



DIOCESE OF MOOSONEE

**DIOCESAN
PROFILE**



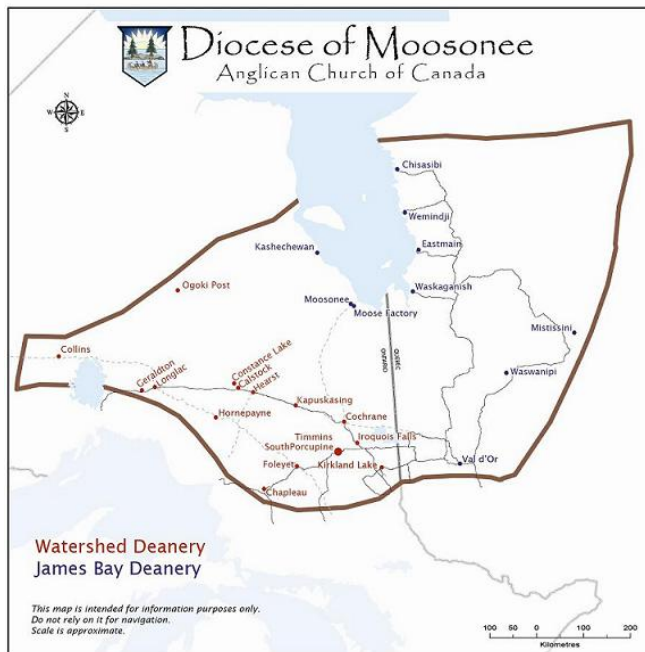
*Called by God to live
and proclaim the Gospel*

ᐆ ᐅᐅᐅᐅᐅᐅᐅᐅᐅ ᐅᐅᐅᐅᐅᐅᐅᐅ ᐅᐅ ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ
ᐅᐅᐅᐅ ᐱ ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ ᐅᐅᐅᐅᐅᐅᐅᐅᐅᐅᐅ

We are the Diocese of Moosonee

The Diocese of Moosonee straddles both northern Ontario and northwestern Quebec covering some 560,000 square kilometers with its southern boundary within close proximity to the 49th parallel. This Diocese is one of the great historic missionary areas of the Anglican Communion, and of early Canada with records dating back to 1780. Mining and forestry are mainstays

of the economy in the Diocese, and the towns and cities in the southern part of the Diocese serve as regional service centres. The towns in the southern part of the Diocese are connected by miles of rail and highways and logging roads.



The northern half of the Diocese is largely populated by the ancient aboriginal peoples, mostly of the Cree nation, with some Ojibwa. The teachings of the Elders say that they are known within Indigenous circles as the Spirit People. These Indigenous communities are connected by road, by air and by seasonal ice

roads. Band Councils play an important part in supporting Anglican ministry in their communities, sometimes offering housing and financial support for the cost of clergy.

Presently, the Diocese employs one full time priest, one part-time priest, one part-time Chief Financial Officer, the Principal of the Bishop Thomas Corston School of Ministry (three-quarters time) and many non-stipendiary deacons and retired priests who serve in the various communities within the Diocese. Archbishop Fred Hiltz is presently serving as Commissary for the Diocese. Like many dioceses across Canada, the Diocese of Moosonee is in a

constant mode of recruitment and the shortage of priests is a constant struggle.



Most Rev. Anne Germond,
Acting Primate, Metropolitan of
the Ecclesiastical Province of
Ontario, Bishop of Algoma and
Bishop of Moosonee

We are followers of Jesus and our desire is to make his love known within the Diocese and beyond. Twenty parishes make up our Diocese divided into two deaneries; James Bay and Watershed. Each congregation is unique but we are all part of the body of Christ, and so each of us plays an important part in our communities and in our Diocese. The population of our Diocese largely consists of Cree people in communities on the west and east sides of James Bay, and inland Quebec. There are, however, Indigenous people throughout our Diocese. The numbers of people attending Sunday services in the Diocese of Moosonee is generally much lower today than in the past. In some parishes, where there is no retired resident priest or full-time stipendiary priest, there are not services every Sunday. Nevertheless, the ministry of the Church is requested from time to time, by many people in their communities at large; and there are many who express that being an Anglican Christian is an important aspect of their identity.

We are members of the Council of the North, which means we receive financial support through a grant from the National Church. Being a member of the Council of the North also means that our remuneration package follows Council guidelines. The National Church supports our Diocese by managing our investment portfolio consisting of internally and externally restricted funds. Information on the remuneration package and financial information is available upon request.



