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Dear youth of the diocese of islands and inlets;

I am grateful to Leslie Flynn (family life coordinator at St George, Cadboro Bay) for contacting some of you and helping us sort out how to best ensure youth voices and views are part of diocesan life.

From those discussions there appears to be broad-based interest in having me host a meeting twice a year with youth from across the diocese (perhaps via Zoom), and I look forward to that opportunity. I hope that this will be a valuable two-way conversation and that together we can find ways to support young people across the diocese in meaningful ways. These events will be open to all those in the diocese between the ages of 12 and 25. Please watch for our first meeting date in late April.

### Diocesan Council

The current diocesan council configuration isn't working. It is too big (30 people!) and it is well documented that small boards are more effective than large ones. Because of this, a motion is coming to Synod in May to reduce the overall size of the diocesan council to closer to 20 people. Part of that is to eliminate the formal designation of "youth representative" on the council.

This doesn't mean we don't want youth members on diocesan council. We do! In fact, it is possible we may have even more young people this way. Diocesan council is open to anyone 16 years of age or older who regularly attends and participates in the life of a parish. Delegates are elected at the regional gatherings held in the year of a synod.

Going forward, we are going to be strongly encouraging parish leaders to support the nomination of people under the age of 25 for these positions. We know it is an underrepresented voice in the governance of the church and it's critical that we magnify that voice, not diminish it. Moreover, as bishop, I also can appoint a limited number of people to diocesan council. So, youth wishing to be on it can contact my office via email at [bishop@bc.anglican.ca](mailto:bishop@bc.anglican.ca).

Finally, there is always the possibility of coming to diocesan council as guests, to share thoughts and viewpoints or just to listen-in and learn what it is all about. And, as with any new endeavor, if it doesn't work, we have to be ready and willing to change course and try something else that might.

### Diocesan Youth Ministry Coordinator

As a mother of teenaged kids, I take seriously the request from some of you to have a paid diocesan position to help support and coordinate youth ministry across the diocese. I can't make any promises about this. The diocesan budget, along with parish budgets, is unfortunately, shrinking—not growing or even levelling off. However, I am committed, while we investigate the options, to helping to improve the communications between youth and between parish groups. This will be a focus for me when we meet later this month. I hope you will bring your own ideas.

I look forward to working with you to make this a truly intergenerational diocese where all voices are heard and respected.

  
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bishop