

Election of the Fourteenth Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada
Nominee Information

The Most Rev. Gregory Keith Kerr-Wilson



Current office and location

Archbishop of Calgary and Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of Rupert's Land
Diocese of Calgary

List of ecclesiastical offices held

Episcopal Ministry:

June 2015 to present	Archbishop of Calgary & Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of Rupert's Land
September 2012 to present	Bishop of Calgary
May 2006 to September 2012	Bishop of Qu'Appelle

Parish Ministry:

September 1998 to April 2006:	Rector of All Saints' Cathedral and Dean of the Diocese of Edmonton
October 1996 to June 1998:	Regional Dean, North Peel Deanery in the Area of the Credit Valley, Diocese of Toronto
January 1991 to August 1998:	Incumbent, Church of the Holy Family, Brampton
June 1989 to January 1991:	Assistant Curate, St. Paul's, Bloor Street

Dates of ordination as deacon, priest and bishop

Episcopal Ordination – May 23, 2006

Priestly Ordination – May 13, 1990

Diaconal Ordination – May 14, 1989

Please describe ministry accomplishments that you wish to share with those voting in this election

It is always difficult to speak of ministry accomplishments in the life of the Church. Christian growth, mission and ministry, in my experience, are accomplished by the working of the Holy Spirit through mutual and shared prayer and work. In my first parish, Holy Family Brampton, Ontario, we worked to extend an already established life of worship and ministry by: empowering lay leadership, introducing Christian education for adults, strengthening youth ministry, putting in place a catechetical program – an extensive initiative for welcoming and including those who came for baptism or who brought their children for baptism - and deepening the community life of the parish.

At All Saints Cathedral in Edmonton, pastoral ministry was directed toward healing the wounds of recent conflict while introducing new initiatives in Christian Education, enhancing the parish's life of worship and preaching, and re-focusing the role of the Cathedral in the diocese as a host and a support for diocesan events.

The Diocese of Qu'Appelle had been faced with some difficult issues and struggles. We worked together to redirect our focus toward mission as the heart of our ministry and to encourage congregations to find hope in the gospel and the gifting of the Spirit, rather than by focusing on and being discouraged by the presenting difficulties. We established a link with the Diocese of Muyinga in Burundi to keep ourselves looking outward in service and mission, while

taking on a Habitat for Humanity build within the diocese. We also worked to develop a mission action plan for the diocese, freed up some funding to help support it, and encouraged congregations to adopt mission action plans of their own.

In the Diocese of Calgary, we have been working to establish a school for mission and ministry to call and equip lay leaders for ministry, particularly in smaller rural congregations – but more broadly to renew the life of local churches and strengthen their ministry. We have also engaged in the study of scripture together and prayer for one another in a face to face context as vital for drawing the Church together in the midst of division.

In my time in episcopal ministry I have considered it important to foster relationships across denominational lines and have established friendships with leaders of other churches and other faith communities. While in Qu'Appelle, for example, we entered into a covenant relationship with the local Roman Catholic archdiocese. The covenant was based upon the provisions of “Growing Together in Unity and Mission”, which committed us to annual shared worship, ongoing prayer, sharing in ministry training as appropriate, amongst other things.

Establishing and deepening relationships with my Indigenous brothers and sisters has also been one of the great joys and privileges of my episcopal ministry. In Qu'Appelle I had the opportunity to work with our local Indigenous clergy - through participation at healing conferences, being present to and with the Indigenous communities on reserve, and efforts to foster an urban indigenous ministry. In Calgary I have continued to see the sustaining and furthering of Indigenous ministries as of primary importance, the election of an Indigenous Bishop for Treaty 7 territory has been a key part of that. In 2015, I was asked by the Indigenous ministry leadership to coordinate an Urban Indigenous Ministry Network. In April of 2018 leadership from Urban Indigenous Ministries from across the Canadian Anglican Church met for

support, gathering of resources, creating a network of care for those serving in isolated ministries in urban centers and planting the seeds for future Urban Indigenous Ministries.

In my early years of ministry, I was involved in liturgical renewal and helped form a group called Liturgy Canada which established a journal of the same name and published several books – for two of which I was a contributing author.

Please provide any personal information that you would like to share

I was born into an Anglican family in Winnipeg, Manitoba, (we moved to Saskatoon shortly thereafter), and was taken to church pretty much every Sunday during my growing up years. My first experiences of God took place in that context – a sense of God’s awesome presence in the midst of worship, particularly the music, at Christ Church, Saskatoon – and also that same presence in the wonder and beauty of nature on family hikes and camping trips. At the age of 11, when an evangelism mission came through Saskatoon, my older sister, who was volunteering to help with the event, shared her faith in Jesus with me and invited me to accept him as Lord and Saviour – which, with an unexpected but deep sense of conviction I did. That decision was followed by Confirmation that spring.

