

The Presidential Address
for
The 42nd Session of The General Synod
Vancouver, British Columbia
July 11, 2019

Dear friends in Christ, it is a great joy to welcome you to The 42nd Session of The General Synod of our beloved Church. It is wonderful to be here in Vancouver and hosted by The Diocese of New Westminster. On behalf of all of us, let me say thank you to Archbishop Melissa Skelton, Dean Peter Elliott, the Local Arrangements Committee chaired by Suzanne Stockdill and Charlotte French, and the vast company of volunteers who have welcomed us with such open arms and big hearts. On Sunday, we shall have opportunity to be worshipping with congregations throughout the city and lower mainland and we can be sure of wonderful hospitality wherever we go. Thank you New Westminster!

Let me also at the very outset of Synod give a big shout of thanks to the General Synod Planning Committee, chaired by Peter Wall (- it's his eighth as Chair of the General Synod Planning Committee), the General Secretary Michael Thompson and his staff, Shannon Cottrell, Josie De Lucia and Michelle Frost, and Heidi Wilker of Blessed Events, all of whom have worked so competently and cheerfully to bring us together in Synod. They have worked very hard to ensure that we are able to manage the work that is before us, and to do so at a reasonable pace, with opportunities for worship and fellowship throughout our time together. Please join me in expressing our gratitude for their labours on our behalf.

Some of you have been to General Synod before and some of you are attending for the first time. Will the first timers to General Synod please stand so that we can warmly welcome you. While we are meeting formally in Synod, the entire Church is gathering with us. A great many people across Canada and the Anglican Communion will be watching Synod as it is livestreamed via Anglican Video. We are grateful for their interest and faithful accompaniment. We are grateful to know as well, that we are being upheld through the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer and all of the Religious Communities in our Church and a number of dioceses and parishes that have organized prayer vigils. How blessed we are by the good intentions of their prayers throughout our time.

We are delighted to welcome to Synod a number of Full Communion Partners, National Ecumenical Partners, and International guests who will be formally introduced throughout the course of the Synod. Graced by their presence in our midst, indeed we look forward to their greetings. For now, I would especially like to welcome The Rev. Canon John Kafwanka who is the Director of Mission for the Anglican Communion worldwide. He is a good friend of The Anglican Church of Canada and through his teaching, has inspired us to embrace a holistic view of the work to which we are called in serving God's mission in these times. John will have opportunity to bring greetings and he will be the preacher at the closing service at which our new Primate is installed. Welcome dear friend!

The theme of Synod is drawn from Chapter 43 in The Book of The Prophet Isaiah, "I have called you by name," says the Lord, "You are mine". The Lord speaks of gathering his people from the North and the South and the East and the West. They hear him speak of them as "precious in his sight, honoured, and loved". Their hearts are lifted and their heads are raised as they anticipate the return from exile. They walk with renewed strength in one another's company and renewed

trust in the Lord's promise. They recall afresh his praise worthy deeds of old and the wonderful works he has done. They begin to anticipate the new thing he intends to do. They begin to feel hope. Their future is not bleak, but blessed. Their songs have a new note of joyful expectation.

"I have called you by name," says the Lord, "You are mine". Each of us is known by a name given us at birth. Given to us in love and with great joy, it gives us identity, dignity and a cherished place within our families, among our friends, and in society. In God's sight, each and every one of us is "precious, honoured and loved". By name God calls us to particular ministries and by name we are upheld in prayer for the grace to fulfill those ministries.

We are also named as peoples of the world with distinct histories, cultures, traditions each one "precious, honoured and loved" in God's sight. God calls us to embrace the diversity of being many peoples bound together within our common humanity and within our care for our common home, the earth itself.

Through our vows in baptism, we are a people known by many names - disciples, friends, servants, repairers of the breaches, restorers of the streets, ministers for reconciliation, and advocates for justice and stewards of God's creation. With these namings come great blessings and also great responsibility, much grace and much accountability.

"I have called you by name," says the Lord. "You are mine."
I call you to be disciples.

