

Annual Conference in Parry Sound Sept 30 — Oct 2

Attached to this edition in your mailing is the Brochure from the Deanery of Muskoka Lay Readers Association for the Conference which they are hosting at Trinity Church, Parry Sound this fall.

It begins with the usual Registration at 7 p.m. followed by Compline at 9 p.m. for all Lay Readers. You will notice in the Brochure that there is a special meeting with the Bishop for Deanery Wardens and Diocesan Lay Readers which will occur in the afternoon in order to discuss a number of matters such as revision of the LR manual and Canons affecting LRs in preparation for next Synod. Out of this will likely come a number of revisions many of which Canon Dr. Gould and the Bishop will discuss with all the LRs in attendance at the Conference beginning at 1:30 p.m. the following day for everyone's input before bringing the changes to the next Diocesan Synod for approval and implementation.

You will notice that the 3 sessions scheduled for 3:45 to 4:45 p.m. will be presenting further opportunity for receiving input and further elucidating on what changes may be in the works in future years.

Another new departure from the format of previous conferences is the Prayer Counseling sessions available for your utilization on Friday after registration and at free times on Saturday.

You will notice that at the Eucharist on Sunday all LRs are asked to attend and are invited to robe for the service, and that following the service there will be a pre-departure luncheon to ensure you return home well-fed.

Words from the Warden

Those of you who are not brand-new LRs and have been receiving the yearly issues of "*Readings*" may remember that the last issue contained an article by the Executive Archdeacon, the Ven. Harry Huskins called "The ministry Challenge Before Us" in which he discussed the new Strategic Plan upon which our Diocese is embarking. In the year which has passed since then things have progressed, and indeed some of those things which need to be somewhat altered are now further along the legislative process—some of which will be the subject of my meeting with you on the Saturday of the Conference.

For those of you to whom this is new, and those others of us who have ageing

memories, I repeat some of that article which I think we need to keep before us.

“From Algoma’s beginning there were never enough ordained clergy or the money to pay them.

“This meant that a large part of the most effective ministry carried out in Algoma’s early days was the ministry of what we would call layreaders today.

“In this time of transition we are entering we are going to have to be...creative and flexible in our view of ministry. We can not allow ourselves to be so rigidly bound by the older models of doing things that we tell small but perfectly viable parishes that they can not continue because they can not afford to pay a fulltime ordained minister.

“We started as a missionary diocese and I think that the realization of the great hopes and accomplishments that lie before us will mean thinking of ourselves again as a missionary diocese.”

I ask of you who will be attending the Muskoka conference to keep these ideas in mind as we consider what LRs can do as the Strategic Plan is discussed in our churches and gradually implemented.

One of the great successes innovated in the past few years has been the appointment of Deanery Layreader Wardens. They have been invaluable to me in keeping the statistics on their LRs up to date, and as a result we now have quite reliable addresses for the vast majority of you.

I still ask of you however that you make it your personal responsibility to see that the LRs of your parish notify the Deanery Warden of any changes in addresses, phone numbers, Email addresses etc., or that you do it for them.

And now another change to which we must get accustomed: Synod office has informed me that due to staffing limitations due to Synod office restructuring it will no longer be possible for the mailing of this publication to be handled by Synod Office staff.

I have been thinking and praying about this, and would request all of you to send me any of your thoughts about solutions to the problem. Getting out *Readings* up to now has involved printing and assembling a number of pages, printing out mailing labels, buying envelopes and stamps, putting labels and stamps on envelopes and mailing them to the approximately 260 Lay Readers in the diocese—a fairly major drain on one’s time which Synod office was up to now

able to accomplish.

My initial thought was that in this day of Emails etc, that circulating all this information could be sent by Email to the majority of LRs who have sent us their Email addresses, and this is what I am doing with this Edition. Those without Email addresses (a bearably small minority) will receive a printing in the usual way (barring postal strikes!). This is the first such attempt at this method. Please ask your colleagues who are LRs and don't receive this to send me their Email addresses and I will send them a reply with all this material included. The chief group whose Email addresses are not available are those in Algoma Deanery, where the warden only recently obtained Email reception herself.

I am sending those with Email Addresses this newsletter (abbreviated edition) with a second Email of the brochure containing all the information which pertains to the upcoming Conference. Please print it out and for those who can attend, respond as quickly as possible so that conference organizers can plan efficiently.

Therefore if you are getting this by "snail mail" I don't have your Email address and I need it for the future. If you don't have one, you will continue to receive everything by conventional mail at an extra cost to the LR fund (and probably considerably later, as doing all these things take time).

Blessings on you all.

David Gould

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