

ALGOMA ANGLICAN

December 2017 Official Voice of the Diocese of Algoma – A section of the Anglican Journal-Celebrating 60 Years Vol. 60 – No. 10



A YEAR OF TRAVEL AND JOY: Bishop Anne Germond is pictured wearing the moccasins presented to her by The Métis Nation of Ontario at the Bishop's consecration in February of 2017. Bishop Germond has worn these moccasins in every parish she has visited this past year in the diocese.

Bishop's report to November 2017 Executive Committee

Report of the Bishop to the November 2017 Executive Committee

"How are things measuring up in Algoma?"

This loaded question came from a friend of mine when I remarked that it had already been a year since the episcopal election. There are any number of ways this question could be interpreted. It might mean, 'Is the Diocese measuring up to your expectations?'

Or "Are you measuring up to the Diocese's expectations?"

Or perhaps, 'Is being a Bishop everything that you expected it to be?'

There's a part of me that wants to quantify the past year and be able to answer decisively, "Yes, it measured up, it's all good," and then to list off some of what I've been doing in the past nine months. Some-

how, a list diminishes the ministry to which I have been called, and you as shared partners in it. Tallying the number of parishes visited, kilometres driven, meetings attended, sermons preached, newly confirmed members of the church, or Eucharists celebrated, important though they be, are only the beginning of what it means to be called to be a worker in the vineyard and an ambassador of the kingdom of God.

A good place to begin is to go back to the motto I chose for this year and to see how it is being lived out in Algoma. Another measure is to see how the four seeds in the sacred bundle that I invited us to carry from Synod 2017 to Synod 2019 are growing in Algoma. These seeds are **Discipleship, Stewardship, Reconciliation and Community Building.**

Living into the Bishop's Motto for 2017
"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace; who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns." (Is. 52: 7)

As I preached my way through Matthew's gospel from one far flung corner of Algoma to the other, wearing my moccasins in every parish I visited, I discovered anew that there is a hunger in this diocese to hear the good news of the gospel of Jesus, and a yearning to be a part of something more than worrying about an uncertain future.

God to +Anne, "I've got this."
I give thanks on a daily basis that God is in charge of the church so I can lift up my heart to praise

him and to say those words aloud.
Growing as disciples

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations." (Matt. 28.19)

I was received with joy in every congregation I visited. Some of the most beautiful moments of this year were the opportunities I had to visit with small groups of wardens, parish leaders, confirmation candidates, families of those seeking baptism, and new Christians either ahead of a service or afterwards. Young people wrote letters telling me why confirmation was important to them, and the frail elderly spoke of the importance of their church family and what it means to be part of their faith community. What I heard was the difference that knowing Jesus means to so many of you, and why you have chosen to follow Him. Some of the stories were incred-

ibly inspiring and I give thanks for the privilege of being able to hear those testimonies. Many of these people are now inviting others to join them in their new adventure in faith.

Dwelling in the Word

It's been especially encouraging to hear how congregations are committing to engaging with God's Word in Bible Studies and other small groups such as Food for the Soul and Cursillo. This is a tried and true way of growing as disciples of Christ. At the November Executive Committee meeting copies of the SSJE Lent 2018 program, "Meeting Jesus in the Gospel of John" will be distributed to the Archdeacons to take back to their deaneries. We ordered 1000 copies so be sure to get yours!

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Inside Algoma



New archdeacon collated for Temiscaming

On Sunday, June 18, 2017, a service of collation was held at St. Mary's. Powassan as Rev. Joan Locke became Archdeacon of the Deanery of Temiscaming.

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Sault church celebrates The King

On Sunday, September 24, 2017, Christ Church, Sault Ste. Marie celebrated the parable of the wedding feast found in the Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 22.

See p. 8

Celebrating the riches of Christmas

**By the Rev. Dr. Jay Koyle
Diocesan Congregational
Development Officer**

The process of liturgy preparation is riddled with temptations, especially at “high points” of the church year.

As in the past, many preachers, planners, and pew dwellers give in to the impulse of teasing or laying a guilt trip on “Christmas and Easter Christians,” folk who venture into our pews only twice a year. Please resist this temptation from now on! Even more prevalent today is the inclination to provide either a nostalgic or novel experience for the crowd, whatever it takes. Couple any of the above with the naïve notion that we must tailor the gospel to “make it understandable for the kids” and we are left with a cruciform vacuum in the centre of our Yuletide liturgies.

Offering Dr. Seuss stories as homilies, yes, it happens, or including “Happy Birthday to you, Jesus” on the hymn list will not cut it. As priest and hymn writer Peter Scagnelli observed, “However wellintentioned or warmly received, these practices blur the focus. Reflective adults – and children! – sense a trivializing of something profound.”

Christmas is not a birthday party for baby Jesus. As biblical scholar Raymond Brown noted, “The infancy narratives in Matthew and Luke present the essential gospel in miniature.” If this is true, we must ensure our Christmas proclamation doesn’t sentimentalize or trivialize. We must not pretend that Jesus is still a little baby in a sanitized stable. The essential gospel message must be presented.

Let me be clear! I do not advocate a Scroodge-flavoured celebration of the Incarnation. Christmas is one of my favourite times of the year, too. But if we expect people to truly rejoice in the good news, then it is the good news they must hear and experience. We must not resort to gimmicks or settle for the superficial. Our liturgies must celebrate the gospel with both its comfort and challenge.

So, when considering the children in our midst, let’s ensure they encounter the story itself well proclaimed and stop fretting about whether they will “understand what it means.” Usually when we “bring it down to their level” we either moralize or actually alter the gospel message. Mistaken notions then get carried into adulthood. Fostering familiarity with the story and a music-filled worship experience in which children are included meaningfully, even to the point of being welcomed as full participants in the Lord’s Supper, provide the best way for all of us to “get the point” of Christmas through the Liturgy.

Make sure the service is saturated with music. This is no time, for example, to say the ‘Glory to God.’ If you don’t know a musical setting for the text, choose a Christmas hymn such as “Angels We Have Heard on High” or

replace it with a metrical version from the hymnbook.

Preachers must resist the temptations of either simplifying or explaining the meaning of Christmas. It is sufficient, as acclaimed preacher Tom Long argues, to allow the sermon to be the offering of one fresh insight in the Liturgy’s telling and ritualizing of an old and trusted narrative.

Luke’s Christmas Gospel depicts folks on the margins as the first to hear of the royal birth while angels sing acclamations typically addressed to Caesar Augustus. Surely this inspires a timely word of hope that goes beyond optimistic idealism, or provokes pertinent prayers that shake us loose from complacency toward neighbours in need.

