

# NORTHILAND

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## Spiritual Challenge

Article by the Venerable Harry Huskins, Executive Archdeacon

**I**N JUNE OF LAST YEAR, Moosonee's Synod met to consider the future of the Diocese and, in particular, how to deal with the fact that we were spending more than we were receiving from the money sent to the Synod Office by our parishes and from the national Church (Council of the North grants) and that this could not go on for much longer.

The Synod considered a number of options that would have transferred all, or parts of Moosonee, to other dioceses in trying to deal with this. After very prayerful thought the Synod members unanimously rejected all of these options and decided to keep the Diocese together and directed the Executive Council and its Vision Quest Team to figure out how to do this in a way that solves the money problem and gives us a balanced budget.

After a lot of careful thought and discussion the Executive Council adopted a plan last fall that does do this by reducing the costs of the work of the Bishop and of the Synod Office, but does not cut any of the money going to the ministry and ministers in our parishes. We now have the overall framework of this plan in place but there are still details to be decided about exactly how the people of our diocese want some parts of this new approach to work. To find this out, and to answer more general questions about the plan, the people of our parishes and our clergy are going to be consulted directly about this in meetings with the Bishop in our deaneries over the next six months.

While these discussions are taking place in the deaneries, the Moosonee Synod will meet



*Bishop Thomas Corston warmly greeted the people who attended the Lessons & Carols service held at St. Paul's in South Porcupine on the Sunday before Christmas.*

in March to put in place a new diocesan Canon on the Moosonee Mission Area, and the Provincial Synod will meet in October in Kingston to put in place a similar Provincial Canon that will enable this plan to work.

No longer spending more money than we have each year, however, is only the first stage of what we need to do. We all know that, if you are trying to run a house, it is hard to think about how to do things better next year while you are worried about how to pay the bills at the end of the week. The changes that will be made in how the work of the Bishop and the Synod Office is done in the future will cut the amount of money we need to spend for these things and will give us the balanced budget we need. But this is only the first stage of the plan. It will remove

our immediate worries about how to pay our bills and will, then, let us concentrate on what is really important to us as Anglicans in Moosonee. This will be the second stage of our task. It is a spiritual challenge to us about our future.

In meeting this challenge we will pray, think, and talk together over the next couple of years about even better ways than we have now of carrying the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ to all parts of Moosonee. How we are doing things at the moment. What is working well and what is not. Out of this we will find ways to ensure that we continue the powerful ministry and success of those who have gone before us and that, in the future, wherever there are people who need this same faith, help and hope that Jesus brings, we will be there for them.

## Legion Chaplain

Article by George Cribbs, Editor

**O**N SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19TH, Bishop Corston was installed as the Provincial Chaplain of the Ontario Command of the Royal Canadian Legion. The Bishop was invited to attend the Legion's annual convention in Aurora at which representatives of local Legion branches from across Ontario attended. Provincial Command President, Andre Paquette, conducted the short ceremony at the beginning of the Convention's business meeting.

Both President Paquette and Bishop Corston were raised in Chapleau at the southern end of the Diocese. The fathers of both men were WWII veterans and their mothers served in the Legion's Women's Auxiliary. It seemed fitting to Paquette, when he was becoming the new Ontario President, that his Chaplain should be his boyhood friend.

Throughout most of his career in the Church, Bishop Corston has been associated with the Royal Canadian Legion as branch Padre in many of the parishes where he has served. While not a veteran himself, he was among the first associate members installed when the Legion made that change in their admissions requirements. He has been involved in Legion activities out of a sense of respect for the war sacrifice made by his own father and the many Canadian veterans who served Canada in war. He accepted the invitation to serve a term as the Ontario Chaplain out of that respect and his agreement with their present programs, especially with Canadian youth.

As Ontario Command Chaplain, Bishop Corston will attend important gatherings, offer prayers and guidance, as well as lead the vital memorial services that are often part of the Legion's programs.

Following his installation, the Bishop was invited to share a few comments to the membership, during which he expressed his pleasure at being invited to be Chaplain and his immense respect for the veterans who have served Canada so selflessly when called to do so.



## Easter Message

Article by the Right Reverend Thomas Corston, Bishop of Moosonee.

**IT IS HARD FOR ME** to think of Easter as I write this message, sitting in a hotel room in Val d'Or after a cold weekend in Chisasibi. However, by the time you read this edition of the *Northland*, spring will be upon us and signs of new life will begin to appear after the long winter.

