

**GENERAL SYNOD 2023
RESOLUTION**

Resolution Number C011

Subject: Communications Policy and the General Synod Office

Moved By: Jesse Zink

Seconded By: Helen Kennedy

Be it resolved that this General Synod:

1. Direct the Council of General Synod to review and evaluate the implementation of Resolution A090 of the 2019 General Synod, make appropriate recommendations for change, and report to the entire church the results of its work.
2. Request the Editorial Board of the *Anglican Journal* to submit a written report to the next General Synod that is separate from the report of the Communications Coordinating Committee.

Source:

Submitted By:

Does this motion contain within it any financial implications? Yes **No**

If yes, has the General Synod Expenditures Committee considered the implications? Yes No

EXPLANATORY NOTE/BACKGROUND

The Communications Coordinating Committee was formed by [Resolution A090](#) of the 2019 General Synod by amalgamating the Communications and Information Resources Coordinating Committee and the Anglican Journal Coordinating Committee. This resolution specified the mandate, governance, and editorial policy of the Anglican Journal as well as the existence of an editorial board.

Since the last General Synod, the *Anglican Journal* has been at the centre of a painful experience in the life of the church centred on sexual misconduct, the *Anglican Journal's* role in reporting on the life of the church, and the supervisory oversight of the *Anglican Journal* by staff in the General Synod Office. This led to the resignation in June 2021 of the Anglican Journal's editor as well as a reporter. Later in 2021, Archbishop Linda Nicholls addressed the matter in a meeting of the Council of General Synod. [Her report](#) at that time asserted that "the structure for Communications, including *The Journal*, that was approved by General Synod in July 2019 has not been adequately implemented. The changes to the Communications Committee; addition of the Editorial Board and clarification of responsibilities of various staff and management have not been thoroughly discussed and there is a confusion of roles and expectations." That report committed to the "full clarification and implementation of the structure

created at GS2019” as well as a review after at least 18 months to “evaluate whether changes are needed to this structure.”

The Council of General Synod (CoGS) has also discussed this matter. [In statement in March 2022](#), CoGS identified that one “strand” of the controversy was about “journalistic policy and practice; in particular, the respective roles of journalists and management when the church is the subject of the story.” CoGS also asserted “as a matter of principle, that the Anglican Church needs and wants to nurture independent journalism of integrity in its print and digital publications.”

The Report of the Communications Coordinating Committee contained within the Convening Circular to this General Synod is effectively silent on all of these matters. Its report devotes a mere two sentences to the *Anglican Journal*. It refers only in the vaguest possible terms to the resignation of the editor and reporter. The report makes no reference to the failings in implementation the Primate identified in her fall 2021 report. Neither does the committee’s report make any reference to the work the Primate tasked the committee with in November 2021. Finally, the report of the Communications Coordinating Committee does not contain any report from the Editorial Committee, disempowering the body the church created to provide additional oversight of and assistance to the *Anglican Journal*.

This motion seeks to take steps to remedy the failings in Communications at the General Synod Office since 2019. It notes with concern the report of the Communications Coordinating Committee for its abundant failings. It directs the Council of General Synod to evaluate the implementation of A090 and report to the entire church. It requires that the Editorial Board, created by General Synod, report independently to General Synod.

Communications is one of the most important tasks of the national expression of the Anglican Church of Canada and it deserves proper oversight from the General Synod, particularly after the experience of recent years. This resolution is a step in that direction.

PROCEDURE FOR ADOPTION (G)

In the normal course, an ordinary motion must be passed by a majority of the members of General Synod present and voting together.

Six members of General Synod may, prior to the question being put, require a vote by Orders, with a majority of each Order being necessary to pass.

If a question passes on a Vote by Orders, any six members (two from each of three different dioceses) may immediately before the next item of business require a vote to be taken by dioceses. A motion passes if a majority (or a tie) of dioceses vote in favour.

Source: Sections 4 and 5 of the Declaration of Principles and sections 18, 19 and 20 of the Rules of Order and Procedure.