

Diocèse  
anglican  
de Québec

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Anglican  
Diocese  
of Quebec

Quebec Diocesan  
**Gazette**



WINTER / HIVER 2025

# The Synod Issue

This issue of the *Gazette* is dedicated to coverage of the 86th Ordinary Synod of the Diocese of Quebec, held October 31-November 3, 2024 at the Monastère des Augustines in Quebec City. Additional information about Synod can be found online at:

[quebec.anglican.ca/resources/synod-documents-2024](http://quebec.anglican.ca/resources/synod-documents-2024)

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Ce numéro de la *Gazette* est consacré à la couverture du 86<sup>e</sup> Synode ordinaire du diocèse de Québec, qui s'est tenu du 31 octobre au 3 novembre 2024 au Monastère des Augustines à Québec. Des renseignements supplémentaires sur le Synode sont disponibles en ligne à l'adresse suivante :

[quebec.anglican.ca/resources/synod-documents-2024](http://quebec.anglican.ca/resources/synod-documents-2024)

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# Bishop's Charge

## to the 86th Ordinary Synod of the Diocese of Quebec

It's hard to know where to begin. It's been five years (and one week) since we last gathered, in this very same place, as a diocesan church in Synod—almost certainly the longest we have ever gone between Synods since we starting having Synods in the Diocese of Quebec in 1859.

There are primarily two reasons for this longer-than-usual gap: the COVID-19 pandemic, which threw schedules off for pretty much the entire planet; and finances, because in-person Synods are expensive to hold, and our diocesan finances (like most everyone's finances these days) are tight.

But still we gather in Synod, because meeting as Synod—as representative laity and clergy together with the bishop—is part of what it means to be Anglican. In Synod we pray together, discuss together, take counsel together, discern together, walk together—which is, in fact, what the word “synod” means.

And even though a lot of the time the next couple of days may look and sound like a business meeting, know that it is more than that. There's a reason we start every Synod not by gathering around a meeting table, but around an altar. This is a sacred gathering of sisters and brothers in Christ, fed by word and sacrament, seeking to discern the leading of the Holy Spirit for the life and work of our diocesan church in and for the world God created and loves.

So as we begin this latest sacred gathering of our diocesan church, I'd like to spend a bit of time looking back at some of the events since our last Synod (some,

not all!), as well as looking ahead.

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It was only a few months after our last diocesan Synod that a global pandemic was declared. Out of an abundance of caution (a phrase we got used to hearing), churches were among the public buildings closed to prevent the spread of the coronavirus—and then opened and closed and opened and closed, to varying numbers of people subject to varying and ever-changing guidelines, over the course of the following two years.

It was an exhausting and distressing time for many of us. Especially difficult was when it wasn't possible to be at a parishioner's or loved one's side in their final moments, or when funerals had to be delayed or their attendance heavily restricted.

And yet there were moments of grace in the midst of it all. In an instant, our diocese went digital. Every Sunday, from March 15, 2020 (the first Sunday following the declaration of a global pandemic) until June 26, 2022, “Home Prayers” were streamed on the diocesan Facebook page, along with additional services for Holy Week and Christmas—190 online services in total



prepared and presented by clergy from across our diocese, most of whom had never once led an online service in their lives. (And those don't count the other online offerings prepared in individual parishes.) Hundreds (and, in the first months of the pandemic, thousands) of people from across the Diocese of Quebec (and beyond) viewed the services (or listened in by telephone) and even developed a unique form of fellowship in the comments section of each online service. It was no permanent substitute for in-person worship, but it clearly helped sustain many in their forced isolation, attracted people online who rarely if ever darken the doors of our churches, and created an unprecedented sense of communion across the vast geographic expanse of the diocese.

A few months into the pandemic, in May of 2020, I wrote the following in my report to the Diocesan Executive Council (DEC): "The church that emerges from the other side of this pandemic will not be the same church that went into it—not in Quebec, not anywhere. Nor will the world that emerges from the other side of this pandemic be the same as before."

One proof of that is that when the health emergency ended, and our church buildings were finally able to open as they had before COVID-19, not everyone came back. Across the entire Anglican Church of Canada, there has been a 26 percent drop in Sunday attendance

since the pandemic, and other religious groups report similar reductions in participation.

During the course of the pandemic, a number of congregations in the diocese asked to close. The responsibilities of maintaining a building and all of the related costs were growing increasingly great for an increasingly small number of faithful (often elderly) parishioners. These decisions are rarely easy to make, but they reflect what I call a pragmatism laced with hope—a pragmatism that acknowledges that it's okay to set down a burden of maintenance that has become too much to carry for too few people; hope that the funds generated by the sale of some of these properties will help support Anglican ministry in our patch of God's kingdom for generations to come, and that the Church will nevertheless continue her life and work.

Early on in my time as your bishop, some informal guiding principles were developed to help orient the diocesan leadership in our decision making. They include the following, which you might call a kind of "vision statement": "We strive to cultivate a vibrant and sustainable Anglican Christian presence in eastern and central Quebec."

It's simple and straightforward, and perhaps also sounds naïve or unrealistic as we confront declining attendance, closing churches, and shrinking finances. But if you don't think there's potential for a vibrant

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and sustainable Anglican Christian presence in our part of the world—if you think there’s no potential for our church to grow numerically, rather than just continue to shrink—I’d invite you to look at the latest census.

It says (unsurprisingly) that there aren’t a lot of Anglicans in the province of Quebec these days. A little less than one percent of all Quebecers (0.7%) self-identify as Anglicans (55,290 out of a total population of 8,308,480). Nearly three-quarters of Quebecers who self-identify as Anglicans are located in and around metropolitan Montreal. Just over 10% of the province’s Anglicans (just over 6,000) live within the geographical bounds of the Diocese of Quebec, concentrated in clusters in the Eastern Townships, Quebec City, the Gaspé Peninsula, and the North Shore—our four geographic deaneries.

Our own statistics suggest that the number of “active” Anglicans in our diocese is just over 1,300 (a number I know to be inaccurately low because a number of parishes don’t provide complete statistical returns each year). That suggests that there are at least a few thousand people in our communities who we rarely or never see in our churches, but who nevertheless consider themselves somehow a part of us. In those numbers I see opportunity, possibility, potential, and hope.

Someone else who sees those things for our church in this time and place is Jesse Zink, an Anglican theologian and principal of Montreal Dio, who we welcomed at our last Synod, too. He’ll be sharing with us on Saturday a vision of what it might mean, in a world beset by rapid change and unrelenting crises, to be a church that is creative, faithful, and hopeful.

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Even as we seek to draw new people into our fellowship, we are mindful of the need to nourish those who are already a part of our church communities, and to help them deepen their Christian understanding, commitment, and engagement so they can still better join in the work of revealing God’s kingdom in our midst. At the Lambeth Conference in 2022, the bishops of the Anglican Communion recommitted our churches to a “season of intentional discipleship.” This means

making a still more concerted effort to help those already a part of our church grow in their Christian faith so they can live as fully as possible what is sometimes described as a “Jesus-shaped life.”

It was striking (and also strangely encouraging) to hear bishops at the Lambeth Conference who come from fast-growing churches in the Global South say things like, “We make disciples but we don’t nurture them; we baptize people but we don’t see them again,” or to describe the Christian commitment of many of their members as “a mile wide and an inch deep.” These are descriptions that sometimes resemble our own situation here in Quebec.

There is no catch-all program or formula for Anglican Christian discipleship formation; it is highly contextual. In their reports to Synod, Canon Theologian Jeffrey Metcalfe and Canon for Lay Ministries Giuseppe Gagliano have outlined some of the ways we’ve attempted, at a diocesan level, to help our people grow into a life of genuine Christian discipleship, and plans for new kinds of Christian formation still to come—using the gifts already present in the people of our diocese, and building on lessons learned during the pandemic about using technology to bring people together across great distance.

In the midst of all of the other preoccupations and demands on our attention, energy, and resources as a church, it can be easy to forget that making and nurturing disciples of Jesus Christ is really what we’re supposed to be about. As fellow Anglican C.S. Lewis once put it, “The church exists for nothing else but to draw [people] into Christ, to make them little Christs. If they are not doing that, [then] all the cathedrals, clergy, missions, sermons, even the Bible itself, are simply a waste of time. God became [human] for no other purpose.”

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As always, much good work is being carried out in every corner of the diocese, a lot of it happening in quiet and unheralded ways. If you haven’t already, I strongly encourage you to read the written reports provided to you over the past few weeks, which recount in detail the mission and ministry being lived out in a

variety of ways by our diocese’s dedicated clergy and faithful laity.

One story I would like to share does not appear in any of those reports, but is of importance to our diocesan life. By now most of us are well acquainted with the Anglican Church of Canada’s participation in the residential school system, which forcibly removed Indigenous children from their communities as part of a state-sponsored program of assimilation and cultural genocide.

One such school operated in our diocese, in La Tuque, between 1963 and 1978. A nine-year-old girl named Juliette Rabbitskin died of pneumonia during an outbreak at the school in 1966. Though from the Cree community of Mistissini (about 500 kilometres north of La Tuque), her body was buried by Anglican clergy in the Anglican cemetery in La Tuque—without Juliette’s parents even being informed of their daughter’s death. They found out months later, from their other children, when they returned home for the summer, without Juliette.

Among the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada is, when requested by the family, the reburial in their home communities of children who died at residential schools. Our diocese’s participation in this repatriation process

began in 2021, working with the family, the provincial and federal governments, and the Cree Nation. Juliette’s body was exhumed from the La Tuque Anglican cemetery on September 20 of this year, and her earthly remains were reburied in Mistissini on September 30, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. At the invitation of the Rabbitskin family, I was present on both occasions, and offered a formal public apology to the family, to the survivors of the La Tuque residential school, and to the Cree Nation.

Reconciliation with the Indigenous peoples and communities our church has harmed is a long and uneven journey. Helping bring Juliette home was a small but significant step on that journey. Emily Rabbitskin, who attended the residential school with her cousin Juliette, said this after the reburial: “It’s like a load from my soul was lifted, that’s how happy I was. [...] I felt peace after.”

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Our last diocesan Synod explicitly mandated two tasks to be completed before we met again.

One was a “request that the Bishop of Quebec authorize the solemnization of the marriage of same-sex couples in the Diocese of Quebec.” Notwithstanding the overwhelming vote in favour of this motion in 2019, I asked Synod for time to consult with some in the diocese who might find such an innovation challenging, in hopes of developing a policy that both honours Synod’s request and the consciences of those who do not agree with it.

The result is a new diocesan policy on marriage that took effect on July 1 of this year. It is grounded in a set of affirmations adopted by the 2019 General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, which had the effect of permitting individual dioceses to exercise a so-called “local option” with respect to offering same-sex marriage in the church. The new policy seeks to respond to Synod’s request by stating simply and clearly our diocese’s guidelines on marriage, regardless of the genders of those being wedded. The policy reiterates an existing long-standing provision which does not oblige any minister to act contrary to their conscience



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in presiding over any marriage—again, regardless of the genders of those being wedded.

The second task mandated by the last Synod was “to critically examine, review and edit the Constitution and Canons of this diocese in order to propose amendments to the next Ordinary Session of the Synod of the Diocese of Quebec.”

