

NORTHLAND

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OUR NEW VISION STATEMENT

The Diocese of Moosonee – called by God to live and proclaim the Gospel



Diocesan Bishop, Thomas Corston, and the Dean of the Diocese, the Reverend Greg Gilson, joined choristers from: St. Matthew's Cathedral, St. John's Lutheran, Covenant United & Porcupine United Church, and those of St. Paul's Anglican Church in celebrating the 41st Lessons & Carols service held in St. Paul's.

Thomas, Our Bishop

Article by Susan Montague, Warden of Layreaders, St. Paul's Anglican Church, South Porcupine.

ON SUNDAY, December 8th, 2013, The Right Reverend Thomas Corston presided at the morning Eucharist at St. Paul's Anglican Church in South Porcupine as the "on vacation but not yet officially retired" Bishop of Moosonee. The people of St. Paul's happily welcomed Bishop Tom into their midst as, together, they celebrated the Second Sunday in Advent. In an engaging and meaningful sermon, Bishop Tom expounded on the role of John the Baptist and his presence within the story of Jesus. The Bishop placed John the Baptist within a 21st century holiday setting to highlight the jarring nature of John's presence while making the point that John's message remains powerfully relative during this festive season. Advent is a season of joyful expectation but it is also a time for the repentance of sins and for thankfulness in God's boundless grace. Closing his sermon book with a gentle yet firm thud, Bishop Tom announced with a smile, "Well, I'm done!" Done his final sermon as Bishop of Moosonee but not yet done

with his role entirely! The service continued and Bishop Tom led us in the partaking of the wine and bread with joy and reverence. This was followed by a time of fellowship and thanksgiving in the church hall as we acknowledged Bishop Tom's lengthy ministry with the fine Anglican tradition of sharing a pot luck meal. Generous parishioners, co-ordinated by Gertie Anderson, provided a bounteous selection of hot and cold foods and Dorothy Rogers topped off the fine meal with a huge homemade cake, complete with a picture of Tom in his Episcopalian regalia. Mary Solomon presented the Bishop with a pair of handmade traditional moccasins and Tom pointed out that Mary's husband, George, had been a lay reader for him in the early days of his ministry. On behalf of the parish, Catharine Cribbs, Rector's Warden, presented Bishop Tom with a piece of her original artwork. Tom expressed his gratitude and said this gift brought double joy both because of the artist whose name it bore and because of the content of the print itself. With a mischievous grin and a comment along

the lines of "hide the scotch when you see the Bishop coming" [not Tom], Dorothy Rogers handed Tom his very own bottle of Chevas Regal. On that note, Bishop Tom entertained us with several stories of previous bishops and other stories from his time as the incumbent of St. Paul's (including an early Saturday morning annual shortbread cookie delivery story). Sorry, folks - what's shared at St. Paul's, stays at St. Paul's!

Bishop Tom returned to St. Paul's later that same evening to participate in the annual Service of Nine Lessons and Carols presented by choir members from St. Paul's, St. Matthew's Cathedral, Covenant United, Porcupine United, and the South Porcupine Lutheran Church. Jan Maloney started the evening by singing the first verse of the processional hymn before being joined by the rest of the choir and congregation. The many hours of hard work during practices were evident in the beautiful delivery of many well known carols and heart warming songs, highlighted by stirring solos.

Our Bishop, continued on page 4.

With Our Blessing

Article by Archdeacon Deborah Lonergan-Freake.

THOMAS A. CORSTON was consecrated ninth Bishop of Moosonee on July 6th, 2010. Living and serving in the Diocese of Algoma at the time of his election, Bishop Tom, as he is affectionately known, returned to serve the Diocese of Moosonee as its spiritual leader. Tom was ordained nearly 40 years ago by the Rt. Rev. James A. Watton, and served Moosonee as a young priest, before moving to serve in other areas of the Canadian Church.

