

The Anglican Church of Canada



L'Église anglicane du Canada

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To the Signatories of the Open Letter to the Anglican Church of Canada,

I am aware that whenever the Church fails, individually or systemically, the resulting harm and pain is devastating. In my remarks to the Council of General Synod last Fall I noted:

At the outset I must acknowledge that this has been a painful incident for all involved but especially so for the sense of betrayal felt by the sources for the article and for the journalist and editor who felt it necessary to resign. Although we may, and must, learn much from this incident it cannot erase the harm done. We are committed to ensuring that it does not happen again and ensuring the integrity of our journalistic practices now and in the future. It was never intended that the article not be published.

Last spring, I wrote a letter to the women, who had offered their testimony to a staff writer of the Anglican Journal, but as I am not privy to their identity, I am not clear that my letter reached each of them. I wrote, *"I am deeply sorry that the process that unfolded through our actions as an organization did not meet your expectations or the commitment of the reporter."* And concluded the letter: *"With sorrow for your pain and prayers for the healing of the pain added by our actions"*. I remain available to meet with those harmed by our actions to personally acknowledge that apology as well as to clarify misrepresentations in the 'open letter'. I hope they will contact me if they would find such a meeting helpful.

In regard to the steps we took, a full review through an independent investigator revealed miscommunication and misunderstandings about journalistic practice that led to an inappropriate sharing of a draft of the article before it reached its final stage. The former editor and staff writer were invited to participate in the review, but did not. In reporting to the Council of General Synod I noted: *"The current situation is primarily a systemic issue resulting from this lack of clarity, misinformation and situational circumstances that are not the responsibility of any single person alone."* As a result the responsibilities of our structure, staff and committees, related to the production of The Anglican Journal and its affiliated publications, have been reviewed to clarify responsibilities in accord with best journalistic practices, especially when dealing with subjects like harassment or abuse that have such potential for further harm.

We remain committed to holding our Church accountable for its words and actions. We are committed to the Safe Church Charter of the Anglican Communion and are deeply sorry for the pain that has been caused.

In Christ,



The Most Rev. Linda Nicholls
Archbishop & Primate, Anglican Church of Canada