Of course, hospitality can be the first taste of good news people encounter. So you might have refreshments available before or



after worship. A hot cup of cider is perfect for what is likely to be a cold, snowy evening for most of our Diocese. If you have a brass player or two around, or a group of folk who like to bundle up and go caroling, maybe they would play or sing carols outside as people arrive. Whether or not you use an overhead projector, this is a time when you may want to produce attractive worship bulletins in which the liturgical rites and music selections are printed so visitors and infrequent attenders can experience the flow of the service without flipping around in a number of books or having the service interrupted with constant page number announcements. Your bulletin might even include prayers for use in the home during the Christmas season.

In your announcements this night, skip reminders about the advisory board meeting and that sort of thing. Instead, express gratitude for all who made arrangements and helped make the Christmas liturgy a wonderful celebration for the congregation.

A warm welcome to all who enter, carols sung with joy, readings well proclaimed, preaching that announces grace, a table reverently prepared and open to all the baptized, and the commitment to reach out beyond the walls of our buildings after the final hymn; these make for a joyous and meaningful Christmas in our parishes. Allowing the season’s riches to come to the fore is what’s required of us. We must do so cheerfully, positively, and patiently, to be sure. But we must do so.



NEWEST ARCHDEACON: On Sunday, June 18, 2017 at a service at St. Mary’s, Powassan, Rev. Joan Locke was collated as archdeacon of the Deanery of Temiscaming. Pictured with Ven. Locke, centre, are Bishop Germond and a number of the clergy from the deaneries of Temiscaming, Muskoka, Sudbury and Thunder Bay-North Shore who were in attendance for this service.

Joan Locke collated as archdeacon of the Deanery of Temiscaming

By Lauren Dashineau

On Sunday, June 18, 2017 at St. Mary’s, Powassan, Trillium Anglican Parish, Rev. Joan Locke was collated as Territorial Archdeacon of Temiskaming Deanery. Throughout the afternoon, there was an air of joyous anticipation as preparations for the service were finalised. Clergy began to arrive from Temiskaming, Muskoka, Sudbury and Thunder Bay-Northshore and friends, family and community partners filled the church to overflowing. Rt. Rev. Anne Germond arrived to preside at the service.

Members of the three point parish of St. Mary’s,

Powassan, St. Alban’s, Restoule and St. Peter’s, Candler assumed shared roles and responsibilities in the service along with visiting clergy. Ven. Linda White was the preacher. From the music, to the message of the sermon, the collation of Rev. Locke and the presence of Bishop Germond, that initial feeling of joy continued. A reception hosted by the parish followed the service. The qualities of compassion, insight, energy and humour that Ven. Joan Locke has shared with Trillium Anglican Parish will now be shared with the whole deanery.

St. Thomas’, Bracebridge explores paths of discipleship

By Steve Newroth and Rev. Kelly Baetz

Editor’s note: The following details a conversation between Steve Newroth, a parishioner at St. Thomas’, Bracebridge and Rev. Kelly Baetz on discipleship.

On Sunday, September 24, 2017, I delivered the following message to the congregation of St. Thomas’ Anglican Church, Bracebridge, in the presence of Bishop Anne Germond. It was part of a series of interviews between Rev. Kelly and six members of the congregation. The series was all about discipleship, one of the identified priorities in the Bishop’s Charge to Synod 2017, based on a book entitled *Bullseye: Aiming to Follow Jesus*. At Bishop Germond’s request, I am forwarding this message to the *Algoma Anglican*, but I want

to acknowledge that my answer to the third question leans heavily on Jean Vanier’s book *Community and Growth: Our Pilgrimage Together*. My wife and I had lived with Jean Vanier for two years in France and worked closely with him opening the first L’Arche community in Canada and for the next seven years we opened several more in North America. I was working with him at the time he wrote his book on Christian community and his talks on the subject still ring in my ears.

Questions and Replies re: Community

Question 1:

Kelly: The word ‘community’, like the word ‘love’, can mean wildly different things to different people. Can you reflect on what we mean from a Christian perspective?

Steve: You are perfectly right,

Kelly, the word ‘community’ conveys many scenarios but from a Christian perspective the best known ones are religious communities inhabited by priests, nuns and brothers and local parish churches.

However, apart from parish life, I am most familiar with the type of Christian community which Ann and I began, in 1969, with our friend Jean Vanier. We lived there for several years and along with others we cared for handicapped people. Our community known as “Daybreak”, a part of the L’Arche organization, consisted of several houses in which we lived together with handicapped people. We conducted ourselves as much like a family as possible. We ate together, played together, and prayed together.

For today’s purposes, we are

See Four – p. 6

EDITORIAL

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The Rt. Rev. Anne Germond, Bishop
Peter Simmons, Editor

Letter from the Bishop

Where is King Jesus now?

Dear friends in Christ,

The Church year culminates with Reign of Christ Sunday on November 26th. It is a day of celebration of Jesus who, ‘humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross, that God has exalted him and given him the name above all names, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.’ (Phil. 2.8-11)

He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords and on that day you will find the church decorated in white, as we celebrate the kingship of Jesus. “Crown him, crown him crown him. Crown him Lord of all.” They are rich, beautiful words, full of images that appeal to our collective imagination.

But where is King Jesus now? The wise in every age have struggled with this question. Is Jesus some infant, meek and mild, dwelling forever in the manger of our Christmas imagination? Is he the King of heaven, safely ensconced in the palace on his throne, separated from his subjects, guarded by security so no one is able to get too close to him?

This is the question that I have been asking parish leaders as I have been visiting congregations across Algoma this year. The answers have been as varied and diverse as the diocese itself and in them it is apparent that Christ is very much alive and well in our midst.

- We see Christ in each other as we worship and work together in community.
- We see Christ in our pastor as she leads and guides us.
- We see Christ in the faces of the children in our midst.
- We see Christ in our elders from whom we learn the way of Jesus.
- We see Christ in those to whom we minister in our outreach programs.
- Christ is most visible in our pastoral care team as they bring the love of Christ to those who aren’t able to be with us on Sundays.
- Christ is most visible in the Word of God as hear it on Sundays and dwell in it.
- Christ is most visible at our fellowship time after church as we get to know one another.
- Christ is most visible in the quiet ministry of those who are never recognised for what they do.
- Christ is most visible in our music ministry; prayer shawl ministry; meditation group; healing team.

To be sure, Christ is visible in our church communities, but He is also most visible outside of our doors. One of the oldest and most famous images for Jesus and for Christian ministry is the image of the shepherd. Shepherds are ‘keepers’ because they keep watch; keep their sheep fed, and keep dangers away from flocks under their care. They are ‘searchers’ because they search for good pastures, search for the lost, and search for the injured of their flocks. They are also ‘accountants’ (Karyn Wiseman) because they are held accountable for what happens to their flock. It is a beautiful image as we see shepherds giving up their



normal lives to care for animals that might not even be their own.

To live fully in the reign of Christ is for us to do the same thing as God did in sending Jesus to be with us and to live among us in love; fully human and fully divine.