Becoming a bishop is not an easy task. There was a lot to learn; new situations to be dealt with and the continuing demands of ministry in the north. Bishop Corston's knowledge and experience of the Diocese of Moosonee and his wide experience as a priest equipped him to meet all challenges. Although his episcopal ministry as Bishop of Moosonee was a relatively short one, we are pleased that Bishop Tom has accepted Archbishop Colin Johnston's appointment to continue as Assisting Bishop.

With a reduced population in the northeast and changes in the economy, the Diocese of Moosonee faces financial challenges and a shortage of priests willing to serve in scattered, remote parishes. Bishop Corston's innovative and courageous leadership led to the unique solution of downsizing from the top. Under the Diocesan Transition Plan, the Diocese of Moosonee will not elect a new bishop to succeed Bishop Corston. Instead, the Diocese will transition to a mission area under the authority of Archbishop Colin Johnson, Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario.

Bishop Corston's work as Bishop of Moosonee has not been easy. Perhaps the word 'change' most

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Blessing continued from p. 1.

describes his episcopal ministry. Bishop Tom oversaw a review of all Diocesan properties and helped parishes dispose of buildings which were no longer needed. His goal was always to support and improve ministry in parishes. During Tom's tenure as Diocesan Bishop, the annual lay readers' conference was re-established in the newly formed Watershed Deanery. The annual clericus continued. A number of educational initiatives were begun. Locally raised ordained ministry has been supported and encouraged. Bishop Tom has faithfully travelled around this Diocese, often in extremes of winter weather. Given his knowledge of the history of this Diocese, the sometimes difficult decisions which Bishop Corston took during his time as Bishop of Moosonee were not taken lightly and no doubt took a toll on him. Nevertheless, Bishop Tom Corston has led this Diocese through a time of transition and change as a faithful servant of God - with every decision rooted in prayer and with an eye to a sustainable future. So much of Bishop Tom's work has been out of public view - organizing and making things happen;

caring for the people of this vast Diocese; calling forth and supporting the gifts of those who serve in various capacities, that much of it may have gone unnoticed; but his contributions to the Diocese of Moosonee have been immense. And so it is time for all of us in Moosonee to say "thank you" Bishop Tom and to wish you our blessing in your official retirement.



Bishop Tom Corston greeted chorister Pat Chalmers and other parishioners at St. Paul's, South Porcupine, after his final service there as Diocesan Bishop.

All Things New

Article by the Reverend Larry Armstrong, St. Paul's, Kashechewan.

A NEW ANGLICAN, a new Deacon, a new ministry, soon to be a new Priest, God willing, and soon I will be 59 years old. That makes me a late bloomer, baby boomer. Recently, I realized that those of us in the ministry and the people whom we serve are all facing the challenge of 'new.'

The Season of Advent, so recently finished, is by no means over. The essence of Advent is that new things are coming. For instance, in the Parish of St. Paul's, we have a new program for Sunday School starting in January and a new adult Bible class in the works. We will soon have four new Lay Readers and, hopefully, a new Church building by the end of next year. This is a very exciting time; I am feeling overwhelmed with all the new things happening at an age when life is supposed to be slowing down. Yet, God continues to pour new things into my life while I continue to wonder how much more 'new' I can

handle.

"Behold, I will make things new." It seems to me that Christian life and the ministry of the Church are all about continuously being new. In the process of writing this article on my new ministry, I came to the realization that we need not fear change or new things. It was all the new things coming late to me in my life that made this new life and ministry possible. But Jesus warns us that putting new wine in old wine skins is not a good idea; the results will be a disaster. If I had stubbornly remained as I was and where I was, then this would be a very different story. It is not about change for the sake of change; it is about being changed - renewed as persons, parishes and a Diocese.

We live in great expectation of the new wine to come. We should not be afraid that this will break us. Rather, we say, "Glory to God, whose power working in us can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine." Amen!



Bishop Tom Corston spread the Sacred Story even on the evening of his last day as an active Bishop.

