

**THE FOURTH CHARGE TO SYNOD
OF
THE RIGHT REVEREND DONALD F. HARVEY
BISHOP and MODERATOR
THE ANGLICAN NETWORK IN CANADA**

I address you in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and welcome you to the fourth annual Synod of the Anglican Network in Canada, a Diocese in the Anglican Church of North America. I have called us here to proclaim yet again in the stirring words of the Epistle to the Hebrews, our faith in *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever.*

Unfortunately, this year our Primate, the Most Reverend Robert Duncan cannot be with us because of distance and an almost impossible agenda which this year includes his own Diocesan Synod during the same week. He officially is being represented by The Reverend Canon Jack Lumanog, Canon for Provincial and Global Mission who will bring greetings from His Grace later on in the agenda.

Throughout the agenda as it unfolds in the next couple of days, you will see the results of the hard, painstaking work of the Synod Planning Committee under the gifted leadership of Archdeacon Ron Corcoran. They have tried to anticipate our every need while working under the demands of what seems an impossible amount of business; yet as important as that business undoubtedly is, they have kept in mind that this is a **SYNOD** and not an **AGM**, and that it is imperative that a spirit of prayer, praise, thanksgiving and fellowship permeate all that we say and think and do. To make this worship something very special, the Committee sought and readily received the fullest co-operation of the Reformed Episcopal Church, a Sister Diocese in our Province, who are providing the full use of this building, the Church of Our Lord, for our worship and some other activities throughout Synod. And, what we experience here is just a hint of what the future holds in store for all of us in ACNA as we grow together in Christ.

A few weeks ago, I, accompanied by Bishops Trevor, Stephen and Charlie had the joy of attending the Consecration of Kevin Bond Allen as a bishop in the Church of God and in launching his new diocese – the Diocese of Cascadia. One of the many highlights of that memorable evening in Seattle was a sermon delivered by Bishop John Guernsey, a dear friend who, together with his wife Meg, are gracing us with their presence as well as their talents at this Synod.

In his sermon, Bishop John told the amusing anecdote of that great scientist Albert Einstein who despite his brilliance in so many fields also had the reputation of being the ultimate “absent minded professor”.

When on a train journey the great man was unable to find his ticket, the conductor who recognized him at once, assured him that there was no need to search further, he was well known and that a person of his stature would not be travelling without a ticket. Dr. Einstein thanked him and settled back, seemingly quite relieved. However, when he reached the rear of the car, the conductor glanced back and saw the great man on his hands and knees searching the floor

around his seat for the elusive piece of paper. Rushing back he again assured him that a search was not necessary. He said, “Dr. Einstein, we know who you are. Please stop searching.” To which he received the reply “Yes my good man, I too know exactly whom I am – but I am trying to find out is where I am going”.

When Bishop Guernsey told this, suddenly a light went on for me, and I realized I had a theme for this Charge, which hitherto had been escaping me. Friends, we do know who we are, but at this stage in our history, are we truly certain of where we are going?

We have reached this point in our journey through great travail, heartache and often much sacrifice. Indeed, even since last Synod many of you have lost the use of your church buildings which were very precious to you for any number of very valid reasons. And, we have spent much time, energy and money in trying to convince the Courts of our land that ours was a just and valid cause. But without exception, when the final decision was made we accepted the verdict without rancour or bitterness but closed that chapter in our journey, and courageously and with excitement and anticipation opened a new epoch, eager to see where HE now will lead us. I also believe that we did our utmost to put into practice what we spent a lifetime teaching - how to treat our enemies in a Christ-like manner. We made a public witness for the Gospel, and especially for our unwavering faith in the Lordship and uniqueness of Jesus Christ. We always had said that when it came to having to make a choice between property and faith, there never would be a question as to what we would do. Making such a stand was a reward in itself, and having made such a clear statement we now have to come to the next stage of our Calling – making HIM known to a sceptical culture that is trying to fill a great void in the lives of its adherents by going after all the wrong things.

We no longer are trying to convince disenchanted Anglicans that they need to take a stand and that reform from within in their own churches is becoming less likely all the time. They know they are welcome and that we constantly pray for them in their distress. But, our attention now must be concentrated on that great mass of people in our midst who while searching for fulfillment in their lives are being attracted to materialism, cultural novelties, and perhaps the greatest threat of all, Islam. In North America and indeed throughout the world Islam is growing at an alarming rate of over 100,000 a year.

Theologically we know where we stand as we claim the supremacy of Holy Scripture, the Catholic Creeds, our Articles and our Formularies. We know that Jesus Christ (and His teaching) is the same yesterday, today and forever. We know that we have to look to Jesus, and to Jesus only, as “the author and finisher of our faith”. And we hold dearly and firmly to His teaching that He is THE way, THE truth, and THE life, and St. Peter's clear statement that “there is no other name under heaven by which we can be saved”.

