

## Bishop's Charge

### To the 45th Session of the Synod of the Diocese of Moosonee

*Excerpts from the Bishop's Charge by  
the Rt. Rev. Thomas Corston, Bishop  
of Moosonee*

I AM CONVINCED that we in this diocese can still be a vibrant and life-giving presence in the communities where we continue to minister. Yes, it is difficult for clergy who are able to be in your community only part of the time, and yes, I know, we are all getting older, but there are many of you and others in lay ministry who can take much of the leadership to help grow your congregation. While I am personally one of those who enjoy remembering things the way they used to be, I become concerned when we spend so much time lamenting the past that we totally forget the need to move forward. We then become blind to the opportunities for growth that are staring us in the face. In many of our communities we need to look at our brothers and sisters in the other denominations and invite them to have a discussion about joining together. I am thrilled that conversations have been taking place in Kapuskasing in recent months between members of the Anglican, United and Presbyterian congregations, with a view to eventually coming together as a combined congregation in one building. Yes, we love our buildings and we love the liturgy that only we Anglicans know how to do properly, but necessity tells us that it's the Gospel message and the witness of the Christian community that is vital to the lives of people. If your parish has not done so yet, I challenge you, when returning home, to begin the conversation.

I also want us to use the tools that are available in an attempt to see some growth in the local church. I am becoming concerned that too



*Bishop Thomas Corston delivered his charge to the Diocesan Synod*

many of us in the diocese are stuck in the mire of death and dying and while the evidence seems to be that, in fact, we are a church in decline, it need not be. All around us are people who are 'unchurched'. In spite of economic difficulties, we need to be better at advertising to the local community our activities and invite people to join our fellowship. It is impressive to see what you are, in fact, doing in your parishes to inform and invite people both within and outside the congregation to participate in some innovative programs and liturgies. There are good usable programs for us to use as tools in increasing faith and attendance. Such programs as 'Alpha' can now be used with smaller, less large-scale resources that can work very well in small congregations. I am increasingly intrigued by 'Fresh Expressions': "a fresh expression of church is a form of church for our changing culture, established primarily for the benefit of people who are not yet members of any church. It

will come into being through principles of listening, service, incarnational mission and making disciples." Wyclif College has now inaugurated a new course called 'Pioneer Ministries' designed for those who wish to assist people to be active Christians but who are not comfortable with our traditional church. Of course, any acceptance of this new form of evangelism will mean that we will need to change our own love of the building and of our wonderful liturgy, maybe even remove some pews to make our worship space more open and accessible to new ideas and new forms, or in places where our building is not adequate at all, try someplace else.

In the same vein, and perhaps even more easily undertaken by the local church, is the growing 'Back to Church' program. Before coming back to Moosonee my parish had embarked upon the 'Back to Church' program and I was enthusiastic about what we thought we might do to

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## Moosonee Votes

*Media Release from  
the Diocese of Moosonee*

THE MOOSONEE SYNOD has unanimously voted to become a Mission Area under the jurisdiction of the Ontario Provincial Synod. The Synod, meeting in Timmins June 3-5, directed its Executive Council and Officers "to enter into discussion with the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario for the purpose of establishing a Mission Area consisting of all of the present parishes of the Diocese of Moosonee; and that the Diocese of Moosonee be placed in suspension with its spiritual jurisdiction lying with the Metropolitan." This included a provision that the Diocese could be brought back into function in the future.

Moosonee Bishop Tom Corston said that he fully supports the decision. The Bishop said "What drove this decision so forcefully was the parishes' determination to stay together and keep the strong links and personal relationships that they have with each other." Some of the options considered by the Synod had proposed separating the parishes and transferring them to surrounding dioceses.

Executive Archdeacon Harry Huskins said that the principle in designing the transition options before the Synod was that the diocesan level structure exists to support mission, ministry and ministers in the parishes and that any changes should be made at the diocesan level in order to strengthen what is happening on the ground and increase their funding if possible.

