



Anglican Network
in Canada

The Charge to the 12th Synod of the diocese of the Anglican Network in Canada by Bishop Charlie Masters

November 6, 2019 at St. Peter & St. Paul's Church, Ottawa

Gracious Father, we pray for your holy Catholic Church. Fill it with all truth, in all truth with all peace. Where it is corrupt, purify it; where it is in error, direct it; where in anything it is amiss, reform it. Where it is right, strengthen it; where it is in want, provide for it; where it is divided, reunite it; for the sake of Jesus Christ your Son our Savior. Amen.

O God, you have made of one blood all the peoples of the earth, and sent your blessed Son to preach peace to those who are far off and to those who are near: Grant that people everywhere may seek after you and find you; bring the nations into your fold; pour out your Spirit upon all flesh; and hasten the coming of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

My dear Bishops, clergy and people of this wonderful diocese of the Anglican Network in Canada and guests,

It is my great joy in this Bishop's Charge to welcome you again to our Nation's Capital, Ottawa, Ontario and again to St. Peter & St. Paul's Church. I say 'again' because this is the 4th time we have enjoyed the hospitality of this great congregation: 2010, 2012, 2014 and now 2019.

This year, however, it is a particular joy and delight because we are now enjoying the benefits of the completion of the first phase of their Building Renewal. On October 27, 2019 it was my joy to join Canon Brent Stiller and the clergy and people of St. Peter & St.

Paul's for a celebration of this Building Renewal, to rejoice at the completion of this very extensive and extremely expensive work and to dedicate and bless the Parish Hall which is now a warm, bright, extremely flexible and beautiful building and platform for worship, fellowship and ministry of all sorts right here in the centre of our Nation's capital and a short walk from our Parliament buildings.

Today as a diocese we are enjoying the benefits of the hard work, great generosity, and vision of the people of St. Peter & St. Paul's. I want to congratulate Canon Brent, and his predecessors who went before and laboured for this day, for all the clergy and people, and thank you for your faith, courage, steadfastness and now your kind hospitality that welcomes us here for this historic Diocesan event.

We were reminded on the October 27, 2019 dedication led by the children as they sang:

*“Unless the Lord builds the house,
Unless the Lord builds the house,
Unless the Lord builds the house,
The work is done in vain”*

My dear friends, I am honoured and thrilled to be part of a diocese where at our Synods and every service and gathering of our congregations we have a tradition and commitment to strong Bible teaching because we are a Bible people—all of us. We're here precisely because of the Bible. We want to grow in the Bible. On our behalf I want to welcome back home the Reverend Dr. Jim Salladin, here to open the Word Thursday and Friday morning and welcome back our GAFCON Missionary Bishop to Europe, Bishop Andy Lines who will open the Word in our final Eucharist on Friday.

Our theme passage for this Synod, as you no doubt know is:

²⁸ Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ.

²⁹ For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

Colossians 1:28-29

Now I am very grateful that Jim Salladin+ in his Bible teaching will be teaching from Colossians 1, which of course includes these two verses. Right now I want to list four simple observations from these two verses which speak to us as a diocese who are in the midst of a Decade of Evangelism, praying to the Lord of the Harvest these days to raise up labourers for His Harvest. We are all about His Harvest and the Apostle Paul, having been included in this gospel ministry, as are we, said of that ministry:

“²⁵ of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known,²⁶ the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints.²⁷ To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

Colossians 1:25-27

And so he says:

1. **“Him we proclaim”...**

The spotlight is entirely shining on Jesus alone and a commitment to declare him to the world. In a dramatic moment recorded in Acts 4 when asked a very telling question: “⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, ‘Rulers of the people and elders,⁹ if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed,¹⁰ let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead-by him this man is standing before you well.¹¹ This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone.¹² And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.’” Acts 4:8-12

The Apostle Paul also said of this Jesus we proclaim: “^{10b} Let each one take care how he builds upon it.¹¹ For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”

1 Corinthians 3:10-11

So, we must be single minded in our commitment to proclaim him to the world. Perhaps some might remember from two years ago our theme verses where Paul said to Timothy, his protégé:

“Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.” 2 Timothy 2:10

2. **“Warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone”...**

The gospel is for everyone. No one is exempt from Jesus’ claim on their lives. So we warn everyone. Paul to the Areopagus in Athens said to the brightest minds of the day : “³⁰ The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent,³¹ because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.” Acts 17:30-31 There is a day and there is a Judge already appointed who is Jesus, and all must face him. We all need to repent but good news—the Judge that we must face, died on a cross and rose from the dead so that when we repent and run by faith to him. We can be assured of joy with him forever. And the gospel works in every case when responded to by faith.

“¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.” Romans 1:16-17

Paul was deeply convinced that every person is eternally lost outside of Jesus Christ. And everyone who responds to the Jesus who died and was raised from the dead need not fear judgment but is assured of eternity of joy with Jesus. The gospel is for every person.

3. **“Warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ”...**

When Paul looked at a person, his goal was not conversion alone, yes definitely conversion, but then for their sanctification by them growing up unto full maturity in Christ. Each person is called to become a multiplying disciple of Jesus and our fellowship together and our congregations and clergy and leaders are called: “¹² to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,¹³ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son

of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,¹⁴ so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.¹⁵ Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.”

Ephesians 4:12-16

4. **“For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.”**

This pursuit is worthy of our very best effort. It is hard work but the wonderful fact and news is that whether trying hard or not, we are totally incapable of doing it, but He whom we proclaim amazingly is the one who calls us, gives us his Grace by the Holy Spirit, and then does the work mightily within and through us, all by the grace of God alone. Jesus said: “I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.” (John 15:5) and Paul gave his own testimony: “⁹ For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.¹⁰ But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.¹¹ Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.” 1 Corinthians 15:9-11 This is worth our every and best effort as we look to Him in desperate need and to our amazement and joy He promises to work. “He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

1 Thessalonians 5:24

Four simple observations from our theme verses:

1. **Him we proclaim**
2. **To every person**
3. **So that they—and we—may come to new converted life in Christ and grow up to full maturity in Christ as disciples who make disciples who make disciples**

4. And the pursuit of these things are what we called to, worthy of our lives and assured of fruitfulness. Alleluia!

So, in the light of these simple truths I submit to you the diocese of ANiC, a diocese of the ACNA— a member and participant of GAFCON the following eleven conclusions that I have come to, and would ask you to prayerfully consider for our life together.

1. The fact that we are completely and wholeheartedly committed as diocese to the Lord's Harvest of a people for His own name's sake and are seeking to discern how to be best situated for the Harvest is, I submit to you, exactly what the theme's verses would call for. Accordingly I want to express my complete support and gratitude for the Harvest Task Force (HTF) Report which I commissioned as a result of our Synod of 2018. The HTF commissioned by me was made up of just three members, Archdeacon Dan Gifford who chaired the group, Joyce Lee and Archdeacon Darrell Critch, with John MacDonald, our National Director providing staff support. Many will remember that at our last Synod there was extensive work which had been done, also at my request, under the leadership of our Assisting Bishop for Missionary Planning, Bishop Ron Ferris. The document provided for our discussion was called Beyond a Lifeboat and was a plan toward the multiplying of our one diocese into three, all to enhance our ability to reach Canada as Anglicans for Christ. You may remember that the outcome and temporary conclusion of that Synod was to step back from the division or multiplying of dioceses for a time and to take time this past year to seek to discern what challenges we could address toward optimizing our effectiveness in Harvest Ministry. Thus I commissioned the HTF. I have asked them to provide their report which we will be considering this Synod. In preparation for what will be shared, let me share:

(A) The four areas they identified, having listened to all of us, which I have found immensely helpful. I am definitely convinced that the work which I trust we will address and in fact have already begun to address are the right four and they are absolutely necessary for us later—soon, I hope—to address the structural changes previously proposed.

(B) Some may wonder how I felt about things being set back. It would be true to

say, I was both a little disappointed—we having done an immense amount of work towards these things—but in the balance I have experienced much peace. I love it that we are part of a diocese that listens to one another— that we are seeking to be truly Anglican—episcopally led, synodically governed. For me, it was never about the structures that I was excited about but about the harvest and doing everything we can including structural adjustments for the maximum harvest. I am persuaded that the areas identified are critical and when addressed, by God’s grace, will make the ultimate structural changes presented before effective in a way that they never could have been if we just pushed this through.

(C) I want to publicly thank Bishop Ron for his incredible work on our behalf and for his servant’s heart which has continued to support us all and be available to the HTF. It must have been somewhat disappointing having done all the work he did for us to step back temporarily from the structural changes anticipated. What is clear, is this is an amazing servant of the Lord and all the work he did on our behalf became the basis and the starting point of HTF.

