

## Discussion Questions on Governance

- ▶ 1) Noting what is distinctive about the Mission of the Church in Eastern Canada, how does/can the Province serve the Dioceses in fulfilling their mission?
- ▶ 2) Noting the connections between the Province and the General Synod, and the Province and the Dioceses, what are the strengths and weaknesses of the current arrangement?
- ▶ 3) Name 3 things that would strengthen the Province in supporting the Mission of the Church.

### 1. Does Serve

- 1) Prayers Care – Praying for each other
- 2) Organized Gatherings – Provincially, ecclesiastically
- 3) Highly rural
- 4) Highly diverse
- 5) Includes 5 geographical provinces,
  - a. Very isolate
  - b. Communication
- 6) In the manner in which it is served
  - a. Also the cost in serving; highly costly to just have meetings
- 7) We live in a culture [RC] and sometimes French where the culture is quite different from us.
- 8) Diversity and challenges we all have
  - a. Language
  - b. Culture
  - c. Geography (NB = 1 Diocese/1 Province)
  - d. Minority presence in some areas [French & RC]
  - e. Very isolated
  - f. Difficult to communicate – not just language but the cost of bringing some of the areas together
- 9) Diversity between political boundaries

- a. 10% Anglicans in NB
  - b. Much higher in NL
- 10) Forces outside of ourselves we can do nothing about: i.e. / translations of the canons and constitutions into French in New Brunswick.
- 11) Commonalities of geography
- 12) Many rural churches
- 13) Our cultural diversities are a common theme: we all minister in places with strong cultural markings and traditions
- 14) Linguistic issues
- 15) Water/seaway – Mission to Seaman
- 16) Changes in rural communities (mission in terms or rural setting)
- 17) Geographic distance
- 18) Five civil jurisdictions in our province common to our mission
  - a. Depopulation
  - b. Out migration
  - c. Aging population
- 19) We are living out of a rich heritage, many respects of our rich history is largely irrelevant today.
- 20) Pooling our resources, sharing what works in our area (networking)
- 21) Greater distance and impersonality comes when individual parishes or dioceses comes only when they deal with General Synod
  - a. This leads to more complexity
- 22) If General Synod was the only governance, harder to attend to needs of everyone
- 23) Things that effect the Maritimes, such as problems raised by demographics (fishing industry and rural communities) do not affect the diocese in the west
- 24) May be mission is no different, but the way we approach mission is different.
  - a. Resources and restrictions
- 25) Differences in Anglican Church are large, and we have overcome many obstacles.

- 26) We are distinctive because we meet, and we are diverse in where we come from on a national level, but on the provincial level we can connect on a personal level.
- 27) Opportunity to help dioceses at grassroots level because of commonalities
- 28) Idea sharing works well, not possible with the complexity of General Synod
- 29) Not bogged down with day-to-day stuff, more opportunity to explore.
- 30) Not the distinctiveness but the sameness: in Quebec Anglicans tend to think of themselves as isolated Anglophones in province of Quebec, many left, etc... Yet finding this is not unique to Quebec, every Diocese has a rural component of people leaving Kids are going away; comfort in the similarities. Could General Synod access this? No, they tend to be more legislative, not time to be able to do that.
- 31) Also distinct things about the mission, ACPO, etc...
- 32) Demographics blips because of departures; difference in doing programming and ministry
- 33) How can we grip people so that they value the communion of Christ; so that they move to seek that everywhere.
- 34) Cities grow, but the churches are not growing, Maybe Provincial Synod could address.

### 35. Weakness

- Lack of orientation (internal)
- Different levels (youth, lay, clergy)
- New delegates
- Weakness in the perception in General Synod about the Atlantic Province
- A prevailing feeling that the province of Canada is the weak little sister, that we are being carried
- We are sending money – but what are we getting for it (national church)
- What they discuss at General Synod isn't acceptable to us
  - o No inters
  - o Not addressing our issues
- We feel we don't have a voice as a province to General Synod
- The agenda of General Synod is made elsewhere