Throughout our Anglican Communion there is a renewed focus on "intentional discipleship". It views our following of Christ as impacting every aspect of our being from how we worship to what we read, from the company we keep in breaking bread to the company we keep in tending the poor, from the political stances we take, to our addressing of environmental concerns. Intentional Discipleship has in fact been the theme of the last two meetings of the Anglican Consultative Council. The most recent meeting in Hong Kong welcomed the fresh language of "Living and sharing a Jesus Shaped Life".

This renewed focus on discipleship is in fact a priority among all the member Churches of the World Council of Churches. Out of a gathering of some 1000 participants in a Conference on World Mission and Evangelism in Tanzania last year, came The Arusha Call to Discipleship. It speaks of discipleship as, and I quote, "both gift and calling to be active collaborators with God for the transforming of the world".

Here are a few statements from within the Call:

"We are called to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ, – the fullness of life, the repentance and forgiveness of sin, and the promise of eternal life, in word and deed, in a violent world where many are sacrificed to the idols of death (Jeremiah 32:35) and where many have not yet heard the gospel.

We are called to be formed as servant leaders who demonstrate the way of Christ in a world that privileges power, wealth, and the culture of money (Luke 22:25-27).

We are called as disciples to belong together in just and inclusive communities, in our quest for unity and on our ecumenical journey, in a world that is based on marginalization and exclusion.

We are called to break down walls and seek justice with people who are dispossessed and displaced from their lands, – including migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, and to resist new frontiers and borders that separate and kill people. (Isaiah 58:6-8)

We are called to be faithful witnesses of God’s transforming love in dialogue with people of other faiths in a world where the politicization of religious identities often causes conflict.

We are called to care for God’s creation, and to be in solidarity with nations severely affected by climate change in the face of ruthless human-centred exploitation of the environment for our own consumerism and greed. **I am pleased to know that this Synod will consider a Resolution commending the Arusha Call as a primary resource for dioceses and parishes wanting to uphold an expression of discipleship that is holistic, robust and relevant for this time in history.**

“I have called you by name”, says the Lord. “You are mine.”
I call you to be ministers of reconciliation.

In marking the 25th anniversary of The Apology offered by Archbishop Michael Peers on August 6, 1993, I raised with the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples, the General Secretary and the Director of Faith, Worship and Ministry the hope that The Apology be memorialized in our Church Calendar. I am very pleased to know this matter is before Synod. An annual commemoration would be an appropriate way to honour that historic moment and call us afresh to “a long obedience” in acting on words of apology.

For some years now, actually dating back to the Covenant of 1994, there has been conversation regarding the need for an apology specific to the spiritual harm inflicted on Indigenous Peoples through the era of colonial expansion and the era of the Indian Residential Schools. Spiritual ignorance and insensitivity on the part of the churches lead to a crushing of spiritualities that had nurtured Indigenous Peoples for thousands of years. The call for an apology of this kind was a significant topic of conversation at the Indigenous Ministries Consultation known as “The Road to Warm Springs”, in September 2017 in Pinawa, Manitoba. And since that gathering, it has been discussed in successive meetings of the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples. The March 2019 meeting expressed real hope that our Church move ahead with making such an Apology. The very last act of the Council of General Synod of this triennium was adoption of a resolution requesting and authorizing me to act on this hope. I will offer an Apology this evening, praying it be received as another step in the long journey of healing and reconciliation.

Six years ago, on the advice of the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples and the concurrence of Synod, I appointed a Commission on Discovery, Reconciliation and Justice, convened by the late Archbishop Terrence Finlay (RIP) and more recently Bishop Riscylla Shaw and The Rev. Canon Andrew Wesley.

I want to acknowledge the very fine work of this Commission. With respect to the Doctrine of Discovery, the Commission engaged Anglican Video to produce a documentary. Titled “Stolen Lands: Strong Hearts”, it is a first class production. From beginning to end, it commands one’s attention in anticipation of what will be learned in the next moment. At its premiere screening in

March, Bob Watts, Chief of Staff of the Office of the National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, spoke of the production as “having a life that will impact the entire country”. And it is already in wide circulation through the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation in Winnipeg, many public schools, universities and theological colleges, numerous community organizations, and the RCMP. I am very pleased that time has been given in our agenda to watch the documentary this evening.

