

**Diocese of Algoma Synod 2023**

**May 10th-May 13th**

**The Water Tower Inn, Sault Ste. Marie Ontario**

**“People of Promise: Our Story, Our Joy, Our Hope,”**

Dear friends in Christ,

The 51st Synod of the Diocese of Algoma will convene in person on Thursday May 11th this year, with an opening Eucharist on Wednesday 10th May at 7pm at St. Luke’s Cathedral. Bishop Michael Oulton of the Diocese of Ontario will be the preacher.

There are a number of important items we wish to communicate about pre-Synod sessions ahead of the publication of the Convening Circular which will be posted on the diocesan website the week after Easter. These items are covered in this letter and incumbents are asked to ensure that distribution of this information to Synod delegates as well as advisory board members happens as soon as possible after your annual meeting.

Plans for Synod are already well underway, both in terms of the agenda and arrangements. Our diocesan treasurer, Jane Mesich, sent out a memorandum detailing information about accommodation, travel, registration and orientation which can be found here:

<https://www.dioceseofalgoma.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Memorandum-from-Diocesan-Treasurer-Feb-14-2023.pdf>

Synod delegates are asked to make attendance at their spring Deanery Council meeting a priority as Synod 2023 will be on the Agenda. The diocesan treasurer, Jane Mesich, and assistant treasurer, Jennifer Baron, will be in attendance at all of the spring Deanery Council meetings to present the diocesan budget and to answer questions relating to resolutions which may be coming to the floor of Synod.

1. **The dates of the spring Deanery Council meetings are as follows**:

Saturday April 15th 9:30am – Thunder Bay/North Shore

Tuesday April 18th – Muskoka

Saturday April 22nd 10:00am – Algoma (St. James Goulais River)

Saturday April 29th 9:30am – Morning Temiskaming (St. Mary Magdalene, Sturgeon Falls)

 Afternoon 1pm Sudbury/Manitoulin (Church of the Epiphany)

A number of deaneries will be electing regional deans and lay stewards at their spring meetings. Canon F-1 Deanery Officials outlines the election process for these positions, as well as the duties and responsibilities associated with them. These are positions of trust and responsibility within a deanery, and at the diocesan level. Deanery Officials become members of the diocesan Executive Committee and are called upon to make decisions about the life of the diocese between sessions of Synod. The first meeting of the new Executive Committee will take place at noon on Friday 12th May over the lunch hour.

Three youth delegates from each deanery, between the ages of 16 and 24, are also entitled to attend synod. As per our Constitution, they are to be elected by Deanery Council prior to synod based on a slate of names brought by a nominating committee and allowing for nominations from the floor. I hope you will encourage youth in your deaneries to come forward for election. The youth who attend Synod will be participating in all of the Synod sessions and will be prepared for Synod in pre-Synod gatherings hosted by the Rev. Jeff Hooper and the Rev. Heather Manuel.

1. **Amendments to the Constitution (Article 11)**

Resolutions for an alteration of, or an addition to the Constitution or Canons of the Diocese of Algoma must be given notice in the convening circular. A change or amendment to the Canons or Constitution coming from the floor of Synod will be regarded as ‘notice of motion’ for the 2025 Synod.

The Ven. Dr. Deborah Kraft (Stpauls.rector@shaw.ca) is the Chair of the Canons and Constitution Committee and The Very Rev. James McShane (algomadean@gmail.com) is the Chair of Resolutions for Synod 2023. Please contact them if you have any questions related to this matter.

1. **Elections at Synod**

Daniel Klein (St. Paul’s, Thunder Bay) will chair the elections committee at Synod 2023. As the voting will take place electronically, delegates are asked to bring an electronic device with them. If you do not have such a devise please notify the Rev. Susan Montague-Koyle, chair of arrangements.

The Canons and Constitution Committee will prepare a “Process Report” for elections and nominations, including the number of eligible clergy, lay and youth delegates, for the following:

**General Synod 2025**

**Provincial Synod 2024 (September Sault Ste. Marie)**

**Youth delegate for the Diocesan Executive Committee**

**Diocesan PWRDF representative (Does not need to be a Synod delegate)**

**Diocesan Court**

1. **Committee Chairs for Synod 2023**
* Arrangements – Susan Montague-Koyle
* Agenda – Deborah Kraft
* Resolutions – Jim McShane
* Worship – Norm Blanchard
* Bishop’s Charge Response – Peter Armstrong
* Credentials – Joan Locke
* Elections – Daniel Klein
* Communications – Cory Brunatti
* Vote of Thanks – Catherine Murkin
* Prayer room – Roberta Wilson Garrett
* Chaplain – Marie Loewen
* Scripture Circles – Kelly Baetz
* Youth – Jeff Hooper and Heather Manuel
* Synod Orientation – Glen Miller

These committees will be populated with clergy and lay delegates to Synod. Please send the names of delegates to Jane Mesich (jane.mesich@dioceseofalgoma.com) utilizing the Synod Delegate Form as soon as possible after your annual meeting.

1. **Everyone is invited to, "Squares Before Circles:  An Introduction to 1st Peter"** - As at Lambeth 2022, our Diocesan Synod gathering of 2023 will be spending some time with the New Testament letter, 1st Peter. Because our time together at Synod is so short, Synod Delegates (and anyone else) are invited to join in this pre-Synod study via the Zoom platform. Archdeacon Kelly Baetz and The Rev. Dr. Peter Armstrong will share in the facilitation of these sessions, which will take place on the following dates:

Thursday, March 2nd (7 p.m.)