An incredibly diligent and dedicated six-person Constitution and Canons Working Group was duly appointed by the Diocesan Executive Council and began its work in the fall of 2020, meeting online no fewer than 70 times to come up with the proposals that will take up the bulk of Synod’s time tomorrow. They represent the first major overhaul of our constitution and canons in a generation—and they are long overdue.

If the idea of constitutional and canonical amendments doesn’t exactly get your blood racing, try thinking of our diocesan constitution and canons like your computer, smartphone, or tablet, each of which uses an operating system—whether its Windows, iOS, or Android. When they’re kept up to date, they operate smoothly in the background, letting you do what you need to do. But you know what happens when you don’t do those updates? Your device slows down, software bugs accumulate, certain things don’t work, or it crashes.

Our diocesan constitution and canons are a bit like that. Occasional patches and upgrades over the years have helped, but now we’re at the point where we require an entirely new operating system—one that allows us to be more nimble, and one that reflects the church we are today and expect to be in the future, rather than the church we haven’t been for generations.

Computers, smartphones, and tablets aren’t ends in themselves. They’re tools that allow us to do things. The same goes for our constitution and canons. As stated in one of the documents that guided the working group: “[Canon] law exists to assist a church in its mission and witness to Jesus Christ. A church needs within it laws to order, and so facilitate, its public life and to regulate its own affairs for the common good. Law is not an end in itself. Law is the servant of the

church.”

And so when we’re discussing what might seem like a pedantic point of canonical minutiae tomorrow, remember that what we’re ultimately doing is helping our diocesan church better fulfil its mission and witness to Jesus Christ.

A third important piece of work emerged organically from our last Synod. Valuable critical feedback was received after a presentation at Synod concerning an earlier update to our diocesan sexual misconduct policy. This led to the Diocesan Executive Council establishing a seven-person Safe Church Working Group in 2020. They were assisted by Mary Wells, a social worker and the Anglican Church of Canada’s representative to the Anglican Communion’s Safe Church Commission. Together they undertook a more extensive revision of our diocesan sexual misconduct policy, *Creating a Safe Church*, which was approved by the DEC in 2023. Such policies are always a work in progress, and feedback aimed at further improving the policy continues to be received, always with the goal of protecting vulnerable people in our midst.

I am deeply grateful to the members of both of these working groups, the majority of whom are lay volunteers, for their commitment and the seriousness with which they conducted this work on our behalf.

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A number of transitions have marked our diocesan life since we last gathered as Synod. I won’t name them all, but will highlight a few.

One involves the building formerly known as Bishopthorpe, which since the 1970s served as the bishop’s residence. I started living in a house of my own a couple of years ago, and earlier this year Bishopthorpe was rebranded Church House, and is now home to the Synod Office—a change in vocation that should result in financial savings for the diocese, since the building is owned by the Church Society.

Another transition concerns our venerable diocesan publication, the *Gazette*. After a publishing hiatus following the departure of editor Matthew Townsend, the *Gazette* has resumed publication, with a thematic issue each quarter in the format of a magazine. It





Stephen Kohner and Jacob Stone are installed as officers of Synod. (Photo: Linda Hoy)

remains a primary means of communication for our diocese.

A number of significant members of our diocesan family have retired or in some other way changed roles, and merit mention.

Ruth Sheeran and Anne Chapman have each served as rural deans and members of the Diocesan Executive Council, for their respective deaneries of Saint Francis and Quebec, for many, many years. For those of us who have been around a while, it's difficult to imagine a diocesan Synod without either Ruth or Anne. Each in their own way remain involved with the life and work of our church in their communities, but to recognize their longstanding involvement and commitment to our diocesan church, it is my distinct pleasure to name them each as rural deans emeriti.

Malcolm McLeod will also be retiring after a decade as our chancellor, a role in which he's provided sound legal counsel to our diocesan church on a wide variety of matters. I rarely dealt with lawyers before becoming a bishop, so wasn't quite sure what to expect. Malcolm has proven a sound, wise, and kind counsellor, with a genuine heart for the church. Though stepping back as chancellor, Malcolm has kindly offered to continue to be available to offer us legal counsel from time to time. In recognition of this kindness, and his faithful

service, I am pleased to name him as our chancellor emeritus.

Stepping into the role of chancellor is Jacob Stone, a member of the parish of Quebec who has been serving alongside Malcolm as our vice-chancellor. (Jacob will be joining us tomorrow.)

There have also been transitions on the finance and administration side of diocesan life. Our registrar, Sean Otto, has been a welcome addition to the team at Church House, serving in the multifaceted role of operations coordinator.

This past summer, after a dozen years as our diocesan director general, Marie-Sol Gaudreau chose to move on to new challenges. (She'll be joining us at the closing banquet on Saturday.) Marie-Sol's departure allowed us to re-evaluate the position she held in the office before proceeding with a new hire, resulting in the newly defined role of diocesan comptroller. Eloah Roberge has been in that role since August, and has been very busy finding ways to bring added clarity, efficiency, and best practices to our diocesan finance and administration.

Michael Boden also stepped back as our diocesan treasurer this summer, a position he held since 2007. He had been expressing for a few years now his desire to progressively step back from his duties with the

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diocese, so that he can focus on his demanding full-time work overseeing the foundations that support Quebec City's English-speaking community. This is a process that began with Mike retiring as treasurer of the Church Society in 2021. He has nevertheless generously offered to continue to be available as a resource for us going forward.

Following Mike's departure I appointed Sylvain Laperrière as our interim treasurer. Sylvain has been an active member of our church for many years, serving as a lay reader and as a warden at St. John the Evangelist in Portneuf. A professional accountant, Sylvain is currently the financial manager of an established business in the Quebec City region. He has already been working closely with our new diocesan comptroller, Eloah, in managing and overseeing the diocese's finances. I'm grateful that Sylvain has allowed his name to go forward to serve in the role of treasurer on a more permanent basis.

Stephen Kohner has also allowed his name to go forward for another mandate as the secretary of Synod. As we'll be reminded over the next few days, Stephen faithfully wears a number of hats in our diocese. As secretary of Synod, he is instrumental in making this gathering happen, often in behind-the-scenes ways.

Another unheralded faithful servant of our diocesan church is Archdeacon Edward Simonton. It's the nature of the job of a vicar general to work quietly yet vigilantly in the background, which Edward does while also helping oversee and minister to a multi-parish regional ministry—a balancing act that no other diocese in the Canadian church asks of its executive officer, and one I'm not sure many others could manage. I am deeply grateful for the support he offers me as your bishop, and that he offers to our diocesan church.

Like our constitution and canons, the diocesan staff, office, structures, and officers are not ends unto themselves. We exist to assist and serve our diocesan church—the congregations and parishes and people of the Diocese of Quebec—in fulfilling our mission and witness to Jesus Christ in this time and place.

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What does that mission and witness look like? What does “a vibrant and sustainable Anglican Christian presence in eastern and central Quebec” resemble? A more basic question might be: what does the future hold?

My honest answer is: I don't know. What I do know is that all that we are doing—updating our governance, emphasizing discipleship formation, setting up new ministry structures, implementing robust financial systems, welcoming new staff and officers—we are doing not to keep busy or to kill time or run out the clock, but because we believe we have a future.

A few years ago someone shared with me a letter they once received from a previous bishop of Quebec, which included the following line: “I am sure,” wrote the bishop, “that I don't have to tell you the future of our church in the diocese looks grim, but we must work at it.”

The author of the letter was Bishop Allen Goodings and the year was 1977. God clearly wasn't finished with the Diocese of Quebec 47 years ago, and God isn't finished with us now. As long as we're open to the leading of the Holy Spirit, God will continue to use this church to accomplish God's good purposes in the world.

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In my charge to the last Synod, I began with a prayer that I then described as realistic but encouraging, honest but hopeful. It's the prayer that concluded each of those 190 online services of Home Prayers during the pandemic. I still love the prayer because it doesn't deny difficult truths or succumb to sterile pessimism. It's a prayer that I think still speaks to where we are as a church in this time and place. As we together begin this sacred gathering that is Synod, I'd invite you to join me in praying this prayer:

*O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go forward with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*



# Appel de l'évêque

## au 86<sup>ème</sup> Synode du Diocèse de Québec

Par où commencer ? Cela fait cinq ans (et une semaine) que nous nous sommes réunis pour la dernière fois, ici-même, pour un synode de notre église diocésaine – ce qui constitue presque certainement le plus long intervalle entre deux synodes dans le diocèse de Québec depuis le premier en 1859.

Il y a deux raisons principales à cet hiatus prolongé : la pandémie de COVID-19, qui a bouleversé les calendriers de la quasi-totalité de la planète; et le coût d'une telle activité, car la tenue de synodes en « présentiel » est onéreuse, et les capacités financières diocésaines (comme celles d'à peu près tout le monde de nos jours)

sont restreintes.

Mais nous nous rassemblons quand même en synode, car se réunir en synode – alors que des représentants des laïcs et du clergé se rejoignent tous avec l'évêque – fait partie de l'identité anglicane. Pendant un synode, nous prions ensemble, nous discutons ensemble, nous nous consultons les uns les autres, nous discernons ensemble, nous marchons ensemble – ce qui, en fait, correspond à la signification du mot « synode ».

Et bien qu'à plusieurs moments au cours des prochains jours vous puissiez avoir l'impression de vous trouver au milieu d'une réunion d'affaires, sachez qu'il s'agit de bien plus que cela. Il y a une raison pour laquelle un synode ne s'amorce pas autour d'une table de réunion, mais bien autour d'un autel. Il s'agit d'un rassemblement sacré de sœurs et de frères dans le Christ, nourris par la Parole et les sacrements, cherchant à discerner le cap vers lequel le Saint-Esprit nous

guide pour mener la vie et l'œuvre de notre église diocésaine dans et pour le monde que Dieu a créé et qu'il aime.

Alors que nous entamons ce rassemblement sacré de notre église diocésaine, j'aimerais passer un peu de temps à revenir sur certains des événements qui se sont déroulés depuis notre dernier synode (certains, pas tous!), ainsi qu'à regarder vers l'avenir.

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Ce n'est que quelques mois après notre dernier synode diocésain que l'état de pandémie a été déclaré à l'échelle planétaire. Par mesure de précaution (une expression devenue familière), les églises ont fait partie des bâtiments publics auxquels on a empêché l'accès pour faire obstacle à la propagation du coronavirus – puis elles ont été à nouveau ouvertes et à nouveau fermées, puis encore ouvertes et encore fermées, permettant l'accès à un nombre changeant de personnes soumises à des directives variables et en constante évolution, et ce pour les deux années suivantes.

Ce fut une période épuisante et pénible pour plusieurs d'entre nous. Et ce fut particulièrement difficile lorsqu'il n'était pas possible d'être aux côtés d'un proche ou d'un paroissien pendant ses derniers instants, ou lorsque des funérailles ont dû être retardées ou assujetties à de fortes restrictions quant au nombre de participants y ayant accès.