With respect to the mandate of reconciliation, the Commission rejoiced in General Synod’s decision to create a full-time staff position dedicated to enabling our Church to respond to the Calls to Action from Canada’s TRC with diligence and integrity. Melanie Delva was commissioned as Animator for Reconciliation at a meeting of the Council of General Synod two years ago and continues to do superb ministry in drawing the Church more and more deeply into understanding that reconciliation is a spiritual discipline requiring commitment for the long haul.

The Commission also called the Church to establish a national committee “to strategize and guide the ongoing work of truth, justice and reconciliation including the building and supporting of a network of Ambassadors for Reconciliation from dioceses and regions across the country”. I trust Synod will heartily support this call.

With respect to the mandate of justice, The Commission supported my initiative in appointing a Council of Elders and Youth to oversee and monitor our Church’s commitment to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. At General Synod in 2016, Bishop Mark MacDonald and I commissioned this Council. Now known as The Vision Keepers, their work is considered so critical that there was a call for this body to have a more permanent status in keeping with our Church’s endorsement of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples at General Synod 2010, and in my pastoral statement of March 2016 that “...our Yes be Yes” in response to a Call to Action #48 from Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The Primate’s Commission also called for the establishing of a Jubilee Commission “charged with examining historic and current funds made available for Indigenous ministries at various levels of the church’s structure, assessing current funds designated to Indigenous programming, increasing alignment between funds for Indigenous ministry and Indigenous oversight of these funds.” The Council of General Synod acted on that call in 2018 and the Commission chaired by Judith Moses. The Commission has now begun its work.

I share all of these developments with a great sense of gratitude for the work of those appointed to The Primate’s Commission. They did a lot of very good work in positioning our Church for its long-term commitment to Truth, Justice and Reconciliation. And on behalf of the Synod, I want to thank the Commissioners for their labour of love and the legacy of hope it bears.

This year marks the 25th Anniversary of the Indigenous Covenant – our Journey of Spiritual Renewal – signed by 21 elders on April 26, 1994 in Winnipeg. They made a covenant one with another for the sake of their people (as they put it,) saying, “Under the guidance of God’s Spirit we agree to do all we can to call our people into unity in a new, self-determining community within The Anglican Church of Canada. To this end, we extend the hand of partnership to all those who will help us build a truly Anglican Indigenous Church in Canada. May God bless this new vision and give us grace to accomplish it. Amen.”

Like the Apology of 1993, this was also a historic moment in the evolving relationship of Indigenous Peoples and The Anglican Church of Canada, - a moment worthy also of commemoration in our Calendar. Annually we will be reminded of the vision of the elders and the action of The General Synod in 1995 in accepting the hand of partnership extended by Indigenous peoples in the building of a truly Indigenous Church in Canada.

It has been an amazing journey, one marked by many milestone moments. Several Sacred Circles have been devoted to conversation about self-determination. From the Sacred Circle in 2005, came the Pinawa Declaration calling for “the election and consecration of 15 aboriginal bishops within one year”. At General Synod in 2007, The Rt. Rev. Mark MacDonald was installed as the National Indigenous Anglican Bishop. The Elders gave him five charges for his ministry:

1. To speak for Indigenous Anglican People in the Councils of the Church
2. To interpret what the Councils of the Church are saying to Indigenous Peoples
3. To be a spokesperson for Mother Earth
4. To act as a midwife for a self-determining Indigenous Church
5. To represent the authority of Indigenous identity within the Anglican Church of Canada

To this ministry Bishop Mark has brought much insight, wisdom, energy and passion. His ministry continues to be a great blessing for all Indigenous Peoples, a great blessing indeed to our entire Church as we support the emerging of truly Indigenous expression of the Church. Let us show our appreciation to this incredible servant of God. (Applause)

With a measure of satisfaction we can note the establishment of a Canon on the National Indigenous Ministry at General Synod in 2010 with subsequent revisions in consultation with the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples (ACIP) in 2013 and 2016. Several more amendments come before this Synod including the empowering of Sacred Circle to make necessary adjustments to the Canon.

We can note with great joy the deliberations of a national consultation on Indigenous Ministries held in Pinawa in September 2017, out of which came a fresh resolve on the part of our bishops, clergy and the faithful “to stand in solidarity with Indigenous People in their quest for self-determination”.