It is for us to leave the comfort of our church buildings where its comfortable, safe and clean, and where everyone looks like us, and to get involved in the nasty, dangerous work of shepherding. God wants God’s followers to wander through every part of their community and beyond, and to get our hands a little bit dirty, however difficult and uncomfortable that might be for us.

Listen to what Jesus told his reluctant followers:

I was hungry, I was thirsty, I was a stranger, I was naked, sick, and in prison. His followers protested of course: When did we see you hungry, thirsty, stranger, naked, sick or in prison? (paraphrase of Matthew 25) And Jesus left no doubt as to what he meant? “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.”

In his book, *They Come Back Singing* a Jesuit priest Gary Smith tells the story of his very first summer as a priest in a poor parish in San Diego.

“One day,” he writes, “I took communion to Cora and Wiley Gibson, an elderly couple who lived near the church. When I arrived at their home, Cora greeted me and led me into their living room, where her husband was sitting on the sofa. He had no legs, long lost to the ravages of diabetes. He was blind and had suffered a stroke that left one side of his face paralyzed. He couldn’t talk and could only hear if he one shouted. Cora, a big and strong woman, assisted him into a wheelchair and wheeled him outside to the porch, loudly announcing, “Wiley, Father is here to give you communion.” He managed a crooked smile and received the Host.

As Cora and I gazed at Wiley, I thought, this guy is blind, almost deaf, partially paralysed, and paraplegic. He’s a mess. Cora stood beside me, her arms folded. She looked at Wiley, then at me, and then back to him and said, “God I love that man.”

Gary Smith goes on to write: “Her words crept over me and into me like the dawn. I understood perhaps better than at any other time in my life the meaning of beauty. The heart of God, wherein all beauty originates, sees not an ugly and broken and insignificant man, but the interior beauty of the beloved. And we are all beloved. Jesus emphasized the point by finding special beauty in the least of our brothers and sisters.” p. 154.

“Lord when did we see you?” Perhaps the starting place for us is looking at the world through the eyes of Jesus. When we do this the world becomes a different place altogether, and we in turn become different people.

May God continue to be with you as you see with the new eyes of Christ our King.

Anne Germond
Bishop of Algoma

Letters to the Editor & Submissions Policy

Letter writers and authors of unsolicited submissions are reminded to include a signature and phone number for verification purposes. Letters will be reviewed and may be edited for length and content. While letters expressing opinion are welcome, all letters and other submissions are subject to approval before publication.

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England's Christmas grinch



By the Rev. Richard White

Christmas was cancelled. The news media shouted it loud and clear “No Christmas! No Christmas!” Riots broke out. In Canterbury thousands clumped together to protest. The mayor issued a statement declaring Christmas a “superstitious festival,” insisting it should be replaced by a normal working day, ordering every shop in Canterbury to stay open Christmas day. Few did. That was when it got ugly.

The few shops that followed his order were ransacked. Merchandise was hurled into the street. The mayor showed up with law enforcement. Someone was seized. The mayor swung a bat at a rioter. The bleeding man struck back, tossing the mayor into the mud. The mayor staggered to his feet and shouted for everyone to clear the streets and go home. The crowds jeered him. Some lad brought out a couple of soccer balls and a mock game began. Arrests were made. The crowd mobbed the law officers and set the arrested men free, shouting “Conquest! Conquest!” Few Christmas were as memorable as those during the 1640s when Christmas was officially outlawed in England, and the news media of the day, the town criers, announced “No Christmas! No Christmas!” And the Christmas Grinch that imposed this travesty on the populous was Parliament. This is what happened.

In the mid 1600s Parliament was in an on-going conflict with its king, Charles Stuart, Charles I. That probably contributed to the Christmas crisis. Charles had elected to reign without consulting Parliament, claiming it his divine prerogative. That didn't go down well. Charles' spirituality leaned towards Roman Catholicism, even though he was Anglican. His wife was a Roman Catholic, and Bishop William Laud, the man he chose for Archbishop of Canterbury, set out to impose a more Roman-style of worship on the Church of England. That definitely didn't go down well.

Parliament was dominated by the Puritans, and they couldn't have been more Protestant.

The Puritans were influenced by the Calvinists of the Continent. They believed some people were irredeemably destined for Hell. They dressed modestly, they championed purity, they advocated fasting, they held a literal interpretation of the Scriptures, they called for an end to a bishop-dominated style of church government, and they detested anything or anyone that had the scent of Roman Catholicism. That includ-



ed the king's wife. It definitely included Christmas. Christmas was doomed from the start as far as Puritans were concerned. It was just too jolly.

Shops, offices and other places of work all closed so people could go to church and waste time being idle or frivolous by partying, singing or playing games. Puritans suspected many people also gambled and generally lost a degree of self-control over Christmas. Then there was this mythical figure called “Father Christmas” who had no Biblical basis whatsoever. To the Puritans this all showed disrespect for the Saviour who came to earth to die for the very sins being liberally committed over Christmas.

They shuddered at the Church's complicity in all this. Churches were often decorated with holly and ivy, rosemary, bays and flowers. Ritualism rose to new prominence and the churches just seemed more Roman than English during the Christmas season with candles and vestments galore. The very season of Christ-Tide as they called it, had absolutely no Biblical basis whatsoever. The

Puritan-dominated Parliament believed it had no choice but to act. It believed it had a moral duty to squelch Christmas; stop it altogether if it could.

In the early 1640s Parliament set to work. In 1644 legislation decreed that Christmas Day be a day for fasting and humiliation. Partying and games were frowned on. Shops were to remain open and people were to go about their business as usual. Churches weren't to have services on Christmas. In January 1645 a so-called “Directory of Public Worship,” made this official by decreeing that the only holy day was to be Sundays, and that all so-called “feast days”, which included Christmas, Easter and Pentecost, were to be discontinued. In 1650 mince pies became the target of Puritan disdain too and were banned.

The public thought otherwise. Semi-clandestine church services continued to be held. Tract writers argued in favour of Christmas. And riots broke out when Parliament and local authorities tried to force shops to stay open on Christmas day. Canterbury's riot was well-documented.

It was no surprise that Puritan anti-Christmas tracts fought back calling Christmas an “old Heathen's Feasting Day,” a “Papist's Massing Day,” and “Satan's working day.” Nor was it unexpected when Parliament passed still more legislation in 1647 and again in 1652 outlawing the observance of Christmas. None of this had much success. As it would happen, history would unfold in favour of Christmas.

Charles I was charged with high treason, sentenced to death and beheaded on January 30, 1649. The country was ruled by a Puritan-dominated, kingless, “Commonwealth” from 1649-1660. These were the grimmest days for Christmas, but when the monarchy was restored under Charles II in 1660 so too was Christmas. The anti-Christmas legislation of the 1640s and 1650s became little more than a footnote in history.