Et pourtant, au milieu de tout cela, nous avons

connu des moments de grâce. En un instant, notre diocèse est passé au mode numérique. À chaque dimanche, entre le 15 mars 2020 (le premier dimanche suivant la déclaration de la pandémie mondiale) et le 26 juin 2022, des « Prières à domicile » (« Home Prayers ») ont été diffusées sur la page Facebook du diocèse, ainsi que des célébrations supplémentaires pendant la Semaine sainte et à Noël – 190 célébrations au total, tenues en ligne, préparées et présentées par des membres du clergé de partout dans notre diocèse, dont la plupart n'avaient jamais présidé à une célébration en ligne de leur vie. (Et cela ne tient pas compte des autres propositions accessibles en ligne préparées dans les paroisses individuelles.) Des centaines (et, dans les premiers mois de la pandémie, des milliers) de personnes de tout le diocèse de Québec (et d'ailleurs) ont regardé les cérémonies (ou les ont écoutées par téléphone) et ont même développé une forme unique de fraternité dans la section des commentaires en ligne de chaque célébration. Ce n'était pas un substitut permanent au culte en personne, mais cela a clairement aidé à soutenir de nombreuses personnes dans leur isolement forcé; cela a attiré l'attention de gens qui ne franchissent que rarement, voire jamais, les portes de nos églises et a contribué à créer un sentiment de communion sans précédent dans la vaste étendue géographique de notre diocèse.

Quelques mois après le début de la pandémie, en mai 2020, j'écrivais ce qui suit dans mon rapport au



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Conseil exécutif diocésain (« DEC ») : « L'Église qui se manifestera de l'autre côté de cette pandémie ne sera pas la même que celle qui y est entrée – ni au Québec, ni nulle part ailleurs. De même, le monde que nous connaissons de l'autre côté de la pandémie ne sera pas comme celui que nous connaissions auparavant. »

La preuve en est que lorsque l'urgence sanitaire a pris fin et que nos églises ont finalement pu rouvrir dans les mêmes conditions qu'avant la COVID-19, tout le monde n'est pas revenu. Dans l'ensemble de l'Église anglicane du Canada, la fréquentation dominicale a chuté de 26 % depuis le début de la pandémie, et d'autres groupes religieux présentent des baisses similaires de fréquentation.

Pendant la pandémie, plusieurs congrégations du diocèse ont demandé à mettre fin à leurs activités. Les responsabilités liées à l'entretien d'un bâtiment et les coûts qui y sont rattachés devenaient de plus en plus lourds pour un nombre de plus en plus restreint de fidèles (souvent âgés). Ces décisions sont rarement faciles à prendre, mais elles reflètent ce que j'appelle un pragmatisme teinté d'espoir – un pragmatisme qui reconnaît qu'il est acceptable de poser un fardeau d'entretien devenu trop lourd à porter pour trop peu de personnes; un espoir que les fonds générés par la vente de certaines de ces propriétés aideront à soutenir le ministère anglican dans notre coin du royaume de Dieu pour les générations à venir, et que l'Église poursuivra néanmoins sa vie et son œuvre.

Au début de mon mandat d'évêque, certains principes directeurs informels ont été mis en place afin d'aider à orienter le leadership diocésain dans notre processus de prise de décision. Il s'agit notamment de ce qui suit, que l'on pourrait appeler une sorte « d'énoncé de vision » : « Nous nous efforçons de cultiver une présence chrétienne anglicane dynamique et durable dans l'est et le centre du Québec. »

C'est simple et direct, et cela peut aussi sembler naïf ou irréaliste alors que nous sommes confrontés à une baisse de la fréquentation, à la fermeture d'églises et à une diminution des capacités financières. Mais si vous ne croyez pas qu'il existe un potentiel pour une présence chrétienne anglicane dynamique et durable dans notre partie du monde, si vous pensez que notre

église n'a aucune possibilité d'augmenter la participation, plutôt que de continuer à la voir diminuer, je vous inviterais à consulter le dernier recensement.

Il indique (sans surprise) qu'il n'y a pas beaucoup d'anglicans dans la province de Québec ces jours-ci. Un peu moins d'un pour cent de tous les Québécois (0,7 %) s'identifient comme anglicans (55 290 sur une population totale de 8 308 480). Près des trois quarts des Québécois qui s'identifient comme anglicans vivent dans la région métropolitaine de Montréal et ses environs. Un peu plus de 10 % des anglicans de la province (un peu plus de 6 000) vivent dans les limites géographiques du diocèse de Québec, concentrés en grappes dans les Cantons-de-l'Est, dans la région de la Capitale-Nationale, en Gaspésie et sur la Côte-Nord, nos quatre doyennés géographiques.

Nos propres statistiques suggèrent que le nombre d'anglicans « actifs » dans notre diocèse est d'un peu plus de 1 300 (un chiffre que je sais être sous-évalué, car un certain nombre de paroisses ne fournissent pas de rapports statistiques complets chaque année). Cela suggère qu'il y a au moins quelques milliers de personnes dans nos collectivités que nous ne voyons que rarement ou jamais dans nos églises, mais qui se considèrent néanmoins comme faisant partie de notre communauté. Dans ces données, je vois des opportunités, des possibilités, du potentiel et de l'espoir.

Dans ce groupe de personnes qui croient voir des choses positives pour notre église en ce moment et en ce lieu figure Jesse Zink, théologien anglican et directeur du Séminaire diocésain de Montréal (« Montréal Dio »), que nous avons également accueilli lors de notre dernier synode. Il partagera avec nous samedi une vision de ce que pourrait signifier d'être, dans un monde soumis à des changements rapides et à des crises incessantes, une Église créative, fidèle et pleine d'espoir.

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Alors même que nous cherchons à attirer de nouvelles personnes dans notre communauté, nous sommes conscients de la nécessité de nourrir ceux qui font déjà partie de nos collectivités ecclésiales et de les aider à approfondir leur compréhension, leur

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engagement et leur implication chrétiennes afin qu'ils puissent encore mieux se joindre à l'œuvre de révélation du royaume de Dieu au milieu de nous. Lors de la Conférence de Lambeth en 2022, les évêques de la Communion anglicane ont réengagé nos églises dans une « période de discipulat délibéré ». Cela signifie faire un effort encore plus concerté pour aider ceux qui font déjà partie de notre église à grandir dans leur foi chrétienne afin qu'ils puissent vivre aussi pleinement que possible ce qui est parfois décrit comme une « vie façonnée par Jésus ».

Il était frappant (et aussi étrangement encourageant) d'entendre des évêques de la Conférence de Lambeth provenant d'églises en pleine croissance dans le Sud global dire des choses comme : « Nous formons des disciples mais nous ne les nourrissons pas; nous baptisons des gens mais nous ne les revoyons pas », ou décrire l'engagement chrétien de nombre de leurs membres comme « beaucoup de bruit pour pas grand chose ». Ces descriptions ressemblent parfois à notre propre situation ici au Québec.

Il n'existe pas de programme ou de formule fourre-tout pour la formation des disciples chrétiens anglicans; tout dépend du contexte. Dans leurs rapports au synode, le chanoine théologien Jeffrey Metcalfe et le chanoine des ministères laïcs Giuseppe Gagliano décrivent certains des moyens avec lesquels nous avons tenté, au niveau diocésain, d'aider nos gens à grandir dans une vie de véritable discipulat chrétien, et des plans pour de nouveaux types de formation chrétienne encore à venir – en utilisant les capacités déjà présentes chez les gens de notre diocèse et en s'appuyant sur les leçons apprises pendant la pandémie concernant l'utilisation de la technologie pour rassembler les gens malgré de grandes distances.

Au milieu de toutes les autres préoccupations et demandes qui requièrent notre attention, notre énergie et nos ressources en tant qu'Église, il peut être facile d'oublier que de former et nourrir des disciples de Jésus-Christ est vraiment ce que nous sommes censés faire. Comme l'a dit un jour l'anglican C.S. Lewis : « L'Église n'existe pour rien d'autre que d'attirer [les gens] dans le Christ, d'en faire de petits Christs. Si cela ne se produit pas, alors toutes les cathédrales, le clergé,

les missions, les sermons, même la Bible elle-même, ne sont qu'une perte de temps. Dieu ne s'est fait homme pour aucune autre raison. »

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Comme toujours, bien des choses extraordinaires se réalisent dans les divers recoins du diocèse, souvent de manière discrète et effacée. Si vous ne l'avez pas encore fait, je vous encourage vivement à lire les rapports écrits qui vous ont été fournis au cours des dernières semaines, car ils relatent en détail diverses expériences de mission et de ministère vécues par le clergé dévoué et les laïcs fervents de notre diocèse.

Une histoire que j'aimerais partager ici n'apparaît dans aucun de ces rapports, mais elle s'avère importante pour notre vie diocésaine. La plupart d'entre nous sont désormais bien au fait de la participation de l'Église anglicane du Canada à ce qui a été appelé le système des pensionnats, qui a, par la force, retiré des enfants autochtones de leurs communautés dans le cadre d'un programme d'assimilation et de génocide culturel parrainé par l'État.

Un de ces pensionnats opérait dans notre diocèse, à La Tuque, entre 1963 et 1978. Une fillette de neuf ans, Juliette Rabbitskin, y est morte d'une pneumonie lors d'une épidémie s'y étant déclarée en 1966. Bien qu'elle ait été originaire de la communauté crie de Mistissini (à environ 500 kilomètres au nord de La Tuque), son corps a été enterré par le clergé anglican dans le cimetière anglican de La Tuque, sans même que les parents de Juliette ne soient informés du décès de leur fille. Ils ne l'ont appris que quelques mois plus tard, de la bouche de leurs autres enfants, lorsque ceux-ci sont rentrés chez eux pour l'été, sans Juliette.

Parmi les appels à l'action de la Commission de vérité et réconciliation du Canada figure, si la famille devait en faire la demande, la réinhumation des enfants décédés dans les pensionnats dans leur communauté d'origine. La participation de notre diocèse à ce processus de rapatriement a débuté en 2021, en collaboration avec la famille, les gouvernements provincial et fédéral et la nation crie. La dépouille de Juliette a été exhumée du cimetière anglican de La Tuque le 20 septembre dernier et ses restes ont été inhumés à nouveau



Rite de confirmation dans la chapelle anglicane de Sainte-Anne au pensionnat indien de La Tuque en 1968. (Photo: Archives du Synode général)

à Mistissini le 30 septembre, Journée nationale de la vérité et de la réconciliation. À l'invitation de la famille Rabbitskin, j'étais présent aux deux événements et j'ai présenté des excuses publiques officielles à la famille, aux survivants du pensionnat de La Tuque et à la nation crie.

La réconciliation avec les peuples et les communautés autochtones qui ont été lésés par notre église est un long périple souvent accidenté. D'avoir aidé Juliette à rentrer chez elle représente une modeste mais importante étape de ce cheminement. Emily Rabbitskin, qui avait fréquenté le pensionnat avec sa cousine Juliette, a déclaré ceci après la réinhumation : « C'est comme si un poids avait été enlevé de mon âme, c'est à quel point j'étais heureuse. [...] J'ai ressenti de la paix après. »

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Notre dernier synode diocésain avait explicitement demandé la complétion de deux mandats spécifiques avant la tenue du prochain synode.

