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For those attending the Diocesan Altar Guild annual meeting on Saturday, Oct. 1, it was a trip to Stittsville where St. Thomas Anglican Church was hosting the event. But everyone at the event experienced a lot more than their drive to Stittsville as they were also taken on a trip to Canada's North thanks to guest speaker Frances Macdonnell.

The retired organist of Christ Church Cathedral in Ottawa has visited the Diocese of the Arctic four times, most recently this past August when she was one of a group of 33 including nine teens who travelled to Iqaluit, the capital city of Nunavut located on Baffin Island.

Nunavut is the home of St. Jude's Cathedral, the Anglican Cathedral that is the seat of the Diocese of the Arctic. Informally known as the Igloo Cathedral

because it is shaped like an igloo, it was rebuilt after an arson fire in 2005 which destroyed the original building built by volunteers in 1972. It cost \$9 million to rebuild, with only \$400,000 still remaining to be paid off.

Ms. Macdonnell called St. Jude's Cathedral the most beautiful building in the Arctic, adding that it features indigenous art inside.

Having visited the Arctic four times including one visit to the western Arctic, she compared the western Arctic where there are trees, industry, mining, roads and lots of employment with Nunavut which has no trees, very little industry, no roads and little employment.

She explained that the cost of housing is high while the cost of fresh food is incredibly high even though it is subsidized by the government, meaning that many children are undernourished.

She noted that Iqaluit, a town of 8,000 people, is a young town in that the median age is 25 years old.

Her most recent visit to Iqaluit this past August included a group of teenagers as they helped run a free week-long music day camp for children there. Adults on the trip worked at the local food bank and at a soup kitchen.

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At the Diocesan Altar Guild annual meeting hosted by St. Thomas Anglican Church in Stittsville on Saturday, Oct. 1 are, from left, Pat Dalphy, secretary of the St. Thomas altar guild; Marlyn Powell, president of the St. Thomas altar guild; Bishop of Ottawa Rt. Rev. John Chapman; and Rev. Jane McCaig, rector of St. Thomas Anglican Church.

St. Thomas Anglican Church hosts Diocesan Altar Guild meeting

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The teens developed lasting friendships with the local teens in Iqaluit and it is hoped that these Iqaluit youth will pay a return visit to Ottawa next year. However, money is needed to finance such an initiative.

During their time in Iqaluit on this trip there, Frances and the group saw the Nunavut legislature where decisions are made by consensus. They also toured the Iqaluit hospital where all babies on Baffin Island are born. They visited the original Hudson's Bay Company buildings which are still standing at what was once called Frobisher Bay (now Iqaluit). In addition, they witnessed throat singing, observed Inuit artists at work and demonstrated square dancing.

During their visit there this past August, the sun shone every day with the temperature ranging between 15 and 18 degrees Celsius. There are no trees but there are lots of rocks and water. There are no flower gardens, Frances explained, but despite this Nunavut is very beautiful.

She explained that both personal friendships and church relationships were formed on this trip and that everyone wants to go back again in the future. It is, though, costly with the airfare being \$2,000 per person, quite a difference from the much lower airfares which govern travel to vacation spots in the sunny south.

There are many needs in Iqaluit but everything costs money. Many of the clergy receive very little salary because there is just not the money available to pay them.

There is a need for a deep water port at Iqaluit, something which has been promised but has not yet become a reality.

She also showed a short video which showed some of the highlights of this trip to Nunavut last August.

This presentation about Canada's North and Nunavut followed the annual meeting of the Diocesan Altar Guild which was held at St. Thomas Anglican Church in Stittsville this year since this is the 150th anniversary year for the parish.

This anniversary was acknowledged by Diocesan Altar Guild president Debbie Tweedle from St. Helen's Church in Orleans who wished St. Thomas a happy 150th anniversary.

"One hundred and fifty years is absolutely awesome," she commented to the over 100 delegates attending the annual meeting.

A roll call of the various deaneries represented at the annual meeting took place, with deaneries such as Arnprior, Carleton Place, Lanark, Central Ottawa, Ottawa East, Ottawa West, Stormont and West Quebec being represented. A deanery is a geographically-based group of Anglican parishes.

The minutes of the 2015 annual meeting at St. John's South Anglican Parish of March in Kanata were read and a treasurer's report was presented. Reports included a report about the current Diocesan calendar project and also a report by president Debbie Tweedle who reported that the Diocesan Altar Guild had been successful in the past year in finding new homes for some unused altar linens, vestments, chalices and other items.

It was determined that the 2017 Diocesan Altar Guild annual meeting would be held at Christ Church Cathedral in Ottawa, to be followed by St. James Church in Carleton Place in 2018. The 2019 meeting will be hosted by Trinity Anglican Church in Cornwall which will be marking its 235th anniversary that year.

The annual meeting at St. Thomas Anglican Church was preceded by the celebration of the Holy Eucharist presided over by Bishop of Ottawa the Rt. Rev. John Chapman as celebrant and preacher. He was assisted by Rev. Jane McCaig, the rector at St. Thomas Anglican Church. Don Gillen was the organist for the service. Assisting in this liturgy were Arlene Simonovich, server; Tanya Drew, chalice; Hilary Shouldice, reader; Mary Passmore, intercessions; Gary Graham, projectionist; and Marlyn Powell and Hilary Shouldice, sides people.

An offering of \$684.30 was collected in this liturgy with these funds to be donated to

the Anglican Diocese of the Arctic, one of several suggested causes.

A lunch was held in the parish hall at St. Thomas Anglican Church following Frances Macdonnell's presentation about the Diocese of the North.

An altar guild in each Anglican church looks after the preparation of the altar and

altar table for various aspects of worship. This involves preparing the sanctuary for worship and maintaining and caring for the church's sacred vessels, altar linens and vestments. The arrangement of flowers and candles as well as the selection of seasonal colours and hangings fall under the duties of the altar guild.



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With Frances Macdonnell (centre), who was the guest speaker at the Diocesan Altar Guild annual meeting on Saturday, Oct. 1 at St. Thomas Anglican Church in Stittsville, are (on the left) Marni Crossley of Christ Church in Bells Corners and (on the right) Rev. Jane McCaig, rector of St. Thomas Anglican Church. Marni Crossley's husband Richard is the son of Canon R.S.V. Crossley who was rector at St. Thomas Anglican Church in Stittsville from 1961 to 1967.