

Theological Education Commission Report

Executive Summary

I. Mandate

The Theological Education Commission was inaugurated as a response to the suspension of the Faculty of Theology at our diocesan college, St. John's College at the University of Manitoba.

The mandate of the commission is threefold:

1. To provide a vision for a robust theological climate within the Diocese of Rupert's Land for the whole Church, including the laity, ordained ministers, indigenous leaders and catechists, theologians, and scholars of all disciplines, and to suggest strategies that will facilitate this vision.
2. To provide a comprehensive strategy for all those in theological formation for Holy Orders.
3. To support an understanding of the role of St. John's College as an Anglican institution, and to envision new ways in which the College can resource the diocese.

Throughout the course of the commission's work it became evident that in order to appropriately attend to the training of indigenous leaders in our diocese, a fourth section of the report should be added under the following mandate:

4. To enable the participation of St. John's College in supporting, promoting and resourcing the vision of Canadian indigenous church leaders. The report's mandate is to promote the facilitation of self-determining Gospel-based leadership training for indigenous people to respond to the needs of their communities across the country.

II. Report Outline

Each mandate is addressed by the following method:

Theology: This section of each mandate will articulate the theological principles that guide our vision. Here we will acknowledge the depths of the Church's resources and seek to express how these theological principals constrain and shape our strategic goals and enliven our hope for the future.

Vision: This section of each mandate will attempt to answer the question: If we believe in these theological principles, then what does it look like in our diocese when we act on our belief?

Strategy: This section of each mandate will articulate short-term and long-term strategic initiatives that would support the fruition of our vision. These will be supported by research and examples.

Recommendations: This section of each mandate will articulate reasonable and sustainable immediate actions that the commission recommends be taken in order to move towards our vision.

There is a substantial **online appendix** available with the report. This section of the report has a two-fold purpose:

1. To summarize research done by the commission for the purposes of supporting suggested strategic initiatives and immediate recommendations.
2. To create a resource both for organs of discernment in the diocese and for those overseeing and participating in the theological and spiritual formation of the laity, local collaborative ministry, the training of indigenous leaders and the training of priests and deacons in our diocese.

III. Research

The Theological Education Commission has conducted a broad body of research concerning the history, theology, and practice of theological education within the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Rupert's Land. This includes, but is not limited to, interviews with the Diocesan Bishop, the Indigenous Bishop, diocesan clergy, St. John's College Fellows, pioneers in indigenous education, theological colleges, and those pioneering alternative approaches to formal theological education. Together, the Commission has sought to use the greatest number of resources possible to imagine a way forward for St. John's College as an Anglican college, for those seeking ordination, and for the diocese as a whole as it seeks to become more theologically robust. What follows is not exhaustive, but is the collaboration of a diversity of Anglicans committed to a thriving theological environment in their home diocese.

IV. Primary Recommendations

The commission submits four primary overall recommendations:

1. That the Diocese of Rupert's Land and St. John's College establish a joint Council for Theological Education. The Council would have a broad mandate and responsibilities as articulated in Appendix A.
2. That a position of Formation Program Coordinator/Mentor be established. Please refer to Appendix B for a draft job description.

3. That the suspension of the Faculty of Theology be lifted at St. John's College in order to allow the college to collaborate with other programs, using the certification privileges provided for in the St. John's College charter to provide Anglican theological education in collaboration with these programs. Please refer to Section 3 of the report.
4. That St. John's College enter into serious dialogue with indigenous leadership and training institutes to understand and promote their vision and to provide sustainable resources. Please refer to Section 4 of the report.

The commission submits several secondary recommendations to be primarily implemented by the instruments described above, with some exceptions. Other important specific recommendations can be found in the body of the report.

1. The development and maintenance of an online resource listing of all Anglican training programs within the Canadian Church.
2. That Rupert's Land News be utilized to promote the flourishing of theological inquiry across the diocese by working with the RLN editor to create a theological education page on the RLN site.
3. That a process of educational covenants be established for all postulants and active clergy. We recommend that reviews take place every year during postulancy and during the first three years of ordained (commissioned) ministry and every five years subsequently.
4. That the diocese, in partnership with St. John's College, ensure resources for ongoing ministry formation among active clergy are maintained.
5. That the diocese participate in St. John's College's upcoming strategic vision process.
6. That the diocese reinvest itself in the chapel life of the college.
7. That St. John's College create a visiting resident fellowship program for clergy and theologians in the diocese.
8. That St. John's College enter into partnerships with indigenous training institutes in the Province of Rupert's Land in order to provide accreditation under the guidance of the national indigenous church leaders.

V. Commission Members

Jamie Howison: Clergy Representative/ jamie@stbenedictstable.ca

Cathy Campbell: Clergy Representative/ stmatwpg@mymts.net

Allison Chubb: New Clergy Representative/ allison.chubb@umanitoba.ca

Paul Dyck: Visiting Fellow Representative from St. John's College/
pdyck@cmu.ca

Susie Fisher: PhD Fellow from St. John's College/ susiefisher@gmail.com

Kirsten Pinto Gfroerer: Facilitator/ kpintogfroerer@gmail.com

Ex Officio Members

The Rt. Rev'd Donald Phillips: Bishop of the Diocese of Rupert's Land and
Chancellor of St. John's College

Dr. Chris Trott: Warden of St. John's College

Secretary to the Commission: Julienne Isaacs/ julienneisaacs@saintmargarets.ca

