

Welcome the Niagara's Diocesan Synod 2011!

from Marni Nancekivell, Secretary of Synod

And what does the LORD require of you?
To act justly and to love mercy
and to walk humbly with your God.
Micah 6:8

If this is your first Synod, we hope that you will be enriched by this experience of the wider church. This promises to be an exciting Synod, as increasingly, our decisions and deliberations will be formed by our Diocesan Vision.

What IS Synod, after all?

The Incorporated Synod of the Diocese of Niagara is the legal entity (established by statute of the Legislature in the Province of Ontario) with responsibility for the dealings of the Anglican Church within its diocesan boundaries. As such, there are a number of legal responsibilities that we must fulfill at every Synod meeting: approving minutes, electing Synod Council, approving financial statements and budgets, and authorizing the actions of Synod Council. But a meeting of Synod is much more than that: it is an expression of who we are as the church. It offers us a unique opportunity to gather and give expression to our diverse community under the leadership of our Bishop.

Two Day Synod

This will be a two-day Synod as we continue with our pattern of alternating one and two-day Synods. Therefore, this year we will both engage in the core business of Synod and have an opportunity to hear from some groups and committees, including an ample opportunity to launch our Vision Petal focus for this year: **Prophetic Social Justice Making**. The venue for this year's Synod will again be the Hamilton Convention Centre on Friday, November 18 and Saturday November 19. Synod will convene both days at 9:00 am, with registration beginning on Friday at 8:00 am.

The Bishop's Charge will be delivered during the Eucharistic Worship that will begin our Synod.

Greening Niagara Guidelines for Meetings within the Diocese:

In this mailing you are receiving an agenda and your registration card. All other reports are at this web address: [www.niagara.anglican.ca/Synod 2011](http://www.niagara.anglican.ca/Synod2011). All motions, as well as the budget and other important information at Synod, will be presented on the overhead screen. There will be a few copies of the line item budget available at each table at Synod. If you wish to print portions of the information provided online and do not have a computer or a printer, please contact your parish, and I am sure they will be able to assist you. **In order to register at Synod, you will need your registration card. It is much like your "entrance ticket". Please bring it with you to Synod to exchange for your voting card.**

About Synod Fees:

Each year some of the costs related to Synod meetings are included in the diocesan budget - specifically the cost of staff time and planning. The costs of the meeting itself (such as site rental, food services, AV services, and mailing) are shared among the members of the Synod and the resulting "fee" is billed to parishes. We plan carefully to keep this fee as low as possible. While some Synod members choose to contribute to this fee (and that generosity is great to see!), I want to emphasize that this is not a charge to you individually. It is simply a way to share the costs among the parishes of the Diocese.

Here are some special features of this year's Synod:**Core Business of Synod**

This year our fundamental business will be to hear and reflect upon the Bishop's charge, to make changes to Canons, to elect Synod Council, to elect members of Provincial Synod, approve financial statements, discuss and approve the 2012 budget and receive reports.

Our Diocesan Vision

Themes connected to our Diocesan Vision will be woven throughout our Synod. We will have a series of presentations from the **Generous Culture of Stewardship** petal as they conclude their 2010-2011 Vision theme. We will also have an opportunity to say farewell to Jim Newman for his excellent work as our Diocesan Stewardship Consultant as he prepares for retirement. This Synod will give us an opportunity to witness the inductions of the Reverend Canon Terry DeForest, Vision Advocate and Coordinator for Excellence in Ministry, and the Reverend Bill Mous, Social Justice Coordinator, in their new roles. These two part-time positions are part of bringing our Diocesan Vision to life. On Saturday, we will have an opportunity to learn about issues of Global Food Distribution with the PWRDF, and our lunch will give us further opportunity to reflect on this theme. Saturday will also give us time to engage with our Vision Theme for 2011-2012: *"Prophetic Social Justice Making."*

A Few Last Words:

The phone number at the Convention Centre, in case of need is: 905-546-2424 x3099.

While you are at Synod, please set your phones to "vibrate", as a courtesy to the people and process of Synod. We also thank you for refraining from using electronic devices such as cell phones and smart phones on the floor of Synod.

Preparation and Evaluation

I hope you will have an opportunity to gather with the other Synod members in your parish to discuss the issues coming before this Synod. Please help us get better at serving you by filling in an evaluation form at the end of the meeting.

See you at Synod!

The Reverend Canon Marni Nancekivell, Secretary of Synod