

Report of the 44th Synod of the Diocese of Algoma Wed October 21st – Saturday October 24th 2009

Synod with about 120 lay and 55 clergy present held every 2 years in Sault Ste Marie is a time for fellowship and on this occasion to observe our new bishop and receive as clergy direction i.e. the challenge to our prayer life and consistency in liturgical use.

Highlights:

Bible Study – apt for the situation in our church 1 Corinthians 11-12. Paul is addressing divisions in the Corinthian church with the message ‘we as brothers and sisters belong to Christ and one another’.

Communion is to be a gathering of social equals in order to build relationships and be attentive to others. The Corinthians are to use their gifts to support one another. They and we are Christians by virtue of each other and community.

Motions –

1. Ethical Investment Policy for Diocese to be established.
2. Letter to encourage dialogue between Vale’ Inco and the Steelworkers in Sudbury and a letter to the Prime Minister to look for positive ways to address the Forestry Crisis.
3. Parishes can now apply for Ontario Trillium money
4. The diocese is implementing a 5 year ‘Strategic Plan’ 2009-2014
5. The diocesan 2010 budget was passed.

Listening Info and Process –

There was an outline of the debate so far from Lambeth 1998. The Listening Process is “so that greater common understanding might be obtained on the underlying issue of same gender unions.’

The Process of listening isn’t a debate or finding compromise but a discussion among equals including same sex people in the exercise. The participants are to show empathy and see each other as fellow followers of Christ. The rules of engagement are set by a Facilitator. Go to www.anglicancommunion.org and click Windsor Process.

We heard the personal stories of Dr Patti Brace an Anglican in Canada involved with ‘Integrity’ and the Rev’d Canon Dr. Mwita Akiri from the Anglican Church in Tanzania.

Fresh Expressions – presenter the Rev’d Canon Nick Brotherhood – Diocese of Montreal.

Fresh Expressions is a response to changing times – Sunday activities i.e. sport, the nature of changing relationships, a changing culture of diversity not uniformity, less knowledge of the Christian faith and a spiritual hunger among many. Fresh Expressions is primarily for ‘not yet’ members of the church. It is an attempt to do something, to reach them in their situation.

It is not an either or but the traditional church 'inherited' alongside the Fresh Expressions of church. There is leadership training available. Go to www.freshexpressions.ca esp. the Church on Tap in Port Colbourne, Ontario and the Messy Church in Holy Trinity – Hawkesbury.

Diocesan Archives

There was a presentation from the Algoma University library director Mr Ken Hernden where the diocese of Algoma archives are now kept including parish records such as marriage, death and birth certificates. Go to www.algomau.ca then the Wishart Library and click on the Diocese of Algoma Archives.

My thanks to the Rev'd Margaret and Art Lucas, Brianna Locke, Cynthia Cooper and Sheena Larson who along with me attended from St Michaels.

Submitted by Rev Peter October 27th 2009