



**Diocese of Toronto**  
Anglican Church of Canada

# **SynodSpeak**

**A Glossary of Terms  
Prepared for the Members of  
Synod of  
The Diocese of Toronto**

- Based on the work of Keith Nunn and David Robinson written for the Youth Ministry Committee of the Diocese of Toronto - 1990
- Revised, expanded and updated by Ruth and T. J. (Thom) Park for the Synod Agenda Committee - 2000
- Updated for the Regular Session of Synod – 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013

## **PREAMBLE TO “SYNOD SPEAK”**

The most common way of involving the laity, in the life of the governance of the church, has been Synods. A Synod is a gathering of lay and clerical members who constitute the governing body of the church.

At the Annual Vestry meeting, the congregation elects Lay Members to attend the Diocesan Synod which meets every other year. It is at these Synods that the most critical decisions, concerning the church’s life, are made. Synod is responsible for decisions in most areas of church life, except those which are the Bishops’ prerogative(s).

In order to carry on the work of Synod, between its sessions, the Diocesan Council meets on a regular basis. The membership of this Council is determined by Canon 2. Committees, working groups and task forces are established, from time to time, to assist Synod and the Diocesan Council, with their work.

- excerpted from “This is Our Faith” by Ian Stuchbery and the “Constitution” of Synod.
- prepared for the Agenda Committee by Paul F. Baston and Thomas J. Park – 1999
- updated by Paul F. Baston – 2003
- updated by Pamela Boisvert – 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013

# Glossary of Terms

## **Archdeacon**

A cleric having a defined administrative authority delegated to him/her by the bishop in the whole or part of the diocese. The territory assigned to him/her is known as an archdeaconry and gives him/her a territorial title.

## **Area Council**

Area Councils provide advice to the Diocesan or Area Bishop on matters referred to it, and elects one of its members to serve on Diocesan Council. Each Area Council nominates 10 Youth and Young Adult Members from its area to be appointed by the Bishop to Synod.

## **Assessment**

The percentage of parish revenues which parishes are required to forward to the diocese. This money is used to fund the diocesan operations as well as to pay the Provincial and General Synod assessments.

## **Bishop, [Diocesan]**

Formally known as the Bishop of Toronto, the Diocesan Bishop is the Chair, President and Chief Executive Officer of Synod.

## **Bishop, Co-adjutor**

A bishop elected by Synod to assist the Diocesan Bishop. A co-adjutor has the Right of Succession, i.e. when the Diocesan retires or resigns, the Co-adjutor assumes the office of Diocesan Bishop without the need for an election by Synod.

## **Bishop, Suffragan**

A bishop elected by Synod to assist the Diocesan Bishop but having no Rights of Succession (see Co-adjutor). In this diocese, the Suffragan Bishops are each responsible for an Episcopal Area. The Co-adjutor or one of the Suffragans may chair Synod, in the absence or at the request of the Diocesan.

## **Canon**

1. A law or decree of the church. The canons of the diocese are also its corporate bylaws and define its organization, structure, and operation methods.
2. An honorary title conferred on some members of the diocese, clergy or lay, by the Bishop.

## **Chancellor/Vice-Chancellor**

This person must be a Member of the Bar of the Province of Ontario, with at least 10 years standing; and shall be a member in full Communion, of the Church of the Diocese. The Chancellor shall advise, assist and act with the Bishop, the Bishop's Commissary, or with an Administrator of the Diocese. The Chancellor acts as a legal adviser to the Bishop, at Synod, and at all meetings of the Diocesan Council.

### **Clerical Members**

All clergy, active and retired, under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Toronto are clerical members of synod entitled to vote and speak at Synod. This includes all parish clergy, chaplains, Synod office staff who are also in holy orders, and heads and members of the staff at Trinity College, Wycliffe College, Toronto School of Theology, and staff of General Synod who are in holy orders. For specifics see section 2 of The Constitution of the diocese.

### **College of Bishops**

Consists of the Diocesan Bishop, Suffragan Bishops, the Executive Assistant and the Archdeacon of York, CAO & Secretary of Synod. Meets regularly to make decisions of importance to ministry throughout the diocese.