The Sacred Story

Article by The Right Reverend T. A. Corston.

ONE OF THE highlights of all family gatherings is the stories that are told when we enjoy one another's company. It becomes even more special when the elders are present and they share tales of the way things used to be. While perhaps some of the children might wander off to do their own thing, many times younger members of the family are captivated. Stories about the way that things once were that involved their parents and grandparents are often great entertainment. These are always fun times.

To be sure that is the way it often is within my own family. Family dinners and outings are often filled with stories of the characters who, for the most part, are now gone. I always enjoy those times and still today I remember stories told by my parents and relatives

of the rascals and lovers, saints and sinners, movers and shakers of long ago. I admit to forgetting who married whom that is part of these family histories, but that's all part of the enjoyment. Sometimes photo albums are dug out and become part of the story telling enticing laughter, some embarrassment, and sometimes sadness.

I do think that there is always an educational element to these family story-telling moments. We want our families to know who they are and where they have come from. Re-counting family histories helps to do that.

The Church is like a story-telling family. Always the Church tells us and teaches us so that we know who we are, where we came from, and where we are going. She knows that, "whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by

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Archbishop's Message

YEARS AGO, when my eldest was five, she took her 3 year old sister's shoulders, commanded her to look her in the eyes, issued a set of instructions, and told her to repeat them back. Turning her around, she pushed her off and said, "Well, go do it! Now!" Looking at her astonished mother, Andrea said, "Someday I'll grow up to be a teacher because I'm so good at telling Rachel what to do!"

We know that's not what a good teacher really does. She could have

said missionary rather than teacher. There was a certain kind of missionary, by no means all, whose vision of mission was to tell others what to do and how to do it, all too often for the benefit of the missionary. That model, coupled with abuse that was too widely perpetrated, has for many people poisoned the very words mission and missionary.

That is unfortunate because the terms have a noble history. Perhaps we need to reclaim them in their proper Christian sense. 'Mission'

Article by Archbishop Colin R. Johnson,
Bishop of Moosonee.

means 'sent out.' Our God is a God of mission beginning at the Creation when God speaks his life-giving Word and light and life are sent forth. It continued as God sought to re-engage his people, sending out the prophets. Jesus is God's eternal 'word made flesh' sent to dwell in our midst, God's mission to us.

What is that mission? At the beginning of his public ministry immediately after his baptism, Jesus entered his home synagogue, the community's centre of worship and

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Archbishop Colin Johnson and Bishop Tom Corston have worked together for the people of Moosonee.

Two Bishops for the Price of None!

Article by Archdeacon Deborah Lonergan-Freake.

FOR THE LAST THREE years or so, under the leadership of Bishop Tom Corston, we in the Diocese of Moosonee have been prayerfully preparing to boldly go where no diocese has gone before - entering into a Transition Plan which has seen us officially transformed into a Mission Area with the Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario as our Diocesan Bishop. Bishop Corston worked himself out of

a job to allow our Diocese to re-focus on providing funds for ministry within our parishes. Savings at the Diocesan level, on staff salaries, housing, office expenses, and travel are reflected in the 2014 Budget. By the time this article is published, it is hoped that our Diocese will be funding the ministry of a Diocesan Youth Resource Worker, as well as, one more paid clergy position. We have entered into observer status with the Living Stones Partnership - a group of dioceses, who, like us, face limited funds and declining or aging populations. By working with similar dioceses, we hope to find new and innovative ways of following God's call as expressed in our Diocesan Vision Statement: "called by God to live and proclaim the Gospel."

For most people in parishes across our vast Diocese, changes will hardly be noticeable. Parish treasurers will, of course, have noticed that there is no request to contribute to the Diocesan Moving Fund this year, leaving some extra funds

in every parish. While our Diocese has not elected a successor to Bishop Corston, episcopal ministry is being provided to the Diocese of Moosonee by Archbishop Colin Johnson who does not draw a stipend from Moosonee. Bishop Corston has been appointed to assist Archbishop Johnson, a ministry Bishop Tom as entered into without a full stipend, accepting instead a basic honorarium.