But now, we also have a function, albeit a secondary one, to decide upon the structure our Church must adopt to carry out this mission, effectively and clearly, and in a manner that makes best use of the resources, financially and otherwise, with which we have been endowed. Our two great desires of being faithful to scripture, while at the same time being part of the worldwide Anglican family, always should be before us as we make some of these far ranging decisions.

Sometimes when introducing myself, I say that technically I am the Bishop of the largest Anglican Diocese in the world - and then I add the key word – *geographically speaking*.

While that never fails to raise a chuckle, I know that deep down the truth of this statement is at the same time our strength and our weakness. But let me stress again, at the risk of being repetitive, that whatever structure we adopt, it must be for the dual purposes of proclaiming the Gospel and bearing one another's burdens as we do so. This is no small task.

While we continue to grow and expand, and are grateful that our efforts are being blessed and rewarded in this manner, in reality we still are a small number spread over an enormous land mass from one coast of this continent to the other.

You are led by an aged bishop well beyond the normal retirement age. Albeit not only have I been blessed by good health, but I continue to be wonderfully supported by three incredibly gifted Bishops' Suffragan, who in turn are ably supported by a corps of seven devoted Archdeacons, who in turn now work side by side with well over 100 clergy. And that is just the ordained contingent. The rest of the team is made up with in excess of 4000 people who attend our churches on Sunday and who, for the most part, do their ministry throughout the week.

Still, with all of these blessings, our task of both holding on to what we have, and expanding in an orderly fashion as we have been doing, is, in my opinion, becoming insurmountable.

Most, if not all of you, will agree that the time is coming when necessity will cause us to expand into more than one diocese within our Province. However, and this you also know, there is a whole range of opinions as to when such changes should take place. Fears of financial stress, duplication, and loss of unity and fellowship, are all quite real and must be dealt with. **Nor should we at this Synod, or any subsequent ones, allow ourselves to be caught up in a structural debate that will divert us from our primary mission.**

This whole process well may require a number of years, but I feel rather strongly that the wheels must be put in motion to make a beginning now. Accordingly, after much prayerful reflection and some consultation, I am presenting to you the following four point proposal.

Step One (2012)

I officially am calling for the Synod of 2012 (next year) to be an Electoral Synod when you will be called on to elect a co-adjutor Diocesan Bishop whom we presently refer to as the Moderator. In case there are some members not fully aware of episcopal terminology, a co-adjutor is a bishop who automatically has the right of succession without any subsequent election. This could be (a) one of our present active bishops; (b) any ACNA bishop; (c) a bishop from a Province that is in communion with ACNA; or (d) a person presently in Priest's Orders who meets the requirements of age and experience presently outlined in Diocesan and Provincial statutes.

Step Two (2012 and following)

When this is done, and the person so elected has been confirmed by the Provincial College of Bishops, I immediately will begin the process of devolving the authority I presently now exercise to my co-adjutor at a mutually agreed upon pace.

Step Three (2013)

While this step 3 is not contingent on the rest of the plan, I strongly recommend (and this is supported by our three Bishops Suffragan) that in 2013 instead of holding a Diocesan Synod that there be three Regional Assemblies. Each will look like a Synod, be presided over by the respective area bishop, and will have the power to make recommendations. The main reason for this step will be to give the members of Synod a feeling of what it would be like to have a separate diocese for their area and to ascertain from experience the strengths and weaknesses of such restructuring. That will take it out of the area of speculation and enable each member to make a better, more well-informed decision, when later down the road it appears obvious that a decision is ready to be made.

Step Four (2014)

By 2014 most of the authority of the present Diocesan already will have been transferred to the Bishop Co-adjutor and on June 30, 2014, I will retire in the very fullest sense of that word. On July 1st my successor will become Diocesan Bishop of the Anglican Network in Canada.

If God continues to bless me with the health and energy I have enjoyed in the last several years in serving in this manner, by 2014 I will have reached the age of 75 years and that year will celebrate the 50th anniversary of my ordination as a Priest in the Church of God. That would, for me, be a glorious occasion when I could say like the aged Simeon “Lord now lettest thy servant depart in peace according to thy word.”

Even as I say this and make this call, there well may be some of you proficient in Canons, Constitutions, and By-Laws who are seeing all kinds of obstacles as to why such a proposal cannot be. I also am aware of that as well, and so I am saying to the incoming Diocesan Canons and Constitutions Committee, you have a year to meet the required deadlines to bring in proposals to make it work. The changes to be made are few and of a technical nature that can be voted on and amended just prior to the election next year, so that all will be done “decently and in order”.