NEWEST CONFIRMANDS: On Sunday, June 25, 2017, St. Luke's, Thunder Bay welcomed Rt. Rev. Anne Germond for a Service of Confirmation. Pictured behind Bishop Germond and Rev. Dr. George Porter are, back row Kaku Worilomena Kenyi and Woja Yugusuk Kenyi. Standing in front of the Bishop are left, Bishop's Chaplain Kimberly Bienvenue and Ruta Eklas Baya. In front, from left are Samuel Bernardi and Gabriel McCrae. Each confirmand had a role to play in the service as Ruta Eklas Baya and Kaku Worilomena brought forward the Eucharistic gifts, Woja Yugusuk was Lector and Samuel Bernardi and Gabriel McCrae carried flags to the song *Victory Chant*.

Book selection of the month

By the Rev. Dr. GailMarie Henderson

Christian Mission in the Twentieth Century by Timothy Yates
Pages 251 plus a bibliography and an index

Published in 1994 by: Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Our anonymous contributor told us he was reading this book in the hope of trying to understand all the confusion and change taking place in the church.

“I've been in the church all my life, and it seems mission, or our understanding of mission is changing, yet I can't seem to quite catch the new drift. Maybe, if I understand how we got to where we are, I will be able to grasp where we are trying to go, hence my reason for picking up this worthy read.”

The book begins by saying: Yates offers a historical focus and perspective to mission by concentrating on the leading figures of each decade, beginning with that leading up to the Edinburgh conference of 1910, and includes treatment of the other great missionary conferences. German mission theory the

wars (1918-39) as are the writings of Roland Allen and D.J. Fleming. Part two covers the years 1940-90 and speaks to the religious pluralism of the modern world which emerged from the conferences before 1939 are looked at through the writings of Stephen Neil, Kenneth Cragg, the documents of Vatican II, and the Lausanne Conference of 1974. The book concludes with remarks from diverse writers like John Hick and Lesslie Newbigin.

This little book is not a nurse's school read, but for anyone interested in how we got to where we are it is an informative, well written, worthwhile read.

This book can be ordered used from Amazon for \$13.29.

If time is limited, and the book seems a bit daunting, but still interesting you can read a three-page scholarly review on line for free: biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/eg/1999-2_151.pdf. or just google author and title and this will pop up.

Reading a review is a great way to get a taste, and sometimes all we need is a nibble.

Holy Trinity, Sault Ste. Marie celebrates 100 years

By The Rev. Claire Miller

This year Holy Trinity, Sault Ste. Marie is celebrating its 100th Anniversary. Plans have been underway for some time to make this an event to remember. We are hoping that members of the congregation and former clergy will be able to join us as we give thanks for all God's mercies in bygone years.

If you are unable to be with us, you might consider a donation to the church. Whatever your choice, we ask that you uphold Holy Trinity Church in your prayers, as we continue our journey of faith into the next 100 years.

Here is the celebration schedule:

Saturday December 2, 2017

Anniversary Dinner at the Delta Hotel

208 St Mary's River Drive

Tickets are on sale now – \$40 for adults, \$20 for children 12 and under. Cash bar. Doors open at 5:30pm, dinner at 6:30pm

Call the office to reserve your tickets 705.254.1692

Or Din at 705.943.0321; Ross at 705.542.5644

Let us know of any dietary restrictions.

Sunday December 3, 2017

100th Anniversary Service of Celebration at 10:00am followed by coffee hour.

Sunday December 17, 2017

100th Anniversary Service of Rededication of the Parish with Bishop Anne Germond at 10:00 a.m. followed by refreshments and a cake.

Correction: The article written on the annual Lay readers conference which appeared in the November edition of the *Algoma Anglican* was not written by Rev. Dr. Jay Koyle. It was written by Susan Montague Koyle. The editor apologises for this error.

Bishop has had a busy and full year

Continued from Front

It is a six week journey into deeper intimacy with God by praying with the words of John the Evangelist (The Gospel of John and the First Letter of John).

In it you will be invited to draw closer to God revealed in and through Jesus by meditating on the words of a daily verse from John. Our guides for this pilgrimage will be the Brothers of The Society of St. John the Evangelist (SSJE) who have deep roots in the Diocese of Algoma and were known to many as the Cowley Fathers for their ministry in Muskoka. The monastic tradition, with its hallowed practice of sacred reading, has, since ancient times, found John's gospel a treasured key for opening the praying heart and awakening the praying mind.

This is how this spiritual pilgrimage will work. You will be asked to sign up online to receive a short video each day from an SSJE brother. He will comment on the scripture verse, share facets of his own relationship with Jesus and suggest prompts for further reflection. At the start of each week, participants are prompted to pray for a particular grace; at the end of each week, an inviting question helps participants to translate that grace into daily life. This Prayer Journal is intended to support you as you journey through Lent.

You may make this pilgrimage alone but I find that one receives a great deal more from sharing in spiritual conversation with others. I urge you to consider meeting in small groups (even two or three) to reflect, journal and share experiences of what has been spoken to you in the past week and of how you have drawn closer to God through Jesus.

You will be pleased to know that when the House of Bishops meet we dwell in the Word every morning. This time has become very important to me as a new bishop in 'the house'. We are able to share deeply and meaningfully and even though we know that our theological positions are different on issues that have the potential to divide us, we remain committed to being in authentic relationships with one another. Christ firmly at the centre of our lives holds us together.

At the recent House of Bishops meeting the daily lectionary readings were from Luke 12: 41-53. Check it out and you'll see how tough they were.

New beginnings and endings

Kingdom work is often difficult, the hours are long, and one often doesn't see immediate results. I witnessed this firsthand as I have been part of the courageous and difficult conversations that are taking place in a few of our deaneries around mergers, reorganization, and new church planning. The easy thing would be to keep the status quo, but if we want to have a sustainable Anglican presence in our communities in the future, we must recognize that being good stewards means making some significant changes now.

On behalf of all members of the Executive Committee, who are the present stewards of the diocese, I want to thank the prayerful and diligent work of all the small groups (Muskoka Ministry Transition Team, Together in Hope in Thunder Bay to name just two) that are presently engaged in these tough conversations. There are some promising new ventures being worked on right now and the new year should produce some good fruit.

Just as every journey begins with one step, so every conversation begins with a word spoken. Don't be afraid to start a new conversation.

As a result of these conversations, particularly in Muskoka Deanery, difficult decisions have been made about the buildings in which God's people meet for worship and fellowship. It's hard to let those buildings go especially when they hold such rich history within their walls. Difficult and heart

wrenching though this might be, it is also about being a good steward now so that there is a healthy and viable Anglican presence in some communities in the future. The Deanery officials and Muskoka Ministry Transition Team have been working closely with these communities and have been true to their motto and 'led with love'. Thank you. Please keep the members whose church buildings have closed in your prayers and invite them to join your congregation. We may afford to lose a building but we cannot afford to lose God's people.