So, there are signs of hope in Moosonee. Ministry continues and will be supported. Lay Readers will continue to be raised up and trained. Monies have been designated to help support a Diocesan Healing Gathering to be held in Eastmain in August. So, although we did not elect a successor to Bishop Corston, we now have the ministry and support of two bishops, all for the price of none, since neither receive a full stipend from our Diocese. These are signs of God's abundant blessings as we continue to follow God's call in the Diocese of Moosonee.

Archbishop's Message continued from p. 2.

teaching, opened the scriptures and proclaimed, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour (Luke, 4:18-19). Here is Christ's purpose, his mission: healing, recovery, freedom, good news! For us.

On January 1st, the Diocese of Moosonee became a Mission

Area of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario when Bishop Tom Corston retired.

As a Mission Area, some aspects of the Diocese change but its core purpose continues as it always has: to be the church of Jesus Christ for the people in a geographic area, gathered as bishop, clergy, and lay people around the Word of God and the Lord's Table, and then sent out (that word 'mission' again) as witnesses and agents of God's loving service to the world.

A Mission Area is not about

someone else coming and telling us what we should do and not do. It is about joining up with others in the church in new ways to be effective ministers of Good News, ambassadors of healing and reconciliation.

January 1st, marks a change and a continuation for me as well. As the Metropolitan (or Archbishop) of the Province, I automatically become the new Bishop of Moosonee, while continuing to be the Bishop of Toronto as I have been for the



Delegates to the "Called to be Caretakers & Stewards of the King's Household" posed for a group photo with Bishop Tom Corston and Dean Greg Gilson.

Caretakes and Stewards

Article by Richard Moore, Lay Reader, Holy Trinity Church, Cochrane.

FOR CHRISTIANS, being 'enlightened' has connotations that are both spiritual and uplifting. The process is, however, sometimes very practical, down-to-earth, and needed. So was the case on Tuesday, November 5th, when delegates from across the Diocese, treasurers and those with financial responsibilities, met to learn, or re-learn, about their duties to their parishes and to their Diocese.

The one-day workshop at St. Matthew's, held in conjunction with the Diocesan Executive Council's meeting, used the theme "Called to be Caretakers and Stewards of the King's Household" and was led by Bishop Tom, Patricia Dorland, Chief Financial Officer, Bryan Finlay, Chancellor, and Matt Bird, Webmaster. Each of these Diocesan leaders explained the various procedures, regulations, and

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steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope." The Church we love, like the loved 'Grannies' in our family, never stop telling their stories filled with joy and triumph, sorrow and failure. The Church, like a holy Granny, likewise never stops. Every liturgy is where the Word is heard and received and the story is "read, marked, learned and inwardly digested". Like the photos and heirlooms used to enhance family story-telling, vestments, smells, sounds, and holy hardware enhance the sacred story of who we are as the people of

forms with which parishes must be familiar in order to remain financially efficient, and which are necessary to good communication in the Diocese.

Patricia Dorland emphasized the vital nature of the work of treasurers, pointing to the need to satisfy the requirements of not only two provincial governments but also the federal government and the national church. As charities, churches must be accurate and transparent so that their status is protected and their parishioners recognized appropriately. The Bishop reminded the group of the responsibilities of parish leaders and pointed out the changes which would be experienced during the transition to being a Missionary Diocese. Bryan Finlay and Matt Bird discussed their roles in protecting and informing congregations.

Participants left the workshop with a heightened of responsibility.

God.

As we enter the season of Lent and Easter, our story comes to its greatest moment. Listen carefully and closely to the story of this holy time. "Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again." The story has not changed. The Christian Church has been telling the same story perfectly from one generation to another for thousands of years. Our very lives depend upon this story for, "when he comes again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may without shame or fear rejoice to behold his appearing".

you over the next few years as we figure out together where God is sending us, where God is already active in mission in our Diocese and how we can join Him in the Gospel work of bringing Good News to the poor, healing and recovery, freedom so that we and all people can live fully with the abundance Christ offers.