Rt. Rev. Thomas A. Corston
(1949–2022), 9th Bishop of
Moosonee (2010–13),
Assisting Bishop from 2013

The election of the 9th Bishop of Moosonee in 2010, was a pivotal point in our history. Bishop Thomas A. Corston, who was ordained in our Diocese and whose family originated in our Diocese, returned to serve in our Diocese. However, this was also at a point where our financial situation was critical. It became very evident that drastic measures had to be taken if we were to continue to meet our financial responsibilities.

In the fall of 2010, the Executive Council of the Diocese embarked on a bold journey and mandated a team of members to work on a five-year plan with the goal to review all existing resources (financial, material and human) to ensure efficient and effective stewardship.

At our Synod in June of 2011, the desire to remain together as a diocese was confirmed as the overwhelming spirit of our gathering was to continue as one body in Christ. Our existing relationships were seen and identified as true gifts that we, as a diocese, were unwilling to discard.

The transition of the Diocese of Moosonee to the Moosonee Mission Area took place on January 1, 2014, immediately following the retirement of Bishop Thomas Corston. The Provincial and Moosonee Canons regarding this transition came into effect on that date and guided our restructuring.



Most Rev. Fred Hiltz,
Commissary of the Bishop of
Moosonee

Thus, the Diocese of Moosonee did not elect a new bishop to succeed the 9th bishop. Instead, Archbishop Colin Johnson, as Metropolitan, became the 10th Bishop of Moosonee pursuant to the transition Canons, and was formally installed to that office on April 1, 2014.

An Archdeacon Executive Administrator was appointed to work with the Chief Financial Officer, and Moosonee's retired bishop became Assistant Bishop. In 2018, the Metropolitan Bishop, Archbishop Anne became the 11th Bishop of Moosonee, and she appointed Archbishop Fred Hiltz as Assisting Bishop and subsequently, Commissary.

The Diocese has a newspaper, *Northland*, which is published and distributed quarterly with the *Anglican Journal*. It is also available online at <https://www.moosoneeanglican.ca/publications/>.

June 2024 Synod

Held at St. Matthew's Cathedral, Timmins, Ontario

Synod 2024 reaffirmed the decision of the June 2011 Synod “to continue as one body of Christ”. Since current reporting of our resources (financial, material and spiritual), there has developed a willingness to move forward in faith. The reports showed positive results based on the original 5-year plan “to ensure efficient and effective stewardship.” At the June Synod, a unanimous motion to elect a full-time resident bishop was carried. The parishes of the Diocese of Moosonee are committed and ‘called by God to live and proclaim the Gospel.’



Opening service of
June 2024 Synod



National Indigenous Archbishop Chris Harper,
Archbishop Anne Germond, Archbishop Fred Hiltz



Archbishop Chris Harper
blessing delegates



Delegates and attendees gathering in prayer

Diocesan Ministry



Rev. Gladys and Rev. George Matoush with newly baptized babies and families



Rev. Canon Cliff Dee presiding at a worship service in Mistissini, Quebec



Parish Fellowship



Lay Readers in our Diocese

Ministry

The parishes of James Bay Deanery are all based in Cree communities, with the exception of Moosonee and Val d'Or. Moosonee, which has many Cree residents, is a town at the bottom of James Bay and across the river from Moose Factory, which is a Cree community. Val d'Or is a city in Quebec,

which is about 300 km from the closest of the other James Bay Deanery parishes. Nevertheless, it is a hub for the Quebec Cree communities for consumer, recreation, commercial and medical purposes.

Baptisms and Confirmations are significant sacred rites of passage. In any given year, for the nine parishes around James Bay there can be as many as 250 candidates for Confirmation. In one parish, preparation for confirmation takes place within the local school, and in many of the parishes, it is provided by lay leaders. One priest sometimes does Zoom confirmation classes for candidates who cannot attend in person.

Ministry at times of death and in bereavement is also important; in the Cree communities, deaths often impact the whole community. Along with funerals, family services (wake services) also take place. Families often also request memorial services on first anniversaries of deaths, and many of the Cree parishes also have annual cemetery memorial services which are well attended.

Most of the worship in the Diocese today is in the English language. However, in Cree communities some of the worship does take place in the Cree language. In the Diocese, there are three Cree dialects in use and there are elders who do not speak English. Moose Cree translations of the New Testament, portions of the Old Testament, much of the 1662 Book of Common Prayer and a selection of English hymns were translated by the first Bishop of Moosonee, John Horden. These publications are still in use especially among elders of the Cree people today. In the northern Quebec Cree dialect, there is also a translation of parts of the 1918 BCP, which is combined with a selection of hymns in a publication that dates back to 1923 (translated by Rev William Walton and his wife Daisy Walton). Some liturgies in the BAS have been translated into various dialects of Cree. The Cree language New Testament used in the Diocese today has been published in three dialects: the Moose Cree New Testament of Bishop Horden, northern Quebec James Bay coastal Cree and the more southern inland Quebec Cree.