This year I've been reading the history of the Diocese and it is a beautiful story of a people who had the good news of Jesus to share and set out to tell it in imaginative ways. From small beginnings as a missionary diocese, funded largely from England in the 1800s, Algoma grew church by church in communities from Muskoka to Thunder Bay and all points in between. In his first Charge to Synod in 1944 Bishop Wright mentioned that because of ease of transportation Algoma did not need as many church buildings to do its mission. This remains true 73 years later.

Appointments and leadership

Several congregations in Algoma have gone through concurrence processes this year. I commend them for their thorough, prayerful and diligent work of discerning who God is calling to leadership in their congregation. I am grateful to the honorary clergy and lay leadership for their ministry during interim periods in a congregation's life. Extra demands are placed on you in terms of leading worship and seeing to the smooth running of the congregation on a daily basis and your offering is appreciated. Since the summer, appointments have been made at Holy Trinity, Sault Ste. Marie, St. John's, Garden River, St. John's, North Bay, the Church of the Ascension, Sudbury, Christ Church, North Bay, St. Simon's, Temagami, and Holy Trinity, Temiskaming.

The important work of discernment is also taking place as the Postulancy Commission and Pastoral Chaplains meet with enquirers who are hearing a call to ordained ministry in the church. The Diocese of Algoma is well served on ACPO (Advisory Committee for Postulants for Ordination) that serves to assist the Bishop in discerning those who are hearing a call to priestly ministry. The kind of leaders we are looking for are those prayerful disciples who are able to live into the diocesan mission and engage in the 'gathering work of Christ' with those they are called to serve in a church that looks very different now from the one that many of us knew twenty or thirty years ago. Algoma has an aging population and they have a wealth of life in Christ experience to share with others, and we have the 'missing millenials' who are just waiting for an invitation to be part of our congregations. The leaders of the future will be able to engage and equip the now and future church for its work. The Postulancy Commission members are myself and:

The Ven. Dr. Harry Huskins (Staff support)
Mrs. Mary Buie
The Rev. Canon Bob Elkin
The Rev. Dr. Bob Derrenbacker
The Rev. Dr. Jay Koyle
Ms. Kate Scott
Ms. Debbie DeBakker

In August, the Pastoral Chaplains, Rev. Canon Paul Carr, Rev. Canon Bob Elkin, Rev. Peter Simmons, Ven. Linda White and Bishop Tom Corston met for two days at Villa Loyola in order to gain a deeper understanding of their role as well as to share ideas with each other.

Stewardship

A group of Anglicans from Algoma attended a recent Stewardship gathering in Quebec and found the presentations and resources that were shared to be very helpful. A

Stewardship Day will be held in Sudbury on November 25. For more details please see the Diocesan website, and please read the Congregational Development Officer's report which will detail this and other stewardship events.

Reconciliation.

The work of reconciliation, whether it be with our Indigenous brothers and sisters or with those we struggle to be in a right relationship with, is something that is worked on daily. I've had the opportunity to be part of several events across Algoma that demonstrate my commitment to fostering good relationships with others. In July, I was fortunate to meet the Canoe Pilgrims travelling across the lakes for healing and reconciliation, and in early November I was delighted to be part of the community welcome at St. John's, Garden River for the federal court who are hearing the historical Robinson Huron Treaty case.

Preparing for General Synod 2019 – the proposed change to the Marriage Canon.

We are approaching the halfway point between General Synod 2016 and the next one in 2019. As you know, a resolution to allow same-sex marriage in the church passed its first reading at the 2016 Synod and a required second reading will go before General Synod in 2019. Many Anglicans across the Diocese are anxious about this and some have written to me to express their concerns. There is great diversity across Algoma on the question of same sex marriage and a real concern about what this proposed change would mean to them in their own setting. There are some Anglicans who are able to live with whatever decision is made at General Synod, there are others who feel that if the vote does not go in the way they hope it will go, that they will have no choice but to leave the Anglican Church of Canada. My hope is that we can stay together as a diocese and I want to assure you that there is room in Algoma for a diversity of theological views. No one should ever feel "marginalized, isolated, or pushed out – on either side of this issue" (Primate Fred: Anglican Journal November 2017)

The Primate, Fred Hiltz, has called upon us to engage broadly in discussions in our dioceses in the next eighteen months. As the Executive Committee of the diocese we will take some time during the March meeting to engage in 'holy listening' with each other on this matter. The clergy will be doing something similar at their May conference, and then conversations will be held at the deanery and congregational level. My hope in doing this is that these conversations will be less about trying to convince those who hold a differing view that theirs is wrong and yours correct, but rather in allowing that person to speak and to find a meeting place for ongoing dialogue and meaningful conversation. You can start talking as soon as you'd like to begin.

At the recent House of Bishops meeting we met in small groups to discuss our own concerns about the proposed change to the Marriage Canon. Part of my group's discussion was centered on how we will continue to walk together in relationship with one another after General Synod.

These are weighty matters and I commend them to our daily prayers.

And finally.....

I give thanks to God for you.

I give thanks for each member of the Executive Committee – for the gifts you bring, the time you give, and the wisdom and knowledge you share. As we travel together into a new year let us continue to offer our gifts to God.

Be the person God has called you to be.

There is an eighteenth century tale told by a wise Hasidic sage named Rabbi Zusya. He was loved by everyone who knew him because of his humility and piety. But as he grew older and realized that

See Like– p. 5

Task group seeks input on end of life care

By The Rev. Dr. Peter Armstrong

A Task Group of the diocese is inviting input from parishes and incumbents. At the last diocesan synod, the following motion was passed having been put forward by Ann Camber and Megan Torfe:

Moved that the Diocese of Algoma encourage parishes and incumbents to become familiar with Bill C-14 and this new approach to end of life care and develop a plan of pastoral response to those affected by serious, incurable illness and their families within our communities. Moved that the

Diocese of Algoma look into providing opportunities and resources for training clergy and laity in end of life pastoral care.

The name of this task group is "P-CAID Task Group", Pastoral Care Around Induced Death, with the following focuses:

- Provide clarity about Bill C-14;
- Identify what parishes and clergy need to provide good pastoral care;
- Address the practical what-do-I-do-at-the-bedside need;
- Address the ethical and theological questions which people have about the subject;

- Provide resources;
- Encourage parishes to develop a plan of pastoral response.

The P-CAID Task Group members want to hear from parishes for two reasons. First, the group wants to invite people to identify what information and resources would be helpful to them: what is needed locally in order to enhance effective pastoral care regarding end of life issues and information about Bill C-14? What can the group provide which would be helpful to parishes? Responses are sought by December 8, 2017.

Second, the P-CAID Task Group members would like to

identify a parish that would be willing to serve as a kind of pilot project to present material and to engage with the parish, which could provide feedback to the committee, in early 2018. Would your parish be willing to host the pilot project? Task Group members would provide the organisation and content. What is needed is simply a handful of interested people and a venue.