- We defer to the Secular Government for matters of social justice
- Must be more proactive
- We have no real budget to help us do more
- Without province we can become too isolated
- Name: Ecclesiastical Province of Canada confusing
- Not pooling our resources effectively
- Lack of finances (some diocese very poor)
- Do we give ourselves enough time to strengthen and plan at a grassroots level, to give ourselves things to take back-weakness?
- Challenging is a strong weakness, we could use better.
- Overlook evangelism, we never did it properly in the decade of evangelism
- Didn't do good jobs of "branding" ourselves and being a presence in our communities.
- Use to be that the Church was the hearts of the community
- Age of Christendom is over
- In light of present circumstances, what is our role? Not answerable, afraid to offend
- We are consoled by our tradition
- Need to be disciples based on the strength of our faith
- Form our spiritual identity, a powerful worship and an emphasis on identity-personal as well as corporate
- Serving Christ is perfect freedom
- 1994/1995, the National Church got rid of the programme department; cut ideas no action, this broke donations to the National Church
- Now all giving no receiving
- Where the rubber meets the road it doesn't impact the local level (Parish).
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- Where the rubber meets the road it doesn't impact the local level (Parish)
- At Provincial level a disconnect which impacts the parishes
- No one had heard of Provincial Synod at the Parish level, has it impacted me or my ministry? No
- No youth events at Provincial Synod
- Not whether people know but whether people are impacted, whether they know or not
- Evangelism should be a focus of provincial synod
- Not clear; definitions are not understood; can't do, if don't know
- We deal with lesser issues more than the true mission – proclaim the Gospel

### Strength

- Follow through with the sexual misconduct training
- Provinces: a lot of close relationships between the Dioceses (Montreal & Quebec)
- Importance of closer relationship
- Collegiality between the bishops
- Strength in our common history together
- Statistics Canada reports that our benevolence of giving is higher
- We have accepted our responsibility as part of General Synod in response to the residential school issue; we share that mutually
- Collar with struggle/poverty
- Dialogue with one another
- Province has good website
- ACPO is a strength because we are doing that assessment; we get people from the "outside" but not from the outside. Other feedback from outside each individual diocese, we can draw on more.

### 52. 3 things that would strengthen the Province

- Diocese should offer an orientation to provincial delegates

- Communications
- Reduce # of delegates by 1 lay and 1 clergy and use those resources to facilitate provincial resource sharing (youth programs, new ministry initiatives/ meeting of Diocese executive/Bishops, etc...)
- Closer relationship between the Bishops
- The leadership has to communicate
- Get some social justice priorities and work towards them
- The Province needs to take the lead helping to share resources between the diocese to work towards a common goal
- Our resources rests with our youth – better than our bishops can gather our youth together and follow up with emotional/spiritual/social structures that help build communities.
  - o (At present they do their part-but we do our part and it brings a disconnection).
- Implications of our theological training nature the diversity of our culture
- Youth are not involved in the church; we just get them to do things
- Priesthood of all believers
- Need greater intention and preparation by delegates to communicate actives “back home”
- Each Diocese should report and be required to communicate to the Diocese/Parish “back home”
- Need for improved methods of communication from Diocesan Bishops on process, structure, function, to the parishes.
- Communications: more conversations amongst our various dioceses
- Consider ways we can share our human capital to support one another
- Work from the parishes up to create strong provincial priorities
- More effective communications with financial resources
- Twinning and enabling to tell and share our stories
- Keeping before us the marks of mission and the millennium goals
- Strengthen the website
- Good news stories
- Links to categories i.e. / confirmation prep, youth, Sunday school, etc...

- Share resources which are working, practices which have been successful
- Network
- Hire someone to maintain the website
- Strengthen communication – insert in diocesan newspaper (but act on communication)
- Appointment of communication officer
- Highlights from synod
- Increase awareness of Province
- Sharing! Better use of our time to move past the reports, but discuss ideas and different missions from dioceses.
- Maybe include youth discussion
- Since we are not bogged down by budgets, we have more opportunity to discuss and share things that have worked and been effective in individual dioceses
- Building relationships through discussion between people of different ages, dioceses and positions
- Placing us into groups of people we don't know
- A more widely approved resource to use for baptismal preparation (confirmation program as well) approved at the provincial level
- Communication, needs to get down into the parishes so they know who/what Provincial Synod is
- A provincial website managed and updated with information on educational events, sharing resources, ask for help offer
- Essential Prayer Care Cycle holding our people's priorities
- Need to forge Anglican Identities. Seniors need to share that and the youth need to share experiences and responsibilities
- No official activities for youth here at this synod

Points raised by the plenary sessions after answers from question number three was presented

1. Links for all diocesan staffs and officers via the provincial website

2. Opportunity to include a component where we can build relationships within the context of Synod
3. Have networking prior to Provincial Synod
4. The name of the Ecclesiastical Province is confusing
5. Orientation at the start of Provincial Synod
6. Disconnect between youth and Provincial Synod
7. Provide place and time for fellowship
8. Diverse nature of what we are and what we be
9. There are implications in the training of clergy when we set priorities for the province so they are prepared to take advantage as to what is out there, provide in services for active clergy and train postulants, provide in service for laity as well
10. Communication is essential
11. Have a "get at me" hour with the Metropolitan
12. Budget, think of ways of redirecting people and financial resources; and free them up to work for the good of the Province.