



August 20, 2021

Letter to Synod Delegates

*Almighty and everliving God,
Give wisdom and understanding to the members of the Synod of the Diocese of Algoma.
Teach us in all things to seek first your honour and glory.
May we perceive what is right, have courage to pursue it and grace to accomplish it,
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen*

Dear Synod delegates,

In a year like no other in our lifetime or in the Diocese of Algoma, the 50th session of Synod will be held like no other in our history. Just two years ago, having a diocesan synod online would have been unimaginable. But, through this season of pandemic, as we have adapted and made necessary changes in every area of our lives, including the way we worship on Sundays, new things have become possible.

I extend a warm Algoma welcome to everyone as we prepare for Synod 2021. There are some of you for whom this will be your first Algoma Synod. Since the 2019 Synod, clergy from the dioceses of Rupert's Land, Niagara, and Toronto have begun new ministries in Algoma. The staffing in the Synod office has changed. Newly ordained clergy and clergy who have returned to the Anglican Communion will be with us. May you all feel very much at home in our midst!

A glance at the list of delegates tells me that many of you have participated in Synod before. Thank you for allowing your name to stand for election for this Synod and for representing your parish in the wider diocese. Even though this is a streamlined Synod, there will be much to report on when you return to your home parishes as we continue to '*Share in the gathering work of Christ so that his newness of life overflows into our hearts, homes, churches, and community*'.

Synod 2021 Theme



“Restore us O God; make your face shine on us, that we may be saved.”

The theme for this Synod is taken from Psalm 80. It is a song of communal lament written in response to a disaster, most likely the fall and exile of the Northern Kingdom. The words of lament are strong in this Psalm, but so are the words of hope repeated over and over again as the community calls on God to ‘restore’ and ‘save’, to ‘turn again’ and ‘give life.’ These have been our cries through this season of pandemic as we have observed the pain and suffering in every country on earth and seen the structures that were once normal, crumble before our eyes.

Like the Israelite exiles living in a foreign land, we too have been living in a time of uncertainty, experiencing feelings of disorientation, anxiety, and fear. It’s been a time of unknowing in which we’ve had to adapt our patterns of living to the rapidly evolving pandemic. We’ve been longing for a return to normal – to be back home in our church buildings, schools, places of work, and play.

In reality we know that we can never go back to the way things were before COVID-19 and we must prepare well for life in a post-pandemic world.

The Hebrew people returned to their homeland with great optimism and hopefulness that things would be different now than they were back home, but that didn’t happen – in fact, life became very difficult for them. Their optimism was abruptly challenged by tremendous economic difficulties. With few financial resources, meager food supplies, and harsh weather conditions, the people found the task of rebuilding their once proud homeland next to impossible.

Through that time the people held onto their faith in God the ‘Shepherd of Israel’ as well as God’s faithfulness to them. Psalm 80 may begin with words of lament but holds in it the promise of God’s blessing – “Make your face shine on us, that we may be saved.” (vs.3)

This is our prayer now, even if the task of rebuilding may seem to be an impossible one. To help us get started, I have invited the Rev. Dr. Susan Beaumont, author of the book, *“How to Lead When You Don’t Know Where You’re Going: Leading in a Liminal Season”*, to lead four pre-synod workshop sessions about living in the midst of uncertainty and how to move forward in the face of uncertainty. Susan Beaumont describes this time of unknowing as being a ‘Liminal State’. It’s a season that is fraught with worry, conflict, and danger but which is also filled with possibilities.

As we continue to pray for the restoration of those whose lives have been forever changed by COVID-19, for God’s face to shine upon them and bless them, we also pray that in this liminal time we will experience the presence of the divine in a new and palpable way and have the courage to cross over into a new season in our lives together as communities of faith in Algoma, a people who are open to their lives being transformed by the living, loving, saving God.

This Synod is critical for Algoma. We are standing on the border between the old ways of being and the new season in which God is calling us to participate in God’s mission in and for the sake of the world. This will take hard work and a commitment in us to change. Susan Beaumont, quoting Heifetz and Linsky (Leadership on the Line), claims that solutions are achieved when the ‘people with the problem’ go through a process together to become ‘the people with the solution’ (pg.19).

Your responsibilities as Synod delegates - the four “P”s Pray. Prepare. Participate. Post-Synod

1. **Pray** for God’s people in the Diocese of Algoma, for delegates to Synod, and for those who are planning synod, preaching, leading worship, preparing videos, speaking at workshops, chairing committees, and taking care of all that is involved in the online platform. Include prayers for synod in your weekly parish intercessions.
2. **Prepare** well by reading the pre-synod materials that are circulated through the Synod Office or posted on the diocesan website under ‘Synod Notes’. Read the profiles of the nominees for elected positions for General Synod, Provincial Synod, Diocesan Court, PWRDF, and Bishophurst Maintenance Committee. Attend the pre-synod deanery council meeting. If you missed the online Synod training session please ensure that you understand the procedure for making motions. Ask good questions. Make sure you have all the information for signing into the meeting and that you have downloaded the latest version of *Zoom*.
3. **Participate** in all of the Synod events – any pre-Synod gatherings in your deanery; the workshop with the Rev. Dr. Susan Beaumont on September 9th and 10th (9th – 3:00-4:30 and 6:30-8:00 p.m.; 10th – 9:30-11:00 a.m. and 2:30-4:00 p.m.); the livestream of the opening Eucharist which will be broadcast from St. Luke’s Cathedral on Thursday 16th September at 7pm, and the two days of Synod via *Zoom* on Friday 17th and Saturday 18th September (17th – 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.; 18th – 9:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.). If you have been invited to be on one of the Synod committees, attend meetings and be an engaged participant.