Discussions will now begin with the Provincial Synod, the Council of the North, and the General Synod, with continuing consultations on this within the Moosonee parishes and deaneries. A Transition Plan will be developed which will go to another Moosonee Synod session for approval, and then be placed before the Ontario Provincial Synod when it

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advertise our congregation and invite friends to join us for worship on the last Sunday of September. I had seen what some of our neighbouring congregations were doing. Last fall I did not see the 'Back to Church' program being used very much at all in Moosonee and I was surprised. My point with all this is that we can, I think, become too stuck in the mire of maintaining the little we think that we have and spend too much time wringing our hands and worrying about keeping the doors open, when we could be seeing this time as a new opportunity to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ in new ways.

By now, you have all heard or read that at our November, 2010 Executive Council meeting we faced a rather harsh reality that our continued reliance upon our financial reserves was putting us into a situation in which we could see a major crisis on the not-too-distant horizon. Over the next two days you are being asked to decide upon the direction for the future. The Vision Quest team and the Synod Agenda committee have laid it all out for you. At the moment there are 'three pathways' on the agenda: to 'stay the course', to ask our neighbouring dioceses to take over the administration of the diocese, or to create a new diocese out of the Deanery of James Bay, leaving the Deaneries of Kenogami and Cochrane to be administrated by our neighbours. This is your church, your diocese, so it is imperative that you should make the decision as to which way you want to go. Whatever decision is made, the process will be difficult and will take much negotiation,



**Bishop Tom Corston and his people celebrated a Eucharist and the installation of regional Deans and Canons at the Synod**

dialogue, and hard work. The Vision Quest Task Force will need to continue as their mandate goes to 2015, but they will need help - your help.

I commend to you the "Five Marks of Mission" that are presently guiding the worldwide mission of the Church throughout the Anglican Communion. They are thoughtful, theologically sound, faithful to the mission of the church and above all, focus our faithful work in such a manner that hope is preached, nourished, shared and trusted. The Marks of Mission include: "to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom; to teach, baptize and nurture new believers; to respond to human need by loving service; to seek to transform unjust structures of society; and to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth." Now, I am calling the diocese to focus specifically, upon these 'Marks of Mission' as the guide for the ongoing, faithful ministry of our communities, in the midst of

the other things that are taking place around us. They dovetail very well into our own diocesan goals: "to encourage the ministry of all baptized persons; to support ministry to youth and children; to strengthen spiritual growth; to strengthen stewardship; and to commit to walking in partnership for the implementation of the Indigenous Covenant."

When the storms of life come upon us we can rise above them by setting our minds and our belief toward God. The storms do not have to overcome us, we can allow God's power to lift us above them. God enables us to ride the winds of the storm. So it is as we experience what very well might be a storm in the life of the Church in Moosonee Diocese. Whatever happens as a result of the decisions we make at this synod, our faith need not be hindered or destroyed, but, with the assurance that this is the Lord's Church and we are His people, we can ride it out and "move up on the winds of change."

meets in October of 2012.

This next Moosonee Synod session will be much smaller. The Timmins Synod also approved a change in the Synod's membership so that it now has the same members as the diocesan Executive Council. This means that the parishes will no longer directly elect delegates to the Synod, but will elect to the three deaneries that will, in turn, choose the Synod members just as they now do the Executive Council members. Bishop Corston said that this will mean a smaller, less expensive, and more flexible Synod doing this work in the future.

Four Synod members chose not to vote on the transition proposals. Charles Bobish, of the northern community of Chisasibi, said he personally supports the decision but that some of the details of the Mission Area option had only arisen out of the discussion among the members on the floor of the Synod and had not been talked about in his community. The members from that community did not feel that they could take a position until this happened.



