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The Anglican Church of Canada
Governance Working Group

MEMORANDUM

Date: 26 March 2012–updated 27 August 2012
To: Council of General Synod
Subject: Structural Issues for Achieving the Priorities and Practices in Vision 2019

At its November 2011 meeting, COGS resolved to set aside two days ... to consider clear directions and a plan for the efficient utilization of financial, staff and structural resources in the achieving of the priorities and practices set out in Vision 2019.

The purpose of this Memorandum is to provide information from the Governance Working Group about the status of structural changes occurring in the Canadian Church.

BACKGROUND

General Synod 2010 passed Resolution A111:

Be it resolved that this General Synod confirm and reiterate its commitment to continuing the conversation about whether and how the diocesan, provincial and national structures need to be modified to support and enhance mission, and requests the whole Church to make this conversation a priority during the next triennium.

THE FOCUS MUST BE ON MISSION

The GWG starts from the fundamental proposition that the focus must always be on the mission of the Church.

While the particular manifestation of the mission of the Church may vary from place to place and from time to time, the Five Marks of Mission are:

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1. To Proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom.
 2. To teach, baptize and nurture new believers.
 3. To respond to human need by loving service.
 4. To seek to transform unjust structures of society.
 5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.
- The purpose of the structure of the Church is to support and enhance God's mission in the most effective way.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE CANADIAN CHURCH

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The Canadian Church is a federation, with some authority lying at the General Synod level, some at the provincial level, and some at the diocesan level. General Synod has authority with respect to its own structures and how its financial resources are used. However, General Synod does not have authority to make decisions about the structure, organization or financial resources of the provinces, dioceses or parishes. As recognized in A111, General Synod (and the Primate) can facilitate the conversations which need to take place at the provincial and diocesan levels, but the latter bodies have the responsibility for making decisions which are appropriate at their respective levels.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY "GENERAL SYNOD"?

When we speak of "General Synod", we may be referring to two different things:

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On the one hand, we may be referring to General Synod (and the Council of General Synod) as a legislative body.

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On the other hand, the National Church, the staff at Church House, or the programs initiated which are administered or paid for by the National Church (including transfers to other entities such as the Council of the North).

STRUCTURAL CHANGES AT THE GENERAL SYNOD LEVEL

The following structural changes have occurred (or are occurring) at the level of General Synod as a legislative body:

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1. General Synod 2010 reduced the size of COGS from 42 to 30 members.
2. General Synod 2010 gave first reading to an amendment which would change the basis upon which membership in General Synod is determined for lay and clergy members from the dioceses. The current system bases the number of delegates on the number of licensed clergy in a diocese. Under the amended system, the number of delegates from a diocese would be based on the diocese's proportionate share of national attendance (in both cases, subject to certain minimums). It would be possible to go further and reduce the size of General Synod from approximately 302. Of these, 142 represent core constituencies such as the bishops, officers, and the minimum guaranteed number of clergy and laity for each diocese. The remaining 160 members are composed of equal numbers of clergy and laity (80 each).
3. The development of the National Indigenous Ministry.

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General Synod 2010 enacted Canon XXII to provide canonical recognition for the National Indigenous Ministry. GWG contemplates bringing an amendment to General Synod 2013 which would provide further details about the structure.

It is foreseeable that the continuing development of the indigenous ministries—including the possibility of new indigenous dioceses or an indigenous fifth province—will have structural consequences both for the composition of General Synod as a legislative body, and with respect to the activities undertaken at the National Church level. (At both levels, these developments will affect some provinces and some dioceses.)

4.
The development of the Bishop Ordinary as a stand-alone office. Until recently, the Bishop Ordinary was a diocesan bishop. With Bishop Coffin's retirement as diocesan, a new canon is being developed to provide for the election and consecration of the Bishop Ordinary. This development will not affect the composition of General Synod (or COGS) as a legislative body; and steps are underway to ensure that there are sufficient financial resources for the Bishop Ordinary.

5.
The need for reliable, up-to-date and meaningful statistics. The GWG has had some involvement in this initiative, which it considers to be exceedingly important to the future of the Church and the effective deployment of its resources for Vision 2019 and beyond.

6.
The Financial Management Committee is working on rationalizing the Apportionment or Assessment formula for contributions by dioceses to the National Church in order to achieve consistency, predictability, fairness and comparability. Although outside the scope of the GWG's work, it is important to note that the structure of the National Church is affected by decisions about what activities the National Church undertakes,

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its staffing levels, its revenue (most of which it cannot directly control), and its expenditures (including expenditures for national ministries and transfers to other entities).