We can rejoice in the emerging of The Indigenous Spiritual Ministry of Mishamikoweesh (ISMM) and new arrangements for Indigenous ministry spanning Northern Ontario, Manitoba and Saskatchewan. We can rejoice in the Spirit’s call to the people of the former Diocese of Cariboo, to be for a time the Anglican Parishes of the Central Interior with a bishop serving as Suffragan to the Metropolitan of the British Columbia and Yukon. And then the Spirit’s leading in widespread consultations on the part of Bishop Barbara Andrews and a number of Indigenous Pastoral Elders working closely with her, in birthing what is now known as the Territory of the People, with the capacity to elect a bishop of their own. What an amazing journey it has been. (Applause)

We can rejoice that while we don’t yet have 15 Indigenous bishops as called for in 2005, we do have 13! – representative (happily so,) of First Nations, Inuit and Métis!

This year ACIP presented to the Council of General Synod, a Plan for Ministry. Bishop Mark always reminds us of this plan to address the crisis in the Indigenous Church. Foundational to the plan is

- The Development and Formation of Disciples;
- Governance and Pastoral Leadership;
- Living in the Faithful Abundance of God, and
- The Encouragement and Support of an Emerging Youth Movement among the People of the Land.

What more wonderful way for us to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the Covenant, than to see the whole Church support this plan?

“I have called you by name,” says the Lord. “You are mine.”
I’ve called you to be restorers of the streets.

On too many streets and highways in this country, and on too many streets of the world, one of the greatest of crimes against humanity is human trafficking – women and girls, men and boys lured into the global sex trade. Time and again they are bought and sold in this insidious form of slavery. Across the world, women and girls are most vulnerable to being trafficked, especially those who are poor. In Canada that is true also. But there’s another hard truth. That Indigenous women and girls are at highest risk is well documented in the recent Report on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. Many are the Highway of Tears across this country, some of course, more notorious than others, but every of them a trek of tragedy for some young girl or woman, her family and community.

At the Anglican Consultative Council gathering in 2012, the Anglican Consultative Council challenged all the Churches of the Anglican Communion to take steps in educating all members about human trafficking, in learning how to spot it and stop it, and in partnering with other agencies in society dedicated to ridding the world of this evil.

Knowing that Canada is ranked among the countries designated as origin, transfer and destination for human trafficking, Dr. Andrea Mann and Dr. Ryan Weston hosted within the last year, four Provincial Consultations focussed on this crime. I commend the Report of these Consultations and trust that Synod will endorse the Resolution calling our Church to continued partnerships with the Canadian Council of Churches’ Working Group on Sexual, Kairos and the Canadian Centre for Ending Human Trafficking.

While much of our focus with respect to human trafficking is on enslavement in the sex trade, there are other forms of enforced exploitative labour for which people are also trafficked as well, including domestic servitude and enforced migration for farm or factory work. Their permit to work is limited to the employer who brings them in, and if that employer is inclined to care little for their human rights or their well-being, those workers are exploited to the point of exhaustion and despair. In a number of dioceses within our Church where migrant workers are farming, our Church is doing wonderful ministry among these workers, pressing for fair and reasonable working conditions, adequate housing and health care. And I commend all the dioceses for their efforts in the care of these people, - precious, honoured and loved.

“I have called you by name,” says the Lord. “You are mine.”

I call you to be stewards of my creation.

Our generation is becoming more and more aware of the effects of climate change including unpredictable and violent weather patterns, an increase in fires that ravage our forests, laying our mountains and valleys bare. We are more conscious than ever of the melting Arctic Ice Cap and the impact on human life and livelihood, animal life and necessary migration. While many people in Canada struggle through the times of rivers rising in the spring, and the damage and loss of homes and property, many other people in the world are coping with rising sea levels. In fact in some places, people speak of islands that are their homes drowning in the wake of climate change. In other parts of the world, deserts are expanding.

Everywhere there seems to be struggle in holding to commitments to the Paris Accord signed by multiple world leaders in April 2016. In Canada, there is great dissension over carbon tax measures and the reduction of the use of fossil fuels.

It is no exaggeration my friends, to state there is a “global climate emergency” and that it is a huge concern for this and future generations. It is no exaggeration to state that the number of “environmentally displaced peoples” is growing.

