celebrate this extraordinary response—not only of our Church—but of many other Canadians too. We celebrate it knowing of course that beyond the current commitments of the federal government to bring in 25,000 Syrian refugees, there is a huge backlog of many others still waiting in hope for a new life in Canada.

What a wonderful testimony to that ancient call, that great commission from the one who himself was a refugee from Egypt while he was yet a child.

How moving to see in the video this morning, Dean Michael Sinclair of St. Paul's Cathedral in Regina tell of the ringing of the bells as a memorial of love and prayer honouring Canada's 1,200 missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls. How moving to see the devotion with which so many cathedrals and parish churches across the country rang their bells. It was an act of breaking the silence around this national tragedy and honouring the call for a National Inquiry. It was an act of solidarity with Indigenous Peoples in their cries for fair policing, protection, emergency healthcare, safe housing and enhanced counselling services. It was in fact the most important thing we did in the Twenty-two Days between May 31, 2015, the opening of the final National Event of the TRC in Ottawa, and June 21, National Aboriginal Day.

Among all the matters that draw us together as a church at this time in our history and in this Synod, none is perhaps more far-reaching and hope-filled than the emerging relationship with Indigenous Peoples, a relationship marked by an abiding commitment to truth and reconciliation, and a genuine respect for the desire of Indigenous people to build a truly Indigenous church.

I am so grateful for the commitment of our church to honour and support the mandate of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), and I want to say how much I appreciate the interest of so many Anglicans showed in the work of the Commissioners, Justice Murray Sinclair, Dr. Marie Wilson and Chief Wilton Littlechild, as they travelled the country hosting seven National Events and numerous Regional and Community Gatherings. I want to acknowledge with the greatest of respect, all those survivors of the Indian Residential Schools who found the courage to tell their stories to share their experiences of loneliness and years of lost love, of ridicule and abuse—physical, emotional, and sexual. I want to acknowledge the respect with which many heard those stories and wept. I want to acknowledge all those who offered gestures of reconciliation at the TRC Gatherings on behalf of our Church local and national.

I want to acknowledge the leadership of our General Secretary and his staff, our Archivist and her staff, the Coordinator of the Anglican Healing Fund and her staff, the former Director of Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice, the Director of Communication and her staff, the National Indigenous Anglican Bishop and his staff and the Primate's Special Envoy for the Residential Schools. They worked very hard in keeping our Church very close to the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and in challenging our Church to give careful attention to the 94 Calls to Action in the Final Report of the Commissioners.

Call to Action #48 summons all the churches to endorse the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and by March 31, 2016 to have declared their commitment with plans for complying with its norms, values, and practices. I am glad to say we were able to make such a statement on March 19 at Her Majesty's Royal Chapel of the Mohawks on Six Nations Territory. I titled the statement "Let our 'yes' be yes". Here are a couple of excerpts:

- "I call on every diocese and territory of our Church to ensure opportunity for learning about the history and lingering legacy of the Doctrine of Discovery.
- I commend resources produced by the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples, the Primate's Commission on Discovery, Reconciliation and Justice and the highly participatory Blanket Exercise designed by KAIROS and the Mapping Exercise designed by PWRDF and the Anglican Fund for Healing and Reconciliation.
- I commend the growing practice across our Church of beginning meetings, Synods and Assemblies with an acknowledgement of the peoples on whose traditional lands and territories we gather with respect for the sacredness of the land.
- I request that on National Aboriginal Day, June 21 or the Sunday closest there be a public reading of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in every parish across Canada accompanied by prayers and ceremonies in keeping with Indigenous Spiritual customs. I am very grateful with the good response to this request.
- I intend, in consultation with the National Indigenous Anglican Bishop, to establish a Council of Indigenous Elders and Youth to monitor our Church's honouring of its commitment "to formally adopt and comply with the principles, norms and standards of the UN Declaration."

I am very pleased to announce that this Council has been named and that on Sunday afternoon Bishop Mark and I will commission them for their work. It will be witnessed by Tina Keeper, a highly respected award-winning actor, producer and director, activist for aboriginal rights and bridge-builder between aboriginal and non-aboriginal people in Manitoba. She is one of the very prominent Honorary Witnesses of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. We are humbled and honoured by her acceptance of our invitation to be present for this historic and sacred moment. It is one of several, on what we are describing in this Synod as Indigenous Ministries Sunday.