National ministries include the Primate, the General Secretary, and the National Indigenous Anglican Bishop; the triennial meeting of General Synod, the Council of General Synod, meetings of the House of Bishops; Faith Worship & Ministry (which among other things oversees the preparation of prayer books and hymn books), the Anglican Journal; and Partnerships with other Churches in Canada and around the world,

Transfers from General Synod to other entities include the Council of the North which consists of nine dioceses, the Anglican Parishes of the Central Interior, and the Archdeaconry of

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Labrador, which are mostly located in northern Canada and are sparsely populated.
The General Synod also funds the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples and the Sacred Circle.

In addition, the National Church provides vehicles for the whole Canadian Church for pensions, short and long term disability insurance, life insurance, medical and health care benefits, and continuing education for clergy.

In determining the appropriate level of funding and expenditure for the National Church, the guiding principle might be: What can the National Church do that cannot be done (or cannot be done as effectively) at the provincial or diocesan levels?

STRUCTURAL CHANGES AT THE PROVINCIAL AND DIOCESAN LEVELS

As noted above, General Synod, which does not have responsibility for making changes at the provincial and diocesan levels, asked the Primate to facilitate conversations at all of those levels. The purpose and focus of these conversations—and Vision 2019—is on how most effectively to achieve the Church's mission.

The GWG contemplated that these conversations might address some or all of the following questions:

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'What can we do together better than we presently do apart?'

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'How can we be faithful stewards of the resources with which we have been entrusted.'

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In what ways might a diocese be able to collaborate with neighbouring dioceses to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of structures and ministry?

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How might the provincial structures be adjusted or realigned to more effectively fulfill their mandate and respond to ministry needs within their boundaries?

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Are there initiatives at the diocesan level with respect to boundaries or structures, such as (but not restricted to) reducing the size of diocesan council or frequency of meeting or size of

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synods, that would improve the ability of the respective dioceses to engage in effective ministry?

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What initiatives or processes are already underway at the provincial or diocesan level or what steps have already been taken that are aimed at improving the efficiency or effectiveness of both structures and the ability to minister locally, nationally or internationally?

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The GWG knows about the following conversations which are taking place:

The Province of Canada

In addition to the Provincial Executive Council deciding to forego one of its in-person meetings and redirect the funds to other uses, the following notices of motion have been drafted to be brought to Provincial Synod:

Notices of motion have been drafted to be brought to Provincial Synod which will:

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Reduce the size of the Provincial Synod based on a 3-2-1 formula - i.e. 3 clergy (including the Diocesan Bishop or in their absence, the Suffragan), 2 lay, 1 lay member between the ages of 16 and 25.

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Reduce the size of the Provincial Council from 31 to 22 (a 29 percent reduction).

C
Explore possible realignment of dioceses within the Province of Canada, with a view to reducing the number of dioceses to no fewer than three.

C
Explore the possibility of sharing Diocesan administrative functions, including human resources, performance review, information technology, payroll and benefits.

C
Make provision for the Metropolitan to be elected by the Provincial Synod as opposed to the Provincial Council.

C
Explore a greater role for the Province in strengthening mission and outreach to the Province's geographically remote, northern and other communities

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Change constitution so that a member of the Provincial Council shall not be re-elected to an office unless she or he has been re-elected to be a member of Synod by her or his Diocesan Synod.

At its recent meeting, the Provincial House of Bishops emphasized the need to focus on God's mission, and the marks of mission. The House talked about the priorities being making

1.
See <http://province-canada.anglican.org/synod2012/>.

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disciples; worshipping God; building communities of faith; caring for the least of our brothers and sisters. In aligning structures to facilitate the mission, there must be

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willingness to “lose our
life in order to gain it”, and the importance of making changes from hope rather
than despair.
Provincial Synod in September 2012 will use the metaphor of “tending the vine”.

The Province of Ontario

There have been two significant developments in the Province of Ontario.

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The first development involves the Diocese of Moosonee.

In June 2011 the Moosonee Synod members considered a number of Options that would
have transferred parts of the diocese to neighbouring dioceses or dissolved the
Diocese of
Moosonee altogether. Consideration of these changes was driven by an impending
financial
crisis. The Synod members rejected all of these options and, instead, enacted a
Resolution
asking that Moosonee become a Mission Area of the Ontario Province and its
Provincial
Synod and asked that Moosonee’s officers and its Vision Quest Team work out the
details of
this with the Province. That work was finalized when the Moosonee Synod met again
in
March of this year and enacted a Mission Area Canon and adopted a Transition Plan.
The
effect of this will be that the Metropolitan will become the Bishop of Moosonee, as
well as
of his own diocese, on the retirement of the current diocesan Bishop. In addition,
the work
of the Synod Office will be markedly reduced with surrounding dioceses picking up
much of
the work now being done there. This will enable Moosonee to have a balanced budget.