Archbishop Johnson greeted Valerie Gilson after a service at St. Matthew's.



Notes from East Main



Peter Colbert of St. Matthew's Cathedral, Bob Webb of Porcupine United, Don Gillespie of Covenant United, and George Cribbs of St. Paul's constituted the base section of the combined choir at the Lessons & Carols service held at St. Paul's in South Porcupine.



*The Reverend Dr. Marilyn van Duffelen and Sadie.
Article by The Reverend Dr. Marilyn van Duffelen, Eastmain.*



Delegates to "Called to be Caretakers and Stewards of the King's Household" held at St. Matthew's Cathedral in November roundly applauded Bryan Finlay, Chancellor of the Diocese of Moosonee, for his presentation.



Lauren Quist, Jean Larocque, and Susan Jansson of St. Matthew/St. Paul's of Hearst took part in an outreach programme to truckers on the Trans Canada Highway in Hearst. Over 50 gift bags were made and distributed to long-haul truckers far from home just before Christmas.



The Reverend Bill Jones, United Church of Canada, shared the joyful duty of reading the lessons with Susan Montague during the inter-denominational Lessons & Carols service held at St. Paul's, South Porcupine.

THE TEMPERATURE has warmed up to -22° and the wind has quieted, so my little poodle, Sadie, and I have braved the cold for a much needed walk. Sadie had to wear her dreaded boots and fleece jacket, but she spent every second outside racing from place to place, back and forth from me to wherever. It was a much needed opportunity to stretch the legs and burn some energy.

The community has been empty since the middle of the month. Christmas vacation has started and most have left the community to shop in the larger city centres or enjoy visiting with family and friends in other communities. The excitement is palpable. Trips to the post office yield boxes and bags of online goodies. The Northern has sales, ladies' night, and men's night. Today is also the last day to enter the outdoor Christmas decoration contest, so the men have taken out their ladders and strings of lights are being skillfully attached to eaves and sills. The competition is fierce with \$1,000 for first prize.

This year will be the first time in many years that we have a New Year's Day wedding, and at our Community

Feast we will be concelebrating with the wedding party. This year our little church will also hold a quiet dinner for all those who will be alone this year. Everyone will bring a little something to the dinner, some family favourite to share with neighbours and friends, or perhaps just themselves, their joy and smiles. We will put on the table cloths, plates and plastic cutlery remaining from birthdays and anniversary parties from the warmer months. We will spread out the offerings, wild meat sharing space with turkey and ham. We will pour tea and juice, hand out water bottles, and once all have arrived, we will say grace and give thanks for our bountiful feast. We will gather to laugh and share stories. We will reflect on the lights we have lit in the darkness. This year, the lights of hope, peace, love, and joy will burn brighter. This year we will share more of ourselves with our neighbours. This year we will spare more than a glance to those who need our help. This year the work of Christmas will continue through the year until we gather again at a quiet dinner shared with our neighbours a year hence, and again we will give thanks.

Our Bishop continued from page 1.

Soloists for the evening included: Peter Davis, Peter Colbert, Peigi Kunkel, George Cribbs, and Jim Nicholls. The wonderful singing was accompanied by Sue Steele on the piano and Peigi Kunkel on the organ. The Reverend Bill Jones and I shared the joyful job of reading the scriptures interspersed throughout the musical selections and Bishop Tom read the gospel for the evening. The congregation thoroughly enjoyed the sharing of the New Light which involves singing *Silent Night* in a church lit only by the candles held by each person. The evening of praise was wrapped up by the closing prayers of Bishop Tom. Well, Tom ... now you're done!



Bishop Tom received a print created by Catharine Cribbs of St. Paul's.