Le premier était une « demande à l'évêque de Québec d'autoriser la célébration du mariage de personnes de même sexe dans le diocèse de Québec ». Malgré le vote écrasant en faveur de cette proposition en 2019, j'avais demandé au synode de m'accorder un délai pour consulter certaines personnes au sein du diocèse qui pourraient trouver une telle innovation malaisée, dans l'espoir d'élaborer une politique permettant de respecter à la fois la demande du synode

et la conscience de ceux et celles qui n'adhèrent pas à cette idée.

Il en résulte qu'une nouvelle politique diocésaine sur le mariage est entrée en vigueur le 1er juillet de cette année. Elle est fondée sur un ensemble d'affirmations adoptées par le synode général de l'Église anglicane du Canada de 2019, qui ont eu pour effet de permettre à chacun des diocèses d'exercer une soi-disant « option régionale » en ce qui concerne la possibilité de mariage de personnes du même sexe en église. Elle cherche à répondre à la demande du synode en énonçant simplement et clairement les lignes directrices de notre diocèse en matière de mariage, quels que soient les genres des personnes désirant se marier. La politique réitère une disposition de longue date qui n'oblige aucun(e) célébrant(e) à agir à l'encontre de sa conscience en présidant à un mariage – encore une fois, quels que soient les genres des futures conjoints.

La seconde réalisation demandée par le dernier synode était « l'examen, l'analyse et la révision critique de la Constitution et de la loi canonique de ce diocèse afin d'y proposer des amendements lors de la prochaine session ordinaire du synode du diocèse de Québec ».

Un groupe de travail sur la Constitution et les Canons, composé de six personnes incroyablement diligentes et dévouées, a été dûment créé par le DEC et a amorcé ses travaux à l'automne 2020, se réunissant en ligne pas moins de 70 fois pour élaborer les propositions qui occuperont la majeure partie du temps de

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notre synode demain. Elles représentent la première refonte majeure de notre constitution et de nos canons depuis une génération, et elles s’imposaient depuis longtemps.

Si l’idée de discuter d’amendements constitutionnels et canoniques ne vous excite pas beaucoup, essayez de penser à notre constitution diocésaine et à nos canons comme à l’équivalent de votre ordinateur, de votre téléphone intelligent ou de votre tablette, qui utilisent tous un système d’exploitation particulier, qu’il s’agisse de Windows, d’iOS ou d’Android. Lorsque ces systèmes sont à jour, ils fonctionnent sans problème en arrière-plan, vous permettant de faire ce que vous devez faire. Mais vous savez ce qui se passe quand vous ne faites pas ces mises à jour ? Votre appareil ralentit, les bugs s’accumulent, certaines choses ne fonctionnent pas ou alors, il plante.

Notre constitution diocésaine et notre droit canonique ressemblent pas mal à cela. Au fil des ans, des correctifs occasionnels et des mises à niveau ont aidé, mais nous en sommes maintenant au point où nous avons besoin de mettre en place un système d’exploitation entièrement nouveau et repensé, qui nous permette d’être plus agiles et qui reflète l’église que nous sommes aujourd’hui et que nous espérons être à l’avenir, plutôt que celle que nous ne sommes plus depuis des générations.

Les ordinateurs, les téléphones intelligents et les tablettes ne sont pas des fins en soi. Ce sont des outils qui nous permettent de réaliser des choses. Il en va de même pour notre constitution et nos canons. Comme spécifié dans un des documents qui ont guidé le groupe de travail : « Le droit [canonique] existe pour aider une église dans sa mission et son témoignage de Jésus-Christ. Une église a besoin de lois pour s’organiser, et ainsi faciliter sa vie publique et pour régler ses propres affaires pour le bien commun. Le droit n’est pas une fin en soi. Le droit est au service de l’église. »

Ainsi, lorsque nous discuterons demain de ce qui pourrait sembler être un point byzantin de certains détails canoniques, rappelez-vous que ce que nous serons ultimement en train de faire, c’est d’aider notre église diocésaine à mieux remplir sa mission et témoigner de Jésus-Christ.

Une troisième tâche importante s’est manifestée de manière organique à la suite de notre dernier synode. De précieux commentaires critiques ont été reçus à la suite d’une présentation faite au synode concernant une mise à jour antérieure de notre politique diocésaine sur l’inconduite sexuelle. Cela a mené le DEC à créer, en 2020, un groupe de travail sur « l’Église sécuritaire » composé de sept personnes. Ils ont reçu l’assistance de Mary Wells, une travailleuse sociale et représentante de l’Église anglicane du Canada à la Commission des Églises sûres de la Communion anglicane (Anglican Communion Safe Church Commission). Ensemble, ils ont entrepris une révision plus approfondie de notre politique diocésaine sur l’inconduite sexuelle, Créer une église sécuritaire, qui a été approuvée par le DEC en 2023. De telles politiques sont en constante évolution, et nous recevons encore des commentaires visant à l’améliorer, toujours dans le but de protéger les plus vulnérables parmi nous.

Je suis profondément reconnaissant aux membres de ces deux groupes de travail, dont la majorité sont des bénévoles laïcs, pour leur engagement et le sérieux avec lequel ils ont réalisé cette tâche en notre nom.

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Notre vie diocésaine a connu plusieurs transitions depuis notre dernière réunion en tant que synode. Je voudrais ici en souligner quelques-unes.

L’une d’entre elles concerne le bâtiment autrefois connu sous le nom de Bishopthorpe, qui servait de résidence à l’évêque depuis les années 1970. J’ai commencé à demeurer dans ma propre maison il y a quelques années, et plus tôt en 2024, Bishopthorpe a été rebaptisée la Maison diocésaine (« Church House »), et abrite désormais le bureau administratif diocésain – un changement de vocation qui devrait se traduire par des économies financières pour le diocèse, puisque le bâtiment appartient à la Société d’Église (« Church Society »).

Une autre transition concerne notre vénérable publication diocésaine, la *Gazette*. Après une pause de parution résultant du départ du rédacteur en chef Matthew Townsend, la *Gazette* a repris du service, présentant chaque trimestre un numéro thématique sous



forme de magazine. Elle demeure un moyen de communication essentiel pour notre diocèse.

Un certain nombre de membres importants de notre famille diocésaine ont pris leur retraite ou ont autrement changé de rôle, et méritent ici une mention particulière.

Ruth Sheeran et Anne Chapman ont toutes deux œuvré à titre de doyennes rurales et en tant que membres du DEC, pour leurs doyennés respectifs de Saint François et de Québec, pendant de très nombreuses années. Pour ceux et celles d'entre nous qui sont là depuis un certain temps, il est difficile d'imaginer un synode diocésain sans Ruth ou sans Anne. Chacune à sa manière demeurera impliquée dans la vie et le travail de notre église dans sa propre communauté, mais pour reconnaître leur implication et leur engagement de longue date au sein de notre église diocésaine, j'ai le grand plaisir de nommer chacune d'elles doyenne rurale émérite.

Malcolm McLeod prendra également sa retraite après une décennie en tant que chancelier, rôle qu'il a rempli en fournissant de judicieux conseils à notre église diocésaine sur une grande variété de questions. Je n'avais que rarement eu affaire à des avocats avant de devenir évêque, je ne savais donc pas trop à quoi m'attendre. Malcolm s'est avéré être un conseiller avisé, sage et bienveillant, montrant un sincère attachement pour l'église. Bien qu'il quitte ses fonctions de chancelier, Malcolm a très aimablement proposé de continuer à nous offrir des conseils juridiques de temps à autre. En reconnaissance de cette générosité et de ses loyaux services, je suis heureux de le nommer chancelier émérite.

Jacob Stone, membre de la paroisse de Québec, a travaillé aux côtés de Malcolm en tant que vice-chancelier; il assurera dorénavant la relève en tant que chancelier. (Jacob se joindra à nous demain.)

Il y a également eu des transitions du côté des finances et de l'administration de la vie diocésaine. Notre registraire, Sean Otto, s'est avéré un ajout opportun au sein de l'équipe de la Maison diocésaine, occupant le rôle polyvalent de coordonnateur des opérations.

L'été dernier, après une douzaine d'années en tant

que directrice générale de notre diocèse, Marie-Sol Gaudreau a choisi de relever de nouveaux défis. (Elle se joindra à nous lors du banquet de clôture samedi.) Le départ de Marie-Sol nous a permis de réévaluer le poste qu'elle occupait avant de procéder à une nouvelle embauche, ce qui a donné lieu à la création du nouveau poste de contrôleur diocésain. Eloah Roberge occupe ce poste depuis le mois d'août et est depuis très occupée à chercher des moyens d'apporter plus de clarté, plus d'efficacité et l'utilisation des meilleures pratiques aux finances et à l'administration de notre diocèse.

Michael Boden a également quitté cet été son poste de trésorier diocésain, un poste qu'il occupait depuis 2007. Depuis quelques années, il avait exprimé le désir de se retirer progressivement de ses fonctions au sein du diocèse, afin de pouvoir se concentrer sur la tâche de supervision à temps plein qu'il exerçait déjà auprès de multiples fondations qui soutiennent la communauté anglophone de Québec. Ce processus a commencé en 2021 avec la retraite de Mike en tant que trésorier de la Church Society. Il nous a néanmoins généreusement offert de continuer à être disponible comme ressource à ce moment-là.

Après le départ de Mike, j'ai nommé Sylvain Laperrière en tant que trésorier par intérim. Sylvain est un membre actif de notre église depuis de nombreuses années, œuvrant comme ministre laïc et comme marguillier à St. John the Evangelist à Portneuf. Comptable professionnel, Sylvain est actuellement directeur financier au sein d'une entreprise établie



Sylvain Laperrière et Eloah Roberge

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dans la région de Québec. Il travaille déjà en étroite collaboration avec notre nouveau contrôleur diocésain, Eloah, pour gérer et superviser les finances du diocèse. Je suis reconnaissant à Sylvain d'avoir accepté de se porter candidat au poste de trésorier de façon plus permanente.

Stephen Kohner a également accepté de se porter candidat pour un autre mandat de secrétaire du synode. Comme nous le verrons au cours des prochains jours, Stephen porte, toujours fidèlement, plusieurs chapeaux dans notre organisation diocésaine. En tant que secrétaire du synode, il contribue largement, et souvent en coulisses, à la tenue et au succès du présent rassemblement.

Un autre loyal serviteur méconnu de notre église diocésaine est l'archidiacre Edward Simonton. C'est la nature du travail d'un vicaire général de travailler discrètement mais avec vigilance en arrière-plan, ce qu'Edward réussit à faire tout en aidant à la supervision et à l'exercice d'un ministère régional multi paroissial – un exercice d'équilibriste qu'aucun autre diocèse de l'Église canadienne n'exige de son dirigeant exécutif, et qui, je crois, ne pourrait pas être géré par bien des gens. Je lui suis profondément reconnaissant du soutien qu'il m'offre en tant qu'évêque, et qu'il offre à notre église diocésaine.

