

Province of Canada - Diocesan Report

Diocese of Central Newfoundland

A diocesan initiative

At our 2013 Diocesan Synod the future of Mint Brook Camp & Conference Centre was discussed at length. Our church camp had been in existence for 40 years and was in need of major renovations and upgrades. With limited finances and increasing maintenance costs, a question mark was hanging over the future of the camp. This led us to think about what could be done to plot a new course for Mint Brook. It was quickly determined that if our church camp was to survive, the people and parishes of the whole diocese would have to see the value in keeping open and maintaining our camp.

Over the years we have seen a shift in the age of our campers. Mint Brook was originally built to provide a camping experience for young people. In recent years a growing number of adult groups have been the mainstay of our camping season. If Mint Brook was to remain open and viable we would have to conduct the necessary upgrades to provide a comfortable camping experience for people of all ages. At Synod 2013 the Bishop challenged the delegates to consider their commitment to Mint Brook. Following much passionate discussion, the clergy and laity of our diocese unanimously agreed to support Mint Brook's upgrades and renovations. Firstly, all parishes would support and promote a Mission: Mint Brook financial appeal. Secondly, a number of parishes organized volunteer work parties to come to Mint Brook with the task of fully renovating most of the 10 cabins. Some parishes raised the funds necessary to complete the repairs on the cabin they volunteered to renovate.

A Wheel Chair Accessibility Grant from the federal government, along with the support of parishes, has enabled the diocese to make washrooms and the dining hall wheelchair accessible. One hundred new mattresses have been ordered with funds provided through the generous donations of those who are committed to Mint Brook..

Mint Brook Camp and Conference Centre continues to be utilized for events such as summer camps for young people, Cursillo, Men's Conferences, Women's Conferences and Lay Minister training events, Anglican Renewal Ministry gatherings, Cadets, Quilters, just to name a few. At every diocesan gathering an update is given on the progress being made at Mint Brook's. On a regular basis parishes and individuals come forward asking what they can do to lend a helping hand or support.

In the last two years we have heard many good news stories of the ministry provided at Mint Brook impacting individual lives. These good news stories encourage our diocese to keep planning the next stage of development for our camp.

Initiatives yet to bear fruit

Many parishes in our Diocese struggle to maintain older buildings. In many instances congregations are pouring the majority of their time, energy and money into maintaining buildings which are no longer practical or affordable. Changing weather patterns, especially the increased frequency of damaging wind storms, are also placing a strain on struggling congregations. Even though a small number of congregations have agreed that they should close their church building and amalgamate with another congregation, it is not an idea which is seriously entertained in most of our parishes. The Diocese encourages parishes and congregations to look beyond themselves and view ministry in terms of people instead of just buildings by looking beyond their own boundaries.

How the Province of Canada can help with initiatives

The Province of Canada can assist by continuing to encourage communication between the dioceses in order to share ideas and resources. No one diocese has all the answers, but collectively we can learn from and encourage one another. One of the strengths of our diocese is how we easily relate to one another as members of a large, extended family. We welcome the opportunity to share any resources we might have so as to help build up the Body of Christ in our Province.