I am pleased to see that Synod will consider a Season of Creation as a focussed time of learning, praying and positioning ourselves, and yes politically, in the interests of “safeguarding the integrity of creation and sustaining and renewing the life of the earth”. It is good to see a resolution calling for the curtailment of the purchase of single use plastic products, which are not biodegradable. These calls are entirely consistent with a call from Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice to support the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the United Nations General Assembly of world leaders in 2015. Several of those Sustainable Development Goals speak directly to address the Climate Crisis. In owning our call as Stewards of God’s Creation, we are inspired by the wisdom of Indigenous Peoples who are teaching us the need to have a mind and heart for the seven generations to come, that they too can enjoy Mother Earth and all the good things she provides.

“I have called you by name,” says the Lord. “You are mine.”
I call you to be friends in faith.

Since its earliest days, commitment to ecumenism has been a priority of the General Synod. In this Synod, we give great thanks to God for our Full Communion Relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada now into its 18th year. Many are the expressions of this relationship from the partnership between the Primate and the National Bishop, to joint meetings of the House of Bishops (ACoC) and the Conference of Bishops (ELCIC), from joint meetings of senior staff to joint meetings of our National Councils, from the work of the Joint Commission to the almost 90 expressions of shared ministries commonly known as “The Waterloo Ministries”. It is heartening to know that the next meeting of the General Synod will be a Joint Assembly with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada in Calgary in 2022. It is exciting to see conversations moving forward with respect to Mutual Recognition of Ministries making our Full Communion Relationships in Canada and the United States fully transitive that is four-way in nature. This venture is viewed with great intrigue and hope by both the Anglican Communion and the Lutheran World Federation.

I note with thanks the 40 plus years dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church and many local partnerships forged in the hope of bringing home the spirit and text of the internationally agreed statement, "Growing Together in Unity and Mission". Which brings together all the Anglican-Roman Catholic Statements over the last 40 years.

I am glad to see how well the Anglican United Dialogue has been rekindled and delighted to see the Anglican Mennonite Dialogue beginning to take shape.

We value our place within the Canadian Council of Churches as it celebrates its 75th anniversary this year and the World Council of Churches as well. Membership in these Councils reflects our abiding commitment as a Church, not only to bilateral dialogues, but multi-lateral ones as well. In his capacity as North American Vice President for the World Council of Churches (WCC), Bishop Mark MacDonald has brought to our attention initiatives of the WCC, particularly in recent years with respect to the Churches' Commitment to Children, their rights, their safety and protection, their health and well-being. The World Council of Churches is vigorously addressing the crime of refusal to register the birth of children, leaving them nameless and without rights or opportunities for access to health care, education and adult employment. They are "nobody's" in their own land. Working to address this tragedy, is from my perspective, one of the most powerful and transformative expressions of ecumenism in action.

By name - Jew, Christian, Muslim, we are all children of Abraham, looking to Jerusalem as The Holy City. The Wailing Wall, The Church of the Holy Sepulchre and The Temple Mount are places to which millions of people make pilgrimage. People of all three faith traditions faithfully pray for a lasting peace in the Land of the Holy One and for a spirit of being good neighbours throughout the world.

It is good that we are considering a Prayer for Reconciliation with the Jews. Since the last Synod when a resolution to remove the Prayer for the Conversion of the Jews in The Book of Common Prayer did not gain a majority vote much work has been done by many in revisiting the matter in a sensitive and pastoral manner. We are indebted to Bishop Bruce Myers for his wise and gentle leadership in this task, to the Prayer Book Society of Canada in composing the text for the prayer and the Canadian Rabbinic Caucus for their counsel. Adoption of this prayer, will I pray will be a helpful step toward a path of renewal in dialogue and collaboration with our friends in the Jewish Community in Canada.

It is good too that we are considering a signing of "A Common Word Between Us and You" a statement from Muslim Leaders via the Royal Aal Al-Bayt Institute for Islamic thought inviting dialogue and growing respect between Muslims and Christians. This is an important dialogue given the fact that Islam is now the second largest organized religious community in Canada. Through refugee sponsorships in recent years, Christians and Muslims are being drawn into wonderful friendships in many communities across the country. And it feels so right that we should take up this invitation to formal dialogue and it feels good to know we will do it in partnership with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.

