

Diocese of Ontario

THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA – GENERAL SYNOD

The Anglican Church of Canada is divided into four ecclesiastical provinces, each under the jurisdiction of a provincial synod and a metropolitan, who is elected by the Provincial Synod. The first ecclesiastical province — Canada — was created in 1860, followed by Rupert's Land in 1875, Ontario in 1912 (carved from Canada) and British Columbia in 1914 (carved from Rupert's Land). The latter province became "British Columbia and the Yukon" in 1943, when the latter territory was joined to it from Rupert's Land. Each ecclesiastical province is made up of a group of individual dioceses, each governed by its own Synod.



The *General Synod* is the governing body of the Anglican Church of Canada. It consists of all the Bishops, together with clergy and laity elected by the Synod of each diocese. The chairman is the Primate, who is an Archbishop.

Every three years the Anglican Church of Canada gathers for General Synod. The members come from dioceses all across Canada. The meeting of General Synod helps to shape the mission and ministry of the church for the next three years. There are debates on resolutions, presentations about work being done locally

and globally, and plenty of opportunities to talk about the issues we face as a church and a society.

The Council of General Synod (CoGS) has jurisdiction between General Synods. The Constitution and Canons, as well as the Handbook of the General Synod are available at the national Church's website at www.anglican.ca.

Mission Statement of the Anglican Church of Canada

As a partner in the worldwide Anglican Communion and in the universal Church, we proclaim and celebrate the gospel of Jesus Christ in worship and action.

We value our heritage of biblical faith, reason, liturgy, tradition, bishops and synods, and the rich variety of our life in community.

We acknowledge that God is calling us to greater diversity of membership, wider participation in ministry and leadership, better stewardship in God's creation and a stronger resolve in challenging attitudes and structures that cause injustice.

Guided by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to respond to this call in love and service and so more fully live the life of Christ.

The Five Marks of Mission

Current work at General Synod is shaped by the Five Marks of Mission, used widely throughout the Anglican Communion.

- 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, to challenge violence of every kind, and to pursue peace and reconciliation**
- 5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth**

The Five Marks of Mission have been developed over several years. Originally, there were only four. The Marks were first formulated and presented as part of the report of “Working Section I: Mission and Ministry” to the sixth meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council which took place in Badagry, Nigeria [1].

At the eighth meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council in Cardiff, Wales, a fifth mark was added. The report of “Section II: Mission, Culture and Human Development” said: “There has been a consistent view of mission repeated by ACC, the Lambeth Conference, the Primates’ Meeting and others in recent years, which defines mission in a four-fold way . . . We now feel that our understanding of the ecological crisis, and indeed of the threats to the unity of all creation, mean that we have to add a fifth affirmation:

to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth [2].

The Five Marks of Mission have never been adopted per se as resolutions of the Anglican Church of Canada, Anglican Consultative Council or the Lambeth Conference. As with the Consultative Council, however, the Five Marks were included and affirmed in the report of “Section II: Called to Live and Proclaim the Good News” in the official report of the 1998 Lambeth Conference [3].

The Five Marks of Mission were discussed in the report of MISSIO (the Mission Commission of the Anglican Communion) to the eleventh meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council in Edinburgh, Scotland, 1999. The MISSIO report was published separately with the title *Anglicans in Mission: A Transforming Journey*[4] and it is the comments from this report that appear on the [Anglican Communion website page](#) with the text of the Five Marks of Mission.

MISSIO commended the Five Marks of Mission to each province of the Communion with the challenge to develop or revise their understanding of mission faithful to Scripture and provided some background and context to the Five Marks with suggestions for ways to continue “along the road towards being mission-centred” [5].

The Anglican Church of Canada took up the challenge made in the MISSIO report in the years since 1999 and in November 2007 the Council of General Synod passed a resolution that endorsed “the recommendation of the Partners in Mission and Ecojustice Committee that the Anglican Consultative Council consider adding a Sixth Mark of Mission to its current list, that relates to peace, conflict transformation, and reconciliation and the General Secretary communicate this recommendation and endorsement to the Anglican Consultative Council.”

At the 2009 Anglican Consultative Council meeting in Kingston, Jamaica, a sixth mark was agreed to in principle.

However, instead of adding an additional mark, members of the 2012 meeting in Auckland, New Zealand, decided to amend the fourth mark to include references to peace, conflict transformation, and reconciliation.

* Note re spelling. The Anglican Communion website text of the Five Marks of Mission uses the British spelling for “baptise” as does the 1984 ACC-6 report. The 1990 ACC-8 report uses the North American spelling “baptize”. The Canadian mission study uses the North American spelling.

[1] Anglican Consultative Council, *Bonds of Affection: Proceedings of ACC-6*, Badagry, Nigeria, 1984(London: Anglican Consultative Council, 1984), p. 49.

[2] Anglican Consultative Council, *Mission in a Broken World: Report of ACC-8*, Wales 1990 (London: Anglican Consultative Council, 1990), p. 101.

[3] Lambeth Conference. *The Official Report of the Lambeth Conference 1998: July 18 – August 9, 1998*(London: Published for the Anglican Communion by Morehouse Publishing, 1999), p. 149-150.

[4] Eleanor Johnson and John Clark, ed., *Anglicans in Mission: A Transforming Journey* (London: SPCK, 2000), pp. 19-21.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 19.

[6] Fred Hiltz, “Walk With Me: Vision 2019: RSVP,” *Anglican Journal* (February 2009), 5.