We could not exist in an orderly fashion without our Constitution, Canons and By-Laws, but we must always remember these are our documents, there to **enable us** rather than offer technical, non-essential, hindrances.

Furthermore, I am requesting this Synod, the main governing body of our Church, to prepare and pass during the time we are assembled, a motion that will adopt the process I hereby am proposing.

Now to a different note:

I often am asked, what is the greatest joy I have experienced since our Diocese was formed? The difficulty, of course, is not finding a joy but in restricting so many of them into some sort of order or even priority. So this morning, let me share instead one of my great disappointments.

Whether we like it or not, many in the public, and especially in the media, still insist on identifying us as that homophobic church so down on gay marriages and ordinations. Although we always have been loud in claiming the injustice of such a label, and that our concern is over something far deeper, I think it still will take years to break down these false images surrounding us.

Unfortunately, very limited resources and a concentration on immediate, pressing internal issues, up until now have prevented us from establishing at a Diocesan level a proactive ministry to homosexual persons seeking healing as well as to sexual brokenness in all of its many forms. Indeed, it was with this in mind that I again invited the Reverend Dr. Dawn McDonald who is active with the Zacchaeus Movement not only to be with us, but this year to do a workshop for the clergy on ministering to sexual brokenness when people in our parishes seek it. Whenever Dawn has been with us, during the whole time she is here, and without exception, she is overwhelmed by the number of people seeking private appointments with her. There is no doubt whatever that the need is there, and it seems to me that until we put this type of ministry somewhere high and proactive on our list of ministries, we will have much difficulty in overcoming the false image with which we have been unjustly tarnished. We have to be seen as an instrument of God's Grace, bringing release to those who are struggling with a life style society often encourages as being as natural as any other, and yet deep down, even as they submit, they know is so terribly wrong.

Now, having said this, it is difficult to move into the topic of our financial resources. You already may be discussing among yourselves the fact that the last fiscal year produced a comparatively large deficit and as a result, our Treasurer will be presenting “a recovery budget”. But please keep in mind that this budget is what it is – a blue print for a speedy recovery from debt brought about but what many of us feel are part of our “growing pains”.

We must not let this put us into a panic mode advocating a policy of “slash and burn”. The cutbacks proposed in this budget can be reversed or modified at any time during the year, as the situation begins to improve. I want to thank our staff and our bishops for so generously accepting a cut back in salary, and promise them that even as we meet here this week, this Synod will do all in its power to adopt this budget as a necessary measure, but also to immediately begin to rebuild from there to see that these cut-backs are of a short, temporary nature.

When a difficult budget needs balancing, there generally are two options. The first is to reduce expenditure, and that we are doing drastically. The second is to increase income, and that primarily is done by adopting the biblical principle of **tithing** at all levels. Many of us have agreed to this in principle. Now it remains for us to put it into practice.

And I would be very remiss if I did not extend on your behalf our profound gratitude to Claus Lenk, who has born the demanding and often frustrating responsibility of being our Treasurer since our inception, and indeed, had a similar role right back in our Essentials Days. After so many years at this post, Claus wants, and needs, to be relieved of it. We are finding that getting a replacement is not easy, but we keep pressing on that God will raise up a person for this position and that the good work begun in Claus will follow through uninterrupted. Nor are Claus's gifts confined to finance and administration. The presence of the Church Plant of Christ the King in Toronto is reflective of the effort he and his dear wife Heather put into the project to make it become a reality.

I now, and with much regret, announce the retirement of Archdeacon Desiree Stedman. Desiree had been an Archdeacon in the Anglican Church of Canada in the Diocese of Ottawa, until her then bishop made decisions she no longer could live with. When that happened, she courageously resigned her role and title of Archdeacon, and a few months later followed this action by retiring as Rector of a large, influential parish in downtown Ottawa. Shortly thereafter she relinquished her Licence and immediately became a Priest in good standing in the Anglican Network in Canada.

But that was not to be the end of her active ministry. At our Synod in Burlington, I appointed her as Personal Assistant to the Moderator with the title of Archdeacon. With the subsequent establishment of our territorial archdeacons, she took responsibility for the Ottawa area, and now at the time of her retiring, was our Senior Archdeacon. Her additional work with the Examining Chaplains was exceptional and will be sorely missed. Indeed, throughout the whole of my ministry I rarely have worked with a person I trusted and relied on more and her contribution to ANiC as a whole, at the crucial time of its formation, was exemplary in all respects. Dear Archdeacon, unlike the first time, now as you move back from center stage, you no longer have to relinquish your title of Archdeacon, and in recognition of your work among us, I take pleasure in now declaring you our very first Archdeacon Emeritus.