### **Committee of the Whole**

If members of Synod want to have full and open discussion of any matter without being subject to all of the formal rules which govern the conduct of business at Synod, they can pass a motion to refer the matter to the Committee of the Whole. Synod operates like an ordinary committee when it sits as Committee of the Whole. The Committee of the Whole does not deal with substantive Synod business such as passing motions. When the work of the Committee of the Whole is completed Synod then determines what formal action, if any, it will take (e.g. passing a motion) on recommendations made by the Committee.

### **Consent of Bishop**

No act or resolution of Synod is valid without the assent of the Bishop presiding at Synod. This can be over-ruled by a two-thirds majority of both clergy and laity at the following session of Synod.

### **Constitution and Canons Committee**

A standing committee of Synod which makes recommendations on implementation of changes to the constitution and canons, as requested by Synod. Members include: the Chancellor; the Vice Chancellors, the Registrar, two Clerical and two Lay Members elected by Diocesan Council.

### **Convening Circular**

A publication containing reports, notices of motion, petitions, and the proposed plans for the diocese. It also includes the list of all members of Synod. The circular is posted on the diocesan website [[www.toronto.anglican.ca](http://www.toronto.anglican.ca)] prior to each Synod meeting. Each member should read this document before the Synod meeting.

### **Deanery**

A portion of the diocese containing a group of parishes under a Regional Dean and a Deanery Council drawn from members of the constituent parishes. There are 18 deaneries in the Diocese of Toronto and they are as follows:

#### York-Credit Valley Episcopal Area

Etobicoke - Humber, Mississauga, North Peel, Parkdale - Toronto West

#### York-Simcoe Episcopal Area

Holland, Huronia, Nottawasaga, Tecumseth, York Central

### Trent-Durham

Durham-Northumberland, Oshawa, Peterborough, Victoria & Haliburton

### York-Scarborough Episcopal Area

Eglinton, Scarborough, St. James, Toronto East, York Mills

## **Diocese**

The area or district under the jurisdiction and pastoral care of a Diocesan Bishop. The Diocese of Toronto contains the Regions of Metropolitan Toronto, Peel, York, Durham, and the counties of Northumberland, Victoria, Simcoe, Peterborough and Haliburton. There are 242 congregations and missions in 198 parishes across 26,000 square kilometers.

## **Diocesan Council**

The focal purpose of the Diocesan Council is “planning and managing”. It acts on behalf of the Synod between sessions/meetings of the Synod.

It is accountable to the Synod for:

- effective planning and establishing budgets to carry out the priorities of the Synod,
- establishing and implementing effective policies, and
- its actions between the sessions of the Synod.

It is not allowed to approve items of a legislative nature. For example, it is not allowed to approve a change in The Constitution of the Diocese. Nor is it permitted to change the meeting frequency or content of Synod meetings or those things spelled out in The Constitution. However, it is empowered to implement the plans which the Synod has approved, to create policy for supporting the operations of the Synod and it is empowered to do its work through Committees and Working Groups which it creates.

## **Episcopal Area**

The Diocese of Toronto is divided up into 4 Areas, each under the care of an Area Bishop. The Areas and their respective bishops are:

Diocese of Toronto: The Most Reverend Colin R. Johnson

York-Credit Valley: The Right Reverend M. Philip Poole

York-Simcoe: The Right Reverend Peter DeC. Fenty

Trent-Durham: The Right Reverend Linda C. Nicholls

York-Scarborough: The Right Reverend Patrick T. Yu

## **General Synod**

The Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada under the presidency of the Primate, the Most Rev. Andrew Hutchison. Meets every three years to conduct the business of the national church and also meets when required to elect a Primate. Members include clergy and laity elected by diocesan Synods as well as the national House of Bishops which consists of all active bishops. Ongoing business is carried on by the Council of General Synod. There are 30 Youth members of General Synod, one per diocese. Members from the Diocese of Toronto are elected by Diocesan Synod.