We begin that day with worship led by our National Indigenous Anglican Bishop Mark MacDonald and a host of other Indigenous leaders and partners. In the afternoon, Synod will hear a progress report from the Primate's Commission on Discovery, Reconciliation and Justice. Then the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples (ACIP) will present a Mission Statement for Indigenous Anglican Spiritual Ministry. The statement is grounded in the 1994 Covenant—a Journey of Spiritual Renewal in which the principle of a truly self-determining Indigenous Church was named and the hand of partnership extended to all who would help that vision be fully realized. This statement is the fruit of much conversation in ACIP and at Sacred Circle last summer, among elders, youth, Indigenous bishops and other community leaders. It is crafted to address the economic, social, and pastoral crisis that mars the life of so many Indigenous communities across Canada. It is a ministry plan rooted in the hope of transformation and renewal. It is truly inspiring and I hope the Synod can whole heartedly celebrate and support it.

As evening comes, we will be gathered in a Gospel Jamboree, featuring teaching and testimonies, songs and stories, drumming and dancing. As we will learn, Gospel Jamborees are an important part of Indigenous culture and a powerful means of evangelism and nurturing people in their life with Jesus.

All these matters to which I refer delight and draw us together as a church, as the company of those who seek to live by Christ's commission "You are my witnesses"—witnesses to my love, compassion, reconciliation and justice for all the world to see.

Pray with me that our witness always be strong and spirited and steadfast!

All of what I have said thus far has been about our domestic life. But our church, as we know, is part of a large extended family called the Anglican Communion. We are 85 million people living in 165 countries. We are 38 autonomous self-governing churches, all of whom are in Communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury and one another. At our very best, we see ourselves as formed by Scripture, shaped by Worship, ordered for Communion, and directed by God's mission. We seek to live by the time-honoured principle of MRI—Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ—adopted at the great Anglican Congress of 1963 here in Toronto.

In this worldwide family of churches, we speak of bonds of affection with which we uphold one another in prayer, in statements of solidarity through times of hardship and persecution, in commitments to partnerships between provinces and companion relationships between dioceses, and in dialogues among bishops across vast political, cultural and theological differences. This affection for one another in Christ and in his Gospel for the world is reflected too in the many

networks of the Communion focussed on family life, healthcare, Safe Church, Indigenous Peoples, and care of the environment to name but a few. The Anglican Alliance, of which PWRDF is a founding partner, draws together all the relief and development agencies of the member churches of the Communion.

We are particularly blessed in this Synod to have as a guest for a couple of days the Secretary General, Archbishop Josiah Idowu-Fearon. He will address Synod tomorrow and I am sure we will get a picture of the life and vitality of the Communion and its commitment to bear a faithful witness to Christ.

Following his remarks we will be privileged to hear from our delegates to the recent meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council in Lusaka, Zambia, gathered as it was under the theme “Intentional Discipleship in a World of Differences”.

I and countless others took great heart in Bishop James Tengtanga’s sermon at the closing service for ACC-16. He said, “The rumour about the demise of the Anglican Communion is greatly exaggerated”. Not wishing however, to have us be seen and heard as boastful, he reminded us that we are “a human enterprise trying to be obedient to our Lord and Saviour in God’s mission”. “We are” he said, “only an approximation of what God intends”. A fitting commentary on our need to grow more and more into that ancient call, that great commission, “You are my witnesses”.

And now, dear friends, the angst.

With you, I am aware that for many throughout the Church, the issue of this Synod is the proposed amendment of the Marriage Canon to make provision for the solemnizing of same-sex marriages in our church. This matter is before us as a result of deliberations on Resolution C003 at General Synod 2013, passed in our accustomed way of voting as bishops and as clergy and laity voting together; and then by request of each of the Orders voting separately – bishops, clergy, and laity. This resolution directed the Council of General Synod (COGS) to bring forward the necessary amendments to the Marriage Canon. As you will hear in some depth this evening, COGS appointed a Commission on the Marriage Canon to address the request. The commission honoured in full the amendments to the original Resolution C003, including broad consultation across our church, with the Anglican Communion and within ecumenical circles in the Church Catholic.

The commission produced a report entitled, “This Holy Estate” which included substantial reflection on the subject of Covenantal Love in a marriage relationship and an invitation to consider some models for understanding same sex marriage. The Report was presented at the September 2015 meeting of the Council of General Synod and commended for study throughout the Church. At the special meeting of the House of Bishops in February, I did a cross-country check as to how the Church was engaging the report diocese by diocese. It appeared that the level of engagement had been nowhere near what had been hoped. I regret that and to be honest it has left me wondering what that says about our Church.

I am grateful that over the course of the next couple of days, members of Synod will have opportunity in Neighbourhood Groups to talk about the report.

I want to make an appeal to Synod that in these conversations and then in debate, we be especially and gently mindful of all those whose lives and loves and longings we are discussing – all those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, and questioning. They are members of our families and extended families; they are our neighbours and our friends. They are members of our parishes. They are our clergy. They bear on their brow the same cross all the rest of us do. They pray with us. They hear the Word of God with us. They break bread with us. They are sent like the rest of us to live by that ancient call, that great commission, “You are my witnesses”.