(D) I also express deep gratitude to the HTF and their respective congregations for turning their attention so wholeheartedly and prayerfully to this discernment task and to all of you for your response and feedback that became the basis of all their work.

(E) As we tried to say, I am very excited about this season we are now beginning. In a way it is complex, because we are hoping without canonical changes or real structural changes to begin to address needs towards the Harvest. Ultimately, not too far down the line having addressed these four areas, we believe in much unity, we will want to and need to make the structural changes.

2. All that we are doing and everything expressed so far confirms the rightness of what we have described as the Five Priorities. From my viewpoint as your bishop, they stand as we seek to live out Colossians 1:28,29 for the sake of the Harvest.

(A) Waiting for people to come to us has never been the intention of the New Testament. Outward looking, outward moving, bold witnessing is what is required. Paul said: “Since we have such a hope, we are very bold” 2 Corinthians 3:12

(B) The Bible is all we have to make us wise for salvation, to teach us, reprove,

correct, train and equip us for every good work— so biblically grounded is a must.
(C) Children and youth are incredibly vulnerable but also incredibly ready for the gospel— so we seek to love children and youth into the kingdom.

(D) Everything about the Great Commission is strategic, under orders by the one who said: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me." Matthew 28:18 So, we are On Mission.

(E) And we are absolutely convinced that church planting and multiplying the number of congregations is the most effective means of multiplying the Harvest. About multiplying congregations Tim Keller says: "The vigorous, continual planting of new congregations is the single most crucial strategy for (1) the numerical growth of the body of Christ in a city and (2) the continual corporate renewal and revival of the existing churches in a city. Nothing else—not crusades, outreach programs, parachurch ministries, growing megachurches, congregational consulting, nor church renewal processes—will have the consistent impact of dynamic, extensive church planting."

So, we committed to planting and growing churches and the two go hand in hand.

3. As we continue in a Decade of Evangelism, our evangelism (opening our mouths and speaking about Jesus) must not end at conversion. The goal is disciples—fully mature labourers. Though we are blessed with a great team of clergy, it is not our desire or intention to be clergy dominated but for our clergy to seek to equip the body of Christ, the people of God for the work of service.

(A) In that regard, our commitment is to strong biblical preaching in every congregation.

(B) As a Province and we are so blessed to have a Catechism "To be a Christian, An Anglican Catechism", recently revised and about to be released. Here in ANiC we are immensely grateful for the Canadian Council of Catechists that, among other things, is providing a catechism for children.

(C) In this past year, knowing that we have a real need for catechism but also robust theological reflection, I approached the Reverend Canon Dr. J.I. Packer and Canon David Short to work on organizing hopefully an annual conference which will provide continued growth and maturity.

(D) Speaking of conferences and the call for each follower of Jesus to grow up to

full maturity and to be a disciple who makes disciples: there is a very exciting conference happening sponsored by our own ACNA and the North American Lutheran Church in Orlando, Florida - February 13-15, 2020. It is called DiscipleLife 2020. It is a tremendous opportunity for clergy and people to be taught and trained in this area. My prayer is that many across the country will be able to spend those few days in February.

(E) Speaking of raising up labourers—growing in maturity and multiplying disciple makers— it is a great joy to see that in addition to Regent College, Vancouver, which has been and continues to be such a fine means of preparing many of our clergy for ministry; and Artizo coming out of St John's Vancouver; there is now Ryle Seminary here in Ottawa coming out of Church of the Messiah; and in start-up phase there is Christ College led by the Reverend Dr. Ken Deeks in Abbotsford, BC.

(F) Recognizing the call to evangelism of all has implications beyond articulating the gospel. Surely it also means doing all we can to protect the vulnerable so that they have every opportunity to hear the good news of the gospel and respond. This must include standing for the sanctity of every human being and to stand against abortion and against MAID (Medical Assistance in Dying) which, though both are in the name of compassion, presuppose any of us own our own lives and also they minimize the reality of judgment and hell which are very real. "The love of Christ constrains us" and therefore living for Him who died for us, we don't stand by as they are rushed to death, but rather appeal to them to be reconciled to God. (2 Corinthians 5)

4. When we recognize the gospel of Jesus is for absolutely everyone and that Jesus said we should preach the gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15); that Jesus sends us as the Father sent him (John 20:21); that we have a message of forgiveness of sins because of Jesus (Luke 24:45,46); that we are commanded to go and make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19,20); that the Holy Spirit is given to make us witnesses of Jesus in an ever increasing circle of influence, starting with where we are and moving out; and because the nations are continuing wonderfully to pour into Canada and therefore we are seeking to our reaching the nations right here where we are: I am proposing for your prayerful consideration that we expand

our mission statement accordingly, possibly to: “Making disciples of all nations right here in Canada (and New England) by building biblically faithful, gospel sharing, disciple-making Anglican congregations.”

