

# The church is at its best in hard times, says philanthropy director

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Holland Hendrix, director of philanthropy, says that regular giving to the church is a matter of faith. "All things are God's," he says.

It may be all gloom and doom on the global and Canadian economic front, but the Anglican Church of Canada's new philanthropy director has expressed confidence that financial support for the church's various ministries will not decrease but will, in fact, thrive.

"I think the church is at its best in hard times, and what's really distinctive about Canadians is that they tend to increase their giving during hard economic times," said Holland Hendrix, director of the new department of philanthropy that has been created to help the Anglican church achieve a level of financial stability that it hasn't seen in years.

He said that Canadians, and in particular, Anglicans, realize that "more people are in need; they feel the responsibility to step up to the plate."

Mr. Hendrix, an American, said that this generosity, which he describes as "distinctive about Canadians," has given him "a lot of hope in being able to realize some very ambitious dreams" for the church.

Mr. Hendrix, who assumed the position last fall, said in an interview that his department has been given the mandate to "support, enhance and better co-ordinate fundraising throughout the church" and for the whole church.

He said that while the Anglican Church of Canada has engaged in fundraising for most of its history, “what’s been lacking is a single, centralized strategy for how most effectively and in the best Anglican way possible, to build resources for the church that will sustain it into the future.” There will be more co-operation and co-ordination among various church fundraising appeals, including those run by the Anglican Appeal, the *Anglican Journal*, the Primate’s World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF), and the Anglican Foundation, he said.

Mr. Hendrix said that the Anglican Appeal, the church’s flagship fundraiser, which has seen a significant decline in donations in recent years, has been “completely restructured” to attract more donors. “We’re trying to spend more time developing relations with donors and prospective donors, trying to increase the income from the appeal that will basically help fund the ministries of the General Synod,” he said.

He said that for the first time, the church is building a centralized major gift program that includes solicitation involving the primate and/or diocesan bishops and parish clergy. Work will also intensify around the area of planned giving, which involves bequests.

Mr. Hendrix said asking for money to fund the church’s ministry is not a novel concept, nor should it be seen as an embarrassing one.

“The church has always asked for money all the way back to St. Paul. In almost all his letters, St. Paul makes a fundraising pitch for a collection for the saints back in Jerusalem,” he said. “As early as St. Paul we’ve had a direct mail appeal. He was extremely innovative, and we can learn a lot from Paul’s example.”

He said that resource development “follows authentic building relationships, so that if you really go about building your congregation, developing your congregation, funding will follow.”

“You have to demonstrate that you’re serious about the ministry of the parish or the diocese or the General Synod, and that if you can demonstrate that effectively and genuinely, then the gifts will follow.”

He said Anglicans will soon hear about a “theology of philanthropy” that is being developed with the help of the national office’s faith, worship and ministry department.

“We tend to forget as Christians, not just as Anglicans, that all things are God’s. Whatever we think we own, whatever we think we possess, is really just a convenient fiction,” he said.

“We’re basically the beneficiaries of God’s creation and God’s gift to the world. What we’re called to do as Christians is to share those gifts and share them as generously as we possibly could.”