That summer we moved to Vancouver, and my faith and commitment became a core support for me as a new phase of life involved me in youth group, altar serving, choir, and many other activities that came along in the life of our congregation. At the age of 16 in the context of a youth group retreat I experienced baptism in the Holy Spirit while sharing with other youth about faith in Jesus – an experience which deeply changed our youth group, and also the direction and focus of my life.

I took part in the formation of a College and Careers group which met weekly and became a mainstay during my undergraduate years in university. At University I studied Bio-

Resource Engineering – which focuses on engineering as it related to biological systems – including agriculture, aquaculture, waste management and environmental issues, among other things.

In church, I was invited to lead the youth group, taught Sunday School, was elected to parish council, was a reader and intercessor – and, during it all, began to discern a call to ordained ministry. After being made a postulant in the Diocese of New Westminster, I married my now wife of 33 years, Vicki, and moved to Nashotah House; an Anglo-Catholic, sacramentally focused seminary. There my encounters with God growing up found context and some measure of comprehension and integration through the study of Scripture, the great Tradition of the Church, the historical and philosophical underpinnings of theology – and a sense of conversion to the Church as Body of Christ in which my personal faith found its true place in relation to the faith, mission and ministry of the whole.

I finished my seminary training at Trinity College in Toronto during which time I was made a postulant in the Diocese of Toronto before being ordained deacon and beginning my work in ordained ministry. Christian ministry begins with our own discipleship, so I have tended, with reflection, to see my life of faith and ministry as an ongoing process of integrating my various experiences of God in light of the teaching of Scripture, the great Tradition of the Church's faith and engagement with the contemporary conversations on faith in the life of both the Anglican Church, and the greater Church throughout the world.

When asked to describe my churchmanship I have often said that I am an Evangelical, Charismatic Catholic, with liberal and conservative tendencies. This has also led me to an understanding that the Church's life and ministry must be a comprehensive and interconnected whole in which our life of worship, our shared unity in fellowship, our core teaching, our loving

service and pursuit of justice in the world, and our proclamation of Jesus before and to the world are all interconnected and mutually inform one another; and that we must be a church which is both open and responsive to the changing context and needs of our world, while grounding our response to it on the faith and witness of scripture as we have received it in Christ's one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

I have three grown children who are making their way in various parts of Canada and the world. I enjoy cooking, music and outdoor activities, including hiking, camping and canoe trips.

Please provide a statement of your vision of the role and ministry of the Primate

Primacy is a particular expression of episcopal ministry carried out collegially as "first amongst equals". The BAS service for the Ordination of a Bishop declares that a bishop "is called to be one with the apostles in proclaiming Christ's resurrection and interpreting the Gospel, and to testify to Christ's sovereignty as Lord of lords and King of kings." This stands at the heart of primacy both within the Church, and in our secular, pluralist and post-modern environment. The primate is called to lead the church in articulating the Gospel message in a way that speaks to the hearts, minds and deepest needs of those amongst whom we live.

While we must always in great humility be prepared to repent of and apologize for errors and missteps in the past we also need to recover our confidence in the saving grace of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and learn afresh how to articulate it with humility, in winsome and healthful ways, as an offering of love and service to our broken and hurting world. The primate has an important leadership role to play in embodying that articulation to the Church and to society, both in words and by practical example, in exercising within the community of faith a ministry of encouragement for the all the baptized to do the same.

Bishops are called to guard the faith and unity of the Church. This too is central to the primacy. Often there has been a tension between what can be interpreted as “guarding the faith” and “guarding the unity” of the Church. This has been the case throughout history, and despite what we might like to see in an idealized Church, it will undoubtedly continue. Guarding faith and unity together is the ongoing work of being able to both acknowledge our differences while actively striving for a greater unity of mind and thought – and acknowledging our divisions and brokenness while unfailingly striving “to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4:3)”, and doing so while embracing the rich diversity of gifts and ministries with which God, through the Holy Spirit, has gifted us. With respect to this, the primate has an important role both as a symbol of the Church’s unity nationally, internationally and across denominational lines, but also an important role as a bridge builder, being an instrument for the repairing of divisions that exist and fostering new relationships within the greater Body of Christ.

The liturgy for the ordination of a bishop declares that “your heritage is the faith of patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs.” The primate in giving leadership to a prophetic church must also speak prophetically both to the Church and to the world. To speak prophetically, in scripture, means to speak a word from the Lord that addresses the current situation – to challenge injustice, to call out idolatries, to call back to faithfulness and to give comfort to the suffering.

Practically, all of the above are carried out first and foremost through a ministry of presence; being present through visitation, preaching and through the ministrations of the sacraments, and participation in the councils of the Church at home and internationally.

The primate's ministry, through and in conjunction with the work of General Synod, is fundamentally about serving the whole of our church by enabling, encouraging and equipping the ministry of our dioceses as they seek to fulfill Christ's call to mission in God's world.