5. Given that we are working so hard as a result of our HTF to position ourselves for the Harvest, we need to expect a harvest and look forward to celebrating the harvest the Lord brings. I believe we need to be very creative in planning for Archdeaconry and other Regional Celebrations and our next Synods need to consider the growth we pray will have happened in these early years since the implementation of our Harvest Task Force work. We will no doubt want to make further adjustments to continue while together. Perhaps we will want to do some things quite differently.

6. Speaking of Synods, I want to also acknowledge that the Synod of 2021 will be a significant for me as Diocesan. As I understand it, our canons' expectation are that the Diocesan steps down as the Diocesan Bishop at age 70 years of age. Accordingly if Synod is in the fall of that year that Synod would need to be an Electoral Synod as I turn 70, in March 2021. Assuming that Synod was in November, 2021, whoever was elected could be Coadjutor Bishop for a few months with me finally handing on the baton no later than March, 2022 when I would be about to become 71. Obviously we can and will leave all these details of how and when all of this should happen in the hands of our ANiC Council whose responsibility it is, I believe, to make plans for our diocese. Needless to say, when we are talking about a Decade of Evangelism and our work as a result of our Harvest Task Force, I, for one, am feeling a fair bit of urgency for moving forward with all the strength God gives, remembering Paul's words: “For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.” Colossians 1:29

7. This year, rather than granting any further honours of new Canons, as has been my custom, I believe in keeping with recommendations from the Harvest Task Force, we turn our attention toward appointing an Executive Archdeacon and an AMMIC Mission Director and perhaps expanding some additional help for our

Archdeacons.

8. As a diocese we want to continue to grow in the depth, excellence and joyful expression of worship in every congregation. At our Clergy Day Tuesday past, we were honoured and blessed to have Archbishop Bob Duncan walk us through the new BCP 2019. We are extremely grateful that in our day such an incredible resource is now available. The use of it is not required or legislated. It is true and required that only authorized liturgies be regularly used, but it is hoped that this particular resource will serve us well and that congregations large and small, as well as individuals and families, will make use of it because they find it helpful. Having said that, it must be acknowledged that things like liturgies highlight the fact that though we are all a Bible people and a Gospel people who hold to a straightforward understanding of the gospel as revealed under the authority of the Bible, there are a whole range of theological issues where there are real and serious differences among us. Liturgies tend to expose some of those differences. As one who travels quite a bit from congregation to congregation, I am keenly aware of some of these differences. I am also aware of the challenges they present to our ongoing life and ultimately the effectiveness of our Harvest Ministry. I think Jesus meant it when he prayed: “I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.” John 17:23 My friends I believe we are a three stream diocese (evangelical, catholic or traditional and charismatic) and enriched by all three streams. We are not for a moment arguing for “everything goes” theology which many of us left behind. We are a Bible people so we must discuss everything in the light of what the Bible says. If something can’t be supported in the Bible, it shouldn’t be part of our life and teaching but, as I say, there are a range of issues where there are discussions all from the Bible. I myself, for a time, in the lead up and before ANiC became an ecclesiastical body, I was the National Director of Anglican Essentials. We were of course formed by three groups which could be linked to the three streams. We used to quote often the statement attributed to a variety of folk: “In essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty - in all things charity.” As a diocese, I believe we are truly three stream. Some might see that we are three stream as a sign of weakness. It is true sometimes there can be

awkwardness and misunderstanding. But I for one, even in the midst of such potential what I have called ‘awkwardness’, believe we are truly blessed to have one another and to be bound together as a diocese. In what I believe was a profound and prophetic address, Dr. Packer in 2008, at our first Diocesan Synod gave an address. In it he described us as four things: a community of conscience, a community of church people, a community of consecration and a community of courage. In the second point of a church people he said:

“We are not evangelical, Anglo-Catholic or charismatic in party or sectarian terms, but under the guidance of Scripture we seek to enter into the strengths of all three, and thus to model what we hope and pray will be the Anglicanism of the future.”

