

Moosonee Transition Plan

Proposed revision for the March 2012

Moosonee Synod session

September 8, 2011

Introduction

The Diocese of Moosonee encompasses a vast geographic area covering the middle to northern national provinces of Ontario and Quebec. Our ecclesiastical borders touch the Dioceses of Keewatin, Arctic, Quebec, Ottawa and Algoma. The diocese consists of three deaneries; James Bay, Kenogami and Cochrane. Most of the largest and growing First Nations parishes are in the northern deanery of James Bay. The two southern deaneries are made up of parishes in communities which were historically settled for the most part by immigrants. In the early 1900's, these pioneers followed the rail line north as the area was opened up by the forestry and mining industries.

The Diocese of Moosonee was established in 1872, with the installation of Bishop John Hordon. He established the See (headquarters) on Moose Factory Island as he continued to serve the First Nations people in the vast northern area of the James Bay Lowlands. The See moved to Chapleau, Cochrane and finally Timmins as subsequent bishops responded to the parochial needs of growing communities to the south. However, by the early 1960's parishes in the two deaneries of Kenogami and Cochrane had peaked in attendance and in the number of priests they could financially support. Conversely, the most northern deanery continues to have many parishes that are growing in members and growing in ministry needs.

Today, in the Diocese of Moosonee, like many other dioceses and religious denominations, the number of parish members is continually decreasing and in many of the northern communities that make up the diocese the economic base has severely disintegrated. This has put a significant financial burden on the diocese and we have had to come to terms with the downward trend of declining financial resources.

In November of 2010, the Executive Council after reviewing the financial situation approved a motion to have the Bishop appoint members to a committee called Vision Quest 2015. This committee had the mandate to assess the viability of all church properties, to establish shared ministers where appropriate, to raise up locally trained leaders to serve within their parish, to ensure and maintain an Anglican presence within our northern area and to report to the 45th Session of Synod in June of 2011.

At the June 2011 Synod, a motion was passed unanimously directing its Executive Council and Officers “to enter into discussion with the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario for the purpose of establishing a Mission Area consisting of all of the present parishes of the Diocese of Moosonee; and that the Diocese of Moosonee be placed in suspension with its spiritual jurisdiction lying with the Metropolitan.”

Purpose

The purpose of this Plan is to bring into effect the transition of the functions of the present Diocese of Moosonee to that of a Mission Area under the authority of the Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario with the Metropolitan exercising the authority, jurisdiction, and powers presently held by the Bishop of Moosonee.

Jurisdiction

Spiritual Jurisdiction:

The spiritual jurisdiction (*jurisdictione in spiritualibus*) presently exercised within the Diocese of Moosonee by the diocesan bishop will be exercised by the Metropolitan and his or her successors in office. This spiritual jurisdiction includes the authority and power to oversee, to carry out, and to make decisions on matters such as confirmation and ordination, the pastoral and disciplinary relationship with the clergy, the general spiritual well-being of the people and parishes of Moosonee, and the furtherance of the Mission and Ministry of Jesus Christ in the Anglican tradition within this geographical area as part of the Anglican Church of Canada.

The Metropolitan will enter into this spiritual jurisdiction on the retirement of the present Bishop of Moosonee.

Temporal Jurisdiction:

The temporal jurisdiction (*jurisdictione in temporalibus*) presently exercised within the Diocese of Moosonee by the diocesan bishop will be exercised by the Metropolitan. This temporal jurisdiction includes all of the present authority, power, and responsibility entrusted to the Bishop of Moosonee under the episcopal incorporating Act and the constitution and canons that have been put into place by the diocesan Synod. This jurisdiction includes matters relating to finance, property, employment of clergy and lay personnel, contracts, the overall management and administration of the diocese, and canon and secular law as they apply to these.

In carrying out this responsibility the Metropolitan may appoint an Administrator for all of the Mission Area, or Administrators for separate geographic areas within the Mission Area. An

Administrator shall function as the Metropolitan's deputy in temporal matters, carry out such duties and responsibilities as are specified by the Metropolitan, exercise such powers as are delegated by the Metropolitan, be responsible to the Metropolitan, and serve at the Metropolitan's pleasure.