In addition, the size of Moosonee’s Synod membership has now been reduced so that
they
are the same people who make up its Executive Council. This means that Synods will
cost
far less and there is more flexibility in calling them when needed.

The “Moosonee Model” may be useful in other circumstances across the Canadian
Church
where the continued separate operation of a diocese may be in question.

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The second development involves the Provincial Synod. A major part of the time of
the
Ontario Provincial Synod session to be held in Kingston this October will be
devoted to
considering a reduction in the size of its membership. Currently this consists of
the Bishops,
four laity, four clergy, and a youth delegate from each of its seven dioceses.

The Province of Rupert’s Land

Many of the dioceses in the Council of the North come from the Province of Rupert’s
Land, and
the Council has recently revised its funding arrangements.

There are on-going discussions among the three Saskatchewan dioceses about
increased

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cooperation.

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An area mission has been developed in the Northern Ontario part of the Diocese of Keewatin, where Lydia Mamakwa was elected as bishop. It may be that this area decides to become a diocese, which in turn might raise questions about the structure or re-organization of the rest of the diocese.

An area mission was being discussed for the northern part of Manitoba, which is part of two dioceses (Keewatin and Brandon). More recently, the proposal is to create a Provincial Indigenous Bishop who would be suffragan to the Metropolitan, and would have pastoral responsibility for Northern Manitoba (and possibly other areas).

The Diocese of the Arctic has decided to elect a coadjutor and only one suffragan (rather than two until recently, three before that). The Provincial House of Bishops will meet on this occasion, and the agenda is to include a discussion about mission and structures.

The Provincial Synod will meet from June 7-10, 2012, where there will also be some conversations around structures.

The Province of British Columbia and Yukon

The Province of British Columbia and Yukon established a Committee on Restructuring ("COR") in 2010, which has consulted widely and examined how structures and governance

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changes could be made within the Province. A video was prepared to assist with that work, and COR has met with the executive councils of four of the five dioceses and the Anglican Parishes of the Central Interior.

The Committee identified a number of areas for immediate consideration by the Provincial House of Bishops, the Provincial Council, and the Provincial Synod (which meets in September 2012). These include provincial coordination of educational programs for lay ministers, deacons and locally trained priests, as well as the camping ministries; reviewing the relationship of the Province to historical institutions such as the Archives, Sorrento Centre and VST; and facilitating conversations about sharing administrative functions such as payroll and insurance. It also recommended a meeting of the Provincial House of Bishops with the Provincial and Diocesan Chancellors and other legal officers to consider legal resources; legal requirements for altering diocesan boundaries; legal issues around area missions, ACIP, APCI; a common canon for episcopal elections; and a common policy for cases of misconduct.

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The Committee also identified a number of areas for further or longer term consideration, including: the development of partnerships between dioceses for mutual education, support and building relationships to support mission goals; the on-going developments in indigenous ministries; the best stewardship and number of camp properties; developing provincial consensus on ministry matters such as educational standards, process for annual review of clergy, common

2. The video can be found at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MTdmuSoIj1A>.

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policies for non-stipendiary ministry; the relationship between the Province and the Council of the North; ecumenical relationships, including present and future shared ministries.

PARISHES

Across the country, many dioceses are addressing the need to merge parishes, as well as the need to plant new congregations in growing areas.

SOME OBSERVATIONS

Change is difficult. The prospect of change often involves dealing with attachment to the past, and concerns about power—who is getting/giving up what? The focus on the mission of the Church—and Vision 2019—should make some of these discussions easier.

More effectively achieving the mission of the Church is not primarily a matter of parish, diocesan or provincial boundaries. It may happen that some of those may conveniently be adjusted or some existing units may be amalgamated, but that is not the first or even the most important focus. There is considerable room for identifying the possibility of doing things together, at the level which is most effective for the mission of the Church, with the human and financial resources available.

There is a continuing need to improve and increase communication and ownership at all levels, and between levels. There is a need to create a climate that we are all part of the same enterprise—the same mission—even though our local needs or methods of approaching that mission may differ; that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts, not less.

David Jones, Q.C., Chair (Province of Rupert's Land)
Dr. Randall Fairey (Province of British Columbia and Yukon)
Cynthia Haines Turner (Province of Canada)
The Ven. Harry Huskins (House of Clergy)
The Rt. Rev. Sue Moxley (House of Bishops)

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Monica Patten (Province of Ontario)

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