I hope we will all enter into these conversations in the spirit in which they have been designed. I trust they will draw us together in a good way, preparing us for the consideration of the Resolution on Monday, July 11. I take this opportunity on behalf of Synod to thank our Chancellor for the time and care he gave in preparing a memo for all members of Synod with respect to “Issues in Dealing with Resolution A051”. Drawing on the Declaration of Principles in the Handbook of the General Synod and the Rules of Order and Procedure with which we carry out our work, the Chancellor helps us understand all that can happen to a resolution once it is before the Synod. The memo speaks not only to how the Synod handles the resolution, but also to things we need to bear in mind should the resolution pass or not. The Chancellor will speak to his memo at the outset of our legislative session on Monday. I am convinced as I am sure many of you are that it will be enormously helpful with respect to our need for clarity in order and procedure.

The companion absolutely necessary to clarity in this matter before Synod is charity, charity one toward another. I recognize that much is at stake in our deliberations, including how we understand the authority of the word of God, the nature of tradition and the defining of doctrine. How we understand what constitutes responsible pastoral care of LGBTQ persons. What is at stake for some is our Church’s commitment to dignity, inclusion and fair treatment of LGBTQ



persons in our midst, inclusion meaning full and equal access to all ministrations of the Church including the solemnizing of their marriages.

For some, an issue at stake is our capacity to remain in communion with one another in the face of deeply held differences of conviction over this matter. “How big is our Church?” was a question posed to me in recent days. It was quickly followed by two more. “How committed are we to making room for one another? Can there be in the spirit of pastoral generosity a place for us all?”

For some an issue at stake is the catholicity of the Church and the impact of decisions we make on our relationships with other churches within the Anglican Communion and with churches with whom we are in ongoing or emerging dialogue.

For some what remains at stake is a continued wrestling with the conclusion of the 2005 St. Michael Report that “the blessing of same sex unions is a matter of doctrine” (para 42), but “not a matter of what is often referred to as core doctrine in the sense of being creedal, it is a matter of doctrine that does not hinder or impair our common affirmations of the three historic creeds” (para 42). The commission concluded also that such blessings are not “a communion breaking issue”. For some what is at stake is their continued wrestling with the significant dilemma named in the St. Michael Report and within which the Church is deeply immersed (nationally and internationally). The dilemma is articulated in the following questions;

Is it theologically and doctrinally responsible for one member church of the Communion to approve a course of action which it has reason to believe may be destructive of the unity of the Communion?

Is it theologically and doctrinally responsible to accept unity as the value which transcends all others, and therefore for a member church of the Communion to refrain from making a decision when it believes it has an urgent gospel mandate to proceed?

In our deliberations about this matter which is clearly divisive, I hope we can embrace the principle of what the Archbishop of Canterbury calls “good disagreement”—that is, disagreement in which we will not dismiss, despise, or demonize the other, but rather turn to one another with a commitment to speak graciously, listen intently and learn of the perspective from which another thinks. While we acknowledge the strain in our relationships, let us not get to a point where any of us says to another “I have no need of you” (1 Corinthians 12:21). On the

contrary, let us never forget our call “to make every effort, to maintain the unity of the Spirit to the bonds of peace”. (Ephesians 4:3)

My appeal to the members of this Synod is that we exercise holy manners, conducting ourselves in such a way that reflects that ancient call, that great commission “You are my witnesses”.

And now dear friends – the yearning – the deep longing within the hearts of so many, that we strive to be less and less focussed on ourselves and more and more a Church “In and for the World”. I borrow that image from the 2013 WCC Publication, “The Church: Towards a Common Vision”. We yearn to be a Church not turned in on itself, but rather turned inside out, working not so hard at turning the world upside down, but rather as Presiding Bishop Michael Curry says, “right side up”.

The Gospel of Christ compels the Church in every age to not remain silent in the face of the real life/death issues of its time. In our time these include:

- Human trafficking
- Gender-Based Violence
- Violence that is racially motivated
- Violence that is religiously motivated
- Child labour, Boy and Girl Soldiers
- Drug Wars
- Gun Control
- Criminalizing of people for their sexual orientation
- Extreme poverty
- Starvation unto death
- Refugees in the millions
- Environmental degradation

It would be impossible to comment on all of these, but let me comment on a couple.

### Human Trafficking

This is the second largest criminal activity in the world following illegal drug sales and just ahead of arms sales. Close to one million persons are trafficked every year across the world most of which are girls and women. No country in this world is immune to this crime. Canada is both a transit and a destination country. It is also now known as a source country for the trafficking of young Aboriginal women who leave their communities in the hope of an education or employment opportunities. Traffickers who prey on these women are known to offer them

opportunity, but then exploit them. As a billboard sign featuring a young women and a man looming over her reads “She sees her future in medicine. He sees her as a slave.”