In a world where anti-Semitism and Islamophobia erupts in terrible acts of violence desecrating places of worship and the killing of innocent people, a Prayer for Reconciliation with Jews and a Dialogue with Muslims are signs of great hope and solidarity as peoples of faith.

“I have called you by name,” says the Lord. “You are mine.”

You are precious. You are honorable. You are loved in my sight. If that be the Lord’s mantra for us. So may it be our mantra for one another.

I have called you to be members one of another in Christ.

Synod has the task of considering Second Reading of an amendment to Canon XXI on marriage that would make provision for same sex marriage in our Church. Since approval on First Reading the matter was referred to the Dioceses and Provinces “for consideration”. All four Provincial Synods took up this opportunity and a number of dioceses did as well. Many sent memorials and reports to the Council of General Synod, some (as you know from your docket,) very substantial. I want to thank all of the bishops and diocesan leaders who created opportunity for such conversations and to thank you for your diligence in sharing your thoughts, further questions and hopes with the wider Church. This matter was taken up at every meeting of the House of Bishops within the last triennium as well as every meeting of the Council of General Synod (COGS). At its March meeting, the Council prepared “A Word to the Church”. It is the outcome of three years of intentional listening and respectful discourse among members of COGS which as a body is as theologically diverse in its perspectives on same sex marriage as the whole Church is. “A Word to the Church” records the acts of the General Synod and all that was said on this matter in the last thirty-five years. It affirms the inherent rights of Indigenous Peoples to continue conversations in their own way in their own time. It speaks to the matter of how the current wording of the Canon may be interpreted. It speaks of the diverse understanding of marriage in our Church at this time and reminds us that missional context must necessarily inform pastoral practise. It acknowledges the cost to those persons whose lives have been implicated in the consequences of the Church’s ongoing discernment. It recognizes “the pain engendered by our diversity of perspectives and our need and responsibility to care for one another in that pain”. It gives expression to the lament we must feel over any and all attitudes of speech or conduct that reflect a profound failure of charity one toward another or a public disdain that has been so deeply hurtful and unbecoming of our calling in Christ. The Word to the Church, concludes with a number of affirmations in the hope of living together with our differences in a manner that reflects a good measure of grace and respect, and a renewed commitment to the communion in which Christ would have us abide.

My hope is that our consideration of this Word to the Church will set a respectful tone for the manner of our conduct in consideration of the amendment to the Canon. I plead your patience with the Prolocutor and me, as we chair these sessions of Synod with the ever thoughtful guidance of our Chancellor. And I plead your patience with one another. In listening and learning, discerning and deciding may our conversations be marked by an honouring of the norms for respectful conversation to which we commit ourselves. Let us hold dear one another’s place in this Church. Let us work hard in making room for each other within the boundless grace of Christ. Let us hold fast to that communion in Him that transcends all our differences and compels us to behold one another as found in Him.

“I have called you by name”, says the Lord. “You are mine.”

I call you to be people of prayer.

One of the most important pieces for prayer in this Synod, is the electing of a new Primate in whom we will entrust the mantle of responsibility in

- leading our Church in the service of God’s mission;

- exercising pastoral leadership throughout the Church;
- visiting the dioceses, territories and spiritual ministry areas;
- chairing the Councils of the Church;
- nurturing the House of Bishops for its apostolic leadership in modern times;
- speaking and writing prophetically to and on behalf of The Anglican Church of Canada;
- representing our Church within the Anglican Communion;
- building relationships with other Churches, and
- forging friendships with leaders of other faith traditions.

We come to this Synod knowing there are five nominees for this office and ministry. And we are grateful that Greg and Jane and Linda and Michael and Ron accepted the nomination of the House of Bishops for this office. We are grateful for their love and devotion to our Church, and for their willingness to serve if elected. Let us continue to hold each of them and their families and their dioceses in our prayers. Let us pray too, for the clergy and lay members of Synod that in their discernment they may give their minds to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Our new Primate, the 14th, will come into this ministry at a time in the life of our Church that is both very exciting and very challenging.