I have had a growing concern that for us in the Diocese of Moosonee the last year has been predominantly focussed on the eventual change that we are preparing for as a result of the decision at our Synod to move into a "mission area" under the pastoral care of the Archbishop. We have been spending so much time dealing with the transition and all the questions and fears that surround the approaching changes that I fear we are forgetting the basic truth of what we are really all about. That truth is that this is Christ's Church and we are His people.

That truth comes to the fore at Easter. Easter is the most uplifting and vital celebration of the Christian community. There comes a time in everyone's life when we need to stop and re-focus on what it is that underscores why we are involved in the Church and, what it is that we are doing in the Church. That comes down to an individual decision. Easter, I believe, places before each of us that most personal of questions, that being, "what is it about Easter that I believe?"



**Bishop Tom Corston and the choir of St. Paul's, South Porcupine all had their roles to play in the 39th annual service of Lessons and Carols held in that parish**

What does Christ's being raised from the dead have to do with how I live, and think, and act? What does it have to do with my being a parent? A spouse? A church member, a neighbour, a friend? What does the resurrection mean to me as I struggle through a problem with my child, or with a serious illness, or with a broken relationship? What does Christ's resurrection have to do with my response to the poverty and suffering of people in third world countries and around me in my own community?

What does the resurrection of Jesus mean? Simply and yet profoundly it means life! And the Bible so wonderfully describes this life of the resurrected Christ. It's called by a variety of names to differentiate it from the life we already have. New life. Abundant life. Eternal life! It is life that is greater, more powerful, and more fulfilling than anything you can create or achieve on your own.

And believing in Jesus means you'll step out into frontiers where ordinary people don't want to go. Loving your enemies. Standing up for people no one else will stand up for. Believing that good will eventually triumph over evil. And as you do all these believing things, the Bible promises that something will begin to happen inside you! Life will begin to stir! New life! Abundant life! Eternal life!

In extending to you my Easter greetings, my fervant prayer is that in the midst of the changes, the fears, the angst, as well as in those times of anger, illness, and loneliness, you can take a new look at the miracle of the Easter event and come to believe in the promise of new and eternal life.

"These things are written so that you will believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that, by believing, you will find life in his name."

Easter is believing.

## Sharing Resources

Article by Richard Moore, Cochrane

**IN THE COMMUNITY OF KAPUSKASING**, the United, Presbyterian, and Anglican Churches are all facing a growing challenge: paying the bills. Members of the three churches felt that exploring a sharing arrangement might make sense - later, if not immediately. Some summer sharing of services had already been undertaken, but before further steps were taken, it was felt that some teaching had to be done about each other's practices, structure, and doctrines. In the interest of progress, the people of St. Mark's Church hosted an information session on Saturday, January 21st. Although there was a feeling of 'getting to know your neighbour', the meeting was organized in response to a real, perceived need. To that end, each congregation invited 'experts' who sketched what their churches believed and practiced, and who responded to questions from the thirty or so persons in attendance.

Hospitality was warm, lunch delicious, and the learning curve steep. It was a most profitable day, where differences were dwarfed by the myriad of similarities which became evident among us.



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### Reflective Moose

## Returning from the Wilderness

by Reverend Edna Murdy

**IT HAS BEEN ABOUT 6** months since I returned from the wilderness of an early retirement to this Diocese of Moosonee. As most of you are aware, I retired in Sept. 2010, completely exhausted yet with a deep sense of the love, compassion and hope that was bestowed upon me by people from around the diocese. I wasn't leaving in despair, or discouragement, but simply in need of rest. As I spent time reflecting on my journey in ministry to that point, I had the opportunity to let go of parish, deanery and diocesan obligations completely, and to take the time to heal and to discern my future

ministry. For me, it was a time apart, in a wilderness of sorts, a time in which I could spend in silence, being still, and truly knowing God's presence within me. And during that time God's strength and healing allowed me to return to the call to this Diocese.