We pray that you will have good health and much happiness in your *real retirement* which begins at the conclusion of this Synod.

After prayerful consultation with my colleagues in the House of Bishops, I am happy to announce the appointment of the Reverend Tim Parent, Rector of the Parish of St. Luke in Pembroke, as the new Archdeacon of Ottawa and Area.

Before bringing this Charge to a close, I also want to thank two other Diocesan Officers, and while doing so, extend a public apology to them. I am referring to our Registrar, the Reverend Tom Carman and to my Chancellor, Michael Donison. They both have given outstanding service during the past year, and in every instance have responded to a call for assistance without delay and most commendably, without complaint.

I apologize in that when I appointed these two persons to their several offices (around this time last year) such was my desire to have them accept that I sort of neglected to tell them just how time consuming their new roles would be. That they have responded as well, without holding my enthusiasm for attaining their gifts against me, speaks well of their ongoing commitment and

dedication to the Cause.
Will you please stand for remembrance.

Since last Synod two of our ordained members have been called to be with the Lord they loved and served so well.

The Reverend Paul Raymond Almond

Paul was made a Deacon in the Church of God on December 9, 1996. He was a well known person in the Windsor area in both church and civic events. In his young years he was a star athlete especially in the field of football. Deacon Paul was very much an athlete in his unstinting service to Christ and his Church, fulfilling the servanthood role of his sacred office with dignity and grace. I recall a memorable afternoon a little over a year ago which I spent with him and his family in their cosy home. His wife Olga continues to be active in the musical life of the parish while his daughter Nicole has been a delegate to this Synod on a number of occasions.

The Reverend Stephen B. Flower.

Stephen was ordained as a Priest in the Church of God in Corner Brook, Newfoundland and Labrador, on September 4, 1988. He served in the Parish of Grand Bay near Port aux Basques for four years and then as an assistant priest in the Parish of St. Thomas in St. John's. He also served for a number of years with the Provincial Department of Health as a Chaplain – Supervisor to Homes for Seniors operated by the government. Stephen attended a couple of our Synods; the gathering in Bedford that launched the ACNA; and the first Anglican 1000 Summit in Plano before declining health made travel difficult for him. He was an inspiration to the leaders of the two ANiC Parishes in St. John's. His wife Marilyn, a Deacon, is with us at this Synod.

As we offer this prayer, may we also include in our hearts any other of our brothers and sisters who entered into eternal rest since our last Synod:

O Father of all, we pray to Thee for those whom we love but for a little while will see no longer. Grant them thy peace and Thy loving wisdom and almighty power work in them the perfect purposes of Thy perfect will; through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

I began this Charge by using one of Bishop John Guernsey's sermon illustrations, and now I think it fitting that I also close with one.

An African Bishop whose Diocese included part of a very arid desert stated that the single, greatest offence one could commit in the desert was to know where you could find water and not share that knowledge with others.

It really is not hard to make the analogy.

My dear Sisters and Brothers – we in the Anglican Network in Canada have been blessed with an abundance of the Living Waters of which Christ spoke. These waters have been giving us the

nourishment and growth to make the stand we took when we approached the crossroads between unity and truth. Both were stirring qualities but we had to make a painful decision. We opted for TRUTH and now these same waters of WORD and SACRAMENT sustain us daily and we are so thankful for them.

We must resist the temptation of looking back, either in nostalgia or in contempt. That is our past and there are many things in it to make us thankful. Above all, we must not use our former church as a yardstick or as a long remembered model on which to build. We cannot put our new wine in old bottles. And we must be very aware, as our primate so frequently warns us, “It is easier to take the person out of Egypt than to take Egypt out of the person”.

Our major thrust of Anglican 1000, our exciting challenge of which you will hear more later in a special presentation, continues to be our primary focus as we advance.

And now as we look around us and into the future at a world parched and starving, we see our renewed task and our new joy which is to lead people to that Living Water. Remember, “Freely you have received; freely give”.

That is our mission as individuals; that is our mission as a Diocese; and that is our mission as a Province. Let us proclaim: **Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever and continue to look to HIM as the author and finisher of our faith.**

Never forget that there are many, many people out there who are not brilliant theologians and who are not aware of the complexities and controversies in which many of us feel called to indulge ourselves. But these people love the Lord, they love the Holy Scriptures, and they love the warmth that comes from being part of the Anglican family around the world. They have given up much for these principles and they have entrusted themselves to our leadership to get it right this time. My dear friends, do not let them down. And above all, do not let HIM down.

I invoke the guidance of God's Holy Spirit on all we think and say and do in these days we will be together.