### **Honorary Secretaries**

Each order, Lay and Clerical, elects an Honorary Secretary for that session of Synod. They are responsible for the keeping of minutes, preserving all papers of the session, conducting correspondence, and seeing that notices, reports and minutes are printed.

### **Incumbent**

A member of the clergy appointed by the Bishop to be in charge of a parish or mission area, and who has been licensed by the Bishop to perform ecclesiastical duties.

### **Investment Committee**

The Investment Committee consists of two clerical and two lay members of the Synod of the Diocese of Toronto together with four members of the laity appointed by the Bishop.

The Investment Committee may delegate some of its responsibilities with respect to the investment of the Fund to agents or advisors. In particular, the services of a custodian (the “Custodian”) and of one or more investment managers (the “Manager”) are retained.

The Investment Committee shall:

- Establish the Statement;
- Select the Manager and Custodian;
- Maintain an understanding of legal and regulatory requirements and constraints set out in this statement;
- On an annual basis, review the Statement and make appropriate amendments thereto;
- Provide regular reports to the Synod of the Diocese of Toronto;
- Monitor the Fund and the investment performance of assets managed by each Manager and the performance of the Fund as a whole; and
- Inform the Manager of any significant cash-flows.

### **Lay Members**

Lay members of Synod are those not ordained as priest, deacon or consecrated as bishops, and who are elected by their parish vestries. The Bishop may appoint up to 20 lay members to Synod. The 40 youth and young adult members may be appointed by the Bishop upon nomination by the Area Councils.

### **Members’ Time**

Much like Question Period in the House of Commons, Members’ Time is a period of time set aside in the agenda during which members of Synod may ask questions of the Bishop or other members or guests of the Synod. This time has also been used in the past for members to raise issues of concern to the Church.

### **Metropolitan**

The Archbishop with jurisdiction over one of the Ecclesiastical Provinces of the Anglican Church, or as Primate in charge of the National Church. There are four provinces in the Anglican Church of Canada. Our diocese is in the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario. The current Metropolitan of Ontario is the Most Rev. Colin R. Johnson who is also the Bishop of Toronto.

## **Motion**

A formal proposal brought to Synod for its consideration. Motions require a mover and a seconder and are decided by a vote after a period of debate, the length of which is the pleasure of the Chairperson.

A notice of motion is a formal notice (in writing) by a member of Synod that she/he intends to make a motion at Synod.

### Procedures in the Diocese of Toronto

- Notice of Motions can be delivered to the Secretary of Synod at any time. Such notices are placed upon the agenda of the next meeting of Diocesan Council.
- Notice of Motions are printed verbatim in the Convening Circular. The Diocesan Council has the ability to express an opinion or make a recommendation to Synod on any notice of motions received.
- Any notices of motion received by the Secretary of Synod after the last regular meeting of the Diocesan Council is referred to the Agenda Committee. The Agenda Committee reports its recommendations to Synod. Such notices are placed on the agenda only with the consent of the majority of the Synod present and voting.
- Motions from the floor and all amendments must be given to the Secretary of Synod, in writing, at the time of their presentation.

All motions are subject to possible amendments which also require a mover and a seconder. If an amendment is moved and seconded it must be debated and voted upon before any further debate or consideration of the original motion. If an amendment is successful, then the original motion is changed by the amendment and debated and voted upon as if it were the original motion. If you think this is confusing, just wait till someone proposes an amendment to the amendment.

## **Motion of Adjournment**

At the conclusion of a sitting or session, someone will move adjournment. This motion does not require a seconder, and if more than half the members present vote in favour, it's over until the Bishop reconvenes: A motion of adjournment is not debatable.

## **Motion “that the question be put”**

A motion which, when seconded and adopted, requires that a vote be taken immediately on the matter under debate. This motion is not debatable.

## **Motion of Postponement**

A motion which postpones or defers the consideration of a motion to a later time.

## **Motion of Referral**

Any motion can be quickly dealt with through a motion of referral. These motions refer a motion under consideration to the Bishop, the Diocesan Council, or one of Synod's other committees for consideration, and sometimes for action. Usually the body to which the motion is referred is required to investigate the motion and make recommendations to the next session of Synod. The only debate permitted on a motion of referral is on where to refer.

