

## Algoma Synod 2011

Algoma's Synod meets only every two years because of the extraordinary distances (and extraordinary costs!) involved. This makes our synods especially important for us all. What follows is excerpted from the reports delivered by St John's People's Warden, Dale Sparkes, and Deputy People's Warden, Maureen Vescio, following last spring's Synod.

### Excerpts from People's Warden Dale Sparkes' Report from Synod

The 2011 Synod of the Diocese of Algoma was an inspiring, joyful and progressive Synod that sought to maintain the unity of the Anglican way and move our Diocese into a new day.

Synod began with an uplifting worship service and ordination at St. Luke's Cathedral. The focus of the proclamation was Isaiah 43, "I am doing a new thing," says God, "forget the past." This theme was emphasised in music, prayer, homily, and ordination. The homily, by Rev. Dr. Jay Koyle, stressed that this is not a message to forget where we have been, or the experiences of the journey; rather, it is a call to transformation, to new life that the way of Jesus leads us to.

### Bishop Andrews' charge to Synod

Bishop Andrews challenges us to improve our biblical theological competence ... We are not to be discouraged by the cultural, environmental, and sociological changes around us. Algoma is not assuming a posture of resignation. Rather, it is moving forward with its Strategic Plan founded on resolve and resourcefulness. ... It is a fresh vision of what God's new way is for this century. It is a plan in which we seek to embody a grateful and critical sense of the past, a vigorous engagement of the present, with patient hope through God for the future...

Bishop Andrews urges Anglicans of Algoma to resist the temptation to bury the Residential School experience because an apology has been issued and a settlement reached. We are challenged in our communities and in our hearts to promote healing and reconciliation. .... Bishop Andrews will be looking for the cooperation of Thunder Bay Anglicans as he seeks to develop a chaplaincy to Aboriginals in our city.

Many of our contemporary issues—sexual ethics, baptism, open communion, debates on war, euthanasia, and the environment—are theological in nature. Bishop Andrews wants the level of theological competence raised, not only in the pulpit, but in the pews as well...

Stewardship is our commitment to maintain and grow healthy churches that care for all people as well as parish resources. ... Bishop Andrews is convinced that the measure of our spiritual growth and our maturity as a diocese, or church, or as Christians is how generous we are with the gifts God has given us...

### Worship

Authentic Evangelism, a plenary session hosted by Michael Harvey, a founding member of the Back to Church movement, focused on church renewal. ... In England, in 2009, over 100,000 people accepted invitations and 12-15,000 were added to church membership. Invitation does work.