Thursday, March 9th (6 p.m. - so that any wishing to also attend Archbishop Anne's book study may do so)

Thursday, March 16th (7 p.m.)

Thursday, March 23rd (7 p.m.)

Each session will last no more than one hour, and if you can't make all of them, just come as you are able! The priority of each session will be listening to God via the scriptures and one another, following a simple format including a prayerful reading of the text, a short teaching, and conversation. The hope is to hear any specific themes or questions that may emerge, into which we can do a "deeper dive" at Synod (May 10-13).

If you know you plan to come, please notify Archdeacon Kelly at kellinac@yahoo.ca, but pre-registration is not required. Zoom link below.

Kelly Baetz is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Squares Before Circles:  1st Peter

Time: This is a recurring meeting Meet anytime

Join Zoom Meeting

[Join our Cloud HD Video Meeting](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81975161701?pwd=UllNMUN0UTN0cVVybS96bmZnMzRtdz09)

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Meeting ID: 819 7516 1701

Passcode: 305104

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kdvuCzNCIh>

1. **Important information and instructions for Synod Delegates 2023 – for Leadership and Advisory Boards**

**From the Response to the Archbishop’s Charge 2021 (Chair Archdeacon Deborah Kraft)**

“*Many churches and individuals have become innovative and worked hard to keep Christ’s love alive in their area and beyond.  There are more ways than any of us are aware of, so let us go back to our churches and make some lists of what your church did to stay connected during this past 18 months.  Also, in the coming two years as we move into different stages, keep lists to help remember what you tried that may be new, innovative or restructured.  Then at our next Synod, each church could bring two cards.  The first card listing all of the innovative efforts that your congregation has used to continue to “be church”, which were helpful and perhaps ongoing, and a second list of the efforts that you tried that did not work as you expected.  When we return in 2023, there would be many many cards, containing much of the same information, but perhaps there is a seed here or there, which would benefit us all.  For the cards containing ideas that were unsuccessful, there can be a time of letting go.  Perhaps a burning of those cards or a ceremony to commemorate those less successful efforts*.”

**Resolution 3 (approved at Synod 2021)**

That the synod delegates for 2023 bring cards from their congregations that identify the community-building ideas that were tried and worked, and the ideas that were tried and didn’t work between Synod 2021 and Synod 2023.  The cards, similar to the seeds presented at Synod 2017, will be presented during a worship service when Synod convenes.

We build community within our parishes and then we reach out, with the hands of Christ, and build community outside of our parishes.

Please work with your Advisory/Leadership Boards to develop the cards, and then bring the cards to Synod 2023. Thank you!

1. **COVID-19 Protocols**

It is recommended strongly that delegates wear a well-fitted, well-constructed mask when Synod is in session, during the opening liturgy, and in other indoor and close-contact settings over the days of our gathering. Respirators and medical masks provide the best protection. One’s mask should completely cover nose, mouth, and chin.

Please note that, at this time, Algoma’s COVID-19 Vaccination Policy remains in effect. Individuals serving in leadership ministry roles have been entrusted with responsibilities that include protection of the vulnerable, and the conscientious regard of others both within and outside the community of Christian faith. Included among the people serving in the Diocese who are required to be immunized with COVID-19 vaccines approved by Health Canada, unless legally exempt, are:

* all clergy holding the Archbishop’s license or permission;
* all licensed lay workers;
* all diocesan staff;
* deanery officials;
* Synod Delegates and Alternate Delegates;

Therefore, apart from legal exemption, all officials of, and delegates to Synod must be vaccinated. If those elected to serve in this capacity have chosen not to be vaccinated in accordance with the policy, a duly elected vaccinated alternate delegate should be prepared to go in their place.

The policy may be viewed here: <https://www.dioceseofalgoma.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/COVID-Vax-Policy-2022-04-Update.pdf>

If a change in conditions warrants updates to the above prior to the convening of Synod, delegates will be notified. Please contact Archdeacon Jay Koyle (jay.koyle@dioceseofalgoma.com) for more information or to answer questions.

1. **Praying for Synod 2023**

A prayer specially written for our upcoming Synod for congregations to use in the weeks leading up to Synod is being prepared. You are also encouraged to use the prayers from the BAS and BCP.

**For a Synod**

Almighty and everliving God, source of all wisdom and understanding, be present with those who take counsel in the Diocese of Algoma for the renewal and mission of your Church. Teach us in all things to seek first your honour and glory. Guide us to perceive what is right, and grant us both the courage to pursue it and the grace to accomplish it; through Jesus Christ our Lord . Amen. (BAS page 676)

Almighty and everlasting God, who by thy Holy Spirit didst preside in the Council of the blessed Apostles, and hast promised, through thy Son Jesus Christ, to be with thy Church to the end of the world: We beseech thee to be present with the Synod of this Dioceseabout to be assembled in thy Name. Save its members from all error, ignorance, pride, and prejudice; and of thy great mercy vouchsafe so to direct, govern, and sanctify them in their deliberations by thy Holy Spirit, that through thy blessing the Gospel of Christ may be faithfully preached and obeyed, the order and discipline of thy Church maintained, and the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour enlarged and extended. Grant this, we beseech thee, through the merits and mediation of the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen. (BCP page 42)*

I remain yours in Christ,

+Anne: Algoma