We are approaching Lent, a time when we are called to remember Christ's time in the wilderness after his baptism. Up until this time he had spent most of his adult life as a carpenter, being the oldest son in a family whose father had died some time ago, being left with the responsibilities of keeping a family together, sheltered and fed. It is **See Wilderness on p. 3**



# Tidings of Outreach & Joy

Article by Reverend Deborah Lonergan-Freake

**WITH SMILES, HUGS,** appreciative grins and laughter, 50 truckers making their usual stop for gas and a bite to eat in Hearts on December 23, 2011 received small bags of Christmas treats from members of St. Matthew/St Paul's congregation. Although the thermometer read -34°C when we gathered at 8 am to begin delivering our goodies, spirits were warm and enthusiastic. Our congregation had been asking: *what does our community need, and how can we be a part of that need?* We realized that dozens of truckers pass through our town on a daily basis, contributing

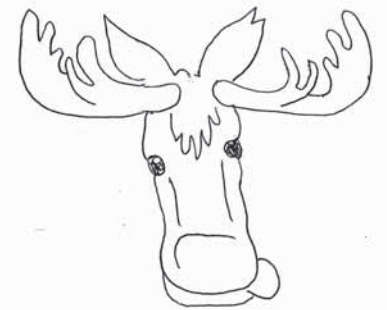


Reverend Deborah Lonergan-Freake talks with a trucker in Hearst, Ontario

to our economy and yet, we have no contact with them. So the women of the Ladies' Coffee Circle decided that it would be a great idea to give the truckers a Christmas gift. We had fun at our December meeting, packaging

homemade cookies, putting candy in water bottles, writing cards and packing everything in brown paper lunch bags, complete with oranges contributed by our sister church, St. Luke's, Hornpayne. Each bag was decorated with a candy cane and a trucker's prayer, on the back of which was our Church name and service times. Staff at the gas stations were excited to have us at their businesses, commenting that nothing is ever done for the truckers. That was obvious from the surprised, and then joyful reaction of the men and the women to whom we wished a Merry Christmas and safe travel on the roadways. One woman, whose daughter is a trucker, hugged me and said, "thank you so much. I can't tell you how much this means to me." It meant a lot to us too! We had the opportunity to spread God's

love in a unique way, to reach out to people who are a part of and yet go unnoticed in our community. We enjoyed the fellowship of each other's company as we prepared our packages and we went home knowing that we too had brought good tidings and great joy with this small, yet concrete act of kindness. And as with all who give to others, we were blessed.



## MOOSE NOTES



## Happenings North of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Parallel

Article by The Reverend Canon Rodney BrantFrancis

**GREETINGS FROM THE** frozen but beautiful north! Our temperatures don't get

much above -20°C these days but we are, nevertheless, an abundantly blessed community. The weeks of Advent flew by and before we were at all prepared the wonderful celebration of Christmas was upon us. Some of the highlights of our Advent celebrations were a weekly lunch program that we did at the parish hall. Food for body and soul you might say - free lunch, an Advent devotional talk, the singing of some favorite carols and a few door prizes were all a part of those gatherings. On average we served about 60 people each Wednesday in Advent. Additionally, I was able to do a weekly Advent Radio Broadcast talking of the themes of Love, Peace, Joy and Hope. This was an opportunity to remind listeners of the real reason for the season - the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Our Advent celebrations went well in spite of

the fact that our community spent eight days in a "state of emergency" as we were without electricity for that period of time. The community pulled together very well and we all learned firsthand the challenge of living out the themes of Advent in less than ideal circumstances.

By the time we were all back in our homes and heat and light were restored it was only a short time until Christmas. Lisa and I were able to host a Christmas Tea for the Elders and prepare the children and young people for our Christmas Play. The two services on Christmas Eve were well attended and the Children and Young people did a great job in sharing with us the Story of Jesus birth. On Christmas Day a large congregation gathered for the celebration of Holy Baptism and Communion. For the second

year in a row we had a set of twins to baptize on Christmas morning. What a great joy and blessing that was. The next major worship celebration was our Watch-Night service on New Year's Eve. A congregation of more than two hundred gathered to sing, pray and join in the Lord's Supper as we bid farewell to the old year and pray for the new one as it arrived.

As I reflect on the seasons of Advent and Christmas that have just past I am filled with thanksgiving for the many who attended worship and for the numerous opportunities to share with those around me the real reason for the season - the coming of Jesus into our world and into our lives. May each of you experience anew the gift of God's love expressed in Jesus and may that love empower you to love others in the name of Christ.