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**Reflective Moose**

## Threads of Life

by Reverend Hal Graham

**I**ARRIVED in Mistissini, on the shores of a lake in Quebec by the same name, for Pentecost Sunday, June 3, 1998. During my time there I visited an elderly couple with the family name, Shecapio. The man had been a Lay-Reader in the Anglican Church, which meant that he would lead prayer services when no ordained clergy was available. I did not give this a lot of attention at the time. He was no longer able to get out of his house. Philip Sr. would be seated in his rocker by the time I'd arrive and there was a minimum of body movement, eye contact and certainly not language since he and his wife spoke Cree

and I spoke English. I knew through contact with their daughters that my visits were important and I would bring the bread and the wine from church to administer eucharist. On one occasion the couple had arranged for photos to be taken with me in the middle, between them. I look rather stiff with an arm reaching out in each direction. They gave no indication of disappointment or that I was failing them in any way. Quite the opposite. Their quiet, seemingly passive, religious expression was immovable and unshakeable. They presented me with a small cloth on which to set

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# Living the Dream



*The cast of The Last Supper in St. Matthew – St. Paul's in Hearst*

I AM SURE parishes across the Diocese are experiencing signs of new dreams and life. Here in Eastern Kenogami both St. Luke's, Hornepayne and St. Matthew - St. Paul's, Hearst offered our communities an evening of holy entertainment as the play, *The Last Supper* was presented along with the monologue entitled, *Barabbas*. Both evenings included special music. Soloist Willo Goulet of St. Luke's brought tears to the eyes of the audience, offering several pieces from *Jesus Christ, Superstar* while in Hearst soloist Martha Heidenheim, accompanied by violinist, Lauren Quist, held those in attendance in awe with selections from both *Jesus Christ, Superstar* and Handel's *Messiah*. Although

these congregations are small, they took up the challenge of providing something new to feed the spirits of their friends and neighbours.

At Constance Lake First Nation, another kind of newness was celebrated on the Easter weekend as the newly constructed St. Stephen's Anglican Church Centre opened for Good Friday and Easter services. It is a beautiful building, and although not yet quite finished, is a source of pride and hope for the people of this congregation. Thanks be to God that in the midst of change, there are signs of growth and newness as the people of God live out our baptismal ministries.

*Article by the Reverend Deborah Lonergan-Freake*

## MOOSE NOTES

### St. Paul's Choir Workshop

**FIRST MET** David Buley in July, 2010 on the occasion of Tom Corston's consecration as Bishop of Moosonee. St. Paul's choir sang with the choir from the Church of the Epiphany, Sudbury, where he is the music director. His infectious enthusiasm (and evident knowledge) had us all doing our very best to make special music for a special occasion. We so enjoyed his approach that I asked him if he his approach that I asked him if he would lead a workshop for us. He accepted the invitation and the result of my request was a day full of music, laughter, and inspiration. On April 19th, twenty choristers



from four churches assembled in the basement of St. Paul's Church to enjoy David's unique talent and leadership. The Bishop joined us for a delicious and substantial lunch, which was provided by the ladies of St. Paul's.

After the formalities of registration, David took us through a set of exercises designed to ready our bodies for the task of singing. We went through, posture, relaxation, and breathing before we began vocal 'warm-ups'. Once

our muscles and our vocal chords were loosened up, we were ready to begin a day of singing and learning.

The main emphasis was on a cappella singing as St. Paul's is currently without an organist. The music was generally easy to learn by listening and doing, although we did have some sheet music that could be read by those who had that skill. Although often as simple as a 2 or 3 part round, the songs were worthwhile musically and in terms of theology and worship. We felt we could use them almost immediately.

At the end of the day, we went upstairs unto the church and sang a familiar hymn: "Rejoice, the Lord Is King". We left uplifted and inspired to keep singing and to ask David for another workshop soon.

*Article by Hazel Maki, Choir Director, St. Paul's, South Porcupine*

## Too Late for Our Church!

*Article written by Rev. Deacon Norma Teigen, Matheson*

**I AM WRITING** to inform those who were upset during last Sunday's final service in St. John's Anglican Church as to why it was the last service. First, let me say that it was not our Bishop, nor our priest, nor was it the few people who have remained faithful and have called St. John's home for many years, who closed the church - it was those who DID NOT attend or support the church in any way who actually closed it and to disrupt this final service was beyond understanding and was extremely hurtful to those few of us who have had to make the decision to close.