Replies can be sent to a member of the task group from your deanery.

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Four conditions necessary for Christian community

Continued from p. 2
talking about our parish, St. Thomas', as a Christian community in which our people come together on a regular basis to pray, to participate in the Eucharist and other liturgies, to study, to listen, to learn, to serve and to share in social activities. We also come together for mutual comfort and support, to marry, to baptize and to bury. Our unifying force is a common faith in Jesus and the power of his word and Spirit to unite us.

Question 2:
Kelly: Why is the kind of community the Church can offer needed in the world today?

Steve: In short, because people are lonely and they are hungry for meaning in their lives and they recognise the words of wisdom and comfort found in the Christian scriptures.

As a boy, I lived in a village where we were mostly farmers or retired farmers with extended families. We were all white, Anglo-Saxon Protestants and Anglicans, and we all spoke English. We were also very equal; there were no extremes of poverty and no extremes

of wealth. The only visible sign of difference in our village was a United Church on one side of the road and an Anglican Church on the other. Life probably wasn't Nirvana, there was pettiness, but it was safe and the people knew how and when to cooperate and support each other. At harvest time, we worked together to bring in the crops on every farm in our area. Clearly, we had a common culture.

As a school boy, I knew all my schoolmates from grade one to grade eight because we were all in one classroom. But even more important, I knew their homes, their parents and most of their grandparents and they knew me. There was no room in that tight knit society for loneliness or isolation.

The society we live in today reflects the disintegration of those natural family units. It also reflects the impact of mobility and immigration of so many people from various parts of the world. Today, our cities, towns and villages are made up of people who no longer know each other, do not speak the same languages, who adhere to dif-

ferent religions and philosophies and may even fear each other! Human community is no longer found in the streets, the neighbourhood or village. This situation creates a loneliness which people have difficulty coping with.

So today people come together, not because they live in the same neighbourhood or are related by blood, but because of a mutual interest; they form community around ideas, around a vision, around a faith.

When I last spoke to my friend David, who has been in prison for 30 years, I asked him what is the essence of community and without missing a beat he said "acceptance and belonging". These are the issues the Church can respond to and the Bullseye program will help us get there.

Question 3:
Kelly: Given all your experience, what would you say are a few of the non-negotiables for a Christian community to be Christian.

Steve: Kelly, there are probably a multitude of conditions necessary for Christian community to be perceived as Christian and to thrive but Jean Vanier points out that there are three or four cardinal conditions.

A first, as my friend David said, is a sense of belonging.

Western civilization is competitive and we teach our children to "win". Parents are delighted with report cards bearing "A's", or even better coming first in class. This is how individualistic materialism and the desire to gain prestige by coming out on top, have taken over from the sense of fellowship, compassion and community.

When I was in university, one of my classmates spent his summers teaching school in a far northern indigenous village. He told a story about offering a prize for being first to answer a question. But the students all worked on the answer together and shouted it out at the same time. In their culture, they couldn't bear to have one of them win, leaving the rest of them losers.

Jesse Jackson once said: "My people are humiliated" and Mother Theresa said: "My people are hungry". These leaders identified with

the heart and soul of their people. They belonged to each other!

Personally, 'my people' are the people of St. Thomas'! That is the reason I asked to celebrate my 80th birthday here with my Christian family. And now Claire has joined me! Perhaps we are starting a tradition, another way to celebrate being together!

A second condition is that a community must have a clear goal or a project of some kind. People must be clear about the "why" of their common life or there will soon be conflicts and the whole thing will collapse. Tensions arise in community from the fact that individuals have not talked about their expectations.

In a Church community, the Mission Statement should be written on the backs of everyone's eyelids so we know why we are here.

Bruno Bettleheim, in his lovely book *A Home for the Heart* said: "I am convinced that communal life can flourish only if it exists for an aim outside itself. Community is viable if it is the outgrowth of a deep involvement in a purpose which is other than, or above, that of being a community."

When I think about my own experience of nine years of working in a L'Arche community, I think of people who have left their traditional milieu to live with a group of developmentally handicapped people under the same roof but with a very specific goal of helping them to grow and reach their greatest level of independence possible. That community is now approaching its 50th year of existence.

A third condition is Personal Growth and Transition.

Jean Vanier writes that a community is only a community when the majority of its members is making the transition from "the community for myself" to "myself for the community", when each person's heart is opening to all the others without exception.

Essentially, what Jean is referring to is the movement from egoism to love, from death to resurrection, from a land of slavery to a promised land, a land of interior freedom.

St. Paul says, in Philippians, "do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others

better than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests but also to the interests of others".

What I recall so clearly about my life in a L'Arche community was how slowly one makes that transition from "the community for myself" to "myself for the community". For most of us it is a life-long journey. And there is also another step and that is moving the whole community towards the heart of the Loving Father and towards those in need. And that, of course, is the purpose of this Bullseye program. So I do hope that everyone will take this opportunity to participate in it.

A fourth condition is the most important, and that is forgiveness.

In a chapter Jean Vanier wrote on Community, he starts by reminding us that "the Father sent his only beloved son not to judge us, not to condemn, but to heal, save and guide us on the paths of love, and to forgive us because he loves us in the depth of our being so that we can accept ourselves. In other words, there is hope! We are not imprisoned forever by egoism and darkness."

So it becomes possible to accept others and to forgive.

In another paragraph he says: "Community is the place of forgiveness. In spite of all the trust we may have in each other, there are always words that wound, self-promoting attitudes, situations where susceptibilities clash. That is why being together implies bearing a certain cross, a constant effort and an acceptance which is daily and mutual forgiveness".

In Colossians, Saint Paul says: "As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful." Col. 3:12-15

When I consider the alternative

By the Rev. Canon Bob Elkin

Not long ago for no particular reason, the skin on my legs below the knee started itching like crazy. Well, when I itches I scratches and pretty soon I'd rubbed things red and raw so I toddled off to the doctor who took one look and said: "Oh I know what you've got! I see it all the time at the senior's home." That wasn't exactly the reassurance I was looking for but she was right. The prescribed treatment was to quit washing so much and rub some lotion on and pretty soon things returned to normal. Once again the point was driven home that you're not twenty-one anymore Boyo!

Things just seem to happen to me as I get older. I was at the mirror the other morning trying to disguise my rapidly receding hairline when I discovered a nasty looking scrape on the top of my head. Where did it come from? Does the cat sharpen his claws up there when I'm sleeping? Does my wife wait for me to nod off and then smack me on the head with the broom at night? You'd think that you'd notice whatever it was that gave you a big scrape on your head but I have no idea. It just happened somehow.