Gospel music is a familiar and welcomed style of praise singing for many Cree parishes. In the Kashechewan parish, St. Paul's Gospel Band has been an important part of the life of the parish since the 1980s. The Band plays at all kinds of church services, singing in both Cree and English, and sometimes is invited to other communities. Their recorded music is popular especially in the Cree parishes.

St. Thomas Restoration Project



Old St. Thomas Restoration Partnership

century onwards. In the late 19th century, Moose Factory was the see for the Diocese, and the resident home of Bishop Horden. By 2006, the church building had become unsafe for public use and was deconsecrated. Now, an MRHHA led initiative is set on restoring the building into a multipurpose community space. The partnership goal is for this building to become a tangible expression of the Diocese's and the community's commitment to



St. Matthew's Cathedral Lunch Ministry

In 2023 the Diocese of Moosonee entered into a partnership with Moose River Heritage and Hospitality Association (MRHHA) in supporting the restoration of “Old St. Thomas Church” on Moose Factory Island. Located in northern Ontario, at the southern tip of James Bay, Moose Factory is a community rich in historical significance. St. Thomas Anglican Church was at the heart of this community from the mid-19th century onwards. In the late 19th century, Moose Factory was the see for the Diocese, and the resident home of Bishop Horden. By 2006, the church building had become unsafe for public use and was deconsecrated. Now, an MRHHA led initiative is set on restoring the building into a multipurpose community space. The partnership goal is for this building to become a tangible expression of the Diocese's and the community's commitment to healing and reconciliation, and to become a center of cultural and language revitalization. “What we are trying to do in restoring St. Thomas Church is not just restore a building, but restore the very best of the relationships represented by those who helped build it, restore it, maintain it, and who lived and used it; who were born in the community and baptized there, who are buried there, who got married there” (quote from Cecil Chabot, Executive Director, MRHHA).

St. Matthew's Lunch Ministry

St. Matthew's Cathedral is situated in the heart of Timmins, Ontario.

While this location is advantageous for accessibility as a central location, it is also a window into the social challenges that many cities can

experience. The Cathedral parish has discerned a ministry of offering food

for those who are hungry, and a place for nurturing caring relationships for those who are seeking a safe community. Volunteers gather each Friday to prepare and serve up a wholesome noon time lunch for any who walk through their doors.

Quilts for Survivors Partnership



In September of 2024, Quilts for Survivors had the grand opening of their new space in South Porcupine, Ontario. This was a public celebration of a partnership formed with the Diocese of Moosonee. The partnership was a way for the Diocese to honour its commitment to truth, justice and reconciliation with Indigenous people by offering a rent and utility free location for this organization.

Vanessa Genier, the CEO of this not-for-profit entity, working with the Mennonite Central Committee had reached out to the Diocese inquiring about the deconsecrated and vacant church property. Vanessa is a member

of the Missanabie Cree First Nation and the mandate of the organization that she founded is to gift a quilt to every Indigenous person in Canada who is a survivor of residential school trauma. With the help of local and even global volunteer quilters, more than 6,000 quilts have been made and mailed out. In Vanessa's words, "the quilt manifests a most meaningful kind of hug, acknowledging and nurturing a sense of recognition of one's pain, and offering comfort."

Challenges

For over ten years, the Diocese of Moosonee has been a mission area of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario. This has meant that episcopal ministry has been provided by the Metropolitan and retired assisting bishops who were not resident in our Diocese. While our Diocese is so very grateful for their commitment, and their love for our Diocese as they exemplified the love of Christ for all people, many ministry goals and relational experiences have been limited due to the part time nature of their episcopal ministry.

The parishes have been affected by the Mission Area structure as a mind-set of being more congregational has developed. They have had to rely on local leadership and direction as opposed to a diocesan model. In parishes where there is no incumbent, lay leaders or parish leadership have taken on the day-to-day ministry and organization of parish life. This has sometimes resulted in a relational distancing between parishes and the Diocese.

Parishes in the James Bay Deanery, as well as Band Councils, which used to enjoy a much closer relationship with the resident bishop, have not had that opportunity in the past number of years due to the limited time available to the bishops.

