

February 25, 2019

Dear Friend,

I am pleased to hear of your election as a delegate to the forty-second meeting of the General Synod, taking place from July 10-16 in Vancouver, British Columbia. We gather under a theme drawn from the forty-third Chapter of Isaiah, "I have called you by name", says the Lord, "you are mine".

We have much work to do in this Synod. Early on in our time together, we will hear the results of the Heartbeat of the Church initiative in which we have been engaged in the last several months, considering what makes our hearts glad, ache, or feel hopeful as we reflect on our Church's work and witness to the Gospel.

The Synod will take good time to observe the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Covenant of 1994. Entitled "A Journey of Spiritual Renewal" the elders spoke of a vision of a truly Indigenous Church within The Anglican Church of Canada and extended the hand of partnership to all who would join them in bringing this vision to reality. Synod will mark some of the great milestones in this journey and consider further steps in supporting the emerging of truly Indigenous expressions of the Church across Canada.

An important matter arising from the last Synod is the consideration of second reading of an amendment to our marriage canon, Canon XXI (On Marriage in the Church), that would make provision for celebrating same gender marriages throughout our Church. Many people – including the House of Bishops, the Council of General Synod, and the General Synod Planning Committee – are working hard to ensure that our conversations are marked by disciplines of speaking and listening respectfully, acknowledging our disagreements, and finding a way to live together with our differences in a manner becoming of the community we are called to be in Christ.

Synod will call a new Primate. While the bishops will have completed a nomination process, it is the clergy and lay members of Synod who actually elect the Primate. With you I pray that they be blessed in the wisdom and leading of the Holy Spirit. The last act of Synod will be the installation of the new Primate.

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We will celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF).

Synod will give attention to how our Church is engaged with others in freeing women, men, and children from the horrors of human trafficking and modern day slavery.

In the spirit of Full Communion with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC), we will be invited to engage in a national conversation with Muslims known as "A Common Word."

Throughout our time together, we will welcome a number of international guests including the Most Rev. Suheil Dawani, the Archbishop of Jerusalem and the Middle East; the Most Rev. Albert Chama, Primate of Central Africa and Chair of the Council of Anglican Provinces in Africa (CAPA); and the Rev. Canon John Kafwanka, Director of Mission for the worldwide Anglican Communion. We look forward to their greetings and messages.

With gratitude for your commitment to the work of this Synod, I assure you of my prayers and I ask for yours.

In Christ,

Fred J. Hiltz

Archbishop and Primate

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