It isn't just aches and pains either. I'll be telling some fascinating story that I've told a million times before according to my children and suddenly I can't remember the name of the guy that the story is about or the place where we were all going to when the wheels fell of the car or some other such critical, interesting point and the story grinds to a halt. While leading the Lord's Prayer during worship I daren't try and think ahead to what the next line is because I know that if I do it won't be there when I get

there. Just say it without thinking about it and it'll flow is what I've learned works best but it is nerve racking and it doesn't always happen. It's like running upstairs and thinking about what foot you have to put down next. Guaranteed to put you flat on your face!

I use the wrong word a lot too when I'm talking I've noticed.



I'll say cereal when I mean bread. I'll say Sudbury when I mean Thunder Bay. I'll say Helen when I'm describing some wonderful weekend away with my wife Connie and that one can be especially dangerous! There seems to be a disconnect between my brain and my mouth which some would claim has always been there but I seem to see it now too. What's all that about?

The long and the short of it is I'm not twenty one anymore but that's OK. Just as I start to get all hung up about it I reflect that nothing that's as old as I am works like it used to either. A ten year old car suddenly backfires and I can relate to that. A twenty year old clock winds down quicker and I can relate to that too. A fifty year old house requires constant upkeep and tender loving care and the wonder of a seventy-one year old anything is that it works at all! So I can live with it.response.

Continued from p. 5
death was nearing, he became more and more agitated. His friends couldn't understand this because he had led such a perfect life – what could he possibly have to be worried about. Surely there would be a great reward from God when he arrived in heaven. "Why are you afraid, Rabbi?" They asked. This is what he answered them: "When I stand before God, should God say to me, Zusya, why weren't you another Moses? I will have an an-

swer for God. I will say, 'Master of the universe, You did not grant me the greatness of the soul that you granted Moses. Should God ask me, Zusya, why were you not another King Solomon? I will say to God, because you did not bless me with the wisdom of another King Solomon. But alas, what will I say to God if asked, 'Zusya, why were you not Zusya? Why were you not the person I gave you the ability to be?'"

Bishop's Motto for 2018
Colossians 3: 12,14
"As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience....
Above all, clothe yourselves with love which binds everything together in perfect harmony."
Faithfully submitted,
The Rt. Rev. Anne Germond

The deadline for the December edition of the *Algoma Anglican* is Friday, December 1, 2017

The Second Prayer Book 1552

By the Rev. Peter Simmons

The reaction to the second *Book of Common Prayer*, 1552 was mixed. Conservatives such as Stephen Gardiner thought it too radical. They felt it broke up the unity of Christian worship, however they did accept the Order of Holy Communion, believing they could still find within it the medieval doctrine of the Mass. Those more reform minded such as Martin Bucer and Peter Martyr believed it did not go far enough. In fact, Bucer wrote a book of 28 chapters examining the new release from many perspectives. John Hooper, another well known reformer, rejected the book outright.

Evidence suggests Thomas Cranmer knew another prayer book would soon need to be produced to mollify more fervent reformers for example those who wanted to move further to Protestant thought and practice. Cranmer was aware the idea of a local presence, that Christ was actually present in the Sacrament, was problematic for some. He was also concerned the Eucharist not be seen as a sacrifice. The sacrifice of Christ was on the Cross, occurred only once and was not repeated each time the Eucharist was celebrated.

The *Book of Common Prayer*, 1552 demonstrated marked doctrinal change had occurred since 1549. In the second book, priestly functions of the clergy were reduced, or removed. References to the chausible, the alb, the tunicle, the cope and candles on the alter were expunged. Even the use of the word Altar was omitted. No longer were clergy to be given a chalice and paten at their ordination. Only a Bible was to be presented.

The words of the Eucharistic Prayer were revised and shortened. With the second book, people would now be required to receive Communion three times per year as opposed to once a year as dictated in the *Book of Common Prayer* 1559. The practice of receiving the Sacrament while

kneeling, which had become a problem for reformers, was addressed with the insertion of what is call the “Black Rubric”. This was done to avoid an misinterpretation of the nature of the Eucharist. It read in part as follows:

“...that the Communicants should receive the same kneeling; (which thing being well meant, for a signification of the humble and grateful acknowledgment of the benefits of Christ, given to the worthy receivers, and to the avoid the profanation and disorder

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which about the holy Communion, as might otherwise ensue; Lest yet, the same kneeling might be thought or taken otherwise, we do declare that it is not meant thereby, that any adoration is done, or ought to be done, either unto the Sacramental bread or wine there bodily received, or unto any real and essential presence there being of Christ's natural flesh and blood. For as concern the Sacramental bread and wine, they remain still in their very natural substances, and therefore may not be adored, for that were Idolatry to be abhorred by all faithful Christians. And as concern the natural body and blood of our saviour Christ, they are in heaven and not here. For it is against the truth of Christ's true natural body, to be in more places then one, at one time. (The Book of Common Prayer 1552).

At Baptism, the exorcism and anointing were omitted. Anointing and the opportunity for Communion from the reserved Sacrament was removed from the Visitation to the Sick. The Burial rite was simplified with no provision for a Celebration of the Eucharist and the removal of Prayers for the Dead. The death of Edward VI on July 6, 1553, brought even more dramatic change in the Church.

More to come.

Blanket exercise conducted at St. John the Divine, North Bay

By the Rev. Beth Hewson

After experiencing the Blanket exercise, people have commented:

“I can speak and give speeches and do as much as I can but the blanket exercise really sticks with people.” Student

“It's going to help me to be more attentive to what the Native people have gone through and all the issues.” Alberta RCMP officer

“I think it's understanding an accurate history, one that presents the Indigenous perspective and not just the colonial history.” University faculty member

In the Blanket Exercise, participants step into the role of the in-

digenous people. The blankets represent the northern part of Turtle Island, or North America, before the arrival of Europeans where the Indigenous peoples were the original inhabitants. The exercise creates a foundation for a fundamental shift in people's understanding of Canadian history. Treaty making, Colonization, the Discovery Doctrine and Reconciliation are some of the issues to grapple with during the exercise.

The Blanket Exercise was created in 1997 by KAIROS and is an ecumenical program that has been repeated in churches, schools, community centres and work-

places. The Exercise allows participants to learn about each other, their backgrounds and have conversations that ultimately can effect positive change. As a response to the Bishop's charge, the first Blanket Exercise was conducted on November 9, 2-17 at St. John's Anglican Church, North Bay.

If you are interested in hosting the Blanket Exercise in your community, as part of your worship service or at your Deanery meeting, please contact Rev. Beth Hewson at revbeth65@gmail.com or Ms. Erma Howe at ermahowe@rocketmail.com



COOKIES FOR A GOOD CAUSE: As part of their confirmation, Samuel Bernardi and Gabriel MacRae were challenged to do a service project. After much thought and discussion it was decided that they would take orders for cookies at church: one dozen cookies for \$10 Over a two week period they took orders, baking 25 dozen cookies. After the church service, they took the money raised, \$250.00 and the 25 dozen cookies to Grace Place. This organisation is an outreach to the community which provides hot meals and drinks, along with warm clothes to those in need.



