

Diocese of Algoma

Monday 29th April, 2019

Prayer request from Archbishop Anne for those who are affected by the flooding in Muskoka.



Spring flooding is affecting a number of communities across eastern Canada, including Quebec, New Brunswick, and parts of Ontario. The Ottawa region and most of Muskoka in Ontario have declared states of emergency and a number of families are ready to evacuate their homes at a moment's notice. Most of the affected families are living close to waterways, and many of them are elderly. As is the case in these circumstances, neighbours are keeping an eye on each other and lending a hand where needed. The following are some updates from clergy and parishioners living in various parts of Muskoka. As we keep them in our prayers we remember those who are working long hours to relieve the situation – city crews, hydro workers, army, and local volunteers.



The following prayer comes from **Christian Aid** and could be adapted for local use:

Compassionate God, source of all comfort,
We pray for the people whose lives have been devastated by rain and flood.
Bring them comfort, we pray.
Protect the vulnerable.

Strengthen the weak.
Keep at bay the spread of disease.
Have mercy on all those working to rescue the stranded and to feed the hungry.
And may our response to their suffering be generous and bring you praise.
For we ask it in Jesus name,
Amen.

From the Rev. Kelly Baetz (kellinac@yahoo.ca) – Incumbent of St. Thomas Bracebridge and Lake of Bays in the Baysville area:

In Bracebridge, 60 armed forces members have arrived to help with sandbagging and evacuations. Some members of our congregation are unable to leave their homes (we have 15 strict road closures in Bracebridge) and they have been telephoned by me and are okay for now. Several members of the congregation have volunteered with sandbagging. The church property is fine. I have been in touch with the chaplain who has accompanied the armed forces team here now, and made St. Thomas' available for whatever he may need. The Legion and other town facilities are on this so we have not yet been called upon but the Mayor knows we can be.

In Baysville some have lost boats and docks but when I checked in with the congregation on Sunday they didn't know of anyone stranded.

More rain in the forecast for this week so it's not over but they believe the levels have hit their peak. Worse than 2013.

From the Rev. Heather Manuel (revheathermanuel@hotmail.com) Incumbent of Trinity – All Saints, Bala and St. James Gravenhurst:

Muskoka Lakes has declared an emergency due to the flooding. Church members are among those who have voluntarily left their homes, those who are at risk of evacuation and those who have participated in sandbagging throughout the community. Several roads in Bala are closed, including the section beside the church that overpasses the falls, due to the strength of the water rush. Several areas have a 'boil water' advisory. The church itself is dry and the water is safe. The Community Centre is the town's primary evacuation shelter, but town

officials know that we stand at the ready to provide shelter and meals if needed. Our members know they can use the church for shelter/water and they are spreading this invitation to their neighbours at risk.

Gravenhurst has not declared an emergency; it benefits from a fair amount of high ground (I'm sure there's a joke in there somewhere) so the flooding is limited to rural routes and boat houses at this point. I'll update you if that changes.

From Mr. Hugh Mackenzie (hugh@mackenziecommunications.net) in Hunstville

Houses and businesses near waterways are flooded but generally the Town, with the exception of a few roads that are under water, is in pretty good shape.

From the Rev. Margaret Morrison (margaretmorrison1395@gmail.com) in Baysville

The water is higher than ever before along our branch of the Muskoka River. We are fine as the back of our home is on stilts however our neighbor's home 3 doors away is in the water. Parts of our dock are torn apart but I was able to tie them off as they broke apart. The water was very chilly! Ever so many of the bushes and big trees on our property are in the water. Our neighbors lost their paddle boat but we saved their canoe and tin boat. Once again very cold water! Every day we have had to move the high water marker up closer to the house. Not sure when all this will end. People are very kind, helping one another as much as they can. A couple of our congregants have folks living with them because their homes are flooded.

The clergy all say that prayer is the best way we can help at the moment and notes of encouragement to the above email addresses.

“The Lord is with us, he is our stronghold;

God will help at the break of day.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

God will help at the break of day.

We will not fear, though the earth be toppled,

And though the mountains be toppled into the depths of the sea.

God will help at the break of day.

Come now and look upon the works of the Lord,
What awesome things he has done on earth.

God will help at the break of day.

“Be still and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations;
I will be exalted in the earth.”

God will help at the break of day.