An Administrator named by the Metropolitan shall Chair the Executive Council and the Synod in the absence of the Metropolitan.

Legislative Jurisdiction:

The Metropolitan shall hold the authority, in consultation with the Moosonee Executive Council, to call the Synod of the diocese of Moosonee into session for the purpose of amending or repealing the present Canons, and to enact new Canons, and to deal with other matters.

Judicial Jurisdiction:

The Metropolitan shall exercise all of the functions in relation to the Moosonee Mission Area that the Bishop of Moosonee presently exercises in relation to the Diocese of Moosonee in disciplinary and judicial matters.

Property and financial Assets:

The property and financial assets of the Diocese of Moosonee are presently held by the diocesan Bishop as an episcopal corporation-sole under a federal statute. The statute provides that this episcopal corporation-sole (the Bishop) will hold and manage the property of the diocese and its financial assets. The property and financial assets will continue to be held in this episcopal corporation-sole. The Metropolitan will be the Bishop of Moosonee for the purposes of this Act.

Appointment and employment of Clergy:

The Metropolitan will exercise the authority, jurisdiction, and power presently exercised by the Bishop of Moosonee in matters relating to the appointment, supervision, discipline and termination of clergy. These powers may be delegated to the Administrator or Administrators appointed by the Metropolitan.

Governance at the parish and deanery level:

The parish and deanery level will continue to operate as they do at present.

Process and Timing:

The process that will put this Transition Plan into effect has the following steps:

1. Consultation with partners about the details of this Plan. The principal partners in these discussions are the Ontario Provincial Synod, the Council of the North, and the General Synod.

2. In September 2011 the Provincial Council and House of Bishops will be briefed on the Moosonee Synod's decisions and the outline of a Moosonee Transition Plan will be placed before them for information and initial discussion.

3. In September of 2011 the Moosonee delegates will brief the members of the Council of the North on the Moosonee Synod's decisions and the outline of a Moosonee Transition Plan will be placed before them for information and initial discussion.

4. In November of 2011 the Moosonee Executive Council will be briefed on the progress made to that date in carrying out the Moosonee Synod's instructions. The Vision Quest Team will be given any further directions that the Moosonee Executive Council thinks appropriate at that time.

5. The Council of General Synod will meet the week following the Moosonee Executive Council meeting and will be briefed on the progress made to that date in carrying out the Moosonee Synod's instructions. Given the tight constraints of the Council of General Synod's agenda this briefing will probably be by written report.

6. In March of 2012 the Moosonee Synod will be called into session (in conjunction with the already scheduled meeting of the Moosonee Executive Council) and will enact a new Mission Area Canon providing for the implementation those details of the Transition Plan over which the Moosonee Synod has authority. At the same time the Moosonee Executive Council will request that the Ontario Provincial Synod enact a similar Mission Area Canon implementing those details of the Transition Plan over which it has authority. The Moosonee Mission Area Canon will come into effect on the retirement of the present Bishop of Moosonee.

The parallel Moosonee and the Provincial Synod Mission Area Canons will provide that, on the retirement of the present Bishop of Moosonee the Metropolitan will assume all of the authority, jurisdiction, and power of that Office.

7. The Transition Plan will be placed before the Ontario Provincial Synod when it meets in October of 2012 for its approval and the enactment of a new Mission Area Canon providing for the implementation of those details of the Transition Plan over which the Ontario Provincial Synod has authority. The Provincial Synod's Mission Area Canon will come into effect on the retirement of the present Bishop of Moosonee.

8. If it seems appropriate to do so, the Transition Plan (or matters relating to it) would be considered by the General Synod when it meets in June of 2013.

8. The retirement of the current Bishop of Moosonee will trigger the implementation of the parallel Moosonee and Provincial Synod Mission Area Canons and the assumption by the Metropolitan of the role previously carried out by the Bishop of Moosonee.

Future return of the Diocese of Moosonee to its former status and the ending of the Mission Area:

The parallel Moosonee and Provincial Synod Mission Area Canons will provide that the Moosonee Synod may at some time in the future, in consultation with the Provincial Synod's Executive Council, enact a Resolution bringing the Mission Area arrangement to an end, proceeding to the election of a new Bishop of Moosonee, and restoring the diocese to its full function and standing.