

# NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Wednesday, September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009

## *Anglican Diocese of BC to begin restructuring*

Victoria, BC ~ The Anglican Diocese of BC (Vancouver Island & the Gulf Islands) has been undertaking a transformation over the last five years to re-energize and refocus how it provides ministry, spiritual guidance and support and these discussions are moving forward in earnest with actions.

As part of this restructuring, on Thursday, September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009 The Anglican Diocese of BC's Diocesan Council carried the motion to suspend the operations of Camp Columbia on Thetis Island, including the termination of all 5 existing staff. This affirms an earlier motion from November 2008 that had been tabled until the Fall of 2009 pending the outcome of an independent review of diocesan ministry to those under 30 years of age. This review was conducted by Dawn and David McLean and is available on our web site.

Camp Columbia has experienced systemic cash flow problems for a number of years, the current accumulated deficit is well over half-a-million dollars and council felt the diocese could not afford the current financial drain on resources any longer. The alternative of increasing parish assessments to cover the camp operational shortfall each year did not appear viable either since many parishes are already facing financial challenges.

The decision was not reached lightly, the council was fully aware that this decision would be met with resistance and the council understands that many people are very passionate about their own experience at Camp Columbia, however, the current year round operation was simply not sustainable. As a result of this and as a result of the McLean report the diocese is re-examining the delivery of ministry to those under 30 as it looks forward to the hiring of its 'Youth and Family Life Facilitator'. Part of the responsibility of this ministry will be the implementation of a summer camping program.

The leadership of the diocese is fully committed to ministry for all ages and looks forward to the refocusing and reorganization as we move forward. This coming weekend, Friday, October 2<sup>nd</sup> and Saturday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, the leadership of the diocese will be meeting at Christ Church Cathedral to discuss the many crucial issues facing the diocese, one of which is the future direction of a diocesan camping program. This weekend will be followed by a meeting in each of the six regions of the diocese over the next 5 weeks leading to our Diocesan Synod in March 2010. This process (unparalleled in the Anglican Church of Canada.) is an initiative that began with the Bishop's charge to Synod in March of 2004.

Camp Columbia was founded in 1947 as a mission and outreach of the Anglican Church and grew to be a year round operation. The physical plant on 72 acres includes nine summer cabins, several winterized cabins housing between two and eight persons, Columbia House ~ a residence that was available for rent and small retreats, a craft building, a portable serving as an office, and various smaller buildings.

**The Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of BC ~ The Right Reverend James A. J. Cowan will be available for comment Tuesday, October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at 10:00am at 900 Vancouver Street at the Synod Office (Yellow building on corner of Vancouver & Burdett).**

**For Further Information please contact: Mary Ruth Snyder ~ 250.418.0336  
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<http://www.bc.anglican.ca/pages/news/mediainfo&newsreleases.html> *Media Info & News Releases*

<http://www.bc.anglican.ca/content/CDOTooLittleTooLate.pdf> *(May 2009) DCDT Report*

<http://www.bc.anglican.ca/content/McLeanFinalReport2009.pdf> *(May 2009) The McLean Report*