**Notice of Motion**

(See Motions)

**Point of Information**

You may use point of information to ask a factual question dealing with the motion at hand.

**Point of Order**

An appeal to the Chair, by any Member of the Synod, that the procedures of the meeting are at variance with the rules of order or the canons.

**Point of Personal Privilege**

You may use point of personal privilege if you have a problem such as you can't hear the person speaking, the person speaking has unreasonably offended you; or the like.

**Primate**

The presiding bishop of the Anglican Church of Canada. The Primate is the senior metropolitan of the Church, the chairperson of the House of Bishops, and the president of General Synod; with the title Archbishop.

**Provincial Synod**

The Synod of the church in the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario. Members are elected from both clerical and lay orders from the dioceses of Algoma, Huron, Moosonee, Niagara, Ontario, Ottawa, and Toronto, and the Provincial House of Bishops, consisting of all active Bishops. The Metropolitan is president of the house. Provincial Synod meets every three years and also meets to elect a Metropolitan. It last met in October, 2012, and will meet again in 2015.

**Quorum**

The minimum number of members of Synod required legally to conduct business. In our Diocese, the quorum of a session of the Synod is not less than one-fifth of the clergy, and not less than one-fifth of the laity entitled to attend and vote.

**Rector**

The title formerly used for the priest in charge of a parish. In certain cases some parishes still use the title rector. (See Incumbent.)

**Synod**

The most common way of involving the laity in the governance of the Church, has been through our Synod meetings. A Synod is a gathering of lay and clerical members who constitute the governing body of the Church.

Synod is made up of all the licensed clergy in the diocese and lay members (non-clergy). At its Annual Vestry meeting, each parish (or congregation, in the case of a multi-point parish) elects Lay Members to attend the Diocesan Synod which meets every other year.

It is at Synod that members determine, at a high level, the priorities for Diocesan Council and its Boards and Committees, and refocus the mission of the church throughout the



Diocese. Synod gatherings are a time of worship, inspiration and education, as well as a forum for affirming the direction of our ministry together.

In order to carry on the work of Synod, between its sessions, the Diocesan Council meets on a regular basis. The membership of this Council is determined by Canon 2. Committees, working groups and task forces have been established, from time to time, to assist the Diocesan Council with its work. You can find further information regarding our Synod in The Constitution.

### **Synod Journal**

The published proceedings, reports and acts of Synod which are available to all members of the Synod and is kept on file in Archives.

### **Table (a motion)**

To postpone temporarily.

### **Vestry**

The body of members of each congregation who are full members of the Anglican Church, 16 years of age and older and who gather to elect the People's Warden, Lay Member(s) of Synod, and any other parish officers as well as to decide important business of the parish.

### **Voting - Constitution and /or Canon Changes**

A motion to enact, amend or repeal a part of the Constitution or any Canon, by-law, or rule of order to become effective requires:

- (a) recommendation for adoption by the Diocesan Council;
- (b) approval of not less than 75% of the Members of Synod present and voting at the session;
- (c) assent of the Bishop.

A motion to enact, amend or repeal a part of The Constitution or any Canon, by-law or rule of order, which does not have the recommendation for adoption by the Diocesan Council, to become effective requires:

- (a) the approval of not less than 60% of the Members of Synod present and voting at two successive annual regular sessions of Synod; and
- (b) the assent of the Bishop following the second approval.

A motion to enact, amend or repeal a part of the Constitution or any Canon, by-law or rule of order, which shall have been recommended for adoption by the Diocesan Council, and does not receive the 75% in one year, requires 50% at two successive sessions of Synod and the assent of the Bishop, following the second approval. (Canon 1(2))

### **Youth and Young Adult Members**

Section 3, subsection 17 of the Constitution of the Diocese reads:

In addition to the Lay Members elected and appointed in accordance with this section, the Bishop may appoint as a Lay Member of Synod, five members between the ages of 16 and 21, and five members between the ages of 22 and 30 from each Episcopal Area upon nomination by the Area Council. For further clarity, young adult members must not have attained the age of 30 years at the time of appointment.