BREAD FOR LIFE: Recently “The Life in the Eucharist” class at St. Michael and All Angels, Thunder Bay enjoyed working together to make bread for the Eucharist for the service to be held on Sunday, November 5, 2017.



PLENTY FOR ALL: Leila and Claire are pictured with bread baked by “The Life in the Eucharist” class taught by Fr. Gordon Holroyd at St. Michael and All Angels, Thunder Bay for use at the Eucharist on Sunday, November 5, 2017.

Christ Church in the Sault celebrates The King

By Wendy Bonenfant

Editor's note: In the following, Wendy Bonenfant writes of the festivities on Harvest Sunday at Christ Church, Sault Ste. Marie.

On Sunday, September 24, 2017 the Children's Ministry of Christ Church, Sault Ste. Marie celebrated Harvest Sunday in a reflection of the wedding feast parable of Matthew 22. The kids had fun, and were reminded that all are sons and daughters of the Greatest King who was himself a servant. This makes it an honour and privilege as sons and daughters of the King to carry on that loving service because that is how Jesus served.

The student body were dressed in robes, sashes and were adorned with crowns of royalty as they prepared and served a delicious lunch of taco chips and dip, grapes, oranges and ice cream cups. The children were very pleased to have decorated the tables with fall centerpieces and coloured tablecloths. They eagerly served and welcomed the congregation into the fellowship area. The students, without being reminded, served the congregation before serving themselves. These young people exhibited the joyfulness of serving and the character of Christ as they encouraged the body of believers.

Before leaving the festivities, every person in attendance was blessed with a laminated bookmark and a cardboard crown that served to reinforce the Bible lesson, reminding all that they are

the children of God and have a responsibility of sharing the Gospel of Christ with everyone.

Matthew 22: 4-14: "Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet." "But they paid no attention and went off—one to his field, another to his business. The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them. The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. "Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. So go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.' So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, the bad as well as the good, and the wedding hall was filled with guests. "But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. He asked, 'How did you get in here without wedding clothes, friend?' The man was speechless. "Then the king told the attendants, 'Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' "For many are invited, but few are chosen."

Every person on this earth needs a personal relationship with Jesus, to know Him as Lord and Saviour!



CELEBRATING THE GREATEST KING: Grace McCallum and Katrina MacGlashan were two of the members of the student body of Children's Ministry at Christ Church, Saul Ste. Marie who served lunch following the service on Sunday, September 24, 2017. The Harvest Sunday celebration was done in reflection of the parable of the wedding feast found in The Gospel of St. Matthew, Chapter 22. Wayne Jones-Reid is pictured in the background.

Contact The Algoma Anglican at our E-mail address:

anglican@muskoka.com

Imagine their experience

By Charlotte Haldenby

Oh my! It was coming true, just as the angel said. She was pregnant! What would her parents say? What would happen to that betrothal the matchmaker had made for her? Sure, the guy was older, but he was respected in the community. He had a good trade, so they'd never be poor. But what will he say, and his family too?

Good, it's okay! He had his own visit from an angel-so he believed that part of her story. However she knew from her older brothers that his friends were making fun of him for being taken in by her pretty face! It was really good to go away for a bit and see her cousin and talk it all over, and see her new baby.

Ah, c'mon! Isn't it hard enough to go through all these body changes, but now they have to go off to another town to register for some government thing! Well, at least he can afford a donkey so she won't have to walk in this condition, but sitting on a donkey all day for almost a week? Doesn't she have enough pain?

This is crazy! All the hotel rooms are taken! A barn! You've got to be kidding! Maybe she can't see the animals but she can hear them and there is that smell. Now the baby's coming, and



there's no midwife-and it's all a women's thing so Joseph's no help except to hold her hand. Oh, good, the innkeeper's wife has come! And it's a beautiful boy! It may have been worth it all.

Knock! Knock! Who can it be? She's so tired! Shepherds! They've seen their own angels and want to see the baby. They just love how he seems to look each one straight in the eye! And they even brought a little lamb as a gift!

But she's so wiped out. Word gets around and there are more visitors. "Have you seen the baby born in the barn yet?" Then there are those awesome visitors! Kings, here, to see her and the baby. Very rich gifts, too, beyond her imagination. They'd heard about her baby, and come from

so far away they'd spent so many nights following a star!

Oh, but they'd stopped in to ask the local king for directions, and he sure didn't want any competition. And he's sent out orders! They've got to pack up and get out right now! But how many babies will he kill and how many mothers will be so devastated? She can't imagine losing her darling boy!

Back on the donkey again! This time with all the stuff for

"They'd heard about her baby, and come from so far away they'd spent so many nights following a star!"

the baby too! Off to another country where no one knows them! But no one speaks their language either. Thank heavens her husband has a hands-on trade and can make what these new people want, if they draw him a good picture to show him. But it's hard, even if the mothers there do drop in to see the baby. Everyone loves his beautiful smile. They have to smile back.

A few years later, word comes that that king had calmed down

and it was safe to come home. Back on the donkey again! It is a long way home! But his family has tidied up the house for them! His reputation as a tradesman hasn't completely faded. What they've been through sounds unbelievable to some of their old friends. But they're really home, and neighbours visit, and the little guy can go out and play safely with the other kids, although sometimes he says strange words from that other country. "What

d'ya mean, guy?" They're alive and well and safe! As she's been saying every night-time for years now, as she remembers the events of the day, and the years, "Thanks be to God!"

We've heard this amazing story every year since we were little. It sounds so long ago and far away. We sing beautiful carols about the events, without thinking of the swirl of emotions the events would spin around Mary and Joseph. We do like our presents, just like they had the lamb, and the gold, frankincense and myrrh, not realising the symbolism of those ancient ones. And we sure do like those holidays. But, if that girl and guy were alive today, and going through

this, what would we be doing?

Back in the 1950's a high school classmate was sent off to "help an aunt who was sick" for a year and the baby was given up for adoption. In the 1970's, the girl had to stay home all day, and then teachers came after school four days a week to keep her up to date. But now? Do we have parenting classes that include the boy too, and have a nursery in the building? Will she get that very important high-school diploma?

If the boyfriend and both families turn their back on her, is there a place she can stay? Have you checked the price on Pampers lately? Winter is closing in; shelter and food are needed. How are we helping?

And what if their own country has exploded and isn't really safe for anyone? The house down the block was a direct hit by a missile, and they need to get out of there, right now! Do we open our hearts and our purses and join together to bring refugees to our safe haven? As we rejoice this Christmas in the birth of that wonderful baby, let us also reach out to every parent and every baby, to make sure they are safe, they are healthy and they know that people care and are ready to help joyfully in His name.