Tout comme notre constitution et notre droit canonique, le personnel, le bureau, les structures et les dirigeants du diocèse ne sont pas des fins en soi. Nous existons pour aider et servir notre église diocésaine – les congrégations, les paroisses et les fidèles du diocèse de Québec – dans l'accomplissement de notre mission et de notre témoignage de Jésus-Christ ici et maintenant.

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À quoi ressemblent cette mission et ce témoignage ? À quoi ressemble « une présence chrétienne anglicane dynamique et durable dans l'est et le centre du Québec » ? Une question encore plus fondamentale pourrait être : que nous réserve l'avenir ?

Je vous donne ma réponse honnête et sincère : je ne sais pas. Ce que je sais par contre, c'est que tout ce que

nous faisons – la mise à jour notre gouvernance, l'emphase sur la formation de disciples, la mise en place de nouvelles structures de ministère, de systèmes financiers robustes, l'arrivée de nouveaux employés et dirigeants – nous ne le faisons pas pour avoir l'air occupés ou pour tuer le temps, mais parce que nous croyons que nous avons un avenir.

Il y a quelques années, quelqu'un m'a fait part d'une lettre qu'il avait reçue d'un ancien évêque du diocèse de Québec, dans laquelle se trouvait la phrase suivante : « Je suis sûr », avait écrit l'évêque, « que je n'ai pas besoin de vous dire que l'avenir de notre église dans le diocèse semble menacé, mais nous devons y travailler. »

L'auteur de la lettre était l'évêque Allen Goodings et la lettre date de 1977. Il est clair que Dieu n'en avait pas fini avec le diocèse de Québec il y a 47 ans, et Dieu n'en a pas fini avec nous aujourd'hui. Tant que nous demeurerons réceptifs à la direction du Saint-Esprit, Dieu continuera d'utiliser cette église pour accomplir ses bons desseins dans le monde.

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Dans mon appel au dernier synode, j'ai commencé par une prière que j'ai ensuite décrite comme réaliste mais encourageante, honnête mais pleine d'espoir. C'est cette même prière qui concluait chacune des 190 diffusions en ligne des « Prières à domicile » pendant la pandémie. J'aime encore beaucoup cette prière parce qu'elle ne fait pas fi des vérités difficiles à accepter et qu'elle ne sombre pas dans le pessimisme stérile. C'est une prière qui, je pense, s'adresse encore et toujours à l'endroit où nous nous trouvons en tant qu'église ici et maintenant. Alors que nous entamons ensemble ce rassemblement sacré qu'est le synode, je vous invite à vous joindre à moi pour prononcer bien haut cette prière :

*Ô Dieu, tu as appelé tes serviteurs dans des périple dont nous ne voyons pas la fin, par des sentiers encore inexplorés, aux périls inconnus. Donne-nous la foi d'aller de l'avant avec courage, sans connaître notre destination, mais sachant que ta main nous guide et que ton amour nous soutient, par Jésus Christ notre Seigneur. Amen.*

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# New Naskapi leaders blessed



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(Photo: Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach)

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Bishop Bruce was honoured to be invited to participate in the inauguration of the new chief and council for the Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach on December 7 and to offer a prayer of blessing as the community's leadership began their term of office. Sworn into office that day were (from left to right) Councillor Luke Swappie, Councillor Timothy Pien, Deputy Chief Nathan Uniam, Chief Louise Nattawappio, Councillor Louise Mameanskum, Councillor Nigel Einish, and Councillor Ronald Tooma.

# Mon premier Synode

Lors de l'assemblée générale annuelle des membres de la paroisse de Québec, j'ai signifié mon intérêt à participer au 86<sup>ème</sup> Synode du Diocèse de Québec afin de mieux connaître le fonctionnement de l'Église anglicane. Ma candidature a été retenue et je suis devenue déléguée à cet événement qui a eu lieu du 31 octobre au 3 novembre 2024 au Monastère des Augustines dans le Vieux-Québec. Quel lieu magnifique!

Je me suis préparée à cette rencontre en lisant tous les documents envoyés par le secrétaire du Synode, monsieur Stephen Kohner, et en participant à deux webinaires, dont l'un en français animé par le registraire, Dr. Sean Otto. Ils portaient sur la révision de la constitution et les lois canoniques du diocèse. D'une part, j'ai lu avec grand intérêt le rapport d'activités réalisées par les instances et les comités diocésains depuis 2019. D'autre part, je me suis familiarisée avec la structure et le fonctionnement du diocèse en posant des questions.

Le jeudi 31 octobre en soirée, j'ai été émue par la célébration de l'Eucharistie tenue dans le chœur des Augustines. Officiée par l'évêque Bruce Myers, ce

dernier était accompagné de la révérende diacre Anne Morissette de la paroisse St. Michaël à Sillery et du révérend diacre Silas Nabinicaboo, de la paroisse de St. John à Kawawachikamach. Ce trio symbolisait pour moi le souci de tenir compte de la diversité sexuelle, ethnique et linguistique des membres du diocèse. J'y ai entendu l'expression de l'Amour en anglais, français et naskapi. Ensuite, j'ai écouté attentivement l'Appel de l'évêque qui m'a fait réaliser que je participais à un rassemblement sacré. « Pendant un synode, nous prions ensemble, nous discutons ensemble, nous nous consultons les uns les autres, nous discernons ensemble, *nous marchons ensemble* – ce qui, en fait, correspond à la signification du mot “synode” ».

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Après la prière du matin du vendredi 1er novembre, nous avons assisté au visionnement de la vidéo de l'Archevêque Anne Germond, primat intérimaire de l'Église anglicane du Canada, de celle de l'*Anglican Foundation of Canada* et de celle produite par l'organisme *Alongside Hope/Auprès de l'espoir* (PWRDF). Toutes ces personnes nous souhaitaient un bon synode et nous rendaient compte des activités réalisées dans le diocèse et au Canada. À la suite de chacune de ces vidéos, nous discutons de la constitution et les lois canoniques. Cette formule a permis d'alléger le contenu des séances de travail qui pouvait sembler austère. J'ai constaté que la très grande majorité des propositions d'amendements aux articles ont été adoptées. Il y a eu des propositions d'amendements « amicales » pour réajuster certains termes mais l'énorme travail de révision effectué par le *Constitution and Canons Working Group* a été reconnu à sa juste valeur. De plus, j'ai été contente d'apprendre que leurs 70 réunions tenues via Zoom s'étaient déroulées dans la bonne humeur.

Le samedi 2 novembre, après la prière du matin, le révérend Dr. Jesse Zink du Montreal Dio (Séminaire diocésain de Montréal) nous a fait réfléchir et discuter



Johanne Jutras (Photo : Océane Holbrook)

de thèmes chrétiens alors que nous vivons dans un monde en crise continue. J'ai échangé avec Spencer Nadeau de Lennoxville, Mary Ellen Reisner Wright, l'historienne du Diocèse à Québec de même qu'avec Vera Welsh Clark et Muriel Clarke des Îles-de-la-Madeleine. J'ai apprécié que les questions soient formulées en anglais et en français. J'ai tellement aimé l'approche de ce jeune révérend que j'ai acheté son dernier livre intitulé *Faithful, Creative, Hopeful: Fifteen Theses for Christians in a Crisis-Shaped World*. Je suis certaine que sa lecture enrichira ma vie spirituelle.

En après-midi, nous avons adopté le budget du Synode, reçu le résultat des élections à divers postes et avons participé à une période de questions-réponses avec l'évêque Bruce Myers et son équipe. Tout au long du Synode, j'ai apprécié le caractère bienveillant des personnes qui répondaient à mes interrogations et mes commentaires. Il y avait beaucoup d'humour dans les échanges. Je n'ai senti aucune tension entre les membres du clergé et les laïques.

Le clou de la soirée fut le banquet tenu au Cercle de la Garnison de Québec. Les gens étaient joyeux. L'évêque a remis des cadeaux à toutes les personnes qui célébraient un anniversaire d'engagement spirituel et professionnel dans le diocèse. J'ai été épatée par les 40 ans de service laïc spirituel de Marilyn Mastine de Danville. Enfin, j'ai constaté tout l'Amour qui se dégageait de la part de la délégation à l'égard de l'évêque Bruce Myers qui fut chaudement applaudi lors de ce banquet.

Malheureusement, je n'ai pu me rendre à la Cathédrale Holy Trinity le dimanche 3 novembre pour l'Eucharistie de clôture du Synode car mon état de fatigue était trop important. Néanmoins, je ressors de ce premier Synode avec une meilleure connaissance de la structure et du fonctionnement du Diocèse anglican de Québec. J'y ai rencontré des personnes intéressantes qui m'ont permis de renforcer mon sentiment d'appartenance à notre Église anglicane. Finalement, j'ai vécu une expérience spirituelle remplie d'espoir.

Merci beaucoup à toutes les personnes qui ont rendu ce Synode si intéressant!

# The kingdom of God is like a matsutake mushroom

Let's not kid ourselves. We are living in the midst of ruins. Like a boreal forest that has been clearcut and replanted, at first glance it might appear as if the trees we see now are the trees that always were. Yet the health, the very identity of an old-growth boreal forest, is not only in its canopy but in its hidden soils, in a rich life that runs deeper than our vision—if not deeper than a bulldozer's blade.

The truth is we are living in damaged landscapes on injured soil, both real and metaphoric. Whether the industry that extracts value where you live is built on the remains of trees, rocks, rivers, or meadows, it has left a mark on the land and on you before it has left altogether. And it will leave. Once it has accomplished

its task of extracting value from the land and from you, you will be left to live in the scars of what remains: open-pit mines where once were mountains, tree plantations where forests reigned, hydroelectric dams interrupting fish runs, farming villages replaced by deserted monocultures of corn.

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We must acknowledge that the church has never been innocent of these extractions. Missionaries always preceded the industrial mercenaries, and the barons of industry built and left parishes in their wake. We are the people who remain—the contaminated church.

As Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing describes in her spiraling ethnography *The Mushroom at the End of the World*, contamination is a mixed metaphor. It is not necessarily negative; it can also describe a site of collaboration and transformation that arises out of our encounters with each other and the land. Against a politics of purity that would hearken to “the good old days” (that were never really good for a great many creatures), thinking of ourselves as contaminated helps us to hold together our histories of exploitation alongside the beautiful relationships we have built within those histories, holding up the possibility that further transformations are not beyond us.

For Tsing, the hope in the metaphor is a mushroom—a matsutake. What makes matsutake mushrooms particularly valuable is their refusal to scale. In a monocultured world, they arise not from factory fields but from within the ruins of damaged landscapes of clearcut forests. These mushrooms form patches across the land, and where these patches arise, so too do small and unexpected communities of mushroom hunters—South Asian refugees, American war veterans, and others—building networks from the

margins that allow them to forage for their freedom, salvaging what remains long after the last loggers left. Despite its history of exploitation and extraction, the land provides.

The kingdom of God is like a matsutake mushroom. It does not scale. No church programs or outreach initiatives can pull us out of our ruins. No politics of purity can plaster over our contaminated histories and the injured soils on which we stand. We are a contaminated church. Yet this same contamination is also a site of encounter and entanglement, a patch called into being, constituted by an agency beyond us. Like mycelial filaments beneath damaged landscapes, the Spirit reaches out through our clearcut histories, drawing us, by its fruit, to forage, to collaborate with unexpected partners, to be transformed by our entanglements.