What is most exciting is the changing culture of our Church – seeing itself as dear Archbishop Howard Clarke saw it so many years ago as “a company of disciples together following our Lord Jesus Christ into every walk of life, serving him in his mission to the world and witnessing to his love on every continent and island”. The very thing Bishop Mark was talking about last night, - this culture of institution to a movement of people in service of the gospel.

It will be exciting for the new Primate to set priorities for the manner in which she or he will exercise this ministry.

It will be exciting for the new Primate to discern the nature of diocesan visits and engagement with bishops and other key diocesan leaders.

It is also exciting to think about how the new Primate will build a partnership with the National Indigenous Anglican Bishop and to be drawn into the life and work of Sacred Circles and the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples.

It will be exciting for the new Primate to discern with the House of Bishops some new ways of working and exercising its leadership role in the life of our Church. It will be exciting to lead the House of Bishops into the Lambeth Conference next summer in Canterbury and to be engaged with primates and bishops from around the world in conversations inspired by the Conference theme “God’s Church for God’s World”.

It will be exciting for the new Primate to take their place as a member in the meetings of the Primates and Moderators of the member churches of the worldwide Anglican Communion. One’s mind and heart and voice in those meetings is critical to the role of representing the local Church to the global and the global to the local.

It will be exciting too, for the new Primate I trust, to have opportunity for an annual visit with the Archbishop of Canterbury and the staff of Lambeth Palace and with the Secretary General and the

staff of the Anglican Communion office in the interest of building, maintaining and enhancing relationships. Our new Primate will want I am sure, to build with the Communion an enhanced relationship with the Office of our General Secretary, a role defined in most other Churches of the Communion as the Provincial Secretary.

Our new Primate comes into office at a very challenging time in the life of our Church as well. In the first instance, I am mindful as you are, that following the outcome of deliberations on amendment to the Marriage Canon there will be a need for ongoing pastoral care for people disheartened or disillusioned by an outcome different from what they had longed and prayed and hoped for. There will be a need for steadfast leadership in efforts to preserve communion one with another in Christ, “making every effort to maintain the unity of the spirit and in the bond of peace.” (Ephesians 4: 3) There will be need for conversations led by the Primate in the wider circles of the Anglican Communion and with our Ecumenical Partners.

The other challenge in which our new Primate will be immediately immersed is strategic planning for the General Synod. Vision 2019 has run its course and while many of the priorities and practices of that guiding document which have been very helpful in shaping our work for the last ten years will continue as such; it is time for fresh visioning bearing in mind the demographic and fiscal realities of this time. The overall decline in the number of people who self-identify as members of The Anglican Church of Canada and the number of identifiable givers is dramatic, and in fact it’s an alarming decline. It poses serious questions. Reduced revenues through parish allotments to dioceses has a ripple impact on the capacity of dioceses to meet the apportionment asked of them to support the ministries of the General Synod. The Council of General Synod has very responsibly called for a process to review the mission of the General Synod and to do so in consultation with the ecclesiastical provinces, the dioceses and territories, the Council of the North and the Indigenous Church. This review is to take place in the next triennium with an eye to the presentation of a new Strategic Plan at General Synod in 2022. In the role of Chief Pastor and by Canon, the Chief Executive Officer of the General Synod, our new Primate will be expected to devote a significant amount of time to this work.

Good indeed my friends, that by name the Primate is up held in prayer by the faithful, day-by-day, week-by-week, and year-by-year. I can attest to what a great source of encouragement that is in the exercise of Primatial ministry and I thank you for your prayers through the last twelve years.

Thank you for welcoming me to your dioceses and territories, your synods and councils. Thank you for welcoming me to your parishes marking milestone anniversaries in your life in Christ.

In my travels, I have heard the heartbeat of our Church both in beautiful liturgy and in compassionate care for the poor and the marginalized. I have seen your hands and feet at work, as our Church understands its calling to be in and for the world. I have been moved by your passions for justice and peace among all people.

I have always loved our Church and I leave the office of Primate loving it even more. In this transition, I can do no better than to quote St. Paul pouring out his affection and his prayer for his beloved Church in Philippi, “I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you determine in all things what is best, so that in the day of

Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God. Amen.” (1:3-5, 9-11)