

Rupert's Land News 2018 Synod Report

Rupert's Land News continues to grow and change as we work to make it a communication tool of the diocese. Since I became the editor in December 2016, I have made it my goal to raise both the profile and the readership of RLN.

RLN publishes 10 monthly issues per year from September to June. However, I have moved away from the previous column-based format to tighten the editorial mandate. This means that each issue focuses on one topic designed to challenge readers' faith in a deeper way; some topics from 2017 and 2018 were Art, Disability, Worship, and Myth. I still include the via media and Parish News Round Up columns, but I also try to feature more image-driven pages so that the magazine does not become too text-heavy.

The feedback I have received for this approach has been generally positive, with most readers enjoying the tighter editorial style.

To help raise subscriber numbers, in summer 2017, after consulting with Bishop Don and the Diocesan Executive to make sure we were not breaking any Canadian copyright laws, I asked parishes to send me their email lists so that I could add them to the RLN subscriber list. This bumped RLN email subscribers from 640 to approximately 2,300. I sent out an email explaining the new initiative and inviting those who wanted to unsubscribe to do so, which dropped the number to just below 2,000. That number currently sits steadily around 1,950.

I also conducted a survey of RLN readership to determine if we should look into new streams of ad revenue. The majority of RLN ads target older generations, but I have been working with Angela Rush, our Advertising Manager, to find ads that reflect the diversity of readers.

Communication between parishes and RLN could be stronger; while parishes regularly send me events to advertise, most do not send me news items. To that end, I have introduced a new volunteer position called the RLN Advocate: each parish designates one person who will send me news and photos that I can include in the weekly newsletter or the monthly magazine. This will enable parishes to use RLN as a vehicle through which they can communicate with the rest of the diocese. RLN Advocates will also be responsible for promoting RLN in their parishes. With parishioners hearing about RLN on a more regular basis, I am hoping that this will increase subscribers.

RLN's social media presence is fairly strong: the website receives an average of 315 visits per week, the Facebook account has 342 followers, and the Twitter account has 306 followers (at the time of this writing). When I attended the Anglican Editors Association conference in May of this year, I learned about new tools and strategies I can use to enhance RLN's social media use, and I am looking forward to implementing some of those.

Working as the editor has been a joy, and I will continue to grow Rupert's Land News to the best of my ability. Please email me at rlnews@rupertsland.ca if you have any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

Kyla Neufeld, editor