I witnessed this transformation in, of all places, a recent deanery council meeting. The meeting opened with each representative of a congregation telling a story of their love for their community, a love maintained in the midst of brokenness and decay. As I looked across the table and heard their stories, I was filled with hope in these small patches of grace. Not a hope that ignores the damaged present or flees it by projecting a future purity, but a hope of resilience; a hope that together, we might yet pursue a ministry of salvage amidst the ruins.



Matsutake mushrooms (Photo: Wikimedia Commons)

# The unlikely beauty of canons

Abiding by the rules doesn't make you particularly popular in modern Canadian society. Despite our country's stereotypes, much of the media we consume is replete with stories of rebels (with or without a cause) who shape their world against all odds. Following passions, expressing individuality, bucking trends, kicking butt, and taking names—these actions catch people's attention. Rules do not.

We Christians are a people of rules. Since the days of the apostles, we have gathered together to carefully select shared words that shape the expression of our common life. After all, our Christian view of the universe is centred on the Word of God. God spoke the universe into existence, and that very Word—through whom all things were made—took on human flesh. The Word did not remain at an intangible distance, but became enfleshed in a body like yours and mine. In a similar way, rules are not abstract: they are the words that guide the practical, nitty-gritty parts of our life in Jesus Christ.

The rules of the church are expressed in canon law. In 2022, the Anglican Consultative Council released a

revised edition of *The Principles of Canon Law Common to the Churches of the Anglican Communion*. In her afterword to this important book, the Bishop of Lesotho, the Rt. Rev. Vicentia Kgabe, speaks of a seminar she attended on church governance. The words of the speaker remained with the bishop: “The church is governed by law and not by whimsy.”

She goes on to write that canon law is the servant of the church as it grows out of our foundational Christian beliefs and aids a practical mission. Similarly, in his foreword to the 2008 edition of *The Principles*, Archbishop Rowan Williams expresses why law is better than whimsy. Law establishes consistency, ensuring that “we shall be treated with equity, not according to



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someone’s arbitrary feelings or according to our own individual status and power.” Likewise, law clarifies responsibility in providing “ways of knowing who is supposed to do this or that . . . so that we can act economically and purposefully.” In short, canon law keeps the church on the paths of justice, fairness, and mission.

The main focus of our diocesan Synod was the approval of the newly revised constitution and canons of the Diocese of Quebec. On the surface, this may have looked like a group of church nerds trudging through minutiae with little consequence. In reality, it was a moment of fulsome community action, led by the Holy Spirit, where we refined our guiding words with care and deep intention.

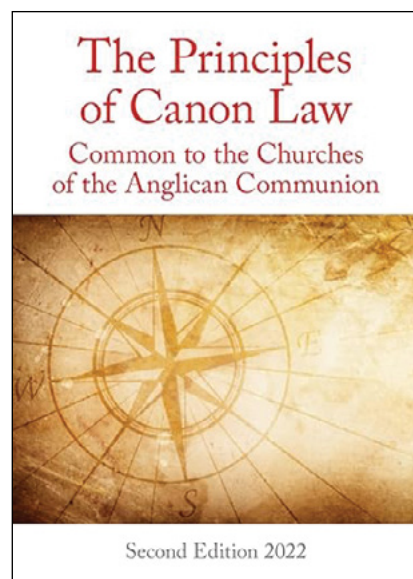
As we passed each motion at Synod, I imagined their possible ramifications. Future Anglicans—unknown to us—will be sharing the Gospel amid the challenges and opportunities of their own time, guided by the words that we critiqued, discussed, and approved. Today, we raise our hands to approve each motion; tomorrow, a struggling lay leader or cleric will be guided amid a practical predicament. This synod gave the gifts of consistency and clarified responsibility to future generations.

As we know from personal conversations, carefully chosen words can spell the difference between encouragement and heartache, understanding and confusion, forgiveness and stubbornness. (If you doubt the careful use of words, simply use the French verb *bless* to mean “bless”!) Our revised constitution and canons recognize this verbal power. Through the tireless and years-long labour of the working group preceding the Synod, definitions were standardized, concepts were tightened up, contradictions were resolved, and excesses were trimmed. I was particularly struck by the working group’s guiding assumption that canons should be written with the possibility of, let’s say, less-than-stellar church leadership. In other words, our canons were revised hoping for the best but prepared for the worst.

The revised constitution and canons also remind us

that our community is based on foundations beyond mere whimsy. The Anglican Diocese of Quebec is not an abstract entity comprised solely of its living membership, like a book club or social media group. As a legal entity, it is founded in the law of this land. In this regard, the appendix of the constitution and canons collect in a single place the legal documents that make up our corporate status—citations that could easily be lost and forgotten. Most importantly, the first sentence of the constitution reminds us that our mission is “to uphold, support, and promote the doctrine, discipline, and sacraments of Christ as the Anglican Church of Canada has received them.” This is truly the highest aim from which all others flow.

The work of this last Synod was truly beautiful, reflecting the power of words enfolded for the sake of justice. The term “constitution” comes from the Latin *constituere*, meaning “to cause to stand, set up, fix, place, establish.” “Canon” comes from the Greek *kanon*, which is a straight rod used by architects for measurement (similar to the word “cane”). With these origins in mind, our last Synod did a bit of home renovation: we checked the foundation on which our diocesan home stands and made needed, careful repairs to our living spaces. With the Holy Spirit’s guidance, may this important work make us a better refuge to welcome sinners and cultivate saints.



By Spencer Nadeau

ST. FRANCIS REGIONAL MINISTRY

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# Lay readers learn about Anglican piety



A statue of Richard Hooker outside Exeter Cathedral (Photo: Wikimedia Commons)

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On January 25, 2025, around 40 participants from the Anglican Diocese of Montreal and the Anglican Diocese of Quebec gathered in person and on Zoom for a fruitful learning experience put on by the Lay Readers Association of the Anglican Diocese of Montreal. Our own canon for lay ministries, the Rev. Canon Giuseppe Gagliano, led the seminar which focused on the history and practices of Anglican piety.

The seminar was broken up into two portions, the first looking at the theological roots of Anglican piety. This first portion of the seminar looked at essentials of Anglican identity, and a particular Anglican method for piety which was Richard Hooker's "scripture-tradition-reason." This method, in a nutshell, says that Anglicans see scripture as its foundation, view it through tradition, and interpret it through reason.

Following the first half of the seminar, participants in person and on Zoom were separated into discussion groups with Canon Gagliano offering some questions to consider. As I was a participant on Zoom, I was randomly placed in Zoom breakout room with three other online participants. I was the only member of the Diocese of Quebec in my group, and this provided an opportunity to offer some of my experiences of lay piety to members of the Diocese of Montreal and to hear and learn about the work and piety of laity in our neighbouring diocese. It was particularly eye-opening for me to hear the differences in our dioceses' lay reader work as the Diocese of Montreal is primarily an urban diocese while our own diocese is considerably rural. My discussion group was quick to discuss this uniqueness and was eager to share different ways and expressions of lay piety in particular settings.

In the second part, Canon Gagliano presented the various ways that the scripture-tradition-reason method is expressed in practice, especially through

Anglican writers, musicians, missionaries, and mystics. This portion of the seminar offered participants ample material to discuss in their discussion groups and also offer more resources for further education. Questions were raised about particular individuals referenced in the seminar and Canon Gagliano was quick to offer his help in guiding participants to more learning resources. Anglican writers such as Jeremy Taylor, William Law, John Keble and C.S. Lewis were all discussed at some length. Anglican music and chant were popular among participants as many have group up with a rich sense of music as an expression of their Anglican piety. Mystics such as George Herbert and Evelyn Underhill were of special interest.

This was my first time participating in an event like this and as I learned later, probably the first time in many years that lay readers from the Diocese of Montreal and the Diocese of Quebec have gathered together in any capacity for a joint event. It certainly offered a fruitful learning experience for laity from both our dioceses to gather together and learn in a collaborative environment. After each group discussion it was enlightening to hear from each group and was sorts of discussions arose and hearing different peoples' experiences.

Coming out of this seminar, participants (including myself) gained a better understanding of Anglican piety, and that, while broad in its expression, arises out of a particular approach to the Christian faith. As our dioceses move forward, it will be important to continue to offer joint learning experiences as they allow for Anglicans in the province of Quebec at large to gather, discuss, and learn what it means to be Anglican in our particular setting and to recall that, while small and often isolated, we are not alone in our journey as our Lord Jesus Christ tells us that "where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them" (Matthew 18:20).

# Bringing our constitution and canons into the 21st century

I remember a plaque in my father's office when he was programme officer for the Diocese of Montreal. It read, "God so loved the world that he did not send a committee." Many of us can relate to being part of a committee, and not all of them positive: meeting upon meeting, bureaucracy, inter-personal conflicts, lack of leadership, a sense that the wheels are churning in mud. The experiences are endless (so are the meetings...).

So, what a wonderful experience it turned out to be for the 70-plus meetings of the Constitution and Canons Working Group. Its work began in 2020 following up on a 2019 diocesan Synod resolution calling for a complete review of our constitution and canons. It was evident that the current constitution and canons were too cumbersome, outdated, and in dire need of revision. How could this possibly have been such a positive experience taking into consideration the scope, task, and implication of the work?

First, the working group was comprised of a wide range of people with a skill set to match. All of them had an interest and a stake at ensuring the proposed amendments would meet the needs of a small and shrinking diocese in the 21st century. Each member brought their respective areas of expertise, unique experiences, insights, and issues with solutions.

Archdeacon Edward Simonton, vicar general and chair, helped the working group navigate through historical aspects, the broader Anglican Communion, and realities of our current diocese. Jacob Stone, vice-chancellor, brought legal expertise and constantly reminded us to ensure that the language used could be understood by the people. In addition, any term that was to be capitalized in the revised document needs a definition. Consequently, the definitions went from 28 to 83.

Chancellor Malcolm McLeod provided guidance as we sought consensus on how to deal with Acts Victoria as well as providing texts for canons that were more

legalistic in nature. Registrar Sean Otto took on the task of providing texts for canons that were ambiguous, repetitive, or needless. Janet Harvey, a parishioner from Gaspé, acted as secretary, using the various features of word-processing software to make and track changes and our progress. It was no small feat on her part. I assisted by taking minutes at each meeting, providing insight into problem situations with our current constitution and canons, and looking at those current canons that should be changed to a diocesan policy.

Second, we had six guiding principles that we abided by and referred to:

1. **use consistent and concise terms;**
2. **use clear and simplified language so that one who is not familiar with church practices can easily understand their meaning;**
3. **provide more flexibility for those carrying out the mission of the diocese;**
4. **combine canons that dealt with similar subject matter;**
5. **eliminate redundancies; and**
6. **refer to other bodies of church rules, procedures and policies where appropriate.**

Third, we met virtually every week when possible, taking breaks when the need arose (yes, we even worked through some of the summer months). Time was at a premium due to work schedules so meetings were capped at one hour unless otherwise possible. A work schedule was proposed at the end of each meeting and homework was assigned. This allowed for work to be done by individuals, very small teams, and for information to be sent out by email before the meetings. Meeting time focussed on actual content.