Nationally and globally our Church laments and condemns this modern form of slavery. Tremendous work has been undertaken to address this crime against humanity by the International Anglican Family Network and the International Anglican Women’s Network that is dedicated to eradicate all forms of violence against women including human trafficking for sexual or other forms of exploitative labour. I commend the resources they produce for programming related to the annual Sixteen Days of Activism Against Gender Violence (November 25—International Day for the elimination of violence against women, and December 10—International Human Rights Day). This is not just a women’s issue, it is an issue about the dignity and sanctity of human life. It is an issue for all of us.

### Religiously Motivated Violence

The world is on edge, indeed on high security alert in the wake of the tactics used by ISIS terrorists in attacks on civilian populations in recent months. Sadly the targets are schools and medical centres and hotels in the heart of business districts, shopping malls, and airports. In recent weeks it seems that I and other church leaders no sooner issue a statement and call to prayer in the aftermath of the carnage and havoc wreaked by suicide bombings in one place in the world, before another is urgently needed.

At the Primates’ Meeting earlier this year, the subject of religiously motivated violence was discussed at some length. The Archbishop of Nigeria spoke of churches, mosques, markets, schools, and conference centres under threat of burning or bombing. Indeed he said, “There is in some places a need for security checks as people come into worship”. There was a passionate plea from a number of the Primates, not only for enhanced efforts in interfaith dialogue particularly Christian Muslim, but also for new dialogue between religious and political leaders. As one of our colleagues remarked, “Governments are fighting terrorists but not terrorism and the ideology that drives it”. And in and of itself that ideology is an affront to any and all of the world’s major religions. On this matter and others including our response to corruption in governments, the point was made that faith communities, civil society, and governments must find ways so speak and act together.

### Climate Change

Again at the Primates’ Meeting a host of voices clamored for our attention to the plight of their people in the face of environmental degradation of one sort or another. The Archbishop of Polynesia spoke of Pacific Islands drowning as sea levels continue to rise. The Archbishop of Kenya spoke about the impact of unbridled foresting. “As the forests disappear” he said, “the

desert is expanding”. The Archbishop of the Democratic Republic of the Congo spoke of the hunger of many nations for the underground resources in the Congo and of the ruthless and reckless measures taken in extracting them. I spoke about the impact of the melting Ice Cap in the Arctic and the impact on peoples who live in Canada’s North. The Acting Archbishop of Melanesia spoke of eroded lands, sinking islands and polluted waterways. He made a passionate plea saying “What’s next?...Who causes it?...Who stops it?” He called for a robust theology of creation. The Archbishop of Southern Africa spoke of the Climate Talks in Paris, the agreement struck with respect to lowering the pace of global warming, and the huge amount of unwavering political will required to make this agreement functional. A number of other Primates from very diverse situations reminded us through story after story, of how the poor are the most vulnerable with respect to climate change. With no choice but to abandon home and livelihood they have to keep on the move with little more than what they can carry. As we have been often reminded, climate change is really about climate justice.

These are real life and death issues in our world and they demand our Church’s attention, our very best efforts and our unwavering commitment in partnering with others to address them. If we are to answer our call, “You are my witnesses” we will get behind the Global Goals for Sustainable Development:

1. No Poverty
2. No Hunger
3. Good Health
4. Quality Education
5. Gender Equality
6. Clean Water and Sanitation
7. Renewable Energy
8. Good Jobs and Economic Growth
9. Innovation and Infrastructure
10. Reduced Inequalities
11. Sustainable Cities and Communities
12. Responsible Consumption
13. Climate Action
14. Life Below Water
15. Life On Land
16. Peace and Justice
17. Partnership For These Goals

These Goals represent so much hope for humanity, so much hope for the redistribution of wealth in the world, so much hope for political order that proves to be just and peaceful for all, so much hope for the just and proper use of creation with regard not only for ourselves, but also for those

who come after us. These Goals must become a priority in the ministry of our Church and in our relationships with our global partners. They must continue to inspire and inform the work of the Anglican Alliance and many of the Networks across the Anglican Communion.

I pray these Goals shape the legacy of our labours as a Church striving to be faithful in that ancient call, that great commission “You are my witnesses”.

Delight—Angst—Yearning

“I want us to look outward and forward”, said the Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby in his Presidential Address at ACC-16. “I want us to look outward and forward because in the end we are not here for ourselves, not for making Anglicans better, but for seeking to serve the work and mission of God in the world”. What a poignant reminder of the theme of our Synod, “You are my witnesses”.

At the outset of this address I referenced the measures of delight, angst and yearning we carry into this Synod. With the accompaniment of the Holy Spirit, I trust our delights will be multiplied, our angst handled with grace and our yearnings fulfilled. Amen.