## Wilderness continued from p. 2

believed by some that he also, for a while before his baptism, may have spent time with the Essene community in their wilderness habitat, deepening his relationship with his Father. Then, after the baptism, sent again into the wilderness, alone with God, to discern what his ministry was to be. And what a process that was for him. Forty days of fasting, prayer and loneliness, and by the end of that time, facing the temptations that called to him. A temptation to perform a miracle - turn stones into bread. That certainly would get people's attention, and he would have followers for sure - but

would that be the right "bread" to the people starving to find God in their daily lives? A temptation to leap off the pinnacle of the Temple and let the heavenly hosts surround him in a spectacular rescue from being smashed on the rocks below. Again people would flock to him, encouraging him to repeat this dangerous feat - but is putting God to the test the way to teach people the true nature of a loving and merciful God who walks with us through the dangers of this world rather than wave a magic wand to make them disappear? A temptation to gain power over the whole world by simply worshipping Satan, preferring evil and darkness, which leads to death,

over worshipping God of light, love and forgiveness, which leads to life. "AWAY WITH YOU, SATAN!", he says, and then receives the strength and nourishment needed to begin his new ministry - in which he did feed people - the true bread of life, the Word of God. He continues to offer us this bread each time we gather together at his table. A ministry in which he called on God to touch and heal those the world had rejected as untouchable and broken. A ministry in which the power of God sustained him through fatigue, through abandonment, through a humiliating and tortuous death on a cross to new life, resurrected to prove the power of God alone to

redeem and bring us all to new life in him.

Although most of us cannot take 5 weeks off from our responsibilities in our lives, we can walk through Lent by seeking ways to be alone with God, by recognizing the temptations we face in this world, and by seeking the courage and strength to let God lead us on this journey of life in faith, confident in his presence both within and around us. And when hunger grows, and we grow weak, let us gather at his table and receive the bread of life and drink from the cup of salvation - strength for the journey.





## Moose Gallery



*Emma Laiho, 10, read the fourth lesson in the Lessons & Carols Service to the people of St. Paul's.*



*Bishop Thomas Corston read the ninth lesson in the Lessons & Carols Service to the people of St. Paul's.*



*Three Wise Men of the Diocese: Dean Greg Gilson, Bishop Thomas Corston & Archdeacon Harry Huskins*



*Bishop Thomas Corston was installed as the Ontario Command Chaplain for the Royal Canadian Legion*



*Dean Greg Gilson and Bishop Thomas Corston participated in the Sharing Seminar held in Kapuskasing by the local United, Presbyterian, and Anglican Churches.*

## On the Move Again

*Article by the Bishop Thomas Corston*

**A**FTER JUST SIX MONTHS in the present facilities at St. Matthew's Rectory, the Synod office is on the move again. In mid-February, staff will be busy moving files and furniture to new facilities at the Cathedral itself.

During November, the office had to be closed due to air quality concerns and an inspection took place. The situation proved to be a false one but during the closure, discussion ensued by both the Cathedral Vestry and the Diocese on the future use of the house. In view of the impending change in the Diocese to become a new Mission Area under the pastoral supervision of the Metropolitan of Ontario, it has become evident that Diocesan facilities will need to be housed in a secure location. When the Diocese transitions into the new Mission Area, office space will need to be maintained, not only to house Diocesan records etc. but also for administrative purposes as well as for Episcopal oversight when there is need for a bishop to be in the area. As these ministries will need to be maintained even on an occasional basis, office space will be required. The Cathedral precincts seem to be the logical location.

The Cathedral Vestry was approached and agreed to renovate the Cathedral's upper hall to provide office space for the Bishop, the present Synod staff, as well as for the Dean. The Bishop's new office is almost completed. Telephone and internet connections are being installed, and the boxes are being packed for the move. The Dean has already moved from his former office into the (former) Nursery room.

At the same time that the Cathedral Vestry agreed to the new office space, they decided to have their Rectory placed on the market. The building sold very quickly at an acceptable price, the closing date being April 2nd. During the week of February 20th - the same week that includes Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday, - the new Synod Office will be taking over their new facilities in our Diocesan Cathedral.

Our new address will be:

Diocese of Moosonee  
c/o St. Matthew's Cathedral  
331 Fifth Avenue,  
Timmins, ON  
P4N 5L6

The telephone, fax numbers, and internet address remain unchanged.



*Dean Greg Gilson, showed Catharine Cribbs the new Diocesan Office; it currently has cheerful paintings of animals on a wall*