Fourth, there was no sense that one person had all the answers. We each brought unique and collective insights to our meetings ensuring that synergy and collective wisdom and experience would prevail. And we were not

afraid to undo some of our work, backtracking on decisions, wording, and rationale. Adequate time for reflection between meetings allowed us to critically examine texts and proposals. And as a result, no person felt personally attacked, criticized, or left out. We admitted our mistakes, sought better solutions, and moved forward even when it seemed we were stuck on one issue for weeks on end.

Fifth, there was a concrete action plan on how to educate and introduce the constitution and canons to Synod delegates. Following up on General Synod’s 2023 use of webinars, five sessions were held online each dealing with specific aspects of the proposed amendments. The online sessions were live but recorded and made available to anyone. The sessions were not simply “talking heads,” but time and opportunity for critical feedback. In fact, errors were caught and were corrected. Ensuring that Synod delegates were well informed beforehand paid off enormously when it came to the actual presentation, discussion, and eventual passing of the amendments.

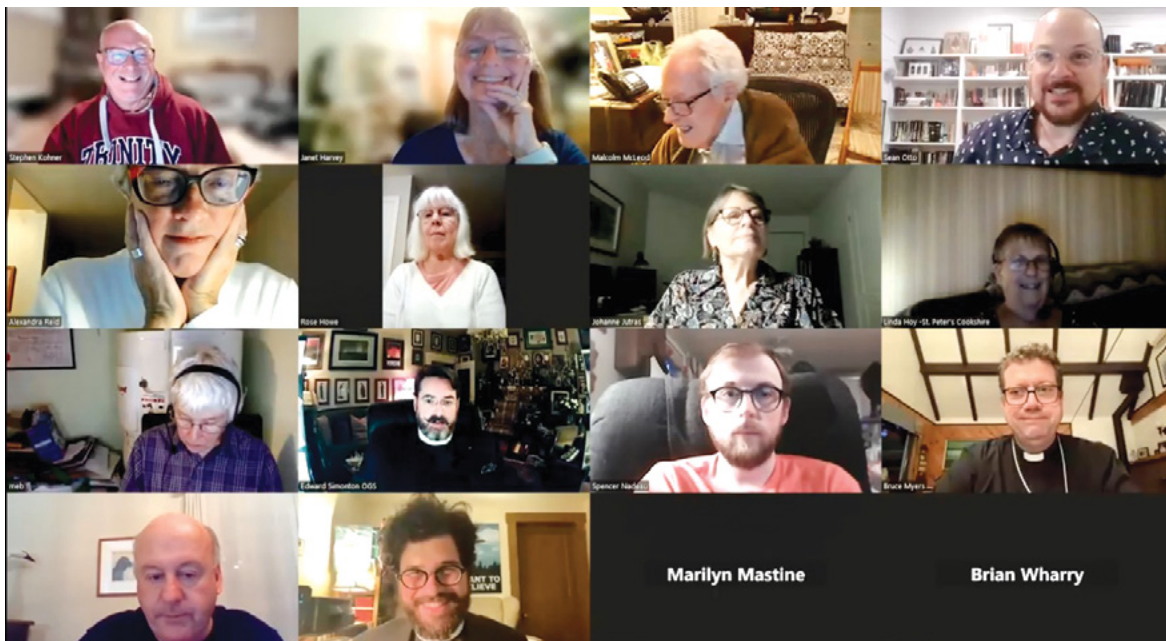
Sixth, the delegates to Synod understood the task at hand. They were receptive to the amendments and could see the need for change, for less canonical directives in the life of the church, and how the text supported the diocese in its day-to-day operations as well as into the future. During Synod, there was little discussion and debate—not due to complacency or disinterest, but due

to the overall sense of the intrinsic value the amendments exemplified.

Seven, Bishop Bruce let the working group do its work. At no time was there episcopal interference. When we had particular issues that we wanted to have his response to, he did so in a way that never curtailed or stymied the group. His input was considered but not as a “commandment.” He reviewed our final work and provided comments and questions. When you have that kind of leadership and trust, it makes the task that much more conducive.

We now have a document that is about 60 pages in length, reduced from 75, from 33 canons to 18, from two appendices to one. The constitution has passed its first reading and will be considered for approval at the next diocesan Synod. Certain canons are now diocesan policy, will be undergoing review and consideration for approval by the Diocesan Council.

The working group (for their sins) is now taking on the task of developing a Diocesan Handbook that will include a number of policies, providing an enhanced and accessible reference for all. Most importantly, the process has shown that process, working collaboratively, and tapping into people’s skill set positively results in equipping our diocese with a constitution and canons that will serve its people... that is until the next round of amendments!



A series of webinars helped prepare Synod members for the proposed amendments to the constitution and canons.

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# Doctor in the (Church) House

Our diocesan canon theologian, the Rev. Jeffrey Metcalfe, successfully defended his PhD thesis at the Toronto School of Theology in the University of Toronto in December. Addressing what he calls Quebec’s “crisis of belonging,” illustrated by the 2017 shooting massacre at Quebec City’s Grand Mosque, his research puts Quebec theologian Gregory Baum in conversation with American academic Willie James Jennings and Wendat scholar Georges Sioui, with the goal of creating a new way of understanding our shared identity as creatures of God, rooted in the land.



Canon Metcalfe is pictured here with the jury who examined his thesis: Prof. Mary Jo Leddy, Prof. Valentina Napolitano, Prof. Natalie Wigg-Stevenson, Prof. Willie James Jennings, and Prof. John Berkman. Congratulations, Dr. Metcalfe!

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# A quarter-century of ministry

After 26 years as lay incumbent of the parish of All Saints, Sept-Îles, Linda Stubbert has begun a well-earned retirement. In recognition of her faithful service, Bishop Bruce appointed her a lay reader emerita at a service at All Saints on December 15.



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# Q&A with Jesse Zink Christianity in a Crisis-Shaped World



The Rev. Canon Jesse Zink has been principal of Montreal Diocesan Theological College (“Dio”) since 2017. He recently published a new book called *Faithful, Creative, Hopeful: Fifteen Theses for Christians in a Crisis-Shaped World*, which was the focus of a presentation he offered to diocesan Synod last November. He answers some questions about the book.

**Q: What do you mean by crisis-shaped world?**

A: My point of departure in this book is the world “polycrisis.” This is a term that has come into use relatively recently and refers to the idea that as a human society we face not just one crisis, but many—climate change, economic inequality, human migration, mental health, housing, racial discrimination, and the list could just keep going. This is the context in which we as Christians are called to witness to the good news of Jesus Christ.

At the same time, we are also aware that the church is facing challenges of its own. We know about declining attendance and predictions of the end of the Anglican Church of Canada. So this is a book written

from within a church in a crisis that tries to offer guidance and ideas to energize our witness to a world in crisis.

**Q: So what’s the answer? How do we find our way to this witness?**

A: I begin the book in a place that some people may find unusual or surprising, with the importance of what I call apocalyptic clarity. I don’t mean by that that I think the world is ending tomorrow. Instead, to think and act and imagine apocalyptically is to be aware of the powers that are active in this world and are obstructing the kingdom of God and the fullness of life God offers to God’s people. People haven’t stopped



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coming to churches because we've messed up or done the wrong thing. People aren't coming to churches because there are other powers in this world that are drawing their attention, energy, focus, and, indeed, their worship. In the book, I focus in particular on how the economic structures we inhabit are a particular power that obstructs the kingdom of God.

**Q: How does an apocalyptic clarity help shape our witness as Christians?**

A: For one thing, I think we need to be clear-eyed about the world we live in. Let's honestly acknowledge that there are powers in this world and they are not working towards the kingdom of God. All of us in the church, just as much as people outside the church, are shaped and effected by these powers. For much of the book I draw out the implications of this apocalyptic perspective and if I were to summarize it in one word it is this: resist. Christians are called to form communities that resist the powers and principalities and offer to the world a different way of life that is ultimately more, well, faithful, creative, and hopeful than much of what we find around us. Much of the book is about me identifying the outlines of that resistant living, even as I also understand that the particular shape of that living will vary depending on a community's context.

**Q: The subtitle of this book is "Fifteen Theses for a Crisis-Shaped World." You've already spoken about the crisis-shaped part. What do you mean by theses? And why fifteen?**

A: A thesis is a declarative statement. So for instance the first thesis of the book is this: "A crisis-shaped world requires apocalyptic clarity." I found that the thesis was a helpful structuring device in that it allowed me to introduce and write about a range of topics and do so in a way that I hope is accessible for all people in the church. For several of these theses, I could have written a whole book! As for fifteen, well, I originally wrote several more but between the publisher insisting on a word limit and the reality that not all of those theses were quite ready for public consumption, I settled on fifteen.

My other hope in using the thesis is that it

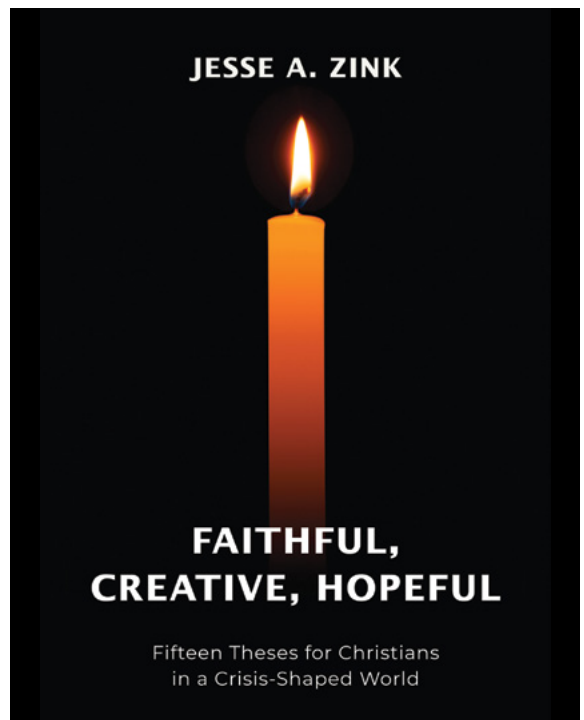
generates conversation. I hope that when people read the book they don't agree with all of them! I'm looking forward to hearing back from readers and I'd love to read someone else and their theses on what Christian witness can look like at this time.

**Q: Who do you hope reads this book?**

A: Every time I write a book I try to keep an audience in mind. The audience I had very clearly in my mind is a community of faithful Christians who are struggling to make sense of the change that is going on around them, not only in their church but also in the world, and wondering what their faith has to say to this moment. So while this is a work of theology, it is not esoteric and out of reach. I use a lot of stories to make this material accessible to lay people. I hope that congregational book groups will find that it provides helpful fuel for their own Christian reflection and ministry.

**Q: Where can we buy the book?**

A: Wherever books are sold! Find your favourite bookseller, online or in person, and let them know you'd like a copy. And if you're having trouble, drop me a line at [jessezink@montrealdio.ca](mailto:jessezink@montrealdio.ca) and I can help you out.



# Gleanings: Much has altered, but much abides after more than a century of synods

How would it be best to approach the subject of our latest diocesan Synod from a historical standpoint?