Lack of local industry and jobs, plus the distance between parishes in both deaneries, has combined to produce a lack of parish growth and a decrease in congregation numbers. The result of this is that some parishes have formed a partnership with other denominations, sharing building space and alternating the forms of Sunday liturgy at agreed upon intervals. Where there is a very infrequent ordained clergy presence, trained and confident lay leadership does provide an Anglican expression, but this does not happen in all parishes.

The Diocese of Moosonee is largely made up of Indigenous Anglicans, but the Diocese has not, as yet, much engaged with the Sacred Circle document for the self-determining Indigenous church within the Anglican Church of Canada, “Our Way of Life.” In 2023, the Diocesan Council of Indigenous People (DCIP) was re-established through the adoption of Canon 35. The mandate for DCIP will provide an opportunity for teaching, for supporting healing gatherings and for sharing wisdom and traditional Indigenous ways of being within our Diocese.

The financial reality of the Diocese of Moosonee has always been challenging and was a main factor in becoming a Mission Area. The transition to a Mission Area gave the Diocese a period of time to regain financial stability. Drastic measures were taken to review all our resources at hand, both human and material. Steps were taken to cut costs, to move our investments to the National Church wherein existed investment expertise, and to restructure the operations of the Diocese.

Due to the significant structural changes implemented over ten years ago, there has been some headway in moving towards a more financially sustainable future. However, parish assessments continue to decrease as parish revenues have decreased. As well, the Council of the North block grant that the Diocese receives is decreasing as the National Church revenues decrease.

The Diocese is facing a crisis in not being able to hire ordained clergy from beyond our Diocese, and in not having a fully developed process for the discernment of locally raised candidates for ministry. Many parish communities have vacant incumbent positions, and the lack of an Anglican presence means that loving, pastoral ministry is not being received when there is no other faith denomination in the community.

A demographic reality in Canada is that a large portion of the population are senior citizens. However, among Indigenous peoples in Canada the largest proportions of the population are children and young people. This is very much the case in the Cree communities of the Diocese of Moosonee. Yet it is generally the case that Sunday church attendance is made up mainly of elders. We value the elders and seek to continue to connect with them, but we also seek to connect more with the younger generations.

Colonialism, and the Residential School experience that has resulted in inter-generational trauma, is having a large impact on Cree communities and the people of the Diocese of Moosonee. Walking the path of truth and reconciliation as a Church so that Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples are full equal partners, is a great challenge. While there are problems across Canada among all peoples regarding drug and alcohol addiction, suicide, bullying, physical and verbal violence and related social issues, sometimes these problems are particularly acute in Indigenous communities, and this is reflected in the life of the people of the Diocese.



A group of students enrolled at the School of Ministry

Bishop Thomas Corston School of Ministry
Addressing the individual educational needs of clergy and lay
as they explore and develop their vocations

The Bishop Thomas Corston School for Ministry (BTCSM) in Moosonee exists to facilitate continuing education for clergy and lay leaders in the Diocese, Indigenous and non-Indigenous. The objective of the school is to equip clergy and lay leaders for situations and problems that might occur in ministry.

The Principal hosts weekly on-line meetings with students of BTCSM and



Rev'd Canon Diane Hilpert
McIlroy, Principal of the
Bishop Thomas Corston
School of Ministry

teaches from hands on experience. Visiting professors from various schools of theology are also brought on-line to teach on specific subjects. The students are able to share their own experiences in ministry, and to seek advice. In homiletic teaching the BTCSM students learn how to integrate the scripture, the daily news and what is happening in the local community. Students learn to preach the Gospel within a secular context so that those listening are able to deepen their faith and move to discipleship. Other subjects addressed are pastoral care, which is vital for church growth and vitality, liturgical practices in worship, and the importance of safe church. A course is taught on exploring trends and cultural realities in a “post-Christian” world and new ways of doing church in a post pandemic world.

The BTCSM seeks to connect with Indigenous knowledge providing an opportunity to learn and reflect constructively on the traditional spirituality of Indigenous people. The BTSCM is in partnership with Huron University College and Niagara School for Missional

Leadership. Through Huron, students are able to gain credits for courses and work toward a Licentiate. The BTCSM encourages course participation at Thorneloe University in Sudbury. The BTSCM offers individual mentoring to students to address identified opportunities for growth.