4. **Post-Synod parish presentation** - Prepare a report with your incumbent and the other synod delegates. Plan a parish gathering to talk about significant motions, the Bishop's Charge and response to it, and who will be representing Algoma at the upcoming Provincial and General Synod. The Rev. Dr. Susan Beaumont's online workshop presentation will be made available for parishes/deaneries to use. Urge your parish to engage with the material. Attend post synod deanery meetings. Ensure that there is an opportunity to bring reports from the wider church to your parish council/board.

Elections during Synod 2021

All self-nominations for elected positions were to be submitted in July for distribution with the Convening Circular. An extension has been granted to Tuesday, August 31st. Appropriate forms may be obtained from the Diocesan website under "Synod Notes". There will be no opportunity for nominations during Synod.

During Synod, the following elections will take place:

1. 2 Clergy and 2 Lay delegates and 1 Youth (over the age of 16 and under 26) plus alternates to General Synod, scheduled for July 12-18th 2022 in Calgary. If elected delegates may be appointed to General Synod committees. This is a three-year term.
2. 4 Clergy and 4 Lay delegates and 1 Youth (over the age of 16 and under the age of 26 at the time of Provincial Synod) plus alternates for online Provincial Synod October 13th - 14th, 2021. One of Algoma's lay and one clergy delegate will be chosen from Provincial Synod delegates to represent Algoma on Provincial Council. Provincial Council meets twice a year (spring and fall) in Toronto.
3. 1 Youth member and 1 alternate youth, from the youth delegates to the Executive Committee. This committee meets three times a year. In 2022 there will be one in person Executive Committee meeting at Villa Loyola in Sudbury. All other meetings will be held via *Zoom*.
4. Diocesan Court - 1 cleric holding the bishop's licence as deacon or priest for more than five years and two lay members to be elected at Synod.
5. Primate's World Relief and Development Fund - 1 representative
6. Bishophurst Maintenance Committee -2 members and 2 alternates who need to live near the Sault, but do not have to be members of Synod.

Delegates to Synod are asked to study the nominees for the various positions as there will not be an opportunity to meet them during Synod. The election will take place during Synod with the rules and procedures for voting explained carefully beforehand.

Technology

Echotech will be taking care of the technological aspects of Synod and ensuring that things run as smoothly as possible. The Archbishop, Synod office staff, Dean and Chancellor will be gathering in person at Zion Lutheran Church in Sault Ste. Marie for the sessions on September 17th and 18th. Special thanks to the Rev. Brad Mittleholtz for making this possible.

Synod 2021 Committees

With the Synod being streamlined the need for the usual and multiple committees is reduced. In 2021 there will be the following committees:

Arrangements:	Liz Hamel, Jane Mesich and Jen Baron
Credentials:	Alison Weir (Chair), Judy Pratt, Jane Mesich
Resolutions:	James McShane (Chair), Garth O Neill (Chancellor), Jay Koyle, Dale Sparkes
Response to the Bishop's Charge:	Deborah Kraft (Chair), David White, Marcia Grawbarger Holly Klemmensen
Vote of Thanks:	Elizabeth Green (Chair), Peggy Morrison, Raymond Knight, Anne DeVries
Worship:	Jay Koyle and James McShane (Co-chairs)
Elections:	Daniel Klein (Chair), Val Paterson, Linda White, Lee Osmond

Deanery presentations

Each deanery is being asked to prepare a 5-minute video that will be shown during the course of Synod, introduced by the Territorial Archdeacon. By the time this introductory letter arrives they should already have been submitted to the Synod office. The video may be a mission moment of significance from the last two years, or a tour around the deanery churches.

Charge to Synod

A printed copy of the Archbishop's Charge to the 50th Synod of Algoma will be available on the Diocesan website (<https://www.dioceseofalgoma.com/diocesan-synod-archives/synod-notes/>) by Tuesday 14th September along with a shorter video version with Charge highlights. Please ensure that you read the Charge ahead of Synod so you are aware of its content.

Synod 2021 guest speakers

1. Archbishop Linda Nicholls, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, will bring greetings.
2. Archbishop Mark MacDonald, National Indigenous Archbishop, will bring greetings.
3. The Rev. Dr. Susan Beaumont will be Synod's online keynote speaker on September 9th and 10th. It would be advantageous for delegates to read her book, *"How To Lead When You Don't Know Where You Are Going: Leading in Liminal Time"* which is available at Amazon.ca
4. The Rev. Canon Dr. Judy Rois, Executive Director of the Anglican Foundation of Canada, will bring greetings.
5. Will Postma, Executive Director of Primate's World Relief and Development Fund, will bring greetings.

6. The Rev. Canon Dr. John Gibaut, President and Vice-Chancellor of Thorneloe University, will bring greetings on the occasion of Thorneloe's 60th anniversary in 2021.

Zoom Meetings – Etiquette and Best Practices

1. Test your technology including camera/video, Wi-Fi, and screen sharing.
2. Practice speaking to the camera and not to the screen.
3. Dress appropriately.
4. Be aware of your surroundings. Adjust your workspace so you face a window or are exposed to plenty of light. Be in a quiet place where you are able to give your full attention to the meeting.
5. Be attentive and present.
6. Put away all other electronic devices including smart phones. Don't multitask.
7. Be respectful. If you want to speak, raise your hand.
8. Mute your microphone when you are not talking to eliminate background noise.
9. Be courteous to other participants, speak clearly, keep body movements to a minimum.
10. Be yourself and enjoy Synod!

I look forward to seeing you all in September. Enjoy the rest of the summer!

I remain yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Anne: Algoma". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

The Most Rev. Anne Germond
Archbishop of Algoma