On the one hand, quite recently (in October 2023 to be precise) these pages revisited the introduction of synods into this country and how, over the years, the Diocese of Quebec has adapted the institution to its own distinctive needs. Surely, we needn't go there again so soon?

On the other hand, a report of any diocesan Synod, hasn't appeared in the *Gazette* for a very long time. We haven't even held such an event for slightly more than five years—"almost certainly the longest we have ever gone between synods since we started having synods in the Diocese of Quebec in 1859"—Bishop Bruce pointed out in his Charge to the 86th Ordinary Synod this past October 31. Might it therefore be worth looking at the first report of one ever to have appeared in the *Diocesan Gazette*?

Such would have to be that of Bishop Andrew Hunter Dunn's second synod, convoked in May, 1894.

Why not of his first? Dunn had arrived in Canada and been consecrated bishop in September 1892. He convoked his own first synod the following year (34 years after Bishop G.J. Mountain had convoked the first one). Dunn founded the *Diocesan Gazette* only afterwards, in January 1894. Thus, the diocesan faithful (especially those outside Quebec City) would have had as yet no means, beyond the private communications of those in attendance, to learn anything about what went on at his initial synod, except through the published record in the Journal of Synod (not easy of access) or whatever attention it might have received in local Quebec newspapers.

The lead article in the 1894 *Diocesan Gazette's* May issue, "Our Approaching Synod," revealed that Dunn's first synod had been overshadowed by and preoccupied with the diocesan centenary, celebrated that same year (1893), marking Bishop Jacob Mountain's arrival in Quebec on 1 November 1793 with 12 members of his family, to take charge of his newly erected see.



Bishop Hunter Dunn (Photo: Quebec Diocesan Archives)

Much of the necessary business of that synod had apparently been set aside to discuss those celebrations.

“The result is that there is a very large amount of work to get through this time,” the article noted, “for, besides a large number of Reports, including one as to the formation of the General Synod [in 1893] and ... the probable effect of this step upon the several Dioceses, there are Canons which it is proposed to amend, as regards certain points in our Constitution, and also as regards certain matters of Discipline. ...”

Readers who attended our most recent Synod will smile at this. In 2024 (almost 130 years later), Synod’s business was much the same: chiefly devoted to amending the Canons and ‘certain points in our Constitution.

“These things touch the interests both of our Clergy and lay people,” the article continued, “and therefore we hope that the Clergy will put aside all else in order to be present, and that the Lay Delegates, having been

elected to so high and responsible a position, will also make a point of attending, so that there may be a full and well balanced representation of the whole Diocese.”

As the May issue would have reached its readership well in advance of May 28, Synod’s opening day, the editor could confidently include a directive to readers, both clerical and lay, to prepare for the event.

The article concludes:

“The Lord Bishop desires that the following Prayer should be used immediately after the Prayer for Clergy and People, or in the Litany before the Prayer of St Chrysostom in all Church Services, until Synod is over ... [and] that our Clergy and people generally may well use over and over again in their private prayers, so that many may unite in seeking God’s blessing:

Almighty and Everlasting God, who by the Holy Spirit didst preside in the Council of the blessed Apostles and hast promised through Thy Son Jesus Christ to be with Thy Church to the end of the world,

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“There had been some division (particularly at the cathedral) over innovations in the way Bishop Dunn preferred services to be conducted, and he strove, very directly, to inspire flexibility of outlook, tolerance and unity among the faithful.”

we beseech Thee to be present with the Synod of Thy Church about to be assembled in Thy Name. Save its members from all ignorance, error, pride, and prejudice, and, of Thy great mercy, vouchsafe so as to direct, govern and sanctify us in our important work by Thy Holy Spirit, that through Thy blessing on our deliberations, the Gospel of Christ may be faithfully preached and obeyed, and the order and discipline of Thy Church maintained amongst us to the overthrow of Satan's power and the final establishment of Thy heavenly Kingdom; through the merits and mediation of Christ Jesus our Saviour. Amen.”

Coverage in the *Gazette's* June issue was by necessity limited to Synod's opening day and the inclusion of the bishop's charge (which was itself very extensive) entering into detail of the episcopal acts during the intervening period. Its most distinctive element appeared close to its conclusion: a measured and dignified appeal for unity and tolerance. There had been some division (particularly at the cathedral) over innovations in the way Dunn preferred services to be conducted, and he strove, very directly, to inspire flexibility of outlook, tolerance and unity among the faithful.

“The Synod was opened in the morning [Tuesday, May 28] by a Service in the Cathedral at 9:30,” the article began. “There was a good congregation and a large number of Communicants. The Altar and Pulpit were beautifully decorated with flowers and there was a large floral Cross above the Altar. The Service was fully choral, and was splendidly rendered, the musical

portion being under the direction of the Organist of the Cathedral ... A large number of the members of the Woman's Auxiliary were present.”

Following the service, the members of Synod, all men, proceeded to the upper chamber of what would be later christened Carter Hall, where the business of the four-day Synod was commenced in earnest.

Further coverage continued in the July issue, outlining in detail the debate over the extensive revisions of both constitution and canons undertaken during this session. The amendments proposed, debated and voted upon touched on such subjects as election procedures for delegates, both clerical and lay, to Provincial and General Synod; the offences for which a member of the diocesan clergy might be disciplined or dismissed; the rules by which pensions should be regulated for clergy when moving from one diocese to another; whether or not the cathedral, by “old custom,” continue to be “differentiated from other Churches” in the number of the delegates they were entitled to send to Synod, etc. This is only a sampling.

A particularly interesting proposed amendment would have granted some advancement in the role afforded to women in ordinary church affairs. Coverage of this particular issue was extensive and discussion heated. A number of the arguments, particularly those opposed, were summarized in detail. One member of the clergy argued that, “The whole principle of the proposition was unsound, and it would lead on to bringing the ladies even more into the legislative matters of the Church. There was no saying where they would stop. If they became members of the Vestry might they not next become members of the Synod? The effect of this culmination of the matter could not but be to the detriment of the Church in Canada as well as in this Diocese.” One layman “begged the members of Synod not to increase the friction at present existing ... on the woman's suffrage question. He feared that the movement, if carried much further, must end in the destruction of the family.”

This was obviously a very uncomfortable topic. Members began to leave in considerable numbers to the threat of quorum. The chairman decided to defer

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the whole matter to the next Synod. Debate moved to other matters.

It is interesting to imagine the astonishment with which these gentlemen would have received the notion that the Rt Revd Mary Gibson, bishop of their sister diocese of Montreal, would be the honoured guest of Synod in 2024, whose sermon would be the highlight of its closing ceremonies at the cathedral, and, perhaps most of all, whose adeptness with technology throughout the preceding business meetings at the Monastère des Augustines had often saved the day!

To return to 1894, at the close of proceedings, a number of votes of thanks were passed: to the clerical and lay secretaries; the treasurer; and the Lord Bishop for presiding; the choir director of the cathedral “for the beautiful music”; the citizens of Quebec “for their hospitality,” and the local clerics in charge of “arrangements.”

Almost as an afterthought, the article concluded with a final piece of Synod business: passing a resolution “placing on record an expression of the Synod’s high estimation of the value and efficiency of Compton Ladies College.”

“Thus was brought to a close what has been a most important, as well as a most interesting Session of our Diocesan Synod.”

In the final analysis, the striking impression left by this three-part report of the 1894 diocesan Synod, is Bishop Dunn’s remarks at the close of his charge. It resonates with today’s needs as much as it must have done in the circumstances of his day:

“I am most eager,” Dunn declared, “that we should all learn to hold large and generous views, clinging firmly, of course, to the holy principles which we ourselves have been taught, but always ready to see good rather than evil in those who differ from us” and always praying that all Christians co-operate in all good works “united in all things necessary in the bright and blessed bonds of Christian love.”

Bishop Dunn seized the opportunity to urge forbearance and generosity of spirit at the start of that particular synod. Bishop Bruce, in guiding our most recent one, mirrored this message as it proceeded.

Though much has altered, much abides.



Bishop Bruce and Bishop Mary Irwin-Gibson of the Diocese of Montreal in conversation in between sessions of last fall’s diocesan Synod. (Photo: Edward Simonton)

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# Election results

Various positions need to be filled each time Synod gathers.

Here are the results of the elections held at the 86th Ordinary Synod:

## **DIOCESAN COUNCIL**

### **Deanery of Gaspé**

The Rev. Melissa Frankland  
Margaret Ann Mauger  
Elizabeth Baird (alternate)

### **Deanery of the North Shore**

Dale Keats  
Mary Spingle  
The Rev. Francie Keats (alternate)

### **Deanery of St. Francis**

The Venerable Dr. Edward Simonton OGS  
Spencer Nadeau  
Marilyn Mastine (alternate)

### **Doyennée du Saint-Laurent**

Donald Crepeault

### **Deanery of Quebec**

Christa Keppel-Jones  
Andrew Reeve  
Glen Marcotte (alternate)

### **Region of Kawawachikamach**

Maggie Mokoush-Swappie  
The Rev. Deacon Silas Nabinicaboo  
Robert Swappie (alternate)

## **SECRETARY OF SYNOD**

Stephen Kohner (acclaimed)

## **TREASURER**

Sylvain Laperrière (acclaimed)

## **DELEGATES TO PROVINCIAL SYNOD**

### **Lay**

Spencer Nadeau  
Sean Otto

### **Clerical**

The Rev. Melissa Frankland  
The Rev. Canon Giuseppe Gagliano

## **DELEGATES TO GENERAL SYNOD**

### **Lay**

Stephen Kohner  
Spencer Nadeau  
Sean Otto (alternate)

### **Clerical:**

The Rev. Canon Jeffrey Metcalfe  
The Ven. Dr. Edward Simonton OGS

## **BOARD OF TRIERS**

The Rev. Jesse Dymond  
The Rev. Canon Giuseppe Gagliano  
The Rev. Canon Jeffrey Metcalfe  
The Rev. Joshua Paetkau  
The Very Rev. Christian Schreiner



(Photos: Linda Hoy)



Farmer Mariluz Suarez of ECLOF, Colombia

alongsidehope.org



# Our name has changed. Our work stays the same.

## PWRDF is now **Alongside Hope**

After two years of discernment and consultation, PWRDF's members\* have approved a new name. Alongside Hope emphasizes themes of partnership, accompaniment, community and teamwork that have always exemplified the way we work.

With its tagline – Anglicans and partners working for change in Canada and around the world – Alongside Hope honours the legacy of PWRDF as an agency of the Anglican Church of Canada, and it will carry us forward into the future.

As we walk alongside our partners and many supporters, listening and sharing with one another, we embrace and embody the hope of a truly just, healthy and peaceful world.



Scan the QR code to view a video about our new name and read our list of Frequently Asked Questions, or visit [pwrdf.org/our-new-name](http://pwrdf.org/our-new-name).

*\* The PWRDF Board of Directors, Diocesan Representatives and Youth Council comprise the voting membership.*



**Alongside Hope**

Anglicans and partners working for change in Canada and around the world



**Auprès de l'espoir**

Anglicans et partenaires œuvrant pour le changement au Canada et à travers le monde