Many call themselves Anglican but when they never come to church, never contribute their time, money, etc. to support the church, then they should not be surprised that they had no say in whether it closes or not! You are then Anglican in name only and is this not the same as standing inside a garage and calling yourself a car?

I did appreciate the kind, caring folks from St. Mark's in Iroquois Falls for being there to support us on a very difficult day, your presence did help us to know that we were not alone in this service of deconsecrating our church. There has been an Anglican presence in our community for over 100 years - plenty of

**See Too Late on p. 4**

**Threads of Life, continued from p. 2** the communion vessels. Eventually, when the old man died, his things were set aside for one year and then distributed. Again, I did not pay much attention but one of his daughters brought his moccasins to my house after the event. I could have attended the distribution but somehow missed it. The moccasins were not aboriginal but of cowhide from a department store and slightly too short so I didn't wear them much. Kathleen, his wife, died a year or two later and again through my own inexperience and lack of understanding I missed being present at her moment of passing.

Phillip's motionless presence

now speaks to me more loudly than any other encounter I can think of at Mistissini. He did not try to change things. He trusted creation and did not try to meddle. He did the right thing at the right time and sometimes just waited. His moccasins now fit me and I think of the story of Elisha passing on his mantle to Elisha. We are an activist society and that has its place but Philip's message got through without ploy or even explanation; out of almost nothing.

The other evening, in a different part of the county, I went to a visitation for the funeral of a little girl, eleven years old, who had hanged herself. What could I say?

There was a sense of compassion and a sense of community in the crowded living room with the coffin at one side. On the wall were pasted the words, "We will always love you." I spoke briefly and said those words are a sign of strength, to be able to love, and we said the Lord's Prayer. Afterwards I began to think about Philip and his quiet inner strength. It seemed to be significant that I'd taken his slippers with me. Even though, in this case, we did not take our shoes off, I had one of his moccasins sticking out of each pocket. I'd like to think that Philip, in his wisdom, knew that he was to pass something of his ministry on to me.





## Moose Gallery



*The ACW Executive Meeting in Holy Trinity, Cochrane*



*Members of the Diocesan Synod took part in a Bible study*



*Reverend Lisa BrantFrancis, Mrs. Ruth Corston and Sister Elizabeth Rolph-Thomas enjoyed a good cup of tea at the Synod*



*Dr. Harry Huskins, Executive Archdeacon, and Bishop Tom Corston at the Synod.*



*Don Gillespie, an avid gardener and Lion, lovingly tends his garden*

## Canadian Gardening

*Article by George Cribbs, Editor*

**S**t. PAUL'S Anglican Church in South Porcupine is blessed with a series of 16 raised gardens situated between the church building and the rectory. The gardens are available to the entire community and are much prized by persons who love to garden but who would have difficulty doing so elsewhere.

The raised gardens are the result of St. Paul's interacting with community groups for the benefit of others. The Porcupine Horticultural Society looks after the gardens and arranges their allocation to persons who request them. The raised gardens were constructed and donated to the church by the South Porcupine Lions Club. The Lions and the Horticultural Society both make use of St. Paul's Canon Gibson Hall for their meetings and activities. This symbiotic relationship has not only served St. Paul's, the Horticultural

Society, and the Lions well but also it has served the needs of the community's gardeners.

The raised gardens are approximately one metre high and they enable persons who experience difficulty in bending or kneeling to continue gardening. The gardens are free of charge to the persons who use them. The vegetables and flowers grown beside the church building add their own particular beauty to the church's property.

St. Paul's has found a way of making good use of its land and, at the same time, being of assistance to secular service groups which endeavour to be of service to the people of the community. The motto of Lions International is "We Serve". This motto well describes the actions of not just the Lions but also the Horticultural Society and the Parish of St. Paul's. Indeed, St. Paul's is still in its 'salad days'.

### **Too Late, continued from p. 3**

time for all, who call themselves Anglican, to support the church. As a friend of mine said to me, "the candles may have been snuffed out, but God's light always shines in our hearts. His light can never

be put out!" How true this is and it is now what we have to remember as we move on – God is the same yesterday, today, and always and we are not people of the building, we are Easter people, people of the Resurrection!