My friends I am appealing to us for a high level of affection, a desire to learn from one another and an ability to grant the other gratitude that before me is a person of real conviction who truly knows the Lord even though their convictions may not line up with mine in all aspects. I am making an appeal for real unity which I believe will serve the cause of the gospel well and thus increase and hasten the Harvest rather than undermine which is what we fear.

9. Take very seriously the responsibility before us to reach Canada for Christ as Anglicans. Church planting and a pipeline of leaders is critical. I love it that we have a multi-faceted approach to church planting. It has to be that way because people, groups of people, keep popping up seeking to join with us in building Biblically faithful, gospel sharing Anglican churches and we must and want to welcome them. There must also be strategic prayerful moves because there many communities across our country that have yet to be touched by one of our church communities. It is not that we think we make up the body of Christ but as Anglicans increasingly it is becoming evident that we must take the burden and responsibility to reach Canadians, all Canadians, of all ages with the transforming love of Christ. So we look to the strategic leadership of Canon Alastair Sterne working with C2C; the strategic, specialized ministry of AMMIC under the leadership of Bishop Stephen; and now, with an eye to standing with often sometimes small and isolated, there is Anglican Explorers under the leadership of the Reverend Geoff Chapman and Bishop Ron Ferris. This is all so significant that

it should not surprise us that the Holy Spirit is raising up all sorts of ways to plant churches, and we as Bishops are trying to keep up with the Lord and steward where we see the Lord is at work and hopefully not get in the way.

10. The battle is real. We would be fools indeed to neither recognize we are in a massive battle, or to make provision to put on the whole armour of God to make use of it in protection and to bring freedom to those who are being oppressed by the evil one and his demonic hosts. Therefore I have commissioned Archdeacon Paul Crossland, the Reverend Ann Crossland and of course Bishop Don to train folk for this quiet but real and necessary ministry.
11. Finally and with much joy, I would acknowledge once again that we exist today as a diocese because of others internationally. Because of Archbishop Venables, Primate of what was then known as the Southern Cone, and then because of the GAFCON Conference and Primatial Council, we were able to be one of the founding dioceses of ACNA (our Bishop being Bishop Donald Harvey and our first Primate being Archbishop Robert Duncan who brought greetings to us as a Synod this morning.) We rightly then are seeking to continue and similarly stand with others as we have been so blessed by international support throughout our brief history.

We rejoice that since June 30, 2017 we have had Bishop Andy Lines as a bishop of ANiC to serve as GAFCON Missionary Bishop to Europe, and he is here. And we will meet later in Synod two guests, the Reverend Dave McCarthy of St Thomas's Corstorphine (Edinburgh, Scotland) and Susie Leafe of Fowey Cornwall. Susie serves as Director of Operations for GAFCON UK.

We rejoice that just as last Synod we had a guest in the Reverend Stephen McNabb from New Zealand, that now they have been formed as a new diocese under GAFCON: The Church of Confessing Anglicans of Aotearoa/New Zealand. And just a few weeks ago their first bishop, Bishop Jay Behan, was consecrated and Bishop Andy was present in the consecration and kindly represented ANiC.

Last Synod we also were blessed again with Bishop Todd Atkinson and a number of his Via Apostolica clergy. Since our Synod Bishop Todd was welcomed into the College of Bishops of the ACNA. Since then all their orders have been regularized

and they are now actively working towards full incorporation of Via into the ACNA. Soon after our Synod it was discovered that a Missionary District was not the way forward, so another approach is in process.

We are however at work with GAFCON and Bishop Andy towards the possibility of a Missionary District for Scotland and UK as a temporary extension of ANiC. Our ANiC Council has given its preliminary approval to this exciting development. Just as we have been cared for internationally so wonderfully in the past, so it is our joy and desire to stand with those who require spiritual coverage in these days with the confidence and hope that temporary will be helpful until they too can establish their own jurisdiction.

And so dear friends, I respectfully submit this Charge to you. I do so, as the second Bishop to the twelfth Synod of the Diocese of the Anglican Network in Canada. I am deeply thankful to God for the joy and privilege to serve in the midst of such a godly and mighty team of Bishops, Archdeacons and all our Clergy and Spirit-filled congregations of our people, served by our ANiC Council between Synods and all of us supported by our staff at our Diocesan Office.

And so we bless the Lord!

*Glory to God whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine: Glory to him from generation to generation in the Church, and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. **Amen.***