Parishes across the Diocese



St. John's Chapleau

Informal shared ministry with a United Church congregation

Served by supply clergy on monthly basis



Archbishop Anderson Memorial Church, Holy Trinity Parish, Cochrane

Served by 1/4 time stipendiary position as well as Lay Readers

Offers weekly Eucharist; 5 pm evening prayer Monday to Friday; prayer and consultation 2 pm Monday to Friday



St. Stephen's Constance Lake

Church owned by Band Council; Band responsible for upkeep

Served by Non-Stipendiary Deacon and lay leaders in community



St. John's Foleyet

Served by supply clergy on monthly basis

Holds regular Sunday worship



St. James (Anglican) and St. Andrew's (Presbyterian), Geraldton

Shared ministry with a Presbyterian Church congregation

Served by Anglican clergy 3 times a year; regular services offered by acting Lay Reader



**St. Matthew's / St. Paul's,
Hearst**

Shared ministry with a United Church congregation; agreement provides that United Church supplies the building and the Anglican Church supplies the clergy

Served by Lay Readers and clergy from nearby community on monthly basis



St. Luke's, Hornepayne

Deacon in Charge – retired

Served by supply clergy



St. Mark's, Iroquois Falls

Served by 1/4 time retired stipendiary priest and non-stipendiary retired deacon who offers reserved sacrament

Lay Reader in training

Building relationship with local Presbyterian Church



St. Mark's, Kapuskasing

Served by Non-Stipendiary retired priest with two non-stipendiary deacons and an acting Lay Reader



**St. Peter's on-the-Rock,
Kirkland Lake**

Served by 1/2 time stipendiary ministry position filled by retired priest and non-stipendiary deacon

3 Lay Readers offer Morning Prayer, lead weekly Bible Study and help with Fellowship events

Weekly congregational teaching offered by Incumbent

Morning coffee hour helps with the homeless



**St. Matthew's Cathedral,
Timmins**

See of Diocese

Presently served by supply clergy; previously a 1/2 time position



St. Philip's, Chisasibi

Served by retired Non-Stipendiary Priest and Deacon

Previously full-time position

Building owned by Band Council



St. Mark's, Eastmain

Building owned by Band Council

Served by clergy in nearby community and lay leaders

Services led by Lay Reader-in-training

Previously a full-time position



St. Paul's, Kashechewan

Building owned by Band Council

Served by Non-Stipendiary priest and lay leaders



Church of St. John the Evangelist, Mistissini

Band Council owned building insured by the parish

A full time ministry position is currently available for this parish

Ministry is led by a team of lay readers, and the priest in Waswanipi



St. Thomas, Moose Factory

Served by two Non-Stipendiary Deacons and lay leadership



**Church of the Apostles,
Moosonee**

Served by two Non-Stipendiary
Deacons and two Lay Readers



Golden Valley, Val d'Or

Shared ministry with a United
Church congregation. Worship
is held in a private home

Served by supply clergy



St. Peter's, Waskaganish

Band Council owned building

Served by clergy in nearby
community and lay leader



St. Barnabas, Waswanipi

Served by retired Non-
Stipendiary priest

Band Council owned building



**Church of St. John the
Baptist, Wemindji**

Full time stipendiary priest and
two non-stipendiary deacons

Band Council owned building



***St. Matthew's Cathedral
Timmins, Ontario***

Synod Administration Office
331 Fifth Avenue, Timmins, ON P0N 1G0

The See City of the Diocese of Moosonee has moved from Moose Factory, to Chapleau, to Cochrane and finally to Timmins, Ontario.



facebook.com/p/Anglican-Diocese-of-Moosonee-100064695786419/



<https://www.moosoneeanglican.ca/>

Diocesan Goals

To encourage the ministry of all baptized Christians by providing pastoral training, and affirmation of leaders

To support the revitalized focus on ministry to youth and children by encouraging the participation of young people in special events and gatherings held throughout the Diocese.

To foster parish and diocesan development in strengthening spiritual growth by:

- Encouraging Bible studies and developing educational resources and training in Christian formation ...
- Partnering with the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer ...
- Involvement in diocesan and parish healing gatherings and worship services ...

To strengthen stewardship in a responsible fashion by:

- Furthering the understanding of diocesan policies and procedures ...
- Developing better communications between diocesan office and parishes ...
- Compiling a list of resources; print, human, pastoral and financial ...

To commit to walking in partnership for the implementation of the Indigenous Covenant.



The Call

... for hundreds of years missionaries have bravely faced the challenges inherent with sharing the Gospel in Canada's north, amongst them accessibility, weather and language. Our Diocese has cheerfully borne and met these challenges, but it takes an open heart to prayerfully listen to where the Holy Spirit is leading. Today, these same challenges remain, necessitating a response for an adventurous energetic vision, and listening to God calling